



Simple, with Tsh Oxenreider

Episode 179

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## Introduction

Tsh: [00:02](#) This is Simple, I'm Tsh Oxenreider.

[00:09](#) Hey friends. In this episode I'm chatting with my friend Katherine Willis Pershey. She's been on the show before and is a long time contributing writer for The Art of Simple. Her full time job is pastor of a local church in her town. In this chat, we talk about what she wrote about this week on the blog. She recently also became a certified yoga instructor, so Katherine talks to me about what that was like, the misconception she had about yoga before she began a few years ago, and generally what it's like to find fun, surprises you didn't know you needed in unexpected places, and then I expand on my posts from the week as well, where I shared My Good List, which I haven't done in awhile. I talk about why I love creating playlists and new to me veggie delivery service that's hitting all the right buttons and the beauty of making time for hobbies even when you have no time. Let's get right to it. Here's Katherine and me talking about yoga, hobbies, journaling, and just making time in our lives for the small delight.

## Segment One

Tsh: [01:14](#) Katherine, I am really intrigued by your whole recent journey into yoga being also a pastor. Tell me a little bit more about how that even happened.

Katherine: It wasn't on purpose. I just started practicing yoga five years ago and didn't expect to really like it. I bought this Groupon for hot yoga and I really bought it for the heat more than the yoga because it was like negative 14 that winter. And I thought that that 95 degree room sounded delightful. And then if I had to do yoga to be in that room then so be it. And then I loved it and for awhile it was this great place to go and not be at the front of the room and not be in charge. I think I just have as part of my personality, like I always end up at the front of the room.

I did feel sort of a similar kind of calling to go deeper into my practice. And then I'm just kind of accepting that part of who I am is a leader and accepting that becoming a yoga teacher really made a lot of sense for who I am and it actually

has become much like my writing has always been an extension of my ministry. So was the yoga. The first place I started teaching was my church and it just feels like a really comfortable, natural next step, if that makes sense. Even though it is, I guess sort of unusual. Although it's not that unusual for a pastor to be a yoga teacher because I keep encountering more and more now that now that I am.

Tsh: [02:57](#) About five years ago, you tried yoga for the very first time. How long did it take for you to get super into it and you bought all end to the idea?

Katherine: I bought the five class pack. The way it ended up happening, I went the day the day before Easter, five years ago. I thought that I had one more class left. They do a free week and so I've taken some classes that free week and then one way or another I mixed up how many I had. And so I went in thinking I had one more class. I find out that I was out. I was like, oh, well, okay, never mind. I wasn't angry. I wasn't going to pay, it's expensive to take a one-off yoga class if you don't have a class pack.

I wasn't ready to like put my money down yet. I walk out and the studio assistant, comes out and follows me out to the car a minute later and she was like, just come in and take the class,. Happy Easter. And I was like, oh, really? There was something about like being offered that gift that made me even that much more, grateful and open. I'd already had realized how much I enjoyed the actual classes. But then that was just a really positive experience. I didn't end up buying my membership for a few months because I'm very much a value shopper and I wanted to get the best value, so the best value is to pay for your whole annual membership upfront, which is a huge commitment. So I went from a Groupon to saving up to pay for a year and that it was a big decision and like I said, big financial commitment, but it's something just really clicked between loving the heat and the teaching and realizing that there was some real genuine kindness in the community. So they got me.

Tsh: [04:49](#) What is it that you like so much about yoga?

Katherine: It's so integrated. Obviously, it feels like a cliché to say it's mind, body, spirit, but it is. I struggle to meditate and sometimes honestly I even struggle to pray. My mind wanders. It's like the curse of the, I want to say the modern human, but I don't think it's just modern humans. We struggle to focus and it's given me that moving meditation quiets my mind in a way that just sitting and trying to meditate or pray, often, I struggled through and then after a class, much more able to enter into a place of prayerfulness. It's a physical practice, it's made me healthier. I love that it's made me stronger and I could do things that I couldn't do five years ago. That's great. That's fun. I'm glad it's made me healthier. But it's the changes in my body are very much matched by changes in my mind and in my spirit and I love that, that it's all connected.

Tsh: [06:05](#) You said something a second ago about prayer. Do you pray during yoga or is it one of these, it's just an outlet for you to then be able to concentrate more in prayer time afterwards?

Katherine: [06:16](#) I think it's a little bit both. I wouldn't say I always pray through every class. I know some people of the Christian faith do approach yoga as a moving prayer time and I don't necessarily do that all the time, but I always set an intention that is sort of grounded in my desire to be open and connected to the spirit. We know that there's different ways of praying. Sometimes prayer is about listening and not necessarily talking, right? There's something about the whole intention of my yoga practice that feels grounded in prayer even if I'm not actively praying every moment. When I teach at church, I wrote a prayer that is similar to what I say before I preach, but I wrote it to speak to the yoga context. At the beginning of every class when we take a shared breath and seal our intentions, I say, may the movements of our body, is the meditations of our minds and the intentions of our spirit be one with you, Oh God, the ground of our being. Then the whole hour is living that prayer out in my body and my mind and my spirit. Does that make sense?

Tsh: [07:37](#) It does make a lot of sense and I get very much what you mean about it's all integrated and it's not like you can divide, I am now praying and I am not praying now. That doesn't really make sense. But I also understand the dichotomy and how it might feel, just because I really resonated so much with what you said about sometimes your mind wanders when you try to actually, okay now I'm going to pray. And so to me that there is a lot of appeal to what you're saying. I mean to me it reminds me a little bit of why whenever I am stuck on a thing, like I'm trying to figure something out, I go on a walk and there's something about going on the walk or just kind of talking as I walk and I figure it out as I go. I think there's something mind-body that happens there.

Katherine: [08:16](#) Definitely. It reminds me, we have a labyrinth at our church too and I love walking the labyrinth and that's sort of, I think I'm a really physical person and, and so inviting my body to the experience, it works for me.

Tsh: [08:32](#) You started yoga five years ago and now you are a yoga instructor, but when did you start that process?

Katherine: [08:38](#) I did a year long teacher training. To be certified or registered as they call it, you do a 200 hour teacher training. All different studios offer these and some of them are, you go to some fabulous place in Hawaii for 28 days and you do the whole training. I personally don't know anybody who has done that. It would be great. Given the circumstances of my life, any of those, like short term trainings, we're not a possibility. I did one full weekend, Friday night, all day Saturday and then I went late a lot on Sundays and then I swapped my schedule

around so I could take some vacation time on Sundays to be present. Sometimes. I did one weekend a month for a year. They'll all have a lot even though now I'm starting to teach and that will take up time.

The fact that I won't be spending 200 hours this year, it feels like there's a spaciousness to my calendar. It was a lot to undertake last year. I took a sabbatical from writing. I basically backed out of all of the writing I was doing except for you. Because I knew that there was no way I could keep going whole hog in all directions. I had to pull back.

Tsh: I find that to be true with a lot of projects. If you know it's short term, it won't last forever, like writing a book or something, then you know, you can kind of sit down and power through those 200 hours or however long it's going to take because it's not going to be forever. You are now a certified instructor. Am I saying that right? Or you said registered?

Katherine: [10:11](#) I'm certified, which means I can register with the Yoga Alliance, which is the organization that gives some structure. It's an ancient practice and has always been handed down, from teacher to teacher, but we also live in a culture that likes to know documentation and have had appropriate training. I have insurance and stuff like that. They they have worked to try to standardize that even as they honor that yoga is a really diverse, an old practice that doesn't always fit into western categories.

Tsh: Right, our nice, neat boxes that we love so much over here.

Katherine: Exactly. Yeah. I actually start my first a regular class at my studio tonight as my first time.

Tsh: That was going to be what I was gonna ask.

Tell me what it's like now to actually teach yoga and do the job you've had for a while, which is being a pastor of a church. What's that like?

Katherine: I've started teaching at my church, under the guidance of a mentor back in June and that was really awesome to have very friendly church members be the first people that I taught because they were so willing to give me grace when I mixed up my left and my right, which, teaching yoga is tricky and yet ironically, I think the hardest thing is just making sure you say the right or left hand, especially if you're trying to mirror them and do the opposite. I'm telling you to lift your left hand, but I have to lift my right hand. That is a lot to ask of my brain.

Tsh: [11:48](#) I've actually wondered that from yoga and just other fitness instructors. How hard is that? It's funny to hear you say it is.

Katherine: It is something. I started at church and that was really, again, I feel like the theme is really integration. It felt like such a happy, integrated way to expand in this direction to start teaching. I teach a class at a church on Tuesday and then my plan is to teach that same class on Tuesday nights when I teach at the studio. The fun thing is, this is the cool part. The studio is, it's a great business and like I said, there's some real kindness and true community there. They are very careful not to turn off potential customers, like with things being too spiritual. They recognize that spirituality is totally part and parcel of yoga. But you don't necessarily have a song that mentions God. And I struggled with that a little bit because one of the limbs of yoga is there's eight limbs of yoga, eight parts to the philosophy and one of them is devotion. I have to be cautious to not go too deep into that at the yoga studio. And then ironically it's at my church where we can have more of a devotional practice. Even though people don't really think of it as a Christian practice, it integrates so beautifully because it's really not a religion yoga, it's more of a philosophy and practice and the integration is remarkably smooth.

That's the thing, I have a different playlist. I have some instrumental hymns and stuff like that at the church class and then I don't play any Christian music at the evening class.

Tsh: I've wondered if you'd gotten any backlash either online or from your local community about yoga, either from either side, like there's no such thing as "Christian Yoga" rather because you're going to sully the good name of yoga or being a Christian. Have you heard any of that at all?

Katherine: I've definitely heard it. I haven't really experienced it personally. We've had a Tai Chi class at church for a long time and the labyrinth. I'm not in the kind of community that is necessarily afraid of something like yoga or, wouldn't trust that I would integrate it in a way that is, that really honors our theology and the practice that I'm borrowing from.

There's definitely a couple of philosophies. One being that, you have to not do yoga at all, you can maybe do, I think it's praise moves as a company that are people who want to exercise in yoga like ways, but think that yoga itself is inherently, only can be connected to a Hindu religious experience. There's that out there. There's some integrations of Christianity and yoga that make me uncomfortable where it feels like they are still missing the missing the point about it being a practice and not a religion. I haven't run into to too much of that personally.

Tsh: That's good. You've told me before that you feel like getting into yoga was kind of a surprise for you, that you didn't really see yourself as that. Tell me a little bit

about how going into yoga like this in a broader sense has surprised you about finding good things where you wouldn't otherwise expect it.

Katherine: [15:32](#) Part of it is just, I think you're also a four on the enneagram.

Tsh: Oh yeah.

Katherine: So part of being a four is we have to, we're incredibly individualistic and special. We're special. We aren't like everybody else. And there was something about the sort of strip mall, Americanized Yoga, I was just going to be another suburban mom with a yoga mat and a latte. And that just felt super basic to me. Just being in a strip mall, obviously this can't be authentic yoga.

Tsh: That was the word that came to my mind.

Katherine: That's what I was going for. I walked into that studio and it changed my life and I do think that was a really humbling reminder that even in my suburban Western, and sometimes I really do stop and get a latte afterwards.

[16:26](#) Well, maybe latte because I'm off dairy again. Whole 30. That's okay to fit into that stereotype because the practice itself is really good. I wouldn't say it has made me a better person. It is making me a better person because I'm learning to breathe through difficult postures and I'm learning to breathe through difficult situations.

Tsh: I think it's a good message for us Enneagram fours that sometimes basic is okay. Do you know what I mean? I think we need to embrace that. Yeah. We love feeling special and that's important to us and really, especially for me, love being authentic to myself and that sometimes it's okay to just admit that you are a suburban mom who loves yoga, you know?

Katherine: Yup.

Tsh: You're gonna still be pastor of your church and now you're a yoga instructor. Did you just take on another full time job?

Katherine: No, I'm really just going to teach one class per week and then I might sub a little bit here and there, but I don't want to overstretch past what I can fit in without running in too many directions. It's definitely not another full time job.

Tsh: I love that you have decided to embrace something new in your life and try something new and just kind of go forward towards something that was really pulling on you. I think that's really cool, instead of just pushing that aside. I don't know. I just really admire you pursuing yoga. Not just taking yoga, but yoga certification. That's really awesome.

Katherine: [17:50](#) Well thank you.

## Segment Two

Tsh: [19:37](#) Well, that was your post from this week where you shared with us about yoga and how it was surprising to you in all the right ways and how it's making you a better person. For me, I shared with everybody My Good List, which is a thing that we've been doing for awhile now, formerly called What's Saving My Life, but it's a format that I personally haven't explored in a while because I've let lots of other people right on the site about their good list and so it was really fun to share one after a long while of not.

Katherine: Yes, I was very ready for your next good list. I was waiting for that one.

Tsh: We restructured it a little bit to give a little bit of scaffolding where we're asking whoever writes their good list to share a thing, philosophy, some form of art and a habit. For me, it was a really fun exercise to think through that and I'll link to the show notes in this episode, my actual good list, but I thought here chatting with you, I can expand this a little bit on what I did write about

[20:34](#) In the first one, the thing that's just been making everything a little bit sweeter right now is a thing called Imperfect Produce. It's not everywhere yet in the US, but it's growing. I want to say it's in maybe just Chicago itself. You're outside of Chicago.

Katherine: I was able to get somebody box one time when they were out on vacation. So I have actually had a box of imperfect produce.

Tsh: Okay. Very cool. It's growing. I was surprised that it was an Austin because I'm so used to whenever I look something up, it's like, oh, it's only on the east and west coast, fine. But it's an Austin in growing a lot. So what it is, is it's a service that delivers veggies that farmers can't sell because it's not "perfect" for stores. It's otherwise perfectly edible, but it's either too big or too small or it's got some kind of bumps or bruises that totally don't affect the overall flavor or it just looks weird.

That's actually an overriding theme that they use and it's really fun, their marketing. It's kind of like a CSA, but it's specific to this type of produce and so it's a little bit cheaper. And we signed up not too long ago for a twice a month box and it's actually really fun. I heard my kids say for some weird reason, this kind of fun fruit and veggies makes me want to eat it more. And so it's been just a little surprising thing. I've missed a regular CSA farmer farmer's market boxes. We used to do that in Oregon and we haven't since we moved back to Texas, so it's been a while. So that's been a really fun little addition to our usual grocery

getting and with that, I didn't talk about this in the post, one thing that it's just encouraged me in as I did this as I've started using our local grocery store chain, which is called HUB, their curbside pickup.

Do you guys have something like that, Katherine?

Katherine: We do, but I haven't tried it yet.

Tsh: Okay. I hadn't tried it either. It's not new. It's been around for several years now, but I finally decided to try it. I think I tried it first, the week of Thanksgiving because things were just nuts and I just wanted to get an order in and then go and so it was really cool that I could just make my grocery list online, pay for it, and then just show up, go to a particular parking spot, text whatever the sign said and then somebody came out with my groceries at a particular time and it was \$5. You talked about earlier being a value shopper or I don't remember how you worded it, but I'm so much that same way too and so in my mind I would think I'm not going to spend \$5 to do something I could otherwise do, but when I started thinking about the time involved, grocery shopping is really up there as one of my least favorite tasks.

I don't know what it is, but I just really detest grocery shopping and so to me it's worth the \$5 a week or so to get that chore off my list and I know a lot of people don't want to do some kind of shopping service because they want to pick out their own stuff.

Katherine: I was going to say, do they pick good bananas for you? I feel like I want the control over what I'm putting in my cart.

Tsh: That was one of my hesitations as well. But the funny thing is with us doing imperfect produce, we're already sort of letting go of some of that idea. Plus for me, it's the payment, like it's that whole partial solution. I'm willing to let go of getting it exactly how I want it for. I feel like the ROI being just less stress in my life and time saved. I would rather shop at home, via my laptop and then go and pick it up. For me, that's just been a nice little thing. I don't know, in fact, I don't always do it. There are times, many times I still go to the store but it saves me at least a couple times a month, a major trip to the store and it just makes everything better. I'm really glad I'm just biting the bullet and doing it.

Katherine: I noticed that they're offering that at Target now. Would you do that at Target or are you one of those people who like to roll through the whole store?

Tsh: I do it all the time at target actually. Well, and I still do the thing where you order online and then you pick up at customer service, but over Christmas I started doing the go to your car and you text them when you're there and it was a game

changer. I don't like to shop for fun. That's just not my thing. I know some people go to Target as sort of a hobby, almost an hey, that's fine. That's just not me. And so for me it was so fun to be able to just pull up and just get myself, especially during the holidays when I know it was nuts in there and just move on with my life. So it was great.

Katherine: Well it will definitely solve the problem of like ending up leaving with 17 things that were not on your list.

Tsh: Totally. And honestly that's one of the reasons I don't like to shop because I know myself and I know I will, you know, I don't like needless clutter at all, but I will still come up with a reason why I could genuinely use this, fill in the blank, whatever it is, you know.

The second thing I shared, my good list is in terms of the habits. I'm sorry, the philosophy, this might be a bit of a stretch, but Kyle and I, last fall started talking about finding a hobby. And so to me the philosophy of cultivating a hobby or just embracing a hobby is something new to me. That's only because I have talked about it for years but never actually done it. I've always believed in this idea of one day it would be great to have time to have a hobby and yet the more I say that the more it, just owning of this idea of someday will never come if I keep thinking that way because I will find a way to be busy. I will find a way to keep my schedule full.

To just do it anyway even though things aren't perfect, even though I still have things on my to do list. And even though the hobbies I've chosen are really almost like non-hobbies, it's not like I'm taking up tennis or taking some kind of class somewhere. To me it just falls in the category of just for fun in my life, meaning there's no outcome related to this that's to better myself or for me to learn something. It's just purely for enjoyment. And I hate to admit that it has been years since I've had anything like that in my life where it is just for enjoyment and I know other people are better at that than me, but I'm just not. I'm always thinking I need to read these books because one needs to read that book or take this class so that I can learn more about the this or that.

This way, embracing hobbies just for fun is a big deal and a mind shift set for me.

Katherine: So what are your hobbies? Are you willing to say?

Tsh: One of them I've instagrammed before, but it's a paint by number and it's not your childhood paint by number where it's a picture you can finish in one hour. It's very intricate, detailed with good quality paint. Paint by numbers where at the end, you end up with a canvas you will probably want to hang and I love that

vintage style of paint by number. I don't know if you know what I mean, but there's just a certain light, fun, imperfect, amateur quality to it when it's done well and so I'm working on a particular one that's just a flower in a jar and it's really pretty and I like it. Lately, on Sunday afternoons I'd been working on it.

Katherine: I love the word amateur positively because it's such a good word and sometimes it's used as a derogatory word, but the root is the same root for love and you're doing it because you love it. There's something so beautiful about that.

Tsh: I feel like I heard that years ago and I forgot. I'm so glad you said that. Yes. I mean it in the most positive way possible. And then the second thing for me, I guess this is to get better at something but only just for fun. I told Kyle, my unofficial goal this year is I want to become a plant lady and all I mean by that, like we have a small raised bed garden in the backyard and of course I have grown, we have a cactus in a pot but I want to be more of a house plant person.

I want to have more greenery inside. I used to years ago, back when we lived overseas and I just haven't because we've been so mobile, it's hard to keep plants alive and so I just haven't bothered. But this year I want to have more house plants. I've got a book from the library on hold right now, like house plants 101. I just want to learn more about it and maybe by this time next year I'll have a dozen indoor plants in our home and that's just for fun. There's no real reason for it other than that.

Katherine: That's great. And I love the feel of a house that has a green inside.

Tsh: Exactly. That's the thing that I realized is I love going into a home, and it purifies the air. You can just tell and feel a house that feels more alive.

Then my work of art that I've I linked to in my good list is a particular Spotify playlist. But honestly creating Spotify playlists in general, listeners know how much I already loved music and how I love creating playlists. It kind of sounds silly, but there are times when I curate music in a playlist, almost like some artists would wheel their paintbrush or something. I'm not elevating it to high art or anything, but I genuinely love creating playlists.

Katherine: You playlists are high arts. I would do that instead of times what I'm making yoga playlist because they're so good.

Tsh: I love discovering new music and then supporting that artist by downloading their album or doing something like that. Maybe that's my version of shopping?

[29:42](#) To curate a list to me means sharing it with the world. Check out this artist to me is setting the stage so that other people can experience them. The thing is, I sometimes can treat it, I don't want to say take it too seriously, but

sometimes I'll overthink it. What I started doing this past fall, is just dumping music into a playlist for the particular season I'm in. Winter 2019, if I hear a new song and I like it, I'll just add it and I'm not going to worry about whether it makes sense with the song before or this overall message to a playlist. I'll still have that, you know, if anyone follows me on Spotify, you'll see the different types of themes I have.

But otherwise, there's just songs that I just want to dump into a playlist as I think of them and that's been fun for me. Just curating playlists in both an intentional in an unintentional way to me is art.

Katherine: I get that. I love that so much. It's actually one of the things I liked the most about teaching yoga is I get to make the playlist. I've always said that if I weren't a pastor, my dream job would be a DJ. So, I totally get that.

Tsh: You know, I'm nodding because I know exactly what you mean. I say all the time, I don't know if it'll be my dream job, but a job that I would just like be for it is scheduling tiny desk concerts, or writing about concerts or doing something in the music world because I love it so much. I get very much what you mean.

The last thing for me is a habit. I wanted to have something kind of fun to start off the year because I wrote a few weeks ago about goals, quarterly goals and the ones I've got on my plate right now, but I wanted to have something fun so I ordered for myself kind of a Christmas gift to myself, one of those five year journals. Do you know what I mean?

Katherine: I have one that I wrote like three things and three years ago.

Tsh: That's been my thing too. I also tried to do that, there's an app that's one second a day where you take a little video clip everyday. That lasted until January third for me and then it hit me like January eighth, oh no, I haven't been doing that. Oh well. I just shrugged it off. But the habit for me is writing in his diary and I've kept it by my nightstand and I've assigned a pen to go with it. Meaning, it doesn't leave my nightstand and it's just for that diary and all I do is right before bed, I write down what we did that day. The thing I like about it is that the space for each day is so small. I really can't elaborate and I can't worry about sounding all fancy or deep or whatever. It's just what the weather was like, we watched this movie, we had this for dinner, I worked on this, the kid said this. It's just enough to capture a little bit of the day and it's something I've been wanting to do for years. But then I'll remember in mid February or so, and for me, I'll just be, well, forget it. I'll do it next year then because I want to start January first. This is the year I finally remembered before the new year began. This was a Christmas gift to me I bought mid-December it's been fun to write it down. don't know what it is. Just capturing the little thing.

Katherine: Think what an incredible gift that is going to be to have in five years when it's full. It's like a photo album. It'll be invaluable.

Tsh: One of the reasons I did this too and I don't know how I'll feel at the time, it'll probably make me more sentimental than I intend, but with it being a five year diary, my eldest is in eighth grade, so that means that the fifth year will be the year that she moves out of the house, which I cannot believe and that is just shocking to me, but to me there was a little bit of that I want to capture our family day to day now.

I don't know if there's something that just hit me recently. I don't want to mourn than that time already because I know there's good things to come from that, but it's just, wow, this is going so fast and I want to capture it. That was part of it.

Katherine: It will be a way to savor it and be in the moment each day.

Tsh: That was the theory behind it, so we'll see how it goes. I hope it keeps going. You know, maybe in a year I'll, I'll check in and say, yep, I actually kept it for a year. That's the hope.

Katherine, that was fantastic. I loved hearing your thoughts on yoga. Thank you for sharing as you expanded from your post and thank you for writing it down. It's really encouraging to hear your take on it.

Katherine: Yeah. I really encourage people who, even if you thought in the past, you didn't think you were a yoga kind of person, give it another shot because that's a powerful practice.

### Segment Three

Tsh: Stephanie is back with another one of your travel questions and this time the question comes from Ryan Louise. Ryan says, where's the coldest place you've been? And I love that I'm asking you this, Stephanie, in the winter in Ottawa, Canada. So tell me where's the coldest place you've ever been?

Stephanie: [34:38](#) Ottawa, in the winter.

Tsh: Truly? That's hilarious.

Stephanie: No, actually that's not true because I spent my pre-teen and my teen years further in, not northern, but more northern Canada. I think it got a little bit colder there. I know most of the listeners probably speak in Fahrenheit. I speak in Celsius, so I hope you can forgive me, but where I grew up, and also still in Ottawa, sometimes it will get down into the minus thirties and it can even hit minus 40 in a really, really bad cold snap. That's really cold.

Tsh: [35:11](#) Yes. That's insane. I don't speak in Celsius, even with all my travels. Anytime I'm somewhere I'm like, wait math, pull out the phone and get the app because I can not figure it out, but for me it's kind of funny. The immediate place I thought of was Chicago for me in January and then I remembered, wait, I've been to Moscow, Russia, and then I remembered that place is the coldest I've been. In the early nineties I was in Moscow for a couple of weeks and it was in March and so it was still pretty much dead of winter there and it was freezing and of course this was my first real foray into international travel. Coming as a Texan, I did not have a lot of experience with anything below maybe 25 degrees Fahrenheit and that was from Colorado when we would go skiing. So the fact that I would be somewhere in the negatives just blew my mind. I had no concept of this and so we just weren't layers upon layers. I think my mom even made me a coat, which is hilarious to think about now and just with this extra padding, think she was just nervous about me freezing. Moscow, Russia is my answer, because it was flipping cold. But Chicago is a close second and I think Chicago was so cold because of where it is on the Great Lakes. I forget which, is it Michigan? Superior? I am terrible about midwest geography.

Stephanie: [36:41](#) Yeah. I can't remember now. Now I want to look up a map.

Tsh: [36:44](#) Either way, it's right on the water and it's just so windy, it gets called the Windy City for a reason, just that it was this biting, biting, cold where I didn't even want to show my teeth because it just felt like it hurt. It was a type of cold that just felt, unlivable. So those of you who lived there, I am impressed with your prowess.

Stephanie: [37:06](#) Yeah, I think that wind chill adds a lot to the cold of a place. I was trying to think of the coldest place we've gone that's not where we're actually from and, I think it would have to be Norway and Iceland. Have you guys been there? You've been in Scandinavia, I think, right?

Tsh: We've been to Iceland, but for not long. We haven't been anywhere else. It is high on my bucket list, which we'll talk about in a future travel question.

Stephanie: Yes, absolutely. Is it okay to admit that we prefer to go warmer places when we travel?

Tsh: Well, you're Canadians and I think you kind of want to go the place that you're not normally in in your home, that's my personal opinion, so it makes total sense.

Stephanie: Yeah. You probably like going colder places than Texas.

Tsh: I don't love freezing cold, but I'm not going to go in July to the beach on vacation. I'm just not. That makes no sense to me. It does not compute, coming from central Texas. Now because we don't have a question in the queue about what's the hottest place we've been to. I'm going to just lob that to you with zero prep. Where is the hottest place you've ever been?

Stephanie: [38:06](#) Dubai and Jordan were pretty stinking hot in the desert. But also, southern Japan. We lived there when we were first married and that stands out to me as really, not just hot, but like the humidity there is so intense that you just walk into a wall of heat and wet and actually Nicaragua felt pretty darn similar. So those are some of my hot places. How about you?

Tsh: Yeah, that humidity can be oppressive. What's funny you say Ottawa about the cold cause, my first thought is, Texas. I know that I have been in some hot places. I would say, right along the equator gets pretty darn hot. We were there, we were in Uganda along the equator. That was pretty hot, but I don't know, somehow it didn't feel as oppressive as other places I've been to. I would say, because of the humidity, some of those places in Southeast Asia, do feel oppressive to me like Singapore where it is 90 degrees Fahrenheit, year round. They don't have a flux in temperature and the humidity is unreal. So that is up there. Honestly also just like the southern US. We have traveled along there, through west Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, and Southern California on up to where we travel or where we visit Oregon and if that's in the summer, that is pretty brutal as well.

I think there's lots of pockets around the world. You said, the Middle East, there's a place in central Asia that we went to that's in the Gobi desert. It was so hot. We were in somebody's house that they had turned it into a restaurant, so we thought it was a restaurant. We walked through this curtained doorway and we're in someone's living room, but I guess this is also a restaurant. It was so hot because there was no wind and then they served us hot tea because this is, you know, that part of the world. And then they served us this hot dish with ginger in it and I'm not a ginger fan and so I would just be biting into these huge chunks of ginger and just sweating my eyeballs out and I just thought it was going to pass out from the heat.

I'm a big fan of somewhere in the middle, in all things really.

Stephanie: I agree with you even about the states. We went to Arizona and I remember walking across the parking lot in Phoenix to go to Target and I thought I was going to faint in the parking lot, so I'm not a fan of that kind of heat.

Tsh: Let's stick with whatever the Celsius is for 75 degrees Fahrenheit. I bet you that's what you like to?

Stephanie: 20s are perfect.

Tsh: Okay. Yes, there you go. Let's just stick to those when we travel.

Stephanie: Agreed.

Tsh: .Thanks for sharing your answer, Steph. If you have a question it big or small about travel, check the show notes to see how you can submit your question for me and Steph.

[40:57](#) You can find Katherine at [KatherineWillisPershey.com](http://KatherineWillisPershey.com) and on Twitter @kwpershey. You can find Stephanie at [WonderlingFamily.com](http://WonderlingFamily.com) or on Instagram @wonderlingfamily and to keep up with me, I'm on twitter @Tsh and Instagram @tshoxenreider and of course at [theartistsimple.net](http://theartistsimple.net). Don't forget to get my weekly email at [fivequickthings.email](mailto:fivequickthings.email). Follow us on Instagram @artofsimple and to be extra awesome, show your support of the show by becoming a Patron for just a few dollars per month, we really appreciate it. And as always, because I just gave you 10 places to go, I've got all these things linked in this episode's show notes, number 179, so just head there for everything. The show was produced by Chad Michael Snavely and Jesse Montonya, and thanks also to Caroline TeSelle, Andrea Debbink and my intern Ginny, see the photo of Ginny at [thesimpleshow.com](http://thesimpleshow.com). Thanks so much for listening. I'm Tsh Oxenreider and I'll catch you back here soon.