



Simple, with Tsh Oxenreider

Episode 220

thesimpleshow.com

Segment One

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

[00:10](#) Hey friends! In this episode, I'm talking to my friend and co-host Christine Bailey, and as always we're talking more about what we wrote about this week. Christine and her husband Steven host Kindred Dinners on their farm once a quarter, where over a hundred people gathered just outside Nashville for a true farm to table feast complete with live music, locally made beer and beyond. It's on my wishlist to make it to one of their dinners one day. She pulls back the curtain for us and talks about what it's like to put on an event like this basically in your own home. It's a big undertaking that involves quite a few people. This week I wrote about two seemingly opposite ideas. I've read about this and two books recently, but they actually play really nicely together. This idea of both ignoring the noun and focusing on the verb and about embracing the noun in order to accomplish the verb. You'll see what I mean as we get going in the chat because it has nothing to do with grammar.

We'll get right into it but first a fun new thing to tell you about. I have started a Substack community and it's officially replacing Patreon. If you're currently a patron, check your email because I wrote about it earlier this week and if you're not yet, you may really like this, I do. It fits the style and ethos of my work really well as a writer and I couldn't be more excited about it. Check out more details through the link in the show notes of this episode or head to theartofsimple.net/ community. Basically it's a place where we'll talk about all sorts of things, especially about how we can know more about and better love the world we live in. You'll understand more when you read my essay explaining why I've made the switch. Head to the show notes to find that link. Let's get into it. Here's Christine starting us off talking about the behind the scenes of her Kindred Dinners.

[01:58](#) Christine, I love that you host these Kindred Dinners on your farm and it's on my bucket list to try and make it to one one day. You shared this week on the blog about some life lessons you've learned through hosting six of them now. I would love for you to talk a little bit more about behind the scenes because I know tons of people have asked you about what does it look like, a making of a

Kindred Dinner. Tell us a bit more of what it's like to host that many people on your land.

Christine: I've definitely got that question from a lot of different people and I'm one that loves to know the behind the scenes of how different things work. I thought I'd share a little bit that today. First, I just want to help people understand the heart behind these dinners for us, that they're not just dinners, that this is something we've really put our heart and soul into these. I think because they're on our actual land and they're really steps outside our back door of where we live, that there really is something more to them than just hosting a dinner with 150 people. These are four hour events. We have live music, we have campfires, we have games. It's a multiple course slow food meal and really creating a space where guests can have the freedom to enjoy the grounds of the farm. We realize that we live this way. We live on a farm all the time and we live out in the country where there's more space and beauty, but a lot of people who come to our dinners live in suburbia or the city and it's just different. It just a complete change from their daily lives. We hope that when people come to Kindred Farm that they feel something really special when they set foot on our land and we really feel like our land is a gift and it's always been meant to be shared. That's our heart behind why we do the dinners and why we invite people there.

Tsh: [03:51](#) Tell me a little bit about who you invite. How do you find the people? First of all, tell us about how many people we're talking about.

Christine: Our first dinner, that was two years ago, October, 2017 and that one we had a little less than a hundred people. That's actual guests. That's not including the whole team of our staff and everything. We probably had over a hundred including them. But now we have 150 guests.

Tsh: 150 guests. Where do these people come from?

Christine: It's an interesting mix. We have some local people that live in the nearby town of Columbia, that's our closest small town. But we honestly have people travel now from other States to come to the dinners, which is so cool and so fun just that people see the value that they want to come from that far. We love that. But we have lots of people from Nashville, which is a little less than an hour away. We've had people come from Georgia and Alabama and Arkansas, so it's really fun. We sell tickets online, so it's through our Instagram following and our farm store customers, and really just word has spread through word of mouth over the last couple of years.

Tsh: That's very cool.

Christine: We have about 150 people and everything we do for the dinners, they set up in a way that highlights local farmers, so as much produce as possible that comes off of our farm and then other local farmers and artisans that we work with. That's really, really important to us.

Typically how it works for a guest is they arrive and we hand them a welcome cocktail or a mocktail that's made from a locally pressed juice, like an alcohol spritz or with the juice. That's a fun welcome to the farm. It's their first impression. We hand a drink and then just give them time to walk around the farm and just enjoy it and just set the space for this is not a hurry thing, this is just an exhale, let go and just enjoy the setting. Once again, just being reminded that this is really, really different for a lot of people. That's consistently what we see is people just are like, wow, they maybe have a picture in their mind of what it's going to be like and it's really neat to see their reaction or how they start to decompress when they step foot there.

Tsh: [06:25](#) How do you find the locally sourced things like the pressed juice?

Christine: That's just been through our network of, we started out at farmer's markets a couple summers ago when we first started farming and we actually met a lot of these artisans through the farmer's market circuit. Then just word of mouth. Our events director, Amy, she has a lot of connections with people from other events she's done. Once we've worked with this local juice person and then the company that provides our craft beverages, our craft beer and the wine, we just develop a relationship with them and we've worked with him for several dinners now and we love that. We love getting to like partner with that artisan and really develop a relationship and support each other's businesses, which is really, really neat.

Guests get to walk around on the farm and just enjoy themselves. Then we have an appetizer hour and there's live music playing and that's where we have the craft beer pairings. We work with a local brewery called Harding House and they are awesome. Their whole staff comes to the dinner and actually serves the guests. That's really neat for them, because they handcrafted these beers and really put the time and effort into that and then they're getting to serve it directly and see how people are enjoying it.

Tsh: I'm curious, listening to you having a cocktail and beer pairing, is this adults only or do kids come?

Christine: [08:07](#) Yeah, we don't come out and say this is definitely an adults only event, but it really is something that pretty much adults only would enjoy. Obviously, we card people so they have to be a certain age to drink. We do have a non-alcohol ticket if they want to choose that. We do have several people that

choose not to do the alcohol pairings. But I think it's something that older teenagers might enjoy if they're into that kind of thing. But it's mainly adults.

Then we have appetizer hour and then at that point it's time for the guests to make their way to the table. What's so fun is just with the setting we have here, we usually set one big long table right dab in the middle of our of our pasture.

For the first four dinners, we were blessed with amazing weather. We had perfect weather and we always had it in the back of our minds, okay, at some point it is going to rain and we're going to have to move this indoors. For our spring dinner this past May, it was our first one we had to move inside. It was down pouring the whole time.

Tsh: Inside your own house?

Christine: No, no. We move it into our greenhouse. We have two greenhouses on the property and we actually grow in those greenhouses all through the winter. It's crazy but we basically moved everything out of the greenhouse, it usually has like dirt and seed trays and we're growing lettuce down one side of it and there's machines and everything in there. We just move it all out and then just recreate this magical dinner space in there with lights.

Tsh: I think that sounds fantastic with the rain coming down. Oh my goodness. That sounds amazing.

Christine: I was honestly so worried about the one we did in the Spring because it was our first time to do it indoors and we're like, okay, we've got to just amp this up and make this amazing. It just ended up being so special. Instead of doing the one big long table, it's a smaller space \so we did two tables next to each other, both still super long. It just created this real intimate vibe and just a little cozier. My husband Steven, who's the main chef, he got to come out and really talk about each course and everyone could hear everything. It has its own fun vibe in the greenhouse.

We just had our fall dinner last Saturday and that one, we had tropical rain storm winds and rain for two days leading up to it. It's totally going to get rained on again. We're like, all right, we've done this before. We know we can do it. We went with the rain plan. We set up this gorgeous space and our greenhouse with like fall branches hanging from the ceiling and lights and so, so beautiful. Then it was crazy, 30 minutes before the guests arrive, the sky literally just broke open. It was clear blue sky with just sun rays coming down. It turned in the most beautiful evening right before everyone arrived. It was unbelievable. It was even predicted to do that. It was cool. It was like a combination of all the other dinners. We got to do it in the greenhouse with this cool breeze going through

it. Then they also got to roam around the farm and do the campfires and all the fun outside things.

Tsh: You walked us through a little bit with the welcome cocktails and then the appetizer hour with craft beer and live music. I have to ask, your husband being the main chef does he do all the courses?

Christine: He creates the entire menu from scratch and that is just his creative space. He comes up with every course according to what we've grown, what other local farms around us have available and what's seasonal. Then we have an entire prep team that works with Steven for three days to prep all of the courses. For dinner, there's a salad course, which always features our salad because we grow a lot of lettuce on the farm. We have a pasta course which is now turned into the dumpling course because the last two dinners for that course, Steven has done these really cool Asian dumplings that have just become really popular. Now we do dumplings instead of the pasta course. Then we have a main course with multiple veggie sides and then a dessert course. Then there's wine pairings for each one. We partner with this one company called OneHope that we love and each of their wines benefits a certain charity, like prostate cancer prevention or support for veterans. Then they also allow us to take a portion of the dinner proceeds and support another local charity that we choose with the wine sales. That's really fun. Our guests get to be a part of that too, just by coming to the dinner.

Tsh: That's very cool. You mentioned that your husband Steven has a team. Are these team members volunteers?

Christine: No, everyone is paid. We have a staff now. We've just found that works the best for everyone and expectations and work ethic and all that. It's worked really, really great. Like I said, overall we just want people to sit down at the table and feel like a special place prepared for them and we just don't take it lightly that a lot of people have never had an experience like this.

There's two of my favorite things about doing these dinners behind the scenes. The first thing is just our team and I've mentioned them, but we have put together this team of people. It's just awesome and I'm so grateful for them and it takes a lot of people working together to make this happen. Steven writes the menu and according to what's available. And then the food prep team, it's about five chefs that work for three days with him to prep all this. Just to give you an idea of some of the things, we had 80 pounds of grass fed beef, 70 pounds of potatoes from a local farm. They prepped 60 individual butternut squashes that we grew and harvested at the end of the summer. Massive amounts of kale. It is so much, that quantity of food for that many people.

Tsh: This might be a dumb question, but where do you store all of that?

Christine: We have a barn and in our barn we have a kitchen, a commercial kitchen in the barn and then we have a walk in cooler. The kitchen has a big commercial fridge and freezer and then our walk in cooler is our saving grace.

Tsh: Got it.

Christine: We store everything in there. We have the whole food prep team and then we have our event producer Amy, who's one of our really good friends who's been with us from the beginning. She's thinking through all the details as far as the overall event goes, like the rentals, the tables and chairs we rent, all the decorations and making sure we have the right plate paired with the course, the exact type of plate or bowl that Steven needs for that course. There's so many little details like that that have to be decided, and it was her idea to cut fall branches and hang them from the rafters of the greenhouse this time. She and I went into the woods to cut the branches together and it's so fun just working together on this and having each person do what they're good at. What I love to do, I'm always a floater, but my favorite thing with preparing for the farm dinners is just making it look beautiful. I'm always in charge of harvesting the flowers for the bouquets and making all the table bouquets. I love making the chalkboard sign. We have signs all around the farm that showcase all the artisans that were involved. Just fun little welcome signs and I love doing all that which is my creative side, I love doing that. Then just all the normal things that happen around a farm just to get it ready for people to come and see it, normally it's not really beautiful. We have tools everywhere and piles of things in places that needed to be cleaned up and just made ready for people to come visit to make it a more beautiful space.

Tsh: [17:01](#) Does it have this effect on you where as you're doing that process, you're seeing your land through the lens of a visitor's eyes and you've grown appreciation for it? I know it does for me in my own home, whenever we're just having people over for dinner, like, oh, this is pretty, or this is a nice little place to have people over. Does it feel that way on a larger scale?

Christine: [17:23](#) I have a new appreciation for our farm every single time we do one of these events because just like you said, we can get so bogged down in the landscape fabric and the tools and the seed trays and we're almost forced to put things in order right before these. It helps you look around and be like, wow, this really is a beautiful place and we get to live here every day. It just reminds me of how much we really do want to share it with people and how special it is to share with people.

Tsh: [17:56](#) I bet. That's very cool. All right. You've told us a little bit about the setup and how you love it and what happens when people come. These helpers that you've got, like Amy, your events producer, are they then, I'm just curious, do they help prep or do they help run the whole thing as well?

Christine: [18:20](#) Everyone is involved in both parts. That whole team that is there for prep for the Thursday, Friday and Saturday leading up to the dinner, is also at the actual dinner. We're all working the whole thing from start to finish. I think one of the cool things about the team and just the way that we run our team is that we don't ever want to micromanage people. For us, the key is building a team with people that we love being around and who are talented but they're also willing to learn. We've just surrounded ourselves with people who we feel do really good work and then we just empower them to just operate within those gifts. I think that's how it works together so well, is that everyone's just in their lane and they're doing what they're good at and there's a comradery to that in all those working together.

Tsh: It reminds me on a tiny scale how whenever we have people over for dinner that guests like being given a job, they want to help slice the bread or set out the silverware or whatever, but on a man of scale that people really do enjoy and experience and getting to play a small part in a bigger thing.

Christine: [19:37](#) I hope they all do feel that pride when it's over that whatever they did, whether it was cutting hundreds of slices of sourdough or prepping a butternut squash, that they had a key role in that dinner. That's a really neat thing. The other thing I love about our team is that, this isn't just living out my and Steven's dream and pulling people along into our dream. We have found that it's really become an environment for others on our team to learn and then be equipped to live out their own dreams. We've had different people that have helped with our dinners that have gone on to do really neat things on their own that they've been inspired to do. We have a gal that used to help with our dinners that moved to Florida and she's built a garden there with a little farmstead and she built a huge 20 foot table in the middle of her garden for sharing meals with her community. We have another young man who's 18 that grew up on a nearby farm and he helps Steven with all of his cooking events now and he just really wants to learn to cook. He loves it and he has a natural talent and so he's learning the ropes under and the other chefs. That's a neat place for him to learn. We have another guy, Tyson that helps us. He has his own bone broth business and elderberry syrup business. He sells it at different farmer's markets and to local restaurants. It was really fun at this dinner we got to use one of his bone broths. It was a plum ginger chicken bone broth in the dumpling course. It was this Asian dumpling with plum ginger chicken bone broth. It was so good and it's just fun, we got to put his company's name on the menu. I just love, I

love all that. I love the synergy of different people's gifts and talents and it's all going together and people are being equipped to do what they feel passionate about in that environment.

Tsh: [21:41](#) That's very fun. That sounds so good too, his bone broth.

Christine: Oh gosh. It's so good. Just so nourishing. It's a cold night in a greenhouse and those are really good.

Here's my other favorite thing about doing the dinners and this is my other favorite behind the scenes thing. I just love having people on our land. I love having people around and this is something that it took me a long time to realize about myself because I am definitely an introvert, but I am a social introvert and it took me so many years to realize that about myself that I would almost be like sad the next day after any type of gathering. When people left I was awww. I just love it. I love that hum of activity that hustle and bustle of the days leading up to the dinner where we're all just in this like state of controlled chaos and we're all going different directions and crossing paths throughout the day and making tons of coffee. I'm constantly delivering hot coffee to the chefs and it's super fun. It's just this feeling of fun and camaraderie among all of us. I love that whole aspect of it and just getting to see guests experience the farm. When it all comes down to it that we're trying to create a special space for people to come and slow down and exhale and take a break from their daily lives. I hope that people see the heart behind that, that's why we're doing this. It's not really about the food or the type of plate we selected or the flowers on the table, that it's a space where people can connect. I think that's something we can all remember, whether it's a small group of people for dinner at our house or a large event like this, it's just remember the heart behind it and that's what people see. Consistently, the things we worry about end up not being issues like these little nit-picky things that were like, oh gosh, we've got to do that, we've got to clean that up. People don't notice that. If we're creating a space where they can feel seen and known and special, it doesn't matter what little glass we're using or whatever. It's about that heart behind it and the space that we're creating for people.

Tsh: After you have 150 people over and it's a delight and you definitely have that social introvert experience of a little bit of almost like an adrenaline boost I would imagine. Do you have that posts, oh my gosh, that was exhausting, I'm so glad it's over. Let's just hole up and be a family for a while. Or are you jazzed, like let's schedule the next one or is it a little bit of both?

Christine: I would say, I think there's definitely a little bit of both. We're energized by it, but the next day we for sure crash. Honestly, there's been a couple times when we can barely walk. We walk up the hill so many times in a three day period that

we're just in pain, but it's so good to just stop and rest. We've learned now after six dinners that we have people come in the next day to help us clean up because there's just no way we can handle all that ourselves. Then we just do nothing. That's a time to connect back with our own little family, our two daughters because there's a lot of work that leads up to this. Let's get back to just the four of us. We usually have a Sunday fun day afternoon, which I've written about before on the blog some ideas we do for that. We really make a point to just turn everything else off and just come back to our little family unit. That's so important for us to recharge.

Tsh: Where are your girls during the dinners?

Christine: They're usually, our house is really close to the dinners, but I usually have a babysitter with them in the house and they love it. They think it's so fun seeing people arrive. They love to peek out the window and see people come. I love that they're growing up, it's so important that we carve out the time just for the four of us. But I also love that they are growing up in an environment where they see hospitality in action and they each get to have their own little parts in it. My oldest daughter loves pressure washing things before the dinner. There's certain things they each like to do. My younger daughter likes to help me harvest flowers and so they get to have their own little part in it and who knows where that'll play out in their lives as they grow older. But hopefully it means something to them that they grew up in that.

Tsh: [26:44](#) I would imagine childhood memories looking back, they'll think fondly on these events that you guys threw. And as they grow older, they can participate in them more and more, I would imagine.

Christine: That would be really fun. I would love that.

Segment Two

Tsh: [28:59](#) Thank you for sharing. I've always been curious about your behind the scenes, what it must take to have four times a year that many people along with all the cooking and all the organizing and it's very cool to think about.

Christine: Thanks for let me share it.

Tsh: The post I wrote this week was a little bit, I don't want to say broad, but it's just a little bit about a philosophy you almost might want to say that I've been mulling over. There's a local to me artists named Austin Kleon here in the central Texas area and he's best known for his little small book, called *Steal Like an Artist*. And he had one come out, I want to say earlier this year called *Keep Going*, and it's a book that I gave several of my seniors last year when they

graduated high school. In process, I went ahead and ordered me one as well. I flip through it every now and then. It's a book you can read in one sitting because it's small. But he has a section on it, it's about 10 ways to stay creative even when things are hard and you don't feel like being creative. It basically shouted out my name loud and clear. One of the topics he discusses is he just simply says, forget the noun, do the verb. Of course, I was intrigued by that, wanted to know what that meant. But here's a little bit of what he says in here. It says,

“Lots of people want to be the noun without doing the verb. They want the job title without the work. Let go of the thing that you're trying to be, the noun, and focus on the actual work you need to be doing, the verb. Doing the verb will take you someplace further and far more interesting. If you pick the wrong noun to aspire to, you'll be stuck with the wrong verb, too.”

I sat on that for a little bit because at first it felt a little antithetical to what I had been feeling, based on something I gathered from *Atomic Habits* that I first read earlier in this year and have continued to reference back all year long. It's by James Clear, I've talked about it several times on the pod, but he talks about how there are three layers of behavior change we all have and at the very core we need to make a behavior identity-based and not outcome-based. What he means by that is this concept of instead of thinking about the goal, he uses the example of people trying to quit smoking. If somebody is offered a cigarette and they say, no thanks, I'm trying to quit. Versus another person that says, no thanks, I'm not a smoker. It is a little mind shift that's small but powerful that can help you think about yourself as somebody who has already accomplished that goal. When I first read this thing from Austin Kleon, my thought was a little bit of that these things are at opposite ends of a spectrum of ideals. Then the more and more I've been mulling over both of these things, I realize they play really well together. It's this idea of, for me anyway, not necessarily forgetting the noun, but in order to be the noun you have to do the verb. The idea with *Atomic Habits* really resonates with me when it comes to identity. I don't know if this is a four thing and Enneagram four thing, because I've heard from other Enneagram fours that this is the one part of *Atomic Habits* that resonates the most with them.

This idea of making it part of your identity, this goal you want to reach. I think for me personally, I don't need to forget the noun. I just need to remember once I land on that noun, what do the verbs look like? Because you're not that noun until you do the verbs. You can't just call yourself something without having the receipts to back it up. Just tossing out a few examples because I'm sure listeners can perhaps identify with this because I think this is just part of human nature. It's the difference between saying, I want to be a novelist, and just staying there,

leaving it there, and taking the next step of saying, okay, that requires daily, but in chair writing words regularly, coming up with some sort of workable word count goal or time spent writing that works for you. That's the verb. To me, it's pairing the noun and the verb.

I want to be a novelist, therefore I write 30 minutes a day at 5:00 AM before the kids wake up. Something like that. You can plug and play this with honestly anything. It doesn't even need to be something as huge as a new career change or an identity in your work. It can be something like, I want to be a good wife and mom, those are great nouns. Those are great titles, so to speak. But the verb looks like, okay, that means for me anyway, engaging with my kids when they're talking to me as opposed to just saying, uh huh. Showing love to my husband the way he hears it best. Instead of just going on to autopilot. I'm prioritizing my family by just living up to our stated values, putting money where my mouth is in terms of what I say we care about.

Now of course you can overthink this into the ground. I don't think life is all meant to be about, am I checking the box of accomplishing the goals? There is something to be said about just resting in the identity you already are. I already am a mom to my kids and just by being present and being here, I am being a good mom. It's not at all to saddle us with this weighted expectation that we can burden ourselves with needlessly. It's just a little bit more towards the end of, it's great to have these ideals, now let's actually maybe walk a few steps toward them so that they become a little bit closer to reality. If we're going to talk physically and if you want to be a physically active person, that noun and what does that verb look like for you? Instead of just wanting to be that, how can you do the verb so that eventually you are that noun. Does it look like something as simple as getting dressed for said activity, or rolling out the yoga mat, putting on the running shoes, whatever it is. Then the next little verb is queuing up the YouTube channel with the yoga or walking out the door or just hitting play on your playlist, whatever it is. Those little bitty verbs that over time you wake up one day and you realize, oh, I am that noun. I'm a physically active person.

For me, a couple of them that I've been thinking about a lot are what does it look like to be an engaged citizen? I want to be an engaged citizen. I want to care about the world around me. It's all well and good to want that, but if we stay there, then there are some things that we just wish would happen that ultimately don't because it takes a lot of people doing those little things to actually cause change. It looks like for me, participating in some of these community events that I read about from the flyers that come in the mail, but don't actually do anything about, calling my government reps whenever I have something to say, even if it feels like it does nothing. Staying informed on the

news instead of burying my head in the sand when it just gets to be too much. Buying local so that I'm voting with my dollars because I care about these businesses. Things like that. Those little things that add up to being an engaged citizen instead of just imagining this lofty ideal ambition without actually doing anything about it.

Christine: [36:56](#) That's so good. I'm just thinking what a good exercise this is for pretty much anyone. I really struggle with being, well not struggle, but I'm definitely a dreamer so I can definitely get caught in the whole, I want to be this, I want to be that and never actually taking the steps. But this is such a simple, good way to just, I love thinking about it in a noun and a verb. I'm thinking about just being a writer, like for so many years I'm like, I really want to be a writer. Well that takes actually putting yourself out there and pursuing writing opportunities, or it's never going to happen. I love that you can apply this to so many different things.

Tsh: I think it's good for those of us who have ideals or high expectations on those nouns when we want good noble things to just to remember to break it down into these little bitty verbs that build up over time.

[37:48](#) For me, the one that I'm really working on that probably people can tell based on what I've been reading lately in my book recap posts are being a financially responsible adult. Now for me, I've been admittedly going on autopilot for a while because I am, for the most part, financially responsible. We don't have debt. We live below our means. We are frugal naturally. So in my mind, I've just thought I'm doing the verbs, it's all good. But when I thought about it more, I realized there's a lot of little tweaks I can make to those verbs to make my identity as a financially responsible adult fit so much more with what I am picturing when I say that. So it means making some longterm choices by actually doing the research, actually figuring out what it is I mean when I say these things or what other people mean when they say this is a good idea. I'm thinking specifically investing, which can feel like just this lofty, confusing, concept. It means going through your bank statements and canceling monthly auto payments that we just don't need any more that you almost forget that you were paying for. It looks like saying no to things when it's so easy to drive by the coffee shop or with your kids at the store and just generally choosing to spend less. We all know these examples. I'm not going to get into them now, but it's these little bitty verbs that to me add up to that noun in my mind that I don't know, I feel like I can rest a little bit more toward knowing that I'm on my way to becoming this noun, even if I'm never going to be like this fully picture perfect ideal that I have in my head that I'm making small daily choices that add up.

Christine: [39:36](#) Yeah. I wonder if there's something to be said for, I wonder if you walk through this exercise with a certain things, like maybe you've said, one of us has

said for a long time, I want to play the guitar or whatever. You walk through or want to be guitar player and you start walking through the exercise. I wonder if there are certain things that when you actually start walking through it, you're like, wait a minute. Do I really want that dream? It puts in perspective, maybe it gives you the freedom to let go of something that you've been saying you've wanted for a long time, but when you put legs to it and actually start walking it out, you can let it go and be like, no, I actually don't want that anymore.

If we didn't do these practical steps, we wouldn't actually know that we didn't want that thing anymore.

Tsh: That's right. That's such a good reminder. We actually talked about this a few weeks ago when my patrons came in from around the country to spend the weekend. We talked about a lot of times we have this idea of a particular job. I think it's easy to explain with a vocation, what we have in our mind of like, I want to be a fill in the blank. A writer, I think is a good example. A lot of times we think of the end result of being a published author. You know what it looks like to have a book in your hands, something you can point to on a shelf. Perhaps you go to book readings and signings and you get to meet people in real life, and you get to see your name in print, all these great things, but you forget what the verbs look like. It looks like, like I said, butt in chair, sacrificing time around your other things. Just doing the work day in and day out, dealing with edits, going back and forth, having meetings with the marketing team, all the details. I'm not saying it's not worth it, for me, it is, but sometimes it's helpful. I actually read a post, I'll link to from Amy Lynn Andrews who I think is just a fantastic thinker about business, especially a small business based on the internet. She talked about these seven things to ask yourself as a minimalist business owner. And the very first question is, how do I want to spend my days? It's related to that Annie Dillard quote, how we spend our days is how we spend our lives. That we can have in our mind, I want a seven figure multi-faceted online empire. But really you forget that what the days look like are people managing, answering email, head in spreadsheets, dealing with money, all that stuff. And actually you got into this business because you loved whatever it is. Like creating designs for tee shirts or connecting with listeners to your podcast, whatever that idea is in your head. And sometimes growing too big, turns out you spend most of your time doing other tasks, especially when you're managing people doing the tasks that you love doing. That can be a real conundrum. I just thought that was a great way to flip the script a little bit to ask yourself, how do you want to spend your days not so much what job title do you want to be able to say at your next dinner party?

Christine: [42:40](#) That's so good. I think it helps you flesh out like what your dream actually is and it might not be what you've been saying is your dream or that you think is

your dream. That's so good because I can definitely stay in the clouds and live in this idealist world. The part I struggle with is putting the verbs to those things. I can see this being really, really helpful.

Tsh: Yeah. To wrap that up, the thing that I've thought about is that both these things are true. What *Atomic Habits* talks about to make it an identity based goal, whatever's in your mind, but at the same time go from there and think about the verbs necessary and don't just live there. *Atomic Habits* says that too. He talks about little things that you can do. To me it's both embracing the noun and then doing the verb.

Christine: That's a really good.

Tsh: [43:40](#) You can find Christine at christinemariebailey.com and on Instagram @organicstine and to keep up with me I'm on Twitter @tsh and Instagram @tshoxenreider and of course, at theartistsimple.net where you can find my writing as well as Christine's. Head to the show notes for this episode number 220 @thesimpleshow.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 an insider by supporting this work as well as how to connect with Christine and myself. The show is produced by Chad Michael Snavely and thanks also to Caroline TeSelle, Andrea Debbink, and my furry intern, Ginny. Thanks so much for listening. I'm Tsh Oxenreider and we'll catch you back here soon.