



Simple, with Tsh Oxenreider

Episode 193

[thesimpleshow.com](http://thesimpleshow.com)

## Segment One

Tsh: [00:03](#) This is Simple; I'm Tsh Oxenreider.

Hey friends! In this episode, I am chatting with contributing writer, Crystal Ellefsen, where we're getting into a topic we visited of and on here on the pod, but with a slightly different angle. As always, we're talking about what we wrote about this week on the blog and we both wrote a bit about social media. Crystal's a bit unique and that while she doesn't use social media for her own personal work, a huge part of her job is helping others use social media for their work, so she knows what it's like to use it both for connecting her real life with the Internet and for helping business owners find their people online. And of course, I do use it for both personal and business, but I've had a lot of full circle moments lately when it comes to how much I depend on social media for connecting, well with you guys, my listeners, readers, patrons, and like-minded folks who I had otherwise never get to connect with were it not for the Internet and that's what we get into here.

The Internet can really become a downward spiral when it comes to things like mental health, relationships, societal structures, politics, and beyond. And yet it can also be a thing of beauty, helping us connect like never before in human history. It all has to do with mindset, motive, and purpose. Before we get into the episode though, a little reminder that I am closing at my class, The Essentials, today, that's Friday, May 3rd, 2019, as in closing for good. I'll no longer open it for enrollment ever again. It'll still exist for everyone involved, but after the end of the day today, it'll no longer be available to the public for new people. If you've ever wanted to take part, this is literally the last time you can. Essentials is my go-to class that covers the seven basic adulting tasks that make grown up being a lot easier. It's the foundational 101 stuff that I suggest anytime someone asks me what to do first to embrace a simpler way of living. It's these seven things. It's totally self paced and you can get into the lessons again and again. If you'd like in, do it now, enrollment closes for the final time tonight. That's Friday, May 3rd, 2019 so go snag your spot. Press pause if you need to and then come back to listen to this episode when you're done. Head to [StartWithTheEssentials.com](http://StartWithTheEssentials.com) or find the link in the show notes of this episode at

number 193. Let's get right into the chat here. This is Crystal sharing how she uses social media with a clear head and full heart.

[02:37](#) Crystal, this is a conversation you and I have wanted to have for quite a while and I think it's really resonating with a lot of listeners these days because I keep hearing about this everywhere and it's this idea of social media and the role it plays in our life. We have covered this on the podcast before, not least of which was a year ago. We did a four part deep dive on how to navigate social media in light of news, and I'm not going insane really, but I think it's still a topic worth revisiting on a regular basis. I'm really excited to dive in to this with you. I would love for you to just start us off with telling us a little bit just your thoughts on social media and the role plays in your life.

Crystal: [03:18](#) I think I definitely come from an interesting context because I don't personally use social media for work or business, to get clients, but part of my business and my job is to help other people with their social media. In a lot of ways really, I'm the behind the scenes strategy. I spend my working days very close to social media. I work with influencers, but I'm not an influencer. But I'm also really jaded because I've seen a lot of behind the scenes things and also just I think, which I've mentioned, I feel like I mention every time, just going through divorce and I remember someone being like, but you guys look so happy and I'm like, on a Facebook post? And so therefore you thought, what about our relationship? My life has had such different extremes in the past 10 years in my own personal life and how that is reflected on social media. Then also I have a professional role with social media. I come to it from lots of different perspectives. So there's that. In terms of what I want to share today, it really is just about how I personally approach social media for my own personal consumption and my own personal sharing.

Tsh: [04:47](#) I think it's really great for listeners because you have the wisdom of social media behind the curtains. You see a little bit of how the sausage gets made, not to be too crude, about how a lot of this "social media influencing" happens. I'm doing air quotes right now that you can't see because I have a whole host of baggage that comes with that being a person that does what I do, yet you're not, like you say that kind of person. You are also very much like our listeners who understand what it's like when you are saying yes, but I want to use Instagram to show pictures of my kids because that's where the bulk of what you would use it personally is compared to say you want to promote your book or new [inaudible] that you want people to buy. I think you're the perfect person to have this conversation with.

Crystal: [05:38](#) Sure. I think social media is amazing because people can build a small audience and find unique people that would enjoy their product or their art. What I do is marketing. I have no problem with using social media for marketing.

I don't think it is inherently gross, although it obviously can be. I definitely want to also be clear, I think there's something really beautiful about the idea that you can find and help and serve the people who would benefit from whatever it is you're making or selling. There's nothing wrong with that. But from the consumer standpoint, I have a specific approach which I also think about even when I work for my clients, which is how can we talk to the people that they're helping? Which by the way, I'm not taking new clients.

Tsh: Good to know. I think that's really good to remember because I think I've heard a little bit of a rumor going around that I have become this person that's a little bit of a shunner of social media, and that's just not the case at all because I completely agree with you. What a time to be alive in terms of being small business or a freelancer or a solopreneur types where we really do have the ability to talk directly to the people we want to connect with. Never in the course of human history have we had this much connection and it can be a really beautiful thing. Even just business aside, when it comes to political engagement or in terms of feeling not isolated. There's so many great things about it.

Crystal: Absolutely. Think about the people that have generally been marginalized and have not had access to platforms because of gatekeepers and all those things, it's amazing. I personally love to listen to voices who are very different from my personal experience on social media because I find that that is so enriching to be able to listen and learn from people that are very different from me. I think that is so valuable. I want to say this is not all hating on social media and that's part of truly my point is that you have the power to curate your own social media experience. That is the beautiful part of it. But you have to take ownership of it to do that. Right? And you have to choose, where am I going to consume media? And what are the voices I want to listen to? Instead of just feeling like I don't have a choice. I mean obviously there's the algorithm which you can't control but you can control who you follow. You don't have to follow everyone you know in real life if you don't want to and you can only follow people you know in real life if you want to. You have so much more choice to customize that experience, but sometimes you just have to just go do it.

Tsh: I think that gets into this blanket idea. This foundational belief that I think is really important to solidify in a conversation like this that sounds really pessimistic and I don't mean it to be because I'm with you. It does remind you of the keys that you do have if you don't necessarily have the keys to the algorithm.

It's the idea that if you're not paying to use something, you're the data, not the customer. I think that's important to remember moving into topics about social media. I don't necessarily mean if it's free then you're being bamboozled. That's not what I mean at all. I simply mean when you think about things like Facebook

or these larger companies that are making billions of dollars and you're not paying for it, then that means that somebody else is paying for it and that's usually the advertisers, and this isn't to sound all Debbie Downer, it's just to remember that you can't just assume the default is for your own benefit for your own health and wellness. That's not their bottom line. Some of these companies, they are not in it to make you a more well-rounded, healthier person with fantastic relationships. They are in it, their business. You just have to be proactive about how you make it work for you without losing your mind. I think that's really good to talk about.

Crystal: [09:58](#) Absolutely. I have a list of my social media guidelines and manifesto. Some of which is in my post on The Art of Simple. Really, I would say a lot of it can be summed up in this quote that I love from Jack Kerouac, which is,

“Rest and be kind. You don't have to prove anything.”

Tsh: Oh, I like that.

Crystal: That summarizes how I feel about it. I don't want to approach it with anxiety or stress or pressure or obligation or I'm supposed to share whatever I have to prove to people that I care about all these important social topics. I have nothing to prove, you know? And that is very helpful for me to remember. I'm not sure if it's just my personality or my life experience, but I don't really struggle with comparing myself to other people in terms of what they look like or how fancy their clothes are, how cute their kids are. It's not my issue, but there are areas of course where I'm like, oh wow, they're able to respond to that thing that happened in the world so articulately, so quickly. For me, that's the part where I compare myself. I wish that I could, but I just can't. I'm just someone who needs to like think about it longer. I don't have a quick response to what's going on in the world. I need to mull it over. That's something that I've just accepted about myself. In social media, the pace is so quick, right? It's sort of like if you don't comment fast enough, then you miss the window. I've just accepted, you know what social media, like my goal and social media is not to prove all of the many things that I care passionately about. I'm not an activist. I care deeply. In my real community, I volunteer and I donate money and I do things related to what I care about. But I'm not interested in proving that on social media.

Tsh: [11:57](#) That's good. I like that you brought up earlier what you were saying that you don't struggle with things like look at this person's perfect house or kids that don't have dirt all over their face, that that's not a struggle of yours because it's not for my neither. I think it's good to remember that we all have our own types of things we're bringing forth whenever we're talking about this conversation. Don't write this off as not for you if you're thinking, yeah, I don't struggle with Instagram, to me it's no big deal or Facebook is fine, I just avoid politics and

why can't other people do that? That we all have these different issues that really, twist the knife sounds too vindictive, but I guess, I mean, pour the lemon juice in the paper cut where we all have our own versions of that stinging feeling. I get what you're saying about the activism, for sure. That's a big one for me.

Crystal: [12:45](#) Personally, and again, I think it's because a lot of my experience, I never look at people's photos and assume anyone has a perfect life. There is no such thing. There is no such thing as a perfect life. There are absolutely people who have privilege or have healthy relationships or have more money than you have or whatever. But no one has a perfect life. I never look at someone's feed and I'm like, oh look at those adorable children and photogenic family. Obviously they have all [inaudible] together, you know? I mean, I just never think that, I always come with the assumption everyone has challenges. Everyone has problems, everyone has hard days and everyone has dirty laundry. Some people might be able to pay someone else to do that laundry, but everyone has challenges. I just assume that, and I don't expect that everyone has to share those on social media. Some people are really good at it. I appreciate it, there are some people who can have the time and energy and value of being able to share that on social media. I enjoy those posts. But personally, maybe it's partly the stage in life, I just don't have the energy to craft that. But also, I definitely prioritize. If I'm going through a hard time, I want to talk face to face with someone. I just have no interest in digital condolences. I'm just not going to share whatever happened. I'm not going to put it on social media because I know that will not make me feel better. I just know it.

Tsh: [14:19](#) How do you think you've gotten to that place because I'm at that place as well, but it wasn't always that way and it's not naturally easy for me. I know every personality is different and you and I might just have different personalities, but do you have any thoughts for the listener who maybe is like, well, that's great, but I really struggle with that. Was it something you had to work through?

Crystal: [14:41](#) I think that a lot of it truly in a way, when I went through, not just divorce, but the time being married to my first husband, the marriage itself was challenging. That was a time where I wasn't going to share a lot publicly anyways because the whole experience was challenging. And then the whole recovery from that was challenging. I went off Facebook for a year during separation and divorce. That was in 2010. That was almost 10 years ago. Even at the time I was aware, I'm just looking at all these people's happy families and I'm angry and jealous and/or super critical. I definitely was coming from a bad place, but I knew I am not in a healthy mental space right now, you know? I think definitely going through that experience where I was just in a way, definitely not

sharing almost anything that was going on in my life because I just didn't know how to share it. There was nothing good and I just didn't know how to share it at all. Then I would say, again on the opposite end, I know what it's like to be the person who is jealous. I definitely have experienced that. And not of how someone looks in a bikini, but of just the fact that they have an intact family, right? That they're not struggling. I remember being this is not helpful at all. This is not helping me. Social media wasn't even as pervasive as it is now. Here's the other strange thing, is now I'm at the opposite end of the spectrum. Now, I would say I have a really healthy, wonderful marriage. I'm in the opposite place, financially and with my business. I like my job. We own a beautiful home. It's very strange how many things have changed in my life in the past 10 years. I know what it's like to be really struggling. And then now I'm weirdly in this place where I have a lot of privilege and my life is really great. That makes me hesitant to share as well because I know I don't want to rub this in anyone's face. I know how beautiful and wonderful my life is and I don't need to prove that to anyone.

In fact, like I don't want to be a cause of jealousy in someone else. That can go extreme. Even sometimes I have to check myself, it's okay. You can just share a photo. It doesn't have to be this whole spiral into questioning everything. It's okay to still share your life even if you have privilege and even if things are going great, it's still okay to share. That's a whole separate thing, it's my own little backstory. I don't know if that answers your question, but I think I have experienced the other extreme and now I'm in a different place. But even along the road I definitely realized, even if you think about things that are controversial, political, I've never engaged in those conversations online because I'm not good at it in person. I get very heated quickly in person and that's something I want to grow at. There's just no point. I just have no interest in having an argument with someone if we can't see each other's faces and hug it out at the end.

## Segment Two

Tsh: [23:08](#) So I am curious, Crystal then, how do you use social media if you don't use it for work as an entrepreneur and you don't necessarily, like you said, you have these personal inner parameters of what you feel comfortable sharing or discussing with on the Internet. How do you use it then?

Crystal: I do have one work that I use for my You Are Not Alone boxes product, but I'm not the face of it, it's just there. Basically I would say, here's just some things that I use. I try to always focus on how can I use social media for, if it's related to people I know in real life, how can I use this for an in person connection? That might be something like, oh, I've never been to that hiking trail. I'm going to text them and say, hey, I saw your photo, I'd love to go hiking with you there some time, right? I'm using something that I found out about on social media to

go hang out in person. I love doing that and I often will be like, okay, I'm craving connection, should I just text someone or I'll go on social media, I'll see what so-and-so's up to and I'll use that as a conversation starter. I like using it to connect. Or I saw you were reading this book, I'd love to talk to you about it. Things like that are very helpful even when I'm about to see someone I haven't seen in a long time, I love looking at them like just to get ideas of things to have a conversation about that. I love that.

Tsh: [24:31](#) We've talked about the book *Digital Minimalism* before, which we can get into, but Cal Newport, the writer does prescribe that as a great use of social media. I think you're really onto something there.

Crystal: Another thing is, on Instagram for example, I follow a lot of artists and I love seeing either their in process videos or their final products and that makes me want to get offline and go and make things. On my personal feed, when I'm just consuming it for myself, I primarily follow visual artists and people I know in real life. There's definitely some other random people mixed in there that I'm just curious about what they're up to or people that are different from me that I want to learn from, but those are some of my priorities. I use different platforms for different purposes. On Twitter, is where I would say I, and not even just based on people I follow, but things I search for, is more of politics, current events, activism. What conversations are happening, I like the idea that you can eavesdrop on conversations on Twitter, right? I don't really post that much. I really just use it more for listening. I'm interested in the different cultural conversations that are happening, but I'm often going for a topic. I wonder what people are saying about this? And then I go look at it and then I leave. That's one thing that I do there. Instagram I think of as people I know and primarily artists, a few other things. I try not to follow brands. One practical thing I do on Instagram, you know how you can save things, right?

Tsh: Yeah. Bookmark.

Crystal: Right. Previously my default would have been oh I want to try that restaurant sometime. Follow, right. Now I just go to one of their posts that's representative of their food and I save it to local places. Then when I'm like, oh, what, what's that restaurant that I wanted to look at? I can just go back and find it. The reality is I'd love to go visit that business and give them my money, but I don't really want to follow them on social media, you know?

Tsh: Well, and I would say I use that right now in that same method when we're renovating our house. If I see a photo of some home inspiration, in the past, I would follow them and then it would spiral into this I don't know this person, but I'm looking at lots of photos of their house and it starts making me feel a little bit of, not so much fomo, but just, oh my house is a wreck and look at this

perfectly curated house. Now what I do is I just bookmark it in kitchen ideas or whatever. Then I show him to Kyle later whenever we're making decisions about tile or faucets and that's it. Then I can move on with my life. That's another way.

Crystal: Yes, absolutely. I think finding those just little ways that work for you, where you do want to save something to go back to it or remember it, whether it's a restaurant to try or some craft do you want to do or whatever it is. Having a system that doesn't always mean following people. Because you might want that idea or you might want to purchase something from them but not necessarily actually follow them. I don't need to see everything about their life, but I might actually still be interested in something that they made and I want to go buy it.

Tsh: Sure. Yeah, that makes sense. I like that. What about how you decide what to post on Instagram? Is it just whatever floats your boat at the time?

Crystal: So again, I can get into a space of thinking way too much about it. Where to the point where I'm like, forget it. I'm not going to post anything because I feel this sense of my life is really wonderful and I just don't want to rub that anyone's face. Then that's I think sometimes too extreme because then I also get to the point where I'm like, but I love it when so and so shares a photo of their dog. I love seeing that. That's one thing. But I would say one practical thing is I never share in the moment. I've always loved taking photos. I mean even in college before smartphones I was always the one with a camera and I was always taking photos of things. I love to take photos, but I don't share them when I'm in that experience. Whether that's on vacation or with family and friends, I take as many photos as I want and if I share it, I share it later when I'm not around those people. On vacation, I take tons of photos, but I don't share until we get back. Part of that's also just a privacy issue, right? I don't like the idea that someone knows I'm not home. But once I'm already back, it's fine that no one knew it was only I was broadcasting, no one's at our house, you know?

Tsh: It gets into the psychology of that, what exactly are you wanting to do by posting the beautiful place your at. I learned this when were traveling around the world and at first I would be frustrated that I'm like, ah, Sri Lanka, the Internet here is horrible. I'm not going to be able to post. Wait, why does it matter? Nobody is sitting there drumming their fingers wondering exactly where I am right at this moment. If I posted a week later, no one's going to think anything of it at all. And it'll help me be more present wherever I am and actually enjoy it instead of thinking about, will this make a good Instagram?

Crystal: Yes, absolutely. I've freed myself to just be like I love taking photos because for a while I stopped taking photos because it suddenly felt like everyone's oversharing and trying to prove all this stuff. Now I've returned to I really like taking photos, but that's a separate thing from when and how I share them. I try

to think of, again, especially to help myself not spiral in either direction, I generally am like, you know what? I enjoy hearing about the good things about people's lives. I enjoy knowing that they had a great family vacation. There's certain things that I would prefer to hear in person. I would love to hear that your kid had some great accomplishment. Tell me in person. I love that too. I never assume, whenever I talk to people, I never assume they've seen my social media. I hate it when someone talks to you as if you've seen their post. Right? There's that. I just try to think of I love celebrating with other people. I don't mind the highlight reel. Show me your highlights. I want to celebrate with you. I love that good things are happening to you. I tried to just be like, great, I'm glad you enjoyed going to that restaurant and if I can't have that attitude, I shouldn't be on here.

Tsh: Yes, definitely. To me that's a sign for me if I am feeling, if I have a response that I just think that was uncalled for or inappropriate, in my head of course, okay, time to put the phone down, probably go to bed or take a nap or something.

Crystal: Absolutely. I try to not overthink it because I can go that way and I just tried to share sometimes this was just a beautiful photo. I'm not even going to bother with a caption. I do really like for my own sake, there's definitely things I want to make sure I share this because I will go back later as a timeline of this year, you know? I definitely sometimes share things I want to remember that this happened this year. Then other times it's just whatever. I do try to just make sure that I don't share from a place of, I want approval. If I can do that or I'm trying to prove something or whatever, and if I can do that, then I feel fine posting. I do think I've done a lot of the inner work to get to that place where I realized because I'm not using it to promote my business for example. For my business, it's all word of mouth, in person. I realized that's a luxury to just be like, it doesn't matter if people like my post or not, but although it really just doesn't, and I really feel like I love solitude. I love reading books. I love my own thoughts and not just having too many voices in my head. In some ways I have trained myself to enjoy getting off. I want to connect a little bit or be inspired. I want to see what so-and-so's up to. But also I just want to go read this book because I know I'll feel more relaxed if I just read that book for 20 minutes.

Tsh: [32:55](#) 100%, I have been there before and I feel that even more viscerally now as I'm reading more and spending less time on the Internet, it's very much a reminder of, oh yeah, there are my thoughts. I like them. I don't need everybody's opinions and I don't need to know the nuances of who's doing what when it just doesn't make my life better. You mentioned something about how you aren't using social media for work and so therefore you might have the feeling of I want to post this because I want to post this and I don't care what happens. I will say as somebody who does use social media for work, that's a

good place to arrive at as well. Even if you're using it for work, this place of sure I want this to reach the person I'm trying to reach, but at the end of the day my worth and my value, even the quality of my work that I'm presenting is not defined by the number of likes that it ends up getting. I think it's really great to come in with this mindset of I am not on social media to find myself, to find a piece of myself because if that's what it's dependent on, it's going to be really, I don't want to say fleeting but unreliable because I know firsthand what it's like to post something that you just are tossing up there and you get a whole bunch of interaction and then you don't toss something up there, you polish it, you overthink it, you really get it going and make it the best you can and you put it up there and there's hardly any engagement and you can easily downward spiral into who you are. All I mean is whether as a listener, you use it for work or you don't, I think it's really healthy to come and open up your social media apps or the website or whatever and remember this isn't a definition of who you are as a person. It doesn't define your worth.

Crystal: [34:36](#) Absolutely. I think the more that you have nourishing friendships that are not on social media, the easier that is. The reality is my husband's barely on social media. My best friend is, I don't even think she like ever checks that, I don't even think she posts anything there ever. A lot of my good friends, some people are not, but like the basis of our relationship is not online. We don't tag each other and it's just not part of our lives in my real community. That is a very big, I realized there's a lot of, I mean even for example, I haven't had notifications on any social media app in years and I even forgot that people have them. I just totally forgot. I was reading a summary of *Digital Minimalism*, which I'm looking forward to reading but haven't yet. That's right, I forgot notifications, you know? Your thought about work, exactly. I think on a practical level, also because I am on social media and thinking about social media for other people's businesses during the day, it also makes it easier for me to just be like, that feels like work. I want to be off work.

Tsh: Yeah, that makes sense.

Crystal: That definitely helped. I think there are so many ways to connect with your audience and find the people that will benefit from your service or your product that there's not always a direct correlation between who has a successful business online and what their social media engagement looks like. It doesn't have to correlate, you can be [inaudible] and connecting with an audience and your Instagram does not reflect that.

Tsh: That's 100% true and I think that is such a good takeaway if anybody's listening and thinking about how to use this for business, really keep that in mind that just because someone has this huge Instagram following and seems to get a lot of likes and comments on a post does not necessarily mean that they are getting

the metrics that really matter to them, be it book sales or being able to create the thing that they want and vice versa is true. You might see somebody that thinks well they're not even using social media and maybe they aren't nearly as strategically or in a particular way, but they are doing just fine. I think that's so healthy and valuable to remember. One of the takeaways for me with *Digital Minimalism*, his idea behind even the term digital minimalism is this idea of less can be more just like in physical minimalism in our house. It's the idea of getting rid of what's unnecessary so that the stuff that's left is truly great. It's the same concept. And he relates it to the Amish somewhat and he says it's funny to bring up the Amish in a book like this because we associate them with just people who blanket reject technology. What he says is it's not that, the Amish don't reject technology without testing it and questioning its value first.

Crystal: Wow, that's so great.

Tsh: Isn't that interesting? He says if it doesn't support their fundamental values, which is family and community, then it's banned. They have a value based approach for the tools that they use. Does it support their fundamental values? He's not saying go and be Amish, not at all. And he's definitely not saying go and throw your phone in the river, which I think some people assume is the idea behind digital minimalism. It's not at all. He says question its use in your life. I think that is the big takeaway. Don't just jump on the bandwagon of something because that's what people are doing. If it doesn't add value to your life, you don't need to use it. No one needs it. If it adds value, great. Keep using it in a way that's valuable to you.

Crystal: [38:39](#) Tell me how you use social media or even, I'd love to hear some of the journey because you have been sharing, you're not a lifestyle blogger, but you've been sharing your personal life online for a long time.

Tsh: Yeah. Well, I've always been a little skiddish of oversharing in the same way you have both because I don't want to for privacy reasons but also just weird inner voice of I want to be an encouragement to somebody reasons, and yet at the same time it's a weird business to be in because in some ways your line of work depends on it, which, again air quotes that you can't see. I believe that less and less really. I will say I've come to this, I don't want to say a pendulum because it's not like I used to use it and be on it constantly and believe I needed to be everywhere. I never bought into that. But at the same time I did believe certain things that I now know not to be true, that involve needing to be at certain places. For me, the way I use it now is I really do question what Cal Newport says in the book I just was talking about. I question its use and adjust accordingly, I guess is the way I am I'm using it. He talks about these three questions to ask about technology, which I think has been really helpful. The first one is does it support something I deeply value? The second one is it the best

way to support this value? Number three is how can I use this tool in a way that maximizes its benefits and minimizes its harm? There's lots of ways I can think about that on a personal level. But when I think about it as a business, I think that really can spin the whole thing on its head and you can end up really doing business upstream even though I don't mean to be some kind of outlier, but I find, wow, I don't know if this supports something I deeply value, especially as someone who, the line of work I'm in these days, and the thing I like to talk to people about is this very idea of living according to your values. I'm a big believer in having a healthy, thriving analog life, offline. It doesn't make a lot of sense for me to be constantly online encouraging that. To give a concrete example, I handed the keys over to our otherwise thriving Facebook group about a month ago. We had a Facebook group that I started off as a way to, buy The Art of Simple, our posts and podcasts and it grew beyond anything I imagined. It's over 10,000 people. They started talking about all sorts of things that were great but weren't my conversations to have and wasn't really supporting what I believed were the most fundamental core values and conversations or that I wanted to be part of. I gave the keys over to someone else and it's now no longer associated with The Art of Simple. I wish them well. There's no ill will, no hard feelings, no judging at all. It's just not for me anymore.

I'm still ebbing and flowing how I'm going to use it in my work. I think this next year in 2019 I'm going to do some more shifting. It helps me a lot of times whenever it's like the thing I know I need to do because readers and listeners do you find episodes and blog posts through social media, but I have somebody else do them because for my own health it's one less thing to bog me down and it doesn't bother this other person because it's like you, it's her job.

Crystal: Absolutely, and it's so much easier for me I think to help other people because I can just focus, right? These are our goals, this is the audience we're serving, this is the kind of content that will help them and these are the actions we want them to take. We're just not going to waste time on other things. It's a billable hour and I want to maximize the ROI and all that stuff. It is easier for me to guide that strategy because it's not personal.

Tsh: There you go. We'll see. And I think that's true and I think it's healthy for me as the person who largely creates that content to have that. For me as an artist, I like that separation between creating the art and promoting it, the maker and the marketing of it. I think that's healthy for me that I do spend more time focusing on my book writing even when I create a blog post, I'm not necessarily thinking, will this do well on Facebook or Instagram because there is a little bit of that division. Now I will say one thing that I have shifted on, all the praise hands, I love this is that whenever we surveyed our listeners and readers last year, it turned out that 92% of the people that do engage with our stuff regularly

find it either through our weekly email or by subscribing to the podcast, not through social media. Only 8% said they mostly find our stuff through social media. That to me was so gratifying and so confirming that there's also I think a misnomer out there of how important social media is as an online entrepreneur. I question that to be honest, how significant it is when it comes to connecting with the people you actually want to connect with. So most of y'all listening, I am hearing you say you get the weekly email or you subscribe to this podcast or both. And to me that makes me so happy. I would be thrilled if that's really how everybody finds our stuff and we didn't even need to promote anything on social media just because that's sort of not really my thing. Overall I feel like there is a correlation between why I'm feeling healthier this year than I have in a while, which I've written about some when it comes to exercise and sleep and eating and less social media. The science is there in terms of there's a direct correlation between how much time you spend on social media and depression and anxiety. To me that's enough of the science, that's enough of the brain stuff for me to think, okay, that matters to me a great deal. I'm not going to do that to myself. Nor am I going to ask my listeners and readers to do that to themselves as well. Does that make sense to you?

Crystal: Absolutely. Yeah. Absolutely. One, I think especially because of your values and the community that you've built, to me it makes sense that they're also not on social media as much. I think it would depend of course on everyone's business and I think there's even so many really creative ways that people are using social media that are incredible. When I was a kid, I would've loved to have a smart phone where you could make videos and do all these cool things. There's so much creativity out there to be had, but also really it's not just a flat statement of everyone should be doing this. For you, the people that you're talking to, the things that you value, the things that they value, it makes sense. But that's what you have to consider, what do I value? What really makes sense for me? Especially if you feel like for your business, I have to be doing this. Think about it. Do you? You might not have to. You have to look if it truly makes sense for you.

Tsh: [45:44](#) I love what you said at the top of the conversation that we can come full circle here. This idea that ultimately I will use social media only as much as I am also offline connecting with other people. I think that's been a huge shift for me over the years. Honestly, one of the great things about social media is that it does connect us with people that we otherwise wouldn't connect with and it can really help those who are otherwise isolated and lonely. I really appreciate social media when we were living overseas and when we travel for those reasons, and I know that's the case, especially with a lot of marginalized people who feel isolated and alone. I get that. For me in my place and where I am right now in my stage of life, I find that if I am not spending enough time in the 3D world

connecting with a real humans across the table, then social media is less and less a good thing in my life.

I really like, Cal Newport also talks about balancing social media with doing something physical to counteract that screen time, both with hobbies and with friendships. That's been something that's really helpful for me. It's a silly example, but I've been getting into gardening lately more than I have in a while and it feels so good to get in the dirt and take care of weeds and stuff like that and not a soul on earth knows about it. This isn't a thing for the world to consume, or to click like about this is for me and my family and just connecting with people. I have found that I want to meet with somebody across the table at least once a week and that just keeps me sane. That keeps me humble in all the right ways. He even talks about those of you who are, people that maybe are, I don't know if he uses influencers as the word, but he likes the idea of if you live in a town like Austin or are bigger, say every week I'm going to be at this coffee shop at this hour, 1:00 PM for an hour. If you want to connect, come talk to me about anything and I'll be here and I'd love to meet with you. I think that's a fun slash slightly crazy idea, but I don't know, to me that resonates with me a lot because my favorite thing about my work ultimately is meeting people. I love writing books and I love the artistic side of it, but my favorite part has been meeting with people and traveling with them, leading them through things and just shooting the breeze across the table. It makes a lot of sense that that would resonate with me.

Crystal: Absolutely. If you truly want to know your audience and connect with them, you can do that in person as well.

Tsh: Yeah, exactly. There's nothing that says that there has to be a screen between us for sure. I think this is a great wrap up ultimately to that quote that I am going to park on for a while that you shared it at the top, the Jack Kerouac bit,

“Rest and be kind. You don't have to prove anything.”

That to me is a pretty damn good mantra for social media, if I'm honest.

: [48:36](#) You can find Crystal at [CrystalEllefsen.com](http://CrystalEllefsen.com) on Instagram @crystal.ellefsen and to keep up with me, I'm on Twitter @Tsh and Instagram @TshOxenreider and of course at [TheArtofSimple.net](http://TheArtofSimple.net) where you can find my writing as well as Crystal's. Head to the show notes of this episode number 193 at [thesimplershow.com](http://thesimplershow.com) where you can find all sorts of things, links to things we talked about where you can sign up for my weekly email called Five Quick Things, how you can become a patron and support the work it takes to create the show for just a few dollars a month, as well as how to connect with Crystal and myself and of course head to the show notes or to

StartwiththeEssentials.com to enroll in my class, The Essentials. Today is your literal last chance. I'd love to see you in there. The show was produced by Chad Michael Snavely and Jesse Montonya and thanks also to Caroline TeSelle, Andrea Debbink, and my furry intern, Ginny. Thanks so much for listening. I'm Tsh Oxenreider and I'll catch you back here soon.