

Speaker 1: [00:00](#) Welcome to the old fashioned on purpose podcast. So I've had this phrase repeating itself in my head a lot lately is this idea of hard but good. And I think it's really presented itself more than normal because we've been doing a lot of firewood chopping and splitting and stacking. And it's made me ask myself maybe more than normal, why we're choosing that path over a simpler one. And that really applies to a lot of what we do in homesteading or even just in our lives in general. And I think this is an interesting concept to dive into. I'm really curious to hear what you guys think of this after you listened to this episode. But it's no secret that as a modern society we are obsessed with all things easy and all things fast. We love our apps that make our lives simpler and we love fast food and conveniences and everything.

Speaker 1: [01:03](#) At the flip of a switch and the press of a button and none of those things are an errantly evil. But I think when we get off balance, then that's when we start to feel like we're missing some things in our lives. So let's dive into this idea in today's episode. Hard but good. I'm your host Jill winger, and for the last 10 years I've been helping people who feel disenchanting by modern life. I'll show you how to leave the rat race and create the life you really want by learning how to grow your own food and master old fashioned skills. So like I said, firewood I think was really the catalyst for me to get into this deep contemplate of State around this idea. And it's a little bit funny. So the things that are going through my head when I'm doing these seemingly menial tasks, like stacking firewood or cleaning stalls or weeding the garden, like I have all these things rattling around in my brain, which honestly is why I started my blog because I needed to get them out and put them out to the world, even if they sounded crazy.

Speaker 1: [02:18](#) But anyway, here I was, on a day, a week or two ago, it was cold. It was windy. I was completely bundled up with my oversized men's wool coat, which after seeing myself on video wearing it, you probably see me on YouTube with it. It's blue and green, not a super attractive cut. It's like very boxy. Anyway. I am not a glamorous person when I am out working. It's all about function all about making sure I'm warm and my hands aren't going to get splinters and I really don't care what I look like. So I really admire the cute farm girls who look cute while they do things. Unfortunately that is not me. Anyway, rabbit trail there, but I was all bundled up with my hat and my boxy wool coat and my gloves and my muck boots and we were out stacking firewood a week or two ago, which we've been doing frequently because we're getting into winter and we basically heat our home almost a hundred percent with wood.

Speaker 1: [03:16](#) So fire wood is a part of our routine for most of the year. But I'm stacking and my nose is cold and the wind is blowing down my neck. And you know, we're out there trying to keep our backs to the wind while we're stacking and there's sawdust blowing in my eyes cause the wind is always blowing. And I'm sitting here going, we have a propane heater in our home. When we did our remodel, we purposely put a furnace in. Because we thought that if we ever sell the home, not everyone wants to heat with wood and we wanted to make sure we weren't hurting ourselves for resale value among other things. But I'm like, we have a propane in the tank, we can afford to buy propane and we have a switch on the wall and all I have to do is hit the switch and the heater comes on.

Speaker 1: [04:04](#) So why are we out here? Getting sought us in our eyes and up our nose in the wind stacking firewood. Because you know, I was having these thoughts but I wasn't feeling adverse to this idea of fire. What I actually very much enjoy it and Christian and I both feel that way towards firewood. He likes splitting it. And I like stacking it and I'm like, why are we crazy enough to think this is a good path for us? Even though we have a heater and we have everything we need to just push a button on the wall and have heat in our home. And it's not a foreign concept for me. It's something I've pondered quite a bit, but I really think there is massive value not even think, I know there is massive value in sometimes in certain aspects of our life to choose the harder path, right?

Speaker 1: [05:02](#) Because as humans, it's really, really natural for us to take the path of least resistance. You know, it's just how we're wired. Obviously, you know, if we think back to the way humans have operated through most of history before industrialization, before electricity, it was about survival. And so you weren't going to make your life necessarily harder on purpose when you were just trying to find food to eat and keep yourself, protected and warm and safe. So it's natural that we're going to take that path of least resistance and it's not a bad thing all the time. Right? There are definitely aspects of my life where I choose convenience. A great example here would be having a dishwasher, right? I really like having a dishwasher and I have no plans in any time in the future to get rid of my dishwasher and go back to hand washing dishes exclusively. If that's your jam, totally cool, but it's not mine.

Speaker 1: [06:12](#) Um, I also really like electricity and maybe back at the beginning of our homestead journey, Christian and I toyed with the idea of someday going off grid, we've ultimately decided that's not a good path for us because we like electricity and I don't feel like

electricity is an inherently evil. I like being able to have lights with a switch. I like being able to take a hot shower by turning on the knob. And there are definitely pieces of technology and advancements that are really great that we have, right? We have a better plumbing and better hygiene now than we would have had a thousand years ago. So they're not inherently evil. Things that are easier conveniences aren't bad by design, but I think that where sometimes we get off track as humans or as a society is when our lives become too easy and too comfortable. I invite you to think about some of the times in your life that have been the most impactful for you or where you have learned the most.

Speaker 1: [07:22](#) And I would be willing to bet that you think back to those times. Very few of them, if any, were when you were in a place of comfort or ease in your life, right? Most of the time when we have formative or transformative experiences where we're growing or we're changing or we're learning something or it's a light bulb moment for us or a landmark in our growth process, it comes from a place of a little bit of discomfort, right? Learning something new is always a little bit uncomfortable cause you kind of feel stupid sometimes when you're first starting or at least I do, right? It's really hard to learn something new. You have to put yourself out there or you have to allow yourself to be challenged by a mentor or listen to someone else's advice, which is a little bit humbling and not always comfortable.

Speaker 1: [08:14](#) So good things come from being a little bit on comfortable. And when we as a society get to the point where every aspect of our lives are designed for ease and comfort, I think that we get a little bit off base. We get a little bit off balance. And that's what I see really happening in our current society. I like my phone. I'll be honest, I use, I do use my phone more than I should. I like my computer. I like technology. I have apps on my phone, I will use Uber when I go to a big city cause I like the convenience of it. But in getting our lives to the point where they're so easy and so push button, we have eliminated a lot of the things that for millennia have kept us grounded as humans. And you've maybe heard me talk about this before, a little bits and pieces in different podcasts or in different blog posts.

Speaker 1: [09:14](#) Cause I'm really, really passionate about this idea of choosing to add things back into our life by choice, right? Because we don't have to chop firewood in this day and age. Most of us don't. We have other options and most of us don't have to cook from scratch. We have other options. But it's this idea of consciously pulling pieces of this old fashioned harder lifestyle, putting it back into our modern routines and acknowledging the value

that comes from it. Here's a few examples, right? So you can kind of picture this. So making bread now, first off, I don't make every single loaf of bread. Sometimes I buy bread. I like to be transparent. There are times in my life where I buy bread. No shame, right? This is not, at no point in this podcast is it my goal to make you feel bad or feel shame or guilt.

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But I know that when I make bread and I keep my sourdough starter going, it, it definitely takes a little bit more time than just going to the store and purchasing a loaf. But it brings a higher quality of life into our home and it's better for us. And there's something relaxing and something nourishing to me as I make the bread. It's, it's harder, but it's good. Same with keeping chickens, right? I am sorry. Like I know everyone, chickens are hot right now. Everyone wants chickens. Everyone thinks that eggs from your own chickens are cheaper than eggs at the store. I hate to be the one to break this to you. If you are of that thought, your homegrown eggs are far more expensive than any eggs you will ever buy from someone else. Like it's a really disappointing concept when you figure it out for the first time.

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But we still choose to keep chickens, right. There's other benefits to keeping chickens even when we have to fill up their water bucket twice a day when it's freezing cold outside. And right now we're making sure that a raccoon doesn't come into the chicken coop cause there's one that's living in our shop. Um, and make sure he doesn't make a little jaunt down to the coop and eat my chickens at night. Um, it's harder, it takes more effort. So I'm just smelly. Sometimes we have to clean out the shavings or the bedding, but it's good. It's harder, but it's good. Same with milking a cow. Way easier to get milk at the store. So much easier and cheaper. Might I add for the most part. But there's a lot of benefits from choosing to get up and milk the cow or milk the goat, get the milk, learn how to make the cheese.

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It's not easy. It's not always easy, but it's good. So hopefully that kind of gave you some real world examples. Now, like I said, I like to keep this in balance because we are still modern people living in a modern world and you will not find me personally just choosing hard for the sake of hard. Like that's just not how I roll. So here's a, here's an example. When you make homemade soap, you have to stir it or mix it for a period. When you add the lye, you add it to the fat, you have to stir it for a long while till it gets to the point of trace and trace is when it starts to come together. Now you can do that with a wooden spoon or a whisk or a fork and it could take you several hours potentially

depending on the ingredients you're using to get the soap to come together.

Speaker 1: [12:48](#) I personally am not going to take two hours of my day to stir soap, right? That's an example of where I'm like, Nope, I still have other obligations and responsibilities. So for that I use a hand blender, that cheap hand blender and it, it does the process in about three minutes. It's super easy. So that's an example of where I'm not choosing hard, just for the sake of hard cause I think sometimes people get a little bit confused. And I also see that time that's sometimes being the thing that burns out new homesteaders where they get super purest and they're like, I have to do it the hardest way. I have to do the a hundred percent old fashioned. It has to be 100% true to historical reenactment. And it, it, you can burn out really, really fast. So it's not choosing hard for the sake of hard, but it's choosing hard selectively when it brings good things into your life.

Speaker 1: [13:42](#) And that's why I do the things like the bread and that's why we chop firewood because they all have easier alternatives. Of course, turn on the propane, buy a loaf of bread, get the vegetables from the store instead of growing them myself. But I really, really love the quality of life that those conscious choices bring, right? They, they give me more discipline in my life. They provide excellent exercise, especially with chopping wood or cleaning stalls or gardening. Great exercise. Right? I find them also to be probably, this is my favorite benefit. They're very mentally clearing, so my brain moves quickly. My brain is usually very full. It's just how I'm wired. I mean this is how God made me, my brain has a lot going on at all times and sometimes when I am just living life, it's very noisy in my head.

Speaker 1: [14:41](#) So when I go out to the garden and I'm weeding or I'm stacking firewood and I'm just able to focus on that repetitive task in front me and focus on being in the moment and just doing the thing. Yes. Sometimes I'm having deep conversations about the meaning of life, like I explained earlier, but a lot of the times that is one of the only times I can get my brain to really chill, like chill out. And it's almost like a little bit of meditation and just being in the moment and focusing on what I'm doing. And that's a huge benefit for me. So that's why people say, you know, when you get to a certain level of income or when your business gets to a certain point, are you ever going to just like stop growing a garden or hire out those pieces of your life?

Speaker 1: [15:28](#) And the answer's no because for me it's not about necessarily the vegetables themselves or the chickens or the eggs or the

loaf of bread. Although those are wonderful benefits that I love. It's actually for me about the process. And that is something I will choose to keep in my life no matter where we go, no matter what our business does, no matter how sophisticated we could be. I think there's always value in keeping those simple practices in our life that are hard, but good. So my takeaway, the thing I'm inviting you to really consider after listening to this episode is what will you choose to do in your life? That's hard, but good. It doesn't have to be every aspect of your life, right? But I invite you, I challenge you to start bringing some pieces into your life, whether it's cooking more or maybe growing a few vegetables or enjoying that manual labor and letting yourself be calmed and kind of getting that zen mode with it.

Speaker 1:

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Like what are you going to do? That's hard but good. Even then you have other options and got the technology, you've got the sophistication, how can you bring those simple tasks back into your life and give yourself that little bit of peace and just calmness that, that brings. So that's my challenge for you today. I'm curious to see if any of this resonates with you. If it does, definitely shoot me a note on Facebook or Instagram. I'm curious to hear your thoughts now. If you are really drawn to the idea of hard but good in a kitchen setting, I have a little tool that will give you a leg up. I've taken three of the most popular videos from my heritage cooking crash course and I'm going to give them to you for free just to help you get started. These videos will have you cooking and eating like a farmer in no time at all, even if you live in the city. And you can grab instant access for those over at [www.homesteadcookingclass.com](http://www.homesteadcookingclass.com) and that's it, my friends, if you have a minute, I would be so honored if you would hit subscribe and leave a review over on your favorite podcast player so more people can find old fashion on purpose and bring old, not old, bring homesteading into their lives. Oh my word. Brain malfunction. Anyway, thanks for listening and I'll catch up with you on the next episode. Take care.