

- Speaker 1: [00:00](#) Welcome to the old fashioned on purpose podcast. Today's episode is all about mistakes. I am going to dive into the biggest mistakes that we have made so far in our home setting journey. This is an episode not to miss because you're going to learn a ton by learning what not to do and even if you're not currently homesteading, maybe you want to do it in the future or maybe you just enjoy hearing about the lifestyle. These mistakes and accompanying lessons are easily applied to other areas of life as well. I'm your host Jill winger, and for the last 10 years I've been helping folks learn how to leave the rat race and create the life they really want by taking the best of the old ways and weaving them into our everyday modern lives. Okay, so I am pumped for this episode because if there is one thing I'm really good at, it is making mistakes.
- Speaker 1: [01:12](#) I am the queen of mistakes. However, that doesn't mean I haven't had successes as well. And I really truly believe that success is just a pile of failures that you're standing on. And so I'm going to dive in to our top five homesteading mistakes that we've made so far. And I say so far because there are plenty more to come in our future. I am certain, but you are going to know by the end of this episode exactly what not to do as you build and create the homestead life you dream of. All right, so let's just dive right in. Mistake number one. Oh my goodness, this one got us good and it is not building things right the first time. This would probably cost us more time and more money in the long run than any other mistake. Now a little bit of background on Christian and I, we are pretty frugal people.
- Speaker 1: [02:25](#) I'm probably more frugal than he is and that's not a bad thing, right? Frugality is a good trait. It is just good. It's helped us to stay out of debt, which in turn gave us a lot of power and momentum moving into our homestead journey. It's good stuff. However, frugality can go too far. Let me explain. So when we first started building our homestead from the ground up, well, I mean it had some structures here as you probably heard in the first episode where I kind of gave the backstory of how we found this place. There was a lot of work to do, right? We had some barns, we had some fences. They really needed to be gutted and, and revamped. So as we were purchasing materials, namely things like posts, barbed wire, fencing, wood for decks and building, you know, buildings and soffits and facias and all of those things.
- Speaker 1: [03:26](#) We had a long list of projects and as we looked at this list of projects, we were on a limited budget and we wanted to stretch the budget as much as possible. So we decided that we would do that by purchasing the cheapest materials possible. So we've

got the cheapest, skinniest fence posts and we got the cheapest rolls of barbwire. Hey, if you have ever gone to the feed store and priced barbwire, it's crazy expensive. So we, we got the cheap rolls. And I remember when we were building our deck around the front of our home. We were looking at treated boards, that's the type of wood that's treated with chemicals so it doesn't rot. And we got two by fours instead of thicker boards because they were cheaper and we thought, hey, a board is a board, we'll slap it on the deck, call it good.

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So we tried to cut these corners just for the sake of the budget, which seemed like a good idea at the time. However, in the long run it resulted in us having to redo those projects over and over again because here's the lesson we learned from this mistake. It pays to spend a little bit more on the quality materials and that's kind of a universal truth. That's pretty much almost always true. So that cheap Barb wire, it broke and sometimes it even broke while we were still putting it up and we would go to stretch it tight and it would snap, which was super frustrating. And those cheap posts cracked and warped and those boards on the deck, those were my favorite. And I'm saying that with sarcasm, they actually were still wet with the treatment chemical when we nail them down. And they ended up curling like actually curling like a ribbon on a Christmas package up and they popped the screws out of the ends.

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So we had these lovely boards that were warped and twisted and curled up on our brand new deck, super classy. It took us a few of those lessons to resolve that we're gonna build things right the first time. And even though it's a little more pricey for the pocketbook, buying the better quality materials, first it pays off because you're not having to rebuild and buy more and replace the cheap ingredients or the cheap materials rather later on. Okay, mistake number two. I don't know if this is a complete mistake, maybe more of a little bit of being naive, but we believed at the beginning of our homestead journey that it would save us money. Now I say this with a little bit of a caveat because it can be true that homesteading saves money in some instances. So take vegetable gardening, for example, if you go and buy a pack of seeds and you just dig up a little plot in your backyard with your shovel, you plant the seeds, you water them, you're going to get a lot of vegetables depending on what you plant for only a few bucks.

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And you know the costs of seeds and the cost of water, which is pretty small. That's a great investment. That does save you money in your grocery budget. The same goes for starting seeds. The other day I went to town to the nursery to get some

plants. The tomato starts were about four bucks a pop, right? So if you wanted to buy any number of those to get homegrown tomatoes, that's gonna add up really quickly. And the resulting tomatoes are going to be pretty darn expensive and probably actually costs you more than it would have cost to go get a tomato at the store. However, if you want to grow a bunch of tomatoes, you get a pack of tomato seeds for \$2 and you start the seeds yourself under grow lights or in a sunny window sill. And then you proceed to transplant those outside grow them throughout the year.

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You can end up with 20, 30, 40 tomato plants for really cheap and those plants are going to produce a lot of tomatoes and make a lot of tomato sauce or whatever else that's going to save you money. Now that doesn't always work. Or those same equations don't work in all instances. For example, keeping dairy animals, let's say a milk cow or a dairy goat. It's probably gonna cost more than just buying the discount gallons of milk at the store. Right. A good milk cow, I believe ours costs of around \$1,200 sometimes they're more like \$2,000 by the time you feed her and you know, get her bred back so she has a baby each year, you know, selling the calves are going, that's going to offset your cost a little bit. But ultimately that resulting milk, if you decide to do the math and figure out how much you're paying for feed, how much you paid for the cow, and then going down for the cost of a gallon.

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I'm not sure I'm brave enough to actually figure that out because it's probably going to be a large number. That's not necessarily to be cost effective. However, you have to keep in mind the other benefits. So for us, we keep milk cows, because we love raw milk. I love the experience of having those cows. I like the process of milking. I like all those things. So those bring a quality of life factor into the equation. But if I was just doing milk cows to save money, that's not gonna work out number wise quite like I would want it to. Okay. Mistake number three, thinking too small. And now this one is kind of a funny mistake. Um, because maybe not funny. Sadly funny, we ended up having to rebuild a lot of pieces of our homestead property because we thought too small at the beginning.

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We have 67 acres, which sounds like a lot, but we actually, and this was kind of how it was set up when we bought the property. So it wasn't entirely our fault, although we definitely added kind of our own issues onto that. But our whole barn yard and house and everything is on a very small section of that 67 acres. So it's kind of in the middle. We have a rectangular chunk and it's kind of on on one side in the middle of that

rectangle, and then the rest of the property is all around it in kind of a u shape, which isn't necessarily bad, but as we started building more outbuildings and getting more animals and expanding, it almost started to feel like we were running out of room on 67 acres because we'd kind of boxed ourselves in to this little courtyard area and we built a fence all the way around it.

Speaker 1: [10:45](#) So what did we do? We had to rip out the fence and expand it. Now this is a little embarrassing ya can't laugh at me. We actually ended up rebuilding that fence line two different times because we kept moving it back to expand and moving it back again to expand. But Christian and I say it to each other constantly. As we're looking at the next years of building and growing our homestead, we say, hey, remember we didn't think big enough at the beginning so we have to think big moving forward. So as you are planning your homestead layout, whether that's on your current property or on a property you are going to purchase in the next few months or a few years, make sure you're mapping out longterm goals so you don't end up building fences and buildings in this teeny tiny area and then kind of boxed yourself in. Okay, mistake number four.

Speaker 1: [11:46](#) This one applies to life in general as well, not just homesteading but mistake number four, getting stuck in the comparison trap. Now, this is a tough one and I think social media, as much as I love social media because it's enabled me to have a tribe of amazing homesteaders just like you, it also brings in this element of giving us a peak into people's lives all over the world, which prior to social media would have been a non issue because we would only see the people directly around us. Now that's not to say that comparison or envy or jealousy wouldn't come into play then as well because that's been an issue since the beginning of time, but it's so much easier to look at someone's homestead that's, you know, 5,000 miles away and suddenly you start to compare it to your own journey and you start to feel bad and start to feel unworthy and not good enough.

Speaker 1: [12:49](#) And all of those things creep in. Now, I'm not going to be, I'm not going to say that. I still don't struggle with this occasionally because I feel like it's kind of an on going battle. Right? And there's times where depending on my state and where I'm at with emotions or goals, there's times when I just stay off of social media because it kind of triggers those feelings of comparison to rise up and it doesn't feel good and it really is distracting. And that's for me is the biggest issue with comparison. Like that quote goes, comparison is the thief of joy.

It's also very distracting. It's the thief of focus and I can't tell you how many times I've been on my path doing my dreams and chasing my goals and feeling really, really good about where I'm going and knowing that I'm on the right path for me personally.

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And then I look over here at Suzy on social media and I see her garden or I see her herd of cows or her the way her fences are, and suddenly I feel bad. I feel bad about myself, I feel bad about my goals, and I start looking over there and get completely distracted off of what I know I am supposed to be doing. So if you struggle with that tendency, I encourage you to really, really limit your exposure to social media or youtube or wherever you're getting those feelings coming from. And just be mindful of that. You're going to accomplish the most on your homestead the fastest when you just stay in your lane and just focus on the things you know you're supposed to be doing. The grass really isn't greener on the other side. Um, and it's funny because you know, there've been times when I've compared and felt not good enough.

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And then when you finally do get to that other side, you know, let's say you're jealous of people because they have a beautiful garden. And then, you know, there's been times when I've had those feelings, I kind of forget about it and then I find myself three years later, you know, my garden's finally where I want it to be. It's great, but it doesn't necessarily fulfill everything you want in life. Right? You still had to work to get there. It's still a process. So focus on what you're supposed to focus on and hey, if you're feeling this sense of wanting or desiring more, and that really is triggered when you see people on social media, I encourage you to just pause and really dissect those feelings because sometimes it's just straight up comparison and sometimes it's actually a call for you to play bigger. And that has been another piece of that that I've learned over the years.

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Sometimes when I see someone that just really bothers me and I feel like they're living the life I want, you know, sometimes it's appropriate to just unfollow that account. But other times I really break it down and say, Hey, am I doing what I'm supposed to be doing? How come I'm drawn to that? What do I need to do to shift that? Is that something that I should be pursuing instead? You have to keep that healthy and you have to keep boundaries in place, but sometimes you can let, when you're looking around at what others are doing, you can let that be your inspiration as well. Okay. Now mistake number five, the final mistake, and this is one we still struggle with and we still are trying to keep in check and that is trying to do all the things at once.

Speaker 1: [16:38](#) So we all have different personalities and I'm guessing that some of you will have no issue with this and some of you will be a little more like us where it's a bit more of a trial, but Christian and I have really intense personalities, which can be a great thing. It can also cause a lot of stress when we bite off more than we can chew, which happens frequently. So this is a do as I say, not as they do tip. Really try to keep your focus narrow down to just a couple big projects or maybe one big project at a time so you don't get too frazzled with your hands in too many different things. I'll never forget, 2015, I was pregnant with our third child who was a surprise and I was putting on, I was co-hosting a online summit was about essential oils and it was huge and it had so much work involved hours and hours of interviews and marketing and coordination and we were getting our house and it, so we had contractors here all day.

Speaker 1: [17:52](#) I had my kitchen, one of the walls was ripped off and it had plywood over it and of course it was winter, so it wasn't very warm. And you know, the electricity would be off during various parts of the day as we were doing wiring and working on things. And I remember cutting potatoes by candlelight one night in my very dirty, gutted kitchen and being pregnant and having all these online projects to work on. And it just was not enjoyable. I didn't get to really enjoy any parts of those processes because there was too much. And sometimes that's unavoidable, but other times that's just a matter of keeping yourself in check, not saying yes to too many things at once, maybe not even saying yes to yourself too much at once. Right? Like when is gardening season? Focus on gardening. Don't try to clean the cabinets or get your kitchen at the same time when it's the winter and the garden is dead.

Speaker 1: [18:52](#) That's when you can go in and redecorate your kitchen. So just try to be mindful of seasons and flow and those patterns of life and don't try to do it all at once. So those were our five mistakes. Just to summarize, number one is build things right the first time. Number two, don't get stuck thinking that homesteading will always save you money, but also take into account the quality of life that comes with that investment. Number three, avoid thinking too small. Number four, steer clear of the comparison trap. And number five, balance yourself so you don't try to do all the things at once. And remember my friend, it is okay to mess up. I have people emailing me all the time who are too nervous to start homesteading because they're afraid of the mistakes and the failures that will come and I invite you to embrace those, know that you will mess up, you will kill things in your garden, you will build your fence lines in the wrong spot and have to move them.

Speaker 1: [20:06](#) I mean, maybe that was just us. Hopefully we'll have to do that after you listened to this episode, but it could happen and you will do things just flat out incorrectly, whether it's in the kitchen or in the barnyard and you will pick yourself up, dust yourself off and try again because that's really the essence of this journey. It's really the essence of learning anything in life, the ability to make a mistake and keep on trucking. And as long as you can hone that ability and you don't let a little bit of failure knock you off your dream and your goal, you are going to rock this homestead life.

Speaker 1: [20:48](#) So if you are ready to dive into home setting but you're not quite sure where to start, I'm your girl. I have created an entire library of resources just for homesteaders like you, whether you're brand new or experienced, and you can get complimentary access to this library at theprairiehomestead.com/grow now, that's it for today's episode. Thanks so much for listening. Please hit subscribe and drop a quick review over on iTunes. When you have a minute, that would mean so much to me and I can't wait to chat with you on the next episode of the old fashioned on purpose podcast.