



Live Farm Fresh Without the Farm™

## **Living Homegrown Podcast – Episode 64 7 Steps to Getting More Done in Your Farm Fresh Lifestyle**

**Show Notes: [www.LivingHomegrown.com/64](http://www.LivingHomegrown.com/64)**

This is the Living Homegrown Podcast, episode #64.

**Announcer: Welcome to the Living Homegrown Podcast, where it's all about how to live farm fresh, without the farm. To help guide the way to a more flavorful and sustainable lifestyle is your host, national PBS TV producer and canning expert Theresa Loe.**

**Theresa:** Hey there, everybody. Welcome to the Living Homegrown Podcast. I'm your host, Theresa Loe, and this podcast is where we just talk about living farm-fresh without the farm. That could mean anything from preserving and fermenting and small-space food growing to just taking simple steps towards living a more sustainable lifestyle. All the different ways that we can live closer to our food even if we have little or no garden space at all. If you want to learn more about any of these topics, or if you just want to learn about my online canning academy where you learn to can food flavorfully and safely and confidently, then go to my website [livinghomegrown.com](http://livinghomegrown.com).

Last week's episode was on making lotions and body care products from the garden, and man oh man, did I get a big response from



Live Farm Fresh Without the Farm™

that one. I wasn't expecting it. It was a little surprising, but I had Stephanie Rose on the show, and she's awesome. Many of you asked if there would be any more episodes on DIY homemade products like that, so I wanted to let you know that I've lined up at least 1 other episode interview along that line. I'm hoping to get another interview on a similar topic so that we can dive into more of those DIY-type projects. Now, I've spread them out so they won't come right after each other because I know if you're not interested in that, you're not going to want to listen to 2 or 3 episodes on DIY products that you make at home, so I spread them out. I just wanted to let you know that I am going to be bringing on some other people to talk about those topics some more because it seemed to be really popular.

Also, last week, I did not release an episode, and I have rarely ever skipped releasing my episodes. It was completely unintentional, so I'm sorry about that. I fully intended to release my episode, but our family vacation got extended, and I had no way to record or even edit 1 of my archived episodes that I keep for emergencies because we had very limited internet, which is actually a good thing. We had a fantastic time, but I will make it up to you, some time in the next few weeks, I will add in a bonus episode in there. You'll get 2 episodes in 1 of the upcoming weeks. That should take care of it. Sorry about that, but you'll get a little extra surprise coming up.

Now, if you are a subscriber of mine, you know that I send out weekly e-mails with seasonal information for living farm-fresh and for canning and preserving. If you're not a subscriber, you should be, so be sure to go to my website because you can sign up to get on my e-mail list by signing up for anything on my website. You



Live Farm Fresh Without the Farm™

could get my free canning resource guide or 1 of the PDF checklists or podcast resources within 1 of the show notes. If you sign up for anything on my website, you're automatically put on my e-mail, and you become 1 of my VIPs. You get some special information that I only send out to my list.

A few weeks ago, I did send out a message to all my subscribers. I was asking them this hypothetical question. I asked them if they could spend an afternoon with me, just one-on-one, what is the 1 thing they would want to learn from me? What could I teach them, or what could I help them with? The response was a little bit overwhelming. I was really surprised to receive hundreds and hundreds of answers. In fact, a few of those answers are still trickling in 3 weeks later. One of my assistants has been scrambling to organize and catalog every single answer so that I can see what topics are most important to all of my subscribers. I have also been getting some great ideas for podcast episodes. That's actually how today's podcast topic came about. Several people, when they were answering me, were asking the same topic, but worded a little bit differently.

They wanted tips for managing time and energy when running a homestead, or they wanted productivity tips for doing all the things that I do because I grow food, and I can food, and I have my family and my household and my business. I also work as a TV producer for a national PBS television show, so they know I have a lot of irons in the fire, and they wanted to know how I handle the pressures of all, spreading myself out so thinly, and how I do that.



Live Farm Fresh Without the Farm™

A few people wanted to know how I keep my energy up with business and family at the same time. Although they're all different questions, they all revolve around the same key things that I do every week or everyday. These are things that I actually learned through various business courses that I've taken over the years. Now, I don't really say that I manage my time because time-management really, I feel, is not possible. You can't manage your time. We all have the same amount of time, and so we can't manage it, but what we can manage are the tasks that we choose to do within that time. If you don't have enough energy, or if you feel drained emotionally and physically and mentally, then it doesn't matter how you manage your tasks. You're never going to get much done at all.

What I've done to manage my energy and workload is to apply these business and productivity tips that I learned from business articles and business classes. I apply them to my farm-fresh lifestyle, or really my daily lifestyle. I thought this might be a great topic to cover here because so many people were asking about that. I never even considered that as a podcast topic. It doesn't matter if you homestead. It doesn't matter if you garden or not, or you can or not. We all have really busy lives, so hopefully, some of the things I cover today will help you in managing your busy life, and figuring out how to best manage your energies and your focus so that you can do the things that you want to do.

What I'm going to talk about is more of the big picture stuff. We can get down to the finer details in another episode, or based on what you guys want to hear more about, but if we can take some of the pressure off of you now, it will help you with everything else



Live Farm Fresh Without the Farm™

going forward. That's where I'm headed with this. We're going to talk big picture here. How you can fine-tune your focus and your energy so that you can get a lot more done. I also want to say that I am not perfect in any way, but the tips I'm going to share are some of the things that I've tried that made the biggest impact on me, trying to manage my gardening and homestead and family and all of that. Maybe 1 or 2 of the tips that I mention here will resonate with you, and help you too. That's my hope.

All right. I'm going to talk about 7 ways that you can manage your energy level and your focus. I really think that if you're able to, you might want to take notes on some of the things I'm going to talk about. I actually have a worksheet PDF for you if you want to download it before I go on in this episode. You can go to [livinghomegrown.com/64](http://livinghomegrown.com/64), and download the free PDF worksheet there. I'm also going to have more information and links to more information on that PDF. You can download that, and it should help you, but if you don't have that, you can either come back later or look at the transcript on the show notes. You can take notes on just a blank piece of paper. That will work too.

First, let's start with our personal energy level because you only have so much, right? Then, as I work down the list, what I'm talking about will mesh more into organizing your whole week and organizing [your 08:29] to-do list a little bit. Okay. The first thing I really recommend you do, this is something that I learned from my business coach, and I cannot tell you what a huge difference this makes. The first thing you need to do is declutter. I know that sounds like, "what? What are you talking about? Why do I need to declutter when all I want to know is how I can get more done." If



Live Farm Fresh Without the Farm™

you want to bring more things into your life, more projects, more activities, more people, or just devote more time to the things that you find are most important to you, then you need to, first, declutter because you have to clear away some of the junk and the clutter in order to make room for the things that you really want to do.

I'm talking about decluttering your office, decluttering where you spend the most time. I'm also talking about decluttering your brain, and decluttering all those ideas and thoughts that you have in your head. Let me go through it one by one, but I actually did do a podcast episode on this a while back. It was episode number 22. It was about using the KonMari method for homesteading. When I did this for myself, I found it to be really life-changing. I know that sounds so silly, but it's really true. When I started organizing and clearing away some of the junk that was just on my desk and in the cupboards that I opened up the most, it really made everything simpler. It made me not feel so cluttered in the head. It made me think clearer. It was really amazing. I'd heard this from so many people, and I didn't believe it at all until I did it myself. I can't recommend it enough that you need to declutter.

I'm not just talking about picking what's most important and getting rid of or pushing off the rest to the side. That's a pretty standard advice like only having out what you need, but I'm talking about all the other clutter: the clutter on your desk, the clutter in your purse, the clutter that you think about all day, all the different ideas that you have in your head. That clutter is what clogs you up. It seriously does. If you want to pick the most important things to focus on, it can make a huge difference in your life, if you first get rid of the



Live Farm Fresh Without the Farm™

clutter around you, so that you know what is the most important things in your life. By doing that, you'll be amazed how everything else falls in place.

The first step is to declutter the area that you spend the most time in. For me, that's my desk. I spend the most time of my day sitting at my desk, so I try to declutter my desk every single week. If I haven't done it in a long time, or if you haven't done it in a long time, it can take you a good hour to declutter your desk.

I'm not talking about taking everything and just throwing it in a box. I mean really going through it, and only keeping on your desk the things that either bring you joy or that you actually need to use on a daily basis. The rest of your desk should be clear and clean. By having that, that clear desk, or if it's your kitchen where you spend most of your time, having a clean and clutter-free kitchen, it lets you think more clearly. All the clutter is gone. That's the first step, is pick whatever area you spend the most time in, and declutter that. If you want to declutter your whole house, then go to episode 22, [livinghomegrown.com/22](http://livinghomegrown.com/22), and learn all about the whole decluttering process using the KonMari method which is how I do it.

Now then, after you've decluttered your most popular area that you spend time in, the next step is to declutter your mind. Now, how do you do this? Well, I take out a piece of paper, or you can do it on a Word doc, or you can do it online. I'll talk about that in a second, but what you're going to do is like a brain-dump of all the things that you need to do. All the things in your head that are floating



Live Farm Fresh Without the Farm™

around in your head, that you're worried you're going to forget, you need to get them out of your head and on to paper or on to your computer or on to a list somewhere.

It can just be 1 giant to-do list of all the things that you need to do today, next week, next month, in your life. Whatever you have floating in your head, you need to get it out and down on paper because what we do is we're so worried we're going to forget those things. They're always on replay in our mind all the time. When you get it out of your head, you know it's in a safe place. It's on paper. You're not going to forget it. You will be surprised how much your brain is freed up.

Now, you can do it pen and paper, the old fashion way. You could do it with a Word doc. One of my favorite ways to do this is with an online app called WorkFlowy. You can Google it. I'll also have a link in the show notes, but WorkFlowy is just an online list. You can organize it pretty easily. I just really love it because you can just go really, really quickly. Then, once you have everything out of your head and in a safe place, you'll be amazed how much lighter you feel, and how much lighter you think. You can go through the list, and you can highlight the things that you need to do right away or what's most important, or you can go through with a pen and cross off the things that you realize are not important at all.

Honestly, I find that just doing this periodically, maybe once a week or once every 2 weeks, that once I have everything out of my head, then I can do a much better job of creating my weekly to-do list or my daily to-do list. I can just look back over and refer to this big



Live Farm Fresh Without the Farm™

giant list that I made occasionally, but I rarely even look at it. I just need to know that it's there. I might refer back to it later, but honestly, once it's out of my head, I'm not so worried that I'm going to forget something important. It really, really helps free up your mind and declutter your mind.

Step 1 was decluttering, okay? I really recommend doing that. I know it sounds funky, but it really works.

Number 2 on list is figuring out your energy temperament or your personality temperament. The reason for this is once you know what kind of a personality you have, it will help you in figuring out where your genius is at, where you work best. What works for you, and what doesn't work for you? What I mean by your personality temperament or your energy temperament is I'm talking about whether you are introverted or extroverted. Everybody is pretty much 1 or the other. Even if you're a little bit of both, you're usually 1 side or the other. Extroverted does not mean that you're outgoing, and introverted does not mean that you're shy. Instead, what those terms mean is it's where you draw your energy from or what drains you, where you work best, or where you don't work best.

For example, I may be in the public eye a lot. I'm even on television, and I do this podcast, but I am absolutely an introvert. I am most in my mojo, or when I work best is when I'm working alone in my office. I get the most done. I feed off of that alone time. I get my most energy when I have an inward focus on what I'm doing. Now, when I go to a concert or a big group gathering, I can have a



Live Farm Fresh Without the Farm™

great time, but it tends to use up my energy. In other words, I can't come home from a big event and say, "all right, I feel so charged up. I'm going to be really productive." In fact, actually, what happens to me is the opposite happens to me. I'll go to the event. I'll have a great time, and I come back, and I'm run-down and tired. I can't really dive into a new project right away. I need to recharge.

An extroverted person will feed off of the group experience. They'll go to an event, and they'll come home so pumped up that they will immediately get a ton of stuff done, okay? You see the difference? One situation feeds you, and another situation drains you. It really helps to know which you are: introverted or extroverted. There are lots of tests online you can do to see what you are. The most common is the Myers Briggs Test. You can do these online tests, and they'll help you decide where you fall. The online tests, they're not perfect, but they will point you in the right direction. I'm going to have more information on this in the show notes, and I'll have links to where you can learn more, and where you can actually take a test online for free. I learned about Myers Briggs from my business coach. Once I knew my personality type, where I was and where I was most energetic, it really helped me with planning out my projects and my work day, and even my work around the homestead.

Here's the thing to remember: knowing if you have an introverted temperament or an extroverted temperament does not mean that you can't do introverted or extroverted things. Like me, in my case, being introverted, I can still appear on television and do a podcast and go on radio shows. I can even give speeches. I do it all the time. I can do all of those things, but when I want to be really



Live Farm Fresh Without the Farm™

productive with the most energy, I work best in a room all alone. That's just me. I have been this way since I was a little girl because that is my area of my best energy. Nothing's draining me. Does that make sense? Okay.

Why do we need to know this? Well, it's because it will help you be more productive if you have some insight into how you work. If you have an extroverted temperament, for example, you might thrive best in communities like Facebook groups and clubs and social groups that focus on your interests like homesteading and cooking and raising chickens. Whatever it is. You might do best learning a new skill in a group setting with lots of people. Where an introvert like me may find more solaced in reading about a topic or taking an individual class that's self-paced or working more one-on-one with someone to teach me a new skill. You see what I mean? It's all about discovering where your temperament is, and that will help you when you plan out your weeks or your projects, and where you learn best and where you work best.

It also helps to know if you are a morning person or an evening person. I think most of us know which we are, morning or an evening person. I am definitely a morning person. I do my absolute best work first thing in the morning. I have to get my hardest things done before noon. I plan my most important tasks for first thing in the morning. I'll also put my hardest tasks first. That's because I have the best mental capacity for them in the morning because I'm a morning person. This is true if we're talking about building a new composter or writing a blog post or a television episode script. Whatever it is I'm working on, if I have something that really needs my focus, I know I'm a morning person, and I know I work best



Live Farm Fresh Without the Farm™

alone in my room, so I will set myself up for success for that project by setting myself up that way. Okay?

All right. That explains how your personality, energy or your personality temperament will affect how you go about doing things. That can help you with all of your productivity and all of your managing of your projects.

Step number 3 is to step away from the things that drain you. Now that you know where you get your most energy, whether you're introverted, extroverted, morning person, evening person, now it helps if you make a conscious effort to avoid the things that rob you of energy. Think about what robs you of energy. Is it junk food, alcohol, a toxic friend? Those people that are just every time you go to do anything with them, or you have contact with them, they just seem to rob you of everything because they're toxic, or they're just draining in some way emotionally. Then, there's other things that can rob you of energy. Lack of exercise. All of those things that you have in your life that rob you of your energy and your focus. Make a list of them. Make a list of all those things that you notice rob you of energy. Then, just create boundaries for those things so that you limit how they can have access to you.

For example, if sugar robs you of energy, and you know that you have this addiction to sugar, and it robs you of energy. It helps to be more conscious of that, and work toward reducing that sugar fix that you need, let's say, in the afternoon. Maybe have something else set out ready for you, so that when you go to reach for that candy bar or whatever it is that is your fix, you have something else



Live Farm Fresh Without the Farm™

in its place. You go for a walk. You try to cut yourself off at the pass so that you have limited or created boundaries away from those things that rob you of your energy.

If it's a toxic person that you know is draining you, maybe you need to put up some boundaries on that person. Maybe not respond to every text or phone call. If it's a situation like Facebook, we all have our Facebook accounts, and I know you've probably been like me where you go on just to check something for a minute. The next thing you know, you've gone down this rabbit hole, and you've been there way too long. Maybe you need to put limits on yourself so that you don't go in to Facebook and waste time. It doesn't serve you. It ends up draining your energy and your time. Do you see what I mean here? All right.

Number 3 is just to look at the things that drain you of energy. Make a list of them. Then, try to work on the ones that are doing the most damage one by one, and just reduce their impact on your energy and your time. Okay.

Number 4 is, after you do that, then you make a list of all the things that light you up. What people or activities really light you up? Write them down. Is it gardening, walking, talking on the phone to your best friend? Whatever it is. What really seems to fuel your energy? Is it a certain food? Maybe when you eat fermented food, or you have a smoothie. They seem to really energize you. Make a list of all the things that light you up or seem to fuel your energy. Then, you're going to work slowly down that list. Pick the things that you find are most important, and try to do those things each



Live Farm Fresh Without the Farm™

week. You are stepping away from the things that drain you, and you're stepping into the things that light you up, okay? All right.

The next one is number 5, and that's where you try to recharge yourself every single day. I want you to make some type of a commitment even if it's 5 minutes to recharge yourself, and do something for you everyday because if you don't recharge yourself, and you just keep going, going, going and draining yourself with all your to-dos and your chores and all the craziness that's going on in your life, and you never recharge, you have nothing else to give. You don't have anything else to give to yourself or to your family or to those that you love.

It's really important that every single day, whether you mark it down on your calendar, or you put a reminder on your phone where an alarm will go off, that you do something for yourself. It can be really, really small. I mean even 5 minutes. If you don't have 5 minutes to do something for yourself everyday, then you have a big problem because I used to think, "I don't have that time. I don't have time for that." As you may know, I'm a cancer survivor, and I now have always, always made time for myself every single day, because it's ridiculous not to have that time for yourself.

What kind of things am I talking about here? Okay. You could go for a walk or exercise or garden or meditate. Have some meditation or yoga time everyday, or just have some sort of a morning routine that you do. When you get up in the morning, you do this, this and this. That's your special time. One of the things I love to do is pour myself a cup of coffee in the morning and walk through my garden.



Live Farm Fresh Without the Farm™

I will do that every single morning. It's my way to start my day. I hear the birds singing. The chickens are waking up. I'm checking the garden at the same time. I'm soaking in all of the sights and sounds, and it's just my time every morning. It only takes a few minutes, and it's just a special time just for me. Whatever it is for you, you want to put it down on your list. Make a mental note to do it every single day. Actually, put it on your calendar, or put a reminder, okay? You don't forget.

Even something as simple as taking a bath if you're having a particularly stressful day can really, really recharge you. In fact, they say that salt water and Epsom salt baths are really, really good at recharging your energy. If you're ever having a really stressful day, that's a great thing to do. Maybe put in a little lavender essential oil. A drop or 2 just so you have the aroma therapy going at the same time, which is very good for stress, and just relax with a bath at the end of a stressful day. You won't believe how much better you'll feel. Okay. Make that time for yourself. Number 5. All right.

Next is number 6. Organize your week in advance. This is something that I started doing, gosh, over a year ago. It has made a huge difference in how I get things done. You think about it the same way that a CEO would think about running their business, right? You have your house. You have your garden. You have your homestead. Whatever it is that you're in charge of, and if you think about it more the way a CEO would think about running things, they don't just decide as they come into the office. "I wonder what we're going to do this week?" They already have an idea, or they should have an idea of what needs to get accomplished that week. They've already planned it out. The best CEOs have planned



Live Farm Fresh Without the Farm™

everything out the night before they walk into the office. If you do that for yourself, it can make a huge difference.

Every night, before I go to bed, is when I plan out what needs to get done the next day. The most important tasks. What are the 1, 2, 3 things that must get done the next day? Those are on a list, and at the top of the list. When I wake up in the morning, it's not like, "I wonder what I'm going to do today." I already know these 3 things are the most important things. I try to tackle at least 1 of them before I do anything else. I start my day with 1 of the most important things crossed off my list. It gives you a confidence boost. It makes you feel like, "oh boy, I'm just like running through my list. I got things done. I'm just checking things off." It really gives you a boost, and gets you going in the morning if you do that.

I highly recommend that if you can organize your entire week on Sunday night or Saturday night for the rest of the week, and if you can make a list the night before of what are the most important things you need to do the next day that, that will really, really help you in planning out your whole week and being productive.

Number 7, the last thing is you need to have a pile-up zone for those ideas that don't serve you right now. What I mean by a pile-up zone is you know how you may be working on something, sometimes this happens when I'm gardening, I'll be out thinking while I'm gardening, and all of a sudden, an idea pops in my head. "Oh, I should do this. Oh, I could do this," or "oh, that's a great podcast episode." You don't have any place to put it. It becomes 1



Live Farm Fresh Without the Farm™

of those cluttery things that is in your mind that you're worried you're going to forget. If you have a system, whether it's a piece of paper you keep on your desk, or on your computer, or if you use something like Evernote or 1 of the other organizational tools that you can get on the internet.

If you have a place where you put those ideas, then you can get it out of your head and on to that piece of paper. It's not something that needs to be done now. It's not a "I need to do this this week," or "I need to do this tomorrow." It's 1 of those ideas that's a great idea, and you don't want to forget it, but it's not something that serves you now. It's not something that you're doing right now. If you can get a place where you put those, and you keep it organized just been keeping it in one. Everything is just in 1 place. It's just a pile of ideas or a pile of to-dos. If you can have it there, it won't clutter you up, and it won't slow you down, okay?

There's a lot of tools you can use for this. One of the tools I like to use is an online tool called Trello. It's like using post-it notes. Trello reminds me of post-it notes, and I can organize my ideas that way. I have a Trello list for podcast ideas, for garden ideas, for the homestead ideas, things I need to do around the house. Any kind of idea like that. I will have a list of tools that you can use for this in the show notes, but I find that it really helps me to have a pile-up zone where I put those to-dos that are not for now, but I'd like to maybe do later or investigate later. I just don't want to have to keep carrying them around in my head.



Live Farm Fresh Without the Farm™

I think you can see that almost everything here is not about how you can get a million things done in a short amount of time. It's about clearing away the things that don't matter so much, or that might be cluttering you up. Then, that gives you the opportunity to spend more time on the things that are most important to you: your home, your family, your garden. The things that you really, really need to get done. You can apply these same things to your business. I use all of these ideas for my daily workload, but I also apply them to my household. I hope that helps you. Maybe 1 or 2 of those little tips might help you in your day, whether it's just a regular old day. Maybe you are a homesteader, and you want to apply some of those to your homestead. Either way, I hope that some of those ideas resonate with you, and will help you gain clarity on where you need to focus, and how you can keep your energy up so that you can do the things that are most important to you.

Remember that I will have in the show notes for this episode, a PDF download worksheet that you can use for filling out and getting clarity on some of these ideas. It will have some resources for you for more information. You can get that at [livinghomegrown.com/64](http://livinghomegrown.com/64). Thank you so much for joining me here today. I know how busy you are, or you wouldn't have been listening to this episode. I really appreciate that you took time out of your busy day to listen to this show. Until next time. Just try to live a little bit more local, seasonal and homegrown. Take care.

**Announcer: That's all for this episode of the Living Homegrown podcast. Visit [LivingHomegrown.com](http://LivingHomegrown.com) to download Theresa's free canning resource guide and find more tips on how to live farm fresh, without the farm. Be sure to join Theresa Loe next time on the Living Homegrown podcast.**