

Speaker 1: [00:01](#) Welcome to the old fashioned on purpose podcast. Expansive Vegetable Gardens, flocks of chickens, barn construction, milk goats, home-baked bread. Sounds like just the normal to do list for the average modern person in 2019 right? Well, if you laughed out loud at that idea, you're not alone. Because as homesteaders, we know that having a foot planted in our current modern lives while still adopting old fashioned homestead practices ain't no joke y'all. And even though we call it the simple life, sometimes it's not exactly simple. If you have ever felt flutters of anxiety when you're planning out future homestead projects or let's be honest, sometimes it's more like a steamroller, not a flutter. You will love today's episode. I'm your host Jill winger, and for the last 10 years I've been helping people just like you who feel uninspired by modern life. I'll show you how to create the life you really want by growing your own food and mastering old fashioned skills.

Speaker 1: [01:30](#) Okay. So it is no secret that we have done a lot of big projects over the years, whether it was our extreme farmhouse make-over back in 2015, building a shop from the ground up or pretty much just redoing every inch of our homestead property from fence lines to roofs to painting, to landscaping. And while we are no longer in that start the homesteads stage, we still have big projects happenings in pretty much everywhere in our lives, whether it's continuing to build out the homestead this summer we are redoing our corals and totally remodeling the barn or in our businesses. So we always have lots and lots going on with more in the works. And if there's one thing I've learned from over a decade of big projects is that it's totally normal to feel paralyzed at the beginning. Even though I'm a huge action taker and you've heard me talk about it before, I love action and driving forward and making things happen. I still get a sense of fear and yes, overwhelm when I dream up something new now, even though that still comes in, it's kind of a familiar feeling to me. I've learned how to overcome and I'm going to show you today exactly how I map things out in a way that demystifies the process of starting. So grab a pen and paper. This episode is going to be packed full of juicy, actionable details you're going to want to write down.

Speaker 1: [03:23](#) All right, so step number one, and this is crucial, you've got to get it out of your brain. And what I mean by that is the first step of this process is getting all the jumbled ideas, the goals, plans, worries, et Cetera, out of our head and onto paper. Because I know this from many years of personal experience, when they are floating around your brain, they seem a thousand times more daunting and overwhelming than they really are. And I can tell you there's been more than one time where I'm, you

know, doing something in the kitchen or cleaning the house. Then I'd just feel panicked and out of breath and I feel like I can't get ahead and I have this thing, you know, I'm thinking about and something I have to get ready for the kids and the activity we're doing tomorrow and you know, homeschool planning and business projects.

Speaker 1: [04:21](#) And it just feels like absolutely unmanageable. And when I take a minute to go to my planner or a blank sheet of paper and write down what I actually have to do to make those things happen or to keep them running, the sense of relief is instant. So this still applies whether you're doing a daily task or working through weekly scheduling or a big project like starting a homestead. You can do this exercise in your planner if you're a planner person or on a giant whiteboard. We actually have two big whiteboards here. We have one in our office, and one in our shop. So we are always scribbling things out on a big whiteboard or just grab a piece of paper. It's totally up to you. But what I want you to do is to write down every single thing that you have swirling around in your head and just get it out of your brain and onto paper.

Speaker 1: [05:22](#) Doesn't have to be organized. It doesn't have to be in sequential order. Just write it down, even if it's fragmented. So for the sake of this example, this exercise will work for any sort of project. But let's say for the sake of this episode, I'm starting a homestead from scratch. So theoretically, if I'm in a build a home set scenario, some of the things that I might be wanting to do, you know, maybe I'm seeing them on blogs or on youtube channels and I think that's a good idea. I want that, you know, and they're floating in my head. I'm going to start writing down all of the things I'm interested in. So let's say starting a garden would be a big one. Getting bees, getting chickens, learning how to bake bread, getting our homestead pantry organized, maybe remodeling a barn or building fence, right?

Speaker 1: [06:22](#) Whatever it is. I'm gonna write every single thing down that I possibly could want to do in our brand new homestead that we are theoretically creating. So once I have dumped everything on the paper or the whiteboard and you can also do this on a computer if you'd like. For me, even though I use a computer for a lot of planning things, I like the process of pen to paper or a marker to whiteboard in this scenario because I feel like it, that physical act of writing it out does more to clear it from my brain. It might just be my own little thing there, my own little quirk but do what works for you. But I would probably recommend pen or in paper or whiteboard over computer for this. So once this is all done, we're going to organize it. So go

through the list you just wrote down and assign dates or time periods for each of the items on your list because some of the things you wrote down might not happen for a couple of years.

Speaker 1: [07:32](#) Then others might happen next week. It does not matter when they happen, as long as you have a plan of when they will come to pass. So for the sake of this exercise, we're going to pretend that chickens, you know, for my pretend brand new homestead are something I want to have in full swing within the next two months. Okay? We'll say that the garden is on track to start in the next month. And then things like having getting goats or getting bees and the bread baking, they're going to wait until a little farther down the road. Maybe I'll start working on the bread in the fall and the bees will be next year. So once I have everything with a date or time assigned, and again, doesn't have to be an exact date for every little thing. For some of the more longterm projects, you might just say next year or in two years, right? You just need to have rough compartments where you're organizing each section. So once I have all that organized, I'm going to take a highlighter or you can just use your pen and star it or underline it. And I'm going to highlight or underline the tasks that I need to start working on like tomorrow. So in this example, those things would be primarily the chickens and the garden because I want those to start happening asap.

Speaker 1: [09:09](#) So I like to, from this list, have three to five things that are really going to be the most urgent. Three is preferred, five is pushing it. If you have a little higher capacity of being able to handle more balls in the air at the same time, you can go to five but three is a good spot for most folks. I had my three urgent tasks or projects chosen and now I am going to make an agreement with myself to be at peace with the rest of the things on that list and I'm going to mentally and physically put those things on the back burner for now. Right. And that's the key too. Really zapping the overwhelm. You have got to train your brain to focus on what's in front of you and let the others rest in the background because it's that frantic jumping from one thing to the next that I find creates the most feelings of panic and subsequent overwhelm.

Speaker 1: [10:21](#) Okay, so now that we have our three to five things that we're going to start working on asap, we're going to break it down even further, so I'm going to make a new column for the immediate action items so you can either get a new piece of paper or write it down below. And for the sake of this example, we're going to say chickens and a garden are my number one priorities that need to happen right away. I need to break down each of these projects into baby steps and get very specific on

what needs to happen for each of these goals to actually come to fruition. Because let's just think about this for a minute. If on your to do list is get chickens, that's really vague and really hard to define. On the flip side, if on our list of things to do would be check out the shed in the backyard and make a list of materials we need to build roosts that's a little more doable, that's a little more tangible and we can actually wrap our brain around when that's going to happen and what is going to look like.

Speaker 1: [11:39](#) So for chickens and my column of immediate action items, it might be things like make roosts, make or find nesting boxes, figure out a source of chicken feed that I like and out if we need electricity in the coop and how we're going to get it there for the garden, that column, I may need to borrow a rototiller. If I'm using a tilled method of gardening, I may need to amend my soil with natural fertilizer. I can make a map of the rows so I know how much food I can fit in my garden. Sometimes you can use graph paper or draw it out is kind of fun. We'll get a map going and order seeds. Okay. So obviously this is just an example and you're going to need to break down your action items probably in a different way depending on your situation and your location.

Speaker 1: [12:38](#) I just want you to keep in mind that the more granular you can get with your steps and your processes, the more tension and stress you will feel lift up from you. Okay? So get detailed and specific. All right, so last step here. Once I have this breakdown of each action item, I need to prioritize the steps I have listed out and then figure out who is responsible for each step. So if you have a spouse, maybe they'll be more prone to do some of those items than you would, or maybe you have a child or a friend or a neighbor who can help you. You just want to get clear on the roles in this process and who's gonna do what. And if it's just you, that's perfectly okay too. You don't have to have a partner necessarily to make this homestead thing work.

Speaker 1: [13:38](#) Now in our unique situation and my list that I just gave as an example, I would probably ask Christian if he could figure out the coop electricity for the chickens and also maybe like find a rototiller or till up the garden for me. Those would be his primary roles, providing he's on board with some of the ideas and then I would probably get to work on the rest. So once I've assigned the roles, I'm going to prioritize which one of these tasks comes first. That way I know exactly what I can start working on tomorrow and what needs to wait, you know, a couple of days or a couple of weeks down the road. Now even when you break these down to the most granular steps, you still have to be committed to action, right? So you can put this on

your calendar and number them out. You still have to say, we're going to do this.

Speaker 1: [14:36](#) Even if I'm not really sure what I'm doing, we're going to take that step forward. So for this list in our example, for me, I would probably say mapping out the rows in the garden would be my number one priority because that's gonna give me a feel of what I'm planting and what seeds I need to then purchase. So the seeds would be second and finding the fertilizer or manure would be third on my priority list. And then Christian could be figuring out the tiller situation in the process. For chickens, if I'm prioritizing that, figuring out electricity would be first and foremost just to make sure that chickens are actually going to be a possibility for us. Then I probably find or source some nesting boxes and roosts and then right before I'd get the chicks from the feed store, we'd work on making sure we have a good source of chicken feed.

Speaker 1: [15:34](#) Right? So we're just, I just go through and put numbers and then if I'm doing this on a piece of paper or a Whiteboard, I take those tasks and insert them into my planner. And if you use a phone for your task list or your calendar, you can do that as well. I have a paper planner and I like to write these into the weeks and the days so I know exactly when they're gonna happen. And the last step to this whole process, like I said, you had just got to do it. Keep in mind that starting anything of value, I don't care if it's starting a homestead or starting a business or going back to school or a new hobby. It almost always feels like leaping off a cliff and I don't know of a way to make that feeling go away. It's just how it works.

Speaker 1: [16:29](#) That is why it is utterly vital that you learn how to do it. Scared, right? Do it scared. That's my motto. Butterflies and all do your homework like we talked about. Break it down, have a plan, but then know at some point you just gotta dive in. Overwhelm or no overwhelm. And what I tell myself over and over, and this is so true. Action cures fear. So even if you have all the butterflies taking that first step, we'll dispel more of them than you can imagine. And once you start getting into these simple little baby steps, you're going to feel that sense of accomplishment and satisfaction and you're only gonna want to keep doing it. So it does get easier. It's a little bit of a snowball effect. It's really hard to get the snowball started, but once it gets rolling, things generally get easier and easier to make happen.

Speaker 1: [17:33](#) As we wrap this up, I hope that gave you some actionable ideas for fighting the homestead overwhelm. And one little note that I want to underscore here as we close this episode, when it

comes to the feeling of being overwhelmed, one of the biggest contributing factors I see to this issue is comparison. And when I personally start to feel like I'm not making progress fast enough or I'm never going to get there, or there's too many things swirling in my head, I can usually trace that feeling back to me spending a little bit too much time watching what other people are doing. Now, I love getting inspiration from others and I do that a lot. But if you find yourself struggling with jealousy or just feeling less than or not enough, I recommend taking a little break from social media or wherever you're finding these feelings of comparison creeping into your life so you can focus on your own projects and celebrate your own progress because your path is going to be different from anyone else's including mine and it's okay to get inspiration but don't let it derail you.

Speaker 1:

[18:56](#)

All right, my friends, if you are ready and more than ever to do this homesteading thing, I can help and if you don't know where to start, that is absolutely my specialty. I happen to have an entire library of resources I've put together for homesteaders just like you, whether you are new or experienced and you can get complimentary access to this library for free at theprairiehomestead.com/grow I'll drop that in the show notes as well, theprairiehomestead.com/grow and that is it for this episode. Thank you so much for listening, and if you feel inspired too, I would be so honored if you would drop me a quick review over on iTunes so more homesteaders can find this podcast and bring the idea of being old fashioned on purpose into their lives. I'll see you in the next episode. Happy homesteading y'all.