

“Don't make it so esoteric that your readers will be afraid of it. Color at its core, is simply the language of emotion.” Those words changed my life. Exaggerating? Maybe...more on that coming up!

This is Stacy Julian with Episode 3 of Exactly Enough Time. You might think from this title that this is a podcast about productivity and while I love to rock a day and get stuff done, Exactly Enough Time, is much more about being present. It's about recognizing the time we have and making the most of it. It's about owning what you love. (I love color!) And inviting more of whatever that is into your life. In this podcast, I tell stories and I invite you to celebrate the people, places and things (like the yellow jumpsuit I wore when I was four) that make you and your life amazing!

Right now, I like the idea of tweaking that intro a little bit each episode. It'll be interesting to see if I change my mind at some point down the road. So today, I'm going to tell you about one of my very clear childhood memories. It was the gift I received for my 12th birthday. My mom told me, a couple months ahead of time, that she wanted to help me decorate my bedroom. Make it into a room better suited for a “preteen girl”. She told me we could paint the walls and then my dad had approved the budget for new carpet and wallpaper. We started out at the wallpaper store and she showed me some pictures of bedrooms in the big heavy wallpaper samples books. Anybody remember those? By the way, wallpaper is trending again, I just looked it up. But, I digress. In 1977, the designs my mom liked were pink and lavender. I should say the designs my mom liked for me. She also liked red, black and white. But I was instantly drawn to the daisies. I knew it the minute I saw it, wide stripes of yellow and white with daisies running vertically between them and little green leaves. My mom was patiently intrigued and suggested we hold off just to be sure. Next we went to the carpet store again, she showed me the lavender carpet, or she said off white, but that wood stain really easily. She said I could even do black carpet if I wanted to. That black goes with all colors. The 1970s was a decade of anything goes. There was almost always some black thrown in. If you don't believe me, google the title card for the Mary Tyler Moore Show. But here again, I was drawn to the brighter colors meaning here again at the carpet store. I chose kelly green, you guys, kelly green. Which was another 1970s superstar. I said, “mom, I want the green carpet and the yellow wallpaper with daisies.” To my beautiful mother's credit, I got it. I still love yellow and green. When you walk in my house, you walk right by the yellow laundry room before entering the green kitchen. Yellow and green are two of my happy colors. This is a little bit of my color story, and why should you care? I'll keep listening.

In 1998ish, I was working on one of my first articles for Creating Keepsakes magazine. That's a scrapbooking magazine. It must have had something to do with color, my assignment. I remember driving myself to the big public library downtown so that I can sequester myself and do some research. I had things I needed to learn. It's crazy to remember the before-the-internet-days but we actually had to go to the library and look things up. Anyway, that was the first day that I learned about something called “the color marketing group” or CMG. Which is an international association for color design professionals. Their purpose is to predict, identify and direct color and design trends and then translate those into sellable colors for manufactured products. I have no idea. I remember thinking, super cool! Oh, I am leaving out one brief, but

essential bit of my story, so let's back up the high school for a minute. My mom started color draping people. Yeah, she read that book called Color Me Beautiful. Totally huge in the 80s. I remember her telling me something about it. She said something like, "I think I understand this color draping thing better than the author does." That's got to be a sure sign that you have just struck a vein, right into your personal passion or natural gifts. Anyway, my mom, yeah, she found it. She found one of those things that she is amazing at. She started her own color draping business. At first, spread out on her dining room table, but eventually she's teaching at our local community college and she sets up shop and begins scheduling appointments in a dress store. Which is on Main Street in Bothell, Washington, where I grew up. I'm telling you this, because I was my mom's sounding board and therefore I learned quite a bit of color theory during those years.

Okay now fast-forward, it's 2003 and I'm the editor of simple scrapbooks magazine. We have been invited to create our first special issue. I hope I'm right about this, but I think I am. I know that I want it to be about color, of course, because I love color. And I think it's going to be super important in terms of helping our readers become better scrapbookers. More confident in designing pages. So we gather as an editorial team and we have an initial brainstorm. I am convinced that to simplify color for our readers, to make it easier to understand and to use with confidence, we have got to know it inside and out. I tell my team that I used to teach color tips to my "Moonlight Madness" cropping groups back in 1999. And that I would start by showing them a color wheel and I would teach them the difference between a tint and a shade and I would show them cardstock that was complementary and triadic and analogous, etc. etc. etc. and that's what I wanted to do, again, in the form of the special issue. I wanted to do it for our readers. Give them a vocabulary to use, so that they could talk about it and feel confident again...smart, I guess, about it. This is what they needed. So that they can go out and select paper to put with their pictures on your scrapbook pages.

So we did it. I was the editor. We all studied it. I especially studied it. I did not want to be wrong or share any misinformation. That would be tragic. We invited a group of really good scrapbookers to start studying and making pages and we approved of them and gave them very specific assignments. I read articles and books. I already had two books that were about color. One was about color and mood and communicating with color. I had some interior design books but I went out and I bought a brand new book, published in 2003, it was called, The Color Answer Book, and I was thrilled, because it did seem to have all of the answers. You know what else? This is the funny thing, it's funny to me today, we were even going to develop our own color guide. It was going to be a custom swatch book, of sort, just for scrapbookers and we were going to advertise it. In fact, we did advertise it as a special issue, and I was certain that we were going to sell hundreds if not thousands.

Then one day I was sitting in my basement office and we were wrapping things up on this special issue, in fact, I was trying to write, as I remember, my past-due editor's note and I looked up at this shelf of books that I had kind of above and to the side of my computer. I saw the spines of those color books and I noticed that three of them were written by the same woman. A woman named Leatrice Eiseman. I remember thinking, I wonder if this person, this expert

author person, I wonder if she teaches classes? By then I had the internet and so it took me all about 10 minutes to locate a four-day color training seminar taught by Leatrice Eiseman it would be on Whidbey Island, which is near Seattle. Which is a mere five hour drive from my home, at the time. The only problem was a big one, the price was like \$1,400, maybe it was even \$1700. It was some astronomical number, way beyond my budget and I was like, oh my heavens, how am I going to make that happen? But I couldn't stop thinking about this class and I wanted to be there, I wanted to know more about color. So, then I decided I would email our new publisher with a very smart sounding proposal. Something about how I, as editor of this magazine, should probably attend it. It would give me credence. We were publishing the special issue and it just made sense. Sure enough, a few months later, I was sitting in a very nondescript meeting room with 14 other people and these people were literally from all over the country. All of whom worked in some kind of manufacturing or design. They were in: surfaces, glass, flooring and carpet. Right behind me, was the graphic designer and marketing lead from Kimberly-Clark makers of Kleenex. Kid you not. When it was my turn to introduce myself, I swallowed hard and I said, "hello, I'm Stacy, from Simple Scrapbooks magazine." Naturally there was a smart-aleck guy in the back that said, "They have magazines for stuff like that?"

Anyway, by then our special issue was out and I had it with me, but it took me until the morning of the third day, to work up the nerve to show it to Leatrice or Lee, as she had asked that we call her. I handed her the magazine and she opened it to the editor's note and smiled at me and flipped through the pages and was very complimentary. She said, "This is beautiful. This is so well done. I love how you defined this. I didn't know that scrapbooking could be so beautiful. This is very interesting." Then you know, we chatted about a few things back and forth and towards the end she paused and looked into my eye and said, "I think you need to be careful, it looks like you've explained and illustrated all of the principles of color and the rules and the relationships that govern great design and therefore scrapbooking pages and all of that is very important for you to understand the ins and the outs and how to's. But, (and here are those words), I hope you don't make color so esoteric that your readers will be afraid of it. Color at its core is simply the language of emotion. Your job is to give people the permission to feel color. To identify with it. To associate it with their memories and use it to bring their pictures to life. Wouldn't you agree?" I stood there, kind of dumbfounded, and I'm sure I said something like "oh absolutely, of course". As soon as I got back to my hotel room that night I looked up esoteric- I had no idea what that meant. It means, intended for or likely to be understood by only a small number of people with specialized knowledge or interest. I knew Lee was right, I was making it too hard. My approach to color changed during that four-day seminar and when I got home I let our lead designer at Simple Scrapbooks know that we would not be following through on the color guide. I said, "I don't know, it's just so esoteric"

Oh my heavens- I got back home and I started noticing color everywhere. I kept thinking about my walls. During my time with Lee, I had learned that it's not so much about choosing the right colors as it is about paying attention and allowing the colors you love to choose you. I purchased a gallon of turquoise paint and I painted the upstairs wall behind the kitchen table. I bet you have some happy colors. I bet they are the colors that you've enjoyed or noticed or liked since you were twelve. Colors that you probably see in nature. Colors that jump out at you in the

aisles of Target. Can I just say that Walmart is totally upping their game. Has anybody noticed that? When was the last time you shopped at Walmart? Anyway they're doing some good stuff. Back to color. I've learned that it's about not being afraid to love the yellow wallpaper with the daisies. Even when your mother doesn't. And when your sister doesn't or your neighbor. When the color trends issue of HGTV magazine says that's a "no" this season. This is what you can think -that's my happy color. My happy colors are my happy colors for a reason. Therefore, they're always in season. Happy colors create happy thoughts and happy thoughts often elicit happy memories. Therefore, they make you and me happy. I remember calling my mom one day during this time and I asked her "Did I have a yellow jumpsuit with a big orange flower at the top and was the zipper covered with green biased tape so it looked like a stem?" she said "yes, I made it for you, but you were really little sweetheart, we lived in the..." and I finished her sentence "Lake City house". "How did you know that?" she asked "I don't know, I just suddenly remembered it" I said. Guess what? We have never found a photo of that jumpsuit. But it existed, my mom made it and I wore it and I clearly loved it. I wonder if it doesn't have something to do with the colors that have made me happy ever since.

I have two favorite quotes about color, the first is this from Alexandra Stoddard "It doesn't cost any more to have happy colors around you than to have depressing colors. I think that a lot of people who are borderline depressed and don't know it, they think it's because they've got too much stress in their lives. When it's really because they live in such dreary environments. Color is an antidote. You should come home to an environment that reflects your personality and your joy. Happy people want to have a stimulating environment. They wear brighter colors in their clothing and the colors around them reflect their greater appetite for life." Isn't that awesome? Doesn't that sound like what Lee said, "at their core colors are the language of emotion."

The second quote. I might even like it better than the first one. "Life is too short for beige." That was Susan Sargent, it's in her book that I can't remember the title of, but I love it. Life is too short for beige. This is totally true, unless of course beige is your happy color. But if it is, I would still encourage you to call beige happy neutral and go find some other color you love because life is too for neutral, and go find some other color that you love, because life is too short for neutral. It's too short for being neutral. It's too short for surrounding yourself with something that's neutral, because it won't offend anything else in the room. Life is too short for beige.

In May 2018, Ingrid Fetell Lee gave a TED Talk titled, Where joy hides and how to find it (https://www.ted.com/talks/ingrid_fetell_lee_where_joy_hides_and_how_to_find_it) So before I read something from her talk, let me tell you that Lee has more than 12 years of experience in design and branding. Most recently as design director at the global innovation firm IDEO. She loves to explore the powerful connection between our surroundings and our emotions. She loves to empower people to find more joy in daily life through design. I totally want to go to lunch with her, but anyway. This is one of the things that Lee said in her talk she said, "I started asking everyone I knew and even people I had just met on the street about the things that brought them joy. On the subway, in a cafe, on an airplane, it was -"hi, nice to meet you, what brings you joy?"- I felt like a detective. I was like-"when did you last see it? Who were you with? What color was it? Did anyone else see it?"- I was the Nancy Drew of joy. After a few months of this, I

noticed that there were certain things it's starting to come up again and again and again. They were things like cherry blossoms and bubbles, swimming pools and treehouses, hot air balloons and googly eyes and ice cream cones, especially the ones with sprinkles. These things seemed to cut across lines of age and gender and ethnicity. I mean, if you think about it, we all stop and turn our heads to the sky when the multicolored arch of the rainbow streaks across it. And fireworks, we don't even know what they're for, we feel like celebrating too. These things aren't joyful for just a few people. They're joyful for nearly everyone. They're universally joyful." Ingrid calls them the "Aesthetics of Joy" and guess what- they're all so colorful. Ingrid goes on "and seeing these things, these aesthetics altogether, it gave me this indescribably hopeful feeling. Because, she says, the sharply divided politically polarized world we live in sometimes has the effect of making our differences feel so vast as to be insurmountable and yet underneath it all there's a part of us, each of us, that finds joy in the same things. And though we're often told that these things are just passing pleasures, in fact, they're really important. Because they remind us of the shared humanity we find in our common experience of the physical world." It's just a really great Ted Talk and so I'm going to link to it in the show notes.

So, for my memory keeping in scrapbooking and storytelling friends out there, listeners, I don't think it's by accident that we speak of remarkable and memorable moments as adding "color" to our lives. Experiences, like color, that challenge the status quo, that help us feel a playful sense of joy and belonging, they might draw attention to us, cause us to feel that tinge of uncomfortable vulnerability, but they also fill us up. If not immediately, in time. With an overwhelming gratitude and that gratitude gives way to confidence. I'm now very confident with color, in my home, in my closet and in my scrapbooks. My daughter Addie is 11, turning 12 this summer. I told her it's time to give her room a makeover, to give it a bigger girl look, "preteen". I have ideas about what I think we could do, but I hope that I will approach this project with the same open-mindedness or at least patient intrigue, that my mom displayed. Because I desperately want to give my daughter the permission to discover her happy colors and put into practice- now-the permission to surround herself with "aesthetics of joy".

So, whatever it is you do for creative expression, I challenge you this week to do it with more awareness of color. Simply because you have exactly enough time to do so. If you don't make it too "esoteric". Maybe you'll just pick up a quart of paint in the 2019 Pantone color of the year, which is what they call 16-1456 or living coral. And maybe you'll paint something, a frame, a stool, a wall in your bathroom. Why not? I'm already seeing living coral pop up all over, and trust me, you feel so smart when you recognize what you're seeing. Like-"oh yeah, that's the pantone color of the year." I'm going to add a 33 second video introduction to this color to the show notes. I know you definitely have time for that. And I'd love to hear what you think. Do you like it? Or perhaps I should ask, do you like it.. yet? Because the color marketing group will do their best to bring it into your life and convince you that you do. And one more thing, thank you for listening. If you have thoughts, opinions, feedback, questions, ideas for future episodes, visit StacyJulian.com/podcast-I would love to hear from you!