
Living Homegrown Podcast – Episode 127
4 Tips to Having The Best
Farm-Fresh Year

Show Notes are at: www.LivingHomegrown.com/127

Theresa: This is the Living Homegrown Podcast, Episode 127.

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.

Here's your host, national PBS TV Producer and Canning Expert, Theresa Loe.

Theresa: Hey there, everybody. Welcome to the podcast. I'm your host, Theresa Loe, and this podcast is where we talk about living farm fresh without the farm. And that means preserving the harvest, small-space food growing, and 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'd like to learn more about any of these topics, or my online courses, or my Living Homegrown membership, just visit my website, livinghomegrown.com

Well, today we are going to talk about tips for having a breakthrough 2018. This podcast is coming out just before the new year, and I'm currently working on my business plan for 2018, and every year I try to strive to have a breakthrough year. And one thing that I truly believe is that having a breakthrough year does not only pertain to business. We can have a breakthrough year in our personal lives as well. So that's why I wanted to do this, because I know a lot of people are setting resolutions right now, and they're setting their goals for themselves, either in their personal lives or in their business, and I want to help you turn those goals into a breakthrough year for you.

Now, I did a podcast episode last year on goal-setting, and I'll link to that in the show notes. So this particular episode is not about how to set your goals or achieve your goals. I do have an episode on that, so I'll link in the show notes. And, you know, I should just say right now how you get to the show notes. You go to livinghomegrown.com/127 and I'll have links there and other information, and I also always have a full transcript of every one of my episodes. So if you want that, go to livinghomegrown.com/127

But this year, what I wanted to do for the last podcast of 2017, is that I wanted to offer some tips for you so that you can create a breakthrough year in your life. Now this can be personal breakthrough year on things that you want to achieve, or for your business. You can apply it either way. All of these little tips are going to help. There's just four tips, but I really feel like they're

powerful. And I was working on my own stuff and I thought, "You know, this would be a great podcast episode, 'cause it can totally relate to home studying and gardening, and keeping a organic lifestyle. It can totally relate."

So, first of all, let's start off by me defining what I'm talking about when I say a breakthrough year. What do I mean by that? Well, something that my business coach taught me a few years back was that a breakthrough year is when you reach a goal that you just didn't think was possible. Maybe you stood on the edge of possibility at the beginning of the year, and you were thinking, "Ah, this would be great, but I just don't know if I could do it." Well, if you accomplish that goal, then you've had a breakthrough year. But what you're really doing is you're making a decision at the beginning of the year to push yourself a little bit harder or maybe do something a little bit scarier than you've ever done before. So that means that you're setting the bar a little bit high, and you know that if you reach this goal, you will have created a life for yourself beyond anything that you've done before.

But, here's the caveat with that. That doesn't mean that you're setting yourself up for failure if you don't reach that goal. And I wanted to talk about that because I think that is where, at the beginning of the year, people don't want to set the bar high because they don't want to set themselves up for failure. Now, to me, setting the bar high on your goals is just telling yourself how you're going to play the game. It's telling yourself how you are

going to show up. So, for me, reaching or not reaching the goal is not about winning or losing, or having a breakthrough year or not having a breakthrough year. For me, setting that goal is telling myself how I'm going to show up. And this is how I look at it.

If you don't actually reach every single goal that you set out for yourself, you're still okay because you've made progress. If you are true to yourself and you're working on that goal, even the hairy scary things, and you've made steps towards what you were wanting to accomplish? Then you have had a breakthrough year, and you have accomplished a lot. And that's because you're still moving down that pathway towards what you wanted. So your progress is really the big win. Your progress can be huge. And that's why I set lofty goals for myself. Do I reach them all? No. But having those goals tell me how I'm going to show up for the year.

Now, this does not mean that you just set a lofty goal and then you blow it off right off the bat and you're like, "Okay, well, I set myself a lofty goal and I made a couple steps towards it so I'm good now. I'm going to have a breakthrough year." It doesn't work that way. But by knowing at the beginning of the year that you may fall off the wagon, you may get sidetracked. In fact, you probably will. We all do. You can remember that your goals are not about winning or losing, they're about the progress that you want to make. And we do miss the mark. Sometimes we fall off the routine, and we can just pick ourselves up, brush ourselves off, and keep making progress throughout the year. So it kind

of takes some of the pressure off of being perfect. Because nobody's perfect, and we have to remember that. So don't beat yourself up that you're not perfect and you don't ... never fall off the wagon or that you don't ever make a mistake, or stop doing the steps that you have set out for yourself. We all do that. So just setting the bar high is not setting yourself up for failure. It's setting up how you want to show up in the game.

Okay. So what I've put together here is a list of just four simple tips for creating your own breakthrough year, and if you're a goal-setting person, you can apply these tips to your goals. But if you are not a goal-setting person, then these tips will still be perfect for you, because they can just help you have a different approach to the year and you still come out ahead. So, if you're not into setting goals, I still think these tips will be really helpful for you. Sound good? Okay. So here we go.

Tip number one is to make time to learn new things. Now, this is really important because at the beginning of a new year, you probably have a million things that you'd like to do or achieve, or that maybe you'd like to learn. And some of those things involve new skills that you have no idea how to do. Like maybe you want to learn how to compost, or maybe you want to learn how to can food, or make sourdough bread. Well, you need to set aside time to learn those things, because what we typically do is we put on the list we want to learn it, but we don't set out a way to achieve that. We don't set out the time. We don't make time to do it and then

it just sits on the list and collects dust. So I don't want that to happen to you. I don't want you to put something on the list and say, "I want to learn this, but I'll do it later when I have time." Because that later will never happen.

The truth is that we make time for what's important in our lives, and if you want to learn a new skill or read a book or whatever it is, you have to make the time for it. Now, I'm not saying that you need to set aside hours a day to learn or read. And that's where a lot of us get stuck. We're like, "I don't have the time. The time is not there." I get it. I have a very busy life myself, so I completely understand. But you absolutely need to schedule into your calendar some time each week towards working or learning the thing that you want to learn. Even if it's just 10 minutes a day to read each night before you go to bed. Let's just say you want to learn something and you can learn it by reading a book? You can set aside 10 minutes a day of reading to do that before you go to bed.

Now, let's just look at that example for a minute, 'cause I can already hear you 'cause I've been there. I used to do this myself. I'd say, "10 minutes per day? You know, I don't have 10 minutes a day." I used to say that to myself, and then I realized if I can't set aside 10 minutes a day for something, if I'm so busy that I don't have 10 minutes to spare, then I don't have a life. And that was a big realization for me. So this is not the type of life that I wanted to live.

So I made a conscious effort to put a certain amount of time each day on my schedule for something that I wanted to learn. Whether it was reading or watching videos, or taking a training, even if it was just 10 minutes. And I set an alarm on my phone and I tried it for just a week, and I was super surprised at the huge impact I had. Because I could tell I was heading forward. So at the end of the week, just spending 10 minutes a day doing something like reading, at the end of the week, I had spent over an hour on that particular thing. So before I knew it, I expanded that time and I was reading 20 minutes per day. It made me feel better about myself. I was making progress on something that I wanted to learn about, and that time expanded on certain days when I had extra time, and I just ended up learning and reading about something that was important to me, and that made a big impact.

So, this is the same as if you want to add exercise or let's say, meditation, or some regular thing in your life but you're like, "Ah. I don't have time." Just try doing 10 minutes a day. Pick a time in your day, set your alarm, and just do 10 minutes. And you'll be surprised. You really do make progress. Even if it's something like learning how to make cheese or hard cider, or reading about it, or watching videos, you really really can make progress at just 10 minutes a day.

Now, something that I currently have on my list, that I'm learning about this year, is I had on my list that I really want to learn how to make hard cider. Now you probably know I have an heirloom farmstead up in

Northern California where we have 65 fruit trees. A lot of them are old heirloom apple trees that were cider trees. But I only know the basics of hard cider. I have never really experimented and figured out how to make a cider that I particularly like, so that's one of my goals.

So what I've been doing is setting aside time every day to read books on the subject. I've already interviewed and consulted with experts in cider making, and I am right now experimenting with small batches of hard cider at home until I feel like I have found the type of cider that I want to make. And then I'm going to be working on that this fall. So that's a long-term goal that I only have a few minutes every day or each week to work on. And so I'm starting now so that I will be ready in the fall for making hard cider with our fruit trees up in Northern California. So that's just one example.

All right. So that is tip number one, and that is just to make time to learn new things. You're just going to have to carve out a few minutes each day to learn something new this year.

Step number two, or tip number two, is to take advice from someone who is ahead of you in the game. And what I'm talking about here is that it's super easy to get overwhelmed with all the content out there on the internet. And it doesn't matter if you're trying to learn how to bake bread or raise chickens, or learn some cool farming technique, there is a ton of information out there to learn. And sometimes that information contradicts each other, and that makes it really hard to

know which information to follow. That's actually how I ended up getting overwhelmed with all the hard cider information. So my advice is to find someone ahead of you on the learning curve, or someone you want to emulate, or someone you really want to learn from, and just listen to them until you get the hang of it. Then you can start experimenting with different techniques and advice. Otherwise, you end up going in a bunch of different directions and you just get confused, and you make no progress at all.

Now the reason I have this as my tip number two is because I see this so much when it comes to people starting businesses in the garden or food space. So maybe if I explain it that way, this will make sense, but for the last few years, I've been coaching up-and-coming entrepreneurs in the organic garden, and artisan food, and wellness space on how to turn their expertise into digital products such as courses or memberships.

Now, one thing I see time and time again with all of these really hard-working entrepreneurs, who want to make it big in the online space, is that so many of them struggle. And the ones who struggle are the ones who are going in a hundred different directions. The ones who succeed or who grow the fastest just listen to the people who are ahead of them on the field of play. And what I mean is that a lot of times you can go and, you know, you're looking on YouTube or you're looking on the internet and there is different people giving advice that may be contradictory and you don't really know if

that person is ahead of you on the game. But if you follow maybe someone who has a very successful book or a blog that has the training that you're looking for, just stick with them until you get your feet wet and you know what you're doing. Then you can experiment.

Now, you might be thinking, "Well, this is a pretty simple concept," right? 'Cause when I say it out loud, it really sounds obvious, but oh my gosh, you would be so surprised at how many people spend way too much time consuming a ton of information on the internet that is written by people who have not made the things work yet, or they aren't successful at teaching that, because they really are not successful themselves.

So all you have to do with this tip is find someone you like, or find someone who is doing what you want to do, and model what they're doing, or consume what they're teaching. Whether it's in books on cheese-making or it's YouTube videos on bread making or something else. Pick a guide and stick with them until you get your feet wet.

All right. Tip number three. And this one is really more about how to approach your life in the upcoming year, and it's really subtle, but it's really powerful. And so tip number three is focus on the positive. Or, in other words, don't wallow in misery. Now listen, let me explain what I mean here. Bad things happen to all of us, right? And it's so easy to get stuck in the trap of only looking at the negative every day, which prevents you from growing as a person, and it can totally hold

you back from your goals and hold you back from your breakthrough year.

Now, you might be thinking to yourself, "Okay. I don't wallow in misery at all, so I'm not sure what Theresa's talking about here." But I want you to think about this. Do you ever find yourself saying things like, "Oh, my gosh! You won't believe what happened to me today. I had to stand in line for two hours at the DMV," or "Oh, I did this and it sucked, and it was miserable." Do you ever catch yourself doing that? Or like, when you see your friends and you haven't seen them for a while, do you tell them about all the great things that are going on? Or do you mostly talk about all the sucky things that are going on? Or another place you might be doing this is are you optimistic about the upcoming week or are you dreading the upcoming week? I just want you to listen to yourself over the next few weeks and make a conscious effort to focus on the positive.

Now, here's another place that this can show up. When you look over your to do list ... This is a place that I was doing this. When you look over your to do list, you know, every day, do you focus on the things that you dread doing? Or are you thankful for something each and every day?

Another thing that you could do is have a gratitude practice. Do you, maybe before you go to bed each night, think over the day and be thankful for three things. And I know that can sound woo-woo and silly, but trust me, if you do just that, you will find really

wonderful things to be grateful for. You know, maybe it's the laugh of your daughter when you were walking through the park that day, or maybe it was the beautiful sunset that you saw. Things like that. Just being grateful can take you out of that zone that we tend to get into where we're only looking at all the bad things that happen.

And one of the reasons why I'm saying this is I don't want you to get into the rut of thinking that only bad things happen to you. I see this a lot too. You might be thinking like, "Oh, it's easy for you, Theresa. Things are probably going great for you all the time." Really? Do you really think that? I think people get caught up in their own misery sometimes, and it's so easy to do. But when we get caught up in our own misery, because we're only looking at the negative, we forget that everybody is carrying a burden.

I have watched people sit in a group of people and they complain about the silliest things without realizing that the person sitting next to them is dealing with cancer. And yet the person talking is focusing on something so silly and mundane, where the person who is the cancer survivor is wondering if they're going to be around for another year. I have witnessed this so many times. And the cancer survivor is not wallowing because they realize that life is short, and they don't want to spend it feeling miserable.

So, yes, we all have very very tough things happen in our lives, and you may have very tough things

happening right now. I'm not immune to that either. I am a cancer survivor, and I have lost loved ones very unexpectedly and in horrible ways. And I have had stressors in my life too, just like everyone else. But I truly believe in, and trust in, the future, and I believe in the lessons that I've learned from going through some of these hard knocks, so I choose to focus on the positive as much as I can. And is that easy? Absolutely not. And is it important? Yes. So, I'm not perfect. I may wallow occasionally too, but I try to snap out of it as fast as possible.

So that tip, number three, to look at the positive things really is about gratitude. So if you are able to just add a gratitude practice into your life every day, where at some point in your day you stop and become present and think about the good things that you're thankful for, it will make a huge difference in your complete outlook of the year.

All right. Tip number four is to give yourself grace. And what I'm talking about here is that we tend to be so hard on ourselves. Whether we're managing a garden or our home, or a family, or just our job, we tend to be so hard on ourselves. Maybe we make a mistake and we're just like, oh, we just beat ourselves up mentally, right? You know, maybe we accidentally hurt someone's feelings and we just, ah, it's just gut-wrenching. We're just like, "Oh, I'm so stupid!"

Well, it can really come in play when you are setting goals for yourself, because chances are you will break

some of those New Year's resolutions or you will fall off the wagon with your goals right off the bat, and you can end up just beating yourself up and throwing it all out. And I don't want you to do that. I want you to know that it's okay to make mistakes. It's okay to fall off the wagon. It's okay to mess up on your resolutions. And it's okay because we're human. We are not perfect. And somehow we always try to make ourselves feel bad for not being perfect, even though we know, consciously, that we're not perfect, that we're human.

So, the next time you catch yourself beating yourself up over something, I want you to stop and just think about how you would speak to a dear friend or your own child about the same thing. What would you say to them? What would you say if they fell off the wagon on their goals, or if they messed up? What words would you use, and how would you talk to them? That is how you should talk to yourself, and we never do that. We beat ourselves up, but we would never talk to someone we love that way. And I want you to catch yourself when you're beating yourself up and think of how you would talk to a friend who is in the same boat, who had just made a mistake, or who had just, you know, eaten a slice of cake when they're trying to diet. What would you say to them? And say that to yourself instead. So, in other words, give yourself grace.

So, that's it! Those are my four tips for having a breakthrough year in 2018. And I just hope that you're able to take a little bit of time some time in the next week or two as we enter 2018 and sit down to think

about what you'd like to accomplish this year. You can make goals if you want or not make goals, but I do hope you're able to apply these four tips to your year. And I think just doing that will give you a breakthrough year.

So remember that if you'd like to listen to my goal-setting podcast or look over these four tips again, I will have them in the show notes for today's episode. And to get to that, you go to livinghomegrown.com/127

Thank you for listening today, and I'm wishing you a warm and wonderful 2018. And I'm hoping that you're able to accomplish everything that you want so that you can have your own breakthrough year.

So, until next time, just try to live a little more local, seasonal, and homegrown.

See you next year.

Announcer: That's all for this episode of the Living Homegrown Podcast.

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Be sure to join Theresa Loe next time on the Living Homegrown Podcast.