# Dino and Ashley Petrone

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Jill Savage: Well, hello, friends. Today, we are talking about intentionality, and we're talking about designing a marriage relationship in the same way that you might design a room in your home. It sounds kind of crazy, but that's where we're gonna go today. Zig Ziglar says, "If you aim for nothing, you'll hit it every time," and too often, that's what we do with relationships, and specifically with marriage. So my guests today believe that intentionally designing your marriage is a really important concept. Ashley and Dino Petrone have been married for 16 years, and they make their home in Florida with their four kids. Dino is a senior engineer, and Ashley is a full-time mom, blogger, and interior designer, and together, they are the authors of the new book, Designed to Last: Our journey of Building an Intentional Home, Growing in Faith, and Finding Joy in the In-Between. Welcome Dino and Ashley.

Ashley Petrone: Thank you so much for having us.

Dino Petrone: Thank you.

JS: Absolutely. So tell us just a little bit more about yourselves and your family.

AP: Yeah. Well, we're Dino and Ashley, um, currently living in Florida right now, like you said, on a little island called Anna Maria Island. Um, we just finished... Basically, last year finished renovating an inn that we bought here. We actually came out here on vacation, and, um, while we were on vacation, we bought an inn, or we put an offering on an inn, and went back home to California, and, um, were there for a month. Yeah, a month later, we moved out to Anna Maria and moved our family of four into the inn. And we just rotated... It has four rooms. We just rotated to all the rooms while we were renovating it, um, and, uh, now that's up and running, so right now, we're just currently just praying about the next thing, but kind of sitting in a time of rest 'cause last year was a little bit... A little bit crazy for us.

JS: Aaah. Well, as you and I were, uh, talking before we pressed record, um, my family used to, um, vacation at Anna Maria Island, and we stayed in a little inn that didn't have very many rooms.

AP: Oh.

JS: I'm wondering...

[laughter]

AP: That could have been it. Yeah. [chuckle]

DP: Was it pirate themed? When we got it, there was pirate.

AP: There was the pirates then.

[laughter]

JS: Oh, that's funny. I don't even remember that many details. I just remember we, uh... I would... Uh, we went down with my parents after my husband and I were married and had our first child, and I remember that, you know, we got a... A couple of rooms, but there weren't very many rooms in the end at all. So...

AP: Yeah, that would be so funny.

JS: So, yeah, it would be. Oh, my goodness, I love that. So, um, tell us a little bit, you guys have kind of become, um, Ins... Instagram sensations. Uh, you, uh, went viral on Instagram. Talk about, uh, what that has been like, and, uh, what is it that you, uh, you know, bring encouragement to on Instagram?

DP: Yeah.

AP: Yeah, well, I mean, started my page about five, six years ago, and at the time, I was... I had three littles. Just kind of in that stage of life that's a little bit of a blur, you know? Like, just not really thinking clearly. I was homeschooling all the kids, and I just always had a desire to just, um, be creative, like I loved to find deals, loved to refinish furniture, so I just decided to start a blog and an Instagram, and that quickly just kind of shifted after about six months, um, into just us kind of... I... I was feeling a little bit of a nudge to share a little bit more. Like up until that point, I wasn't really even sharing our faces, we just would... I just would shared my... My deals and stuff like that. And so I wrote a blog, um, we'd we've just in our 10-year anniversary, and I just thought... God kinda prompt me to write a blog on marriage and what we had learned, like 10 things we learned in our marriage, and after that, I just really fell in love with just being open and vulnerable and sharing our journey.

AP: Um, so we then a few months later sold everything and moved into a trailer, and I thought that everything was just gonna go away, like, all of the... I had like 6 or 7000 followers at that time. I thought they were all just gonna go away, 'cause who wants to watch some random family live in a tiny trailer? But apparently, a lot of people do wanna watch that, so, [chuckle] um, it was kind of the time too where not a lot of people were living in the trailer or renovating them, so it just, like, hit a lot of people, like, we just, really, I think, spoke to the designing side, 'cause I had renovated the... The whole trailer, um, the family side, 'cause we were sharing everything that we were going through, um, tiny living side, um, just a lot of different things. So I started that my... My page really just to have an outlet and had a creative outlet, and God just really used it to be, like, a ministry, and I feel like he gave me this little gift of design, and that, like, brings people in, but then they stay for, like, the good stuff, for the real rich stuff.

JS: Right, right. So you guys, uh... What was the size of that little tiny house that... Or the... The trailer that you were in?

AP: Yeah.

DP: It was small. It was 180 square feet, so we had a little master bedroom with two 12-inch closets, about this big, right? Each, and then we had, uh, a living area with a... That had a pop-out, so it was basically a... A space for a very small couch that two people could sit on, a very small table that four people could kind of cram into, and then in the back, there was a bathroom and three bunk beds. Um, and that's actually one of the reasons why Ashley and I fell in love and like, bought it, [chuckle] it was that when we found it, we we're like, "Whoa, this has three bunk beds. We have to buy it. Let's do it."

AP: We were like, "It's a sign. There's three bunk beds."

[chuckle]

AP: And not obviously clearly knowing that most RVs have bunk beds and...

DP: Yeah.

AP: And lots of them, but we were naïve to that. We were just like, "Oh. This was... This was here for us."

DP: No, no, it was very special. It was special just for us.

AP: It was. [laughter]

JS: So...

DP: Oh, yeah...

JS: Yeah, go ahead.

DP: It was... It was... It was a good... No, it was a very small space. It was... We... We were crammed in there. The kids each previously had their own room, and now they were all in these triple bunk beds, all... All jammed in there. So.

JS: Wow. So talk to us about marriage lessons learned living in that tiny little space, because I can only imagine that there were... There were relationship skills that had to be honed in... In living in that kind of an environment?

DP: No. It was super easy. It was super easy to...

AP: Yeah.

[laughter]

DP: Yeah. So yeah...

JS: And your nose is growing Pinocchio.

AP: Exactly.

DP: We went from... We went from a five bedroom 3000 square foot house to selling basically everything and then moving into 180 square feet. So there was definitely some adjusting.

AP: Yeah, It was a season. I felt like the first eight years of our marriage we were really just like, we were doing life together in our marriage but we were more side by side. Dino was doing his thing, really pushing towards his career. I was doing my thing, like mothering, not really knowing who I was. I was just a little lost. And so this basically put us into a pressure cooker to like lean on one another, lean solely on, on the Lord and like really lean into our family. And so we could have gone two either... Like two different ways. We could have just been like, "This is terrible. I hate being with you." Like you could just lose it. Um... Not that we didn't have our definite moments but we, we really used it with intentionality or tried to, to really lean into the good things that God was trying to show us. So it was extremely challenging and I like to use that word because I feel like, like through... Difficulty sounds like negative but challenging I feel like it has a positive spin to it. Like through challenges we learn things, we grow. And so it was... Every single day was a challenge. We'd get into an argument and like I would like steam off to the other side of the trailer and there's no doors to slam, there's nowhere to hide and you're just like... You just start laughing. 'Cause you're like, what are we doing? Why are we... You know. What are we even arguing about? Where am I going? Where am I running off to?

[laughter]

AP: Um... So it was... It was really great for us to just really work things out and also to like learn how to be intimate, like in a small space and not lose that part of our marriage. Or you get creative and just have fun with our marriage during that time.

JS: Right, right. And how long were you living in that?

DP: About... Yeah. About a year and a half.

AP: Seven... Yeah. 17 months, yeah.

JS: Year and a half. Wow. So, uh, you know, oftentimes it is in those pressure cooker times where really our faith, you know, it becomes kind of a where the rubber meets the road journey in our faith. Uh... How did that play out for you guys in, in that season of time? What were you doing faith-wise? How were you growing in your faith that was making a difference in your marriage?

DP: Yeah, I'd say the big one for us was that Ash and I had previously where... We, we found our identity in a lot of other things, right? Like mine was my career, video games, or you know, TV, you know, my, my buddies, the... Things that were not... That my identity should not be found in, right? And, and I was still a child at the time too. I mean if I'm being honest I still feel like a child in a lot of ways but I was still acting very much like a child at the time. And similarly Ash, was very much into like, you know, the material things of the world, trying to find, you know... Her identity was, was wrapped up in a lot of like how can she make the house look and the new things that she could potentially buy and the new styles or following the latest trends. And those things get very... Stripped away very fast when you live in a trailer, you don't have internet, you don't have the ability to go and hang out with my, my buddies online or play video games or be able to do the things that I wanted to do and similarly Ash, didn't have an ability to go and grab new things and update the, the inside of the trailer. So really for it, it was, it was a, a forceful... A forcing function for both of us to say, "Hey, it's time for both of us to kind of grow up here and, and see what God can really do by transforming us as individuals. And transform our marriage by leaning in because everything else just got gets naturally stripped away, right?

JS: Mm-hmm...

AP: Yeah, and, and for me too, you know, we were in this waiting period of... We were again naive and young and thought that, "Oh, it takes like three months to build a house" Like we, we had moved in the trailer initially so we could build a house, we bought land for it. We were living... The house was supposed to be built up on this beautiful hillside but our trailer couldn't go up there so we literally were in the ditch and every day we would just look up at it and be like, "Oh, it'd be so great to be up there one day" We never built, we... All of our money just went into dirt work and water and all the things that go into building a house but we never got to that point, and we just lost all of our money basically in the land. But I felt like after a month or two of being in there, I was... I just felt the Lord showing me that this had nothing to do about building a house at all but it was about us... Him really just changing our hearts and who we were at our core. And it was a season of life that I really learned to just find what... Like it's on the subtitle of our book, Joy in the In-Between. Like this was an in-between time, I was waiting... 'Cause I feel like we're constantly waiting for something else. We're, oh, I'll be happier when I get that job or when we move or when I get that purse or cut my hair. Whatever. And so I was just... He was teaching me to just find joy right there in that trailer, in that ditch, um, daily.

JS: Mmhh... That is powerful. And I love that you guys thought you were making this change for one reason but God revealed to you it was for something completely different.

AP: Yeah.

JS: And sometimes... I mean, sometimes when that's happening we kind of fight it. Did you feel like there was a, a point where you were kind of fighting it and then you just finally had to surrender to it? Or do you feel like you surrendered to it pretty easily? What was that journey like?

DP: I think it was a, uh... I mean, we were in it for a year and a half so the... And there's a lot to get stripped away from a person when they're... [chuckle] when they're being ripped. Like everything's kind of, God's putting you through the, the fire and the flames, which we very much were. Um... But I definitely remember there were a couple times, one specific scenario for me was like it had dumped rain and I was just feeling so mad and angry and frustrated that we were still in this trailer and I had to park my, my little commuter car way far away. Like out at the main street and then I... I had to go buy... I had boughten boots just so that I could put the boots on.

DP: Take my shoes off and trudge through like, you know, a 100 yards of like a foot deep mud to get to the trailer so I could take my boots off so I could get in, and I was just like... I was so angry at the time, and then I just like... I got into... I got into my room and I was just like, if this is how it's gonna be, then who cares? It's still pretty great. Like can you just find joy in this like kind of crummy scenario? And it was... I just kinda like let it all go, you know, up until... I mean, a good chunk of me had, had let go of a lot of things. It's a stripping away process when you're going through stuff like that.

JS: Mm-hmm.

DP: But I definitely remember going, coming out of that specific scenario, just being like, okay, I got nothing left and I'm not gonna try and continue to cling onto something, I'm just gonna allow myself to just be in the, be in the moment, be in the, the scenario where God's kind of working on me and not resist through like a negative mental state, instead just say, hey, like, this is... God's got me here right now for the, for a reason, and I'm just trying to find the joy in this, this specific scenario.

JS: Mm. So a lot of it is what happens inside your head, isn't it?

AP: Mm-hmm.

DP: Absolutely. Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely. Because God's trying to transform you. Like he's constantly... God's constantly trying to transform each one of us, and it's a matter of saying, am I going to relinquish control in this scenario and have the correct mental attitude so that God can actually mold us in that scenario, right? And, and living in a trailer for 18 months or a year and a half, whatever, you get put through a lot of those. And, and for a long time, even still now, I... We resist, right? And when you resist with this negative mental attitude and negative perspective, you're stopping God from moving in your life, if you're just focusing on the negative and you're fighting and, and being irritated with the scenario instead of embracing it for what it is.

AP: Mm-hmm.

JS: Yeah, yeah. That is so very true. Yeah. So what are some practical ways, um, that you guys, uh, keep... You have a very busy family, you have four children. What are their age ranges?

AP: We have a almost 13-year-old, 11-year-old, a nine-year-old, and a one-year-old.

JS: Okay. And so busy, busy time.

DP: Yeah.

JS: Uh, age span of kids.

AP: Mm-hmm.

JS: How are you being intentional about, uh, keeping your marriage a priority in the midst of this really busy season of life?

AP: Yeah. I think the trailer really showed us how important it was to be intentional. I feel like pre-trailer, we kind of knew that and we tried to have our time in the way that, you know... You know, we'd put our kids to bed since they were born, they would have a set bedtime so that we would have the evenings.

JS: Yeah.

AP: But I feel like since then it's even gotten more intentional and we just see how valuable it is to connect with one another, to have time with one another. And so the same thing, our kids, you know, have set bedtimes, we try to set aside time for us to date one another, whether that's just walking alone on the street, like going for a walk. Um, we... At our last house, we had a bathtub, and we called it the year of the bathroom, and we would just take a bath together like every couple of times a week. And it was just like such a great way for us to strip down everything again, be totally vulnerable with one another and just have like really rich conversation. I think just being like in that like specific situation made it extra vulnerable and, and just this great conversation. Very rich.

DP: Absolutely.

AP: So we just try to be intentional with our time. And, um, we've seen the fruit that comes when we really put in the time in our marriage. And then we've also seen the, the other side, when we get back into that parallel life, me and my Elaine and Dino and his that we disconnect and it's not as fruitful in our lives.

JS: Yeah, yeah. I totally see that. You know, I remember when my husband and I were first married, we lived in an old farmhouse and it had a clawfoot bathtub, but it didn't... It wasn't for two, it was just for one.

[chuckle]

JS: Um, and, uh, but I loved to take like baths at night, and he would come in and, you know, put the, the, uh, lid down on the toilet and just sit there and we would just talk for...

DP: Yeah.

JS: You know, 30 minutes to an hour. Um, and then we, when we moved into the home that we have now, we put in a huge soaking tub.

AP: Mm-hmm.

JS: And that soaking tub has been the place of many conversations.

AP: I love that.

JS: So just, you know, taking the time to do something as simple as slowing down, taking a bath together, or in the case of us in our early, early marriage, um, you know, at least just, uh, utilizing that time for talking.

AP: Mm-hmm.

DP: Yeah.

JS: What a difference it makes.

AP: It does.

DP: Yeah.

JS: But I...

DP: I mean... You have to be, you have to be intentional. I mean, Ashley and I have very much found you have to be intentional about ensuring we have the right like habits and the right lifestyle in our, in... Set-up. And part of that means that like we dedicate time to spending time with one another, like Friday nights, a lot of times, we will shut the TV off at, from like 8 o'clock and, you know, kids go to bed from 8:00 to 11:00, we just sit in bed and kind of talk and hang out. But another big one is, is like the relationship that we have in our, like the structure of how our household is set up. The kids very much know the hierarchy of our home. That God comes first, and then it's mom and dad, and then the kids are a welcomed welcome addition to that, but our kids are not our priority, they're a priority, but the priority is God first, then mom and dad, and then the kids. And they actually, I mean, a lot of people might say, oh, well, what do you, you can't do that. You can't tell your kids that, but the security that the kids get in knowing that, um, Ashley and I are rock solid, actually it has really built a sense of confidence in them. And they, they adore the relationship that they've seen in us. They will sit and stare at us while we kiss and just like, or they'll come over to us while I'm, while I'm holding Ash, and they just like lock-on and like get around us as well, and they want to get up in there. They, it...

DP: It's not, it's almost counterintuitive that, you know, you think that you have to be feeding your kids and feed, feed feed. They have to be the priority. But in reality, if you allow something to get between, you know, your, you and your spouse, the kids end up suffering significantly more just from an insecurity perspective. So...

JS: Yes, I have been preaching that message for 20 years.

AP: Yes. I love it.

JS: It's so good to hear you guys say that.

DP: Yeah.

JS: It really is. People do not understand, um, the damage that child centeredness does to a marriage and to a family.

DP: Yeah.

AP: Yeah.

DP: Yeah.

JS: And, uh, when we wrote our No More Perfect Marriages book, we identified what we call the slow fades and slow fades are when a marriage gets pulled apart one little quarter, inch at a time underneath the surface. It looks good on the outside, but things are not, it's kind of eroding underneath the surface.

DP: Yeah. Yeah.

JS: And one of those slow fades is the slow fade of child centeredness.

DP: Yeah.

JS: And that's exactly what you're saying is the kids find their safety and their security in knowing that mom and dad are okay. And if mom and dad are okay, then their world is okay.

DP: Totally.

JS: So, yeah, I think that that is so very important. Thank you so much... Uh, for sharing that.

DP: Yeah.

JS: So talk about, um, talk about just the concept of design... Design is obviously really important to you. I mean, it's what you do, Ashley, but it, you know, you've really applied that concept of design to also your family, what you're doing with your family, your living space, um, your, um, your marriage, uh, why do you feel like that transfers over into the marriage relationship so well?

AP: Yeah, I think that we are all, you know, God gives us all individual like gifts or talents. And, um, I think for me, it's just been something that I've always loved. But like I mentioned before, when I was younger, I didn't really know how to use it. And I always, I, I really did. I found it as a, I was discontent just all the time. I just was not content, but it's, because I didn't have a foundation in the Lord. And once I got my foundation in the Lord, I then saw this love for design and to make a beautiful home and inspire other people really as just a beautiful gift that God gave me. And so, um, it's, it's funny when we wrote our book, it was really interesting to see, you know, we were, we book mapped our book, which was new to us and it was very cool to see how God had really intertwined design into everything into, into our marriage, into our family, into who I was and how he was shaping me as the godly woman he wanted me to be.

AP: So I've loved being able to grow in that and grow in my faith and be able to share that alongside with all of our followers on Instagram, that you can design a home with intention. And, um, it's fun to get new things and to paint things. But for that, not to be where our, our core of like our heart is at when we're designing our home, but to design a home, to fill it for people... With people instead of things. So that's a big thing that we've, I've taken away from after we lived in the trailer, um, we moved into a few different houses that were bigger than the trailer and it was really great to take the things that I had learned in that time in our life and really build a home, um, with intention on how we designed it.

JS: Yeah. Yeah. So talk about, um, what type of intentional design do each of you use to grow your relationship with the Lord? How are you being intentional and what are some of the habits that you have? What's been some of your journey, um, that has really grown your faith in a deeper way?

DP: Yeah, for me, it's really revolved around discipline. That's been probably the, the main, like core pillar of, of my life and, and some, uh, an aspect that God has just like reiterated to for me over and over and over. So what that ultimately looks like is, is making a decision on what it is that I want my life to look like. And obviously from a godly perspective, making a decision, then in the moment saying, I choose... I'm going to make the decisions today that are going to be what I want most versus what I want right now. So, like to paint a picture of a little bit of what that looks like, I'm gonna be a godly man. So I'm not going to choose my sleep in the morning time, over my, or my time with God. So I chose a long time ago when we, you know, when Ashley and I were first in our first home together, I was, and I started down this discipline journey. I was gonna wake up before I go to the gym in the morning, I'm gonna spend half an hour or an hour of time reading my Bible and be disciplined with that every single day. And then after that, I'm gonna be disciplined with my body and I'm going to be going the gym for an hour and taking care of my body. And then I'm gonna be disciplined in the way that I eat to ensure that I'm gonna allow that discipline to flow into all the other areas.

DP: Same then goes from my marriage. I'm going to be disciplined in my marriage. I, I'm a very, very, very selfish person by in my natural state, but that's not who God's called me to be. God's called me to serve and love my wife like Christ of the church, which means that I come dead last. It's the exact opposite of what my natural inclination is. So I'm gonna go up like way beyond what I want to do and say, I'm going to be disciplined then in serving and show, make sure that my kids understand that I'm modeling a servant attitude with them, um, through everything that I do so that they all know dad comes last. That doesn't mean that like, you know, my, my kids, I let them walk all over me. It just, I, I want them to understand that, like when I'm cooking, I cook for like, I cook and take care of everybody. And I'm the last to eat when I'm cleaning up or whatever. I ensure that everything's taking everybody else's stuff is taken care of and I instill that in the kids. So again, for me, it's really been about this, this aspect of discipline. I feel like discipline in one area, really just overflows into all the others.

JS: Yeah. You know, my husband also calls that the power of decision and...

DP: Yeah.

JS: So you've really made decisions, um, that are decisions out of discipline. Um, and then you operate based upon the decisions, not based upon your feelings.

DP: Yes. Definitely.

JS: Because my guess is there's times you don't feel like getting outta bed.

DP: Oh yeah. Every day. I hate you. [laughter] I mean, it's a, I have to basically tell myself, like you enjoy the gym, go to the gym, you enjoy eating this way. Like the thing, the negativity that is in my brain it would say that you don't want, like, don't eat the things you don't wanna eat. Don't go to do this go, or don't read your Bible. Don't like go to bed on time. Like, the things that I want to do are in a constant contradiction between, uh, the things that I wanna do and the things that I know that are right to go and do.

JS: Yep. What about you, Ashley? What's been really key for growing your relationship with the Lord?

AP: Yeah. Um, I've really just... You know, the world that I'm in with Instagram and social media. I've had to just be really intentional about monitoring, you know, what I'm looking at, how much time I'm spending on things. Um, and so, I mean, I... From the beginning, I really wanted to use what I do, um, for God's glory. And so I really do the same thing. Like I try to start every day reading my Bible, having quiet time, just being intentional with my time Because... And not picking up my phone first. I actually like to have like a, my, a real handheld Bible. 'cause I feel like if I go off my phone, I can, you know, start doing other things and I get lost. Um, so it's just been a lot of intentionality. I constantly have things coming at me in my face. Um, easy to fall into a comparison game.

AP: It's easy to just feel like you have to respond to every message. Um, and just figuring out a balance on, you know, doing that job and having fun with it. Doing it well, um, being obedient to God, but then also just having like a really good balance in our lives. So we take... I take time off three days a week. We, um, like of no phones and really just really try to be intentional with that time. You know. At first and foremost, um, my walk with the Lord comes before anything else that we do. And so I would try to have an open hand with that. Always like, if at any point, God doesn't want me to be on social media anymore, then great. Let, let me know. Let's not do it anymore. So, um, I'm just always trying to just be in tune with what he's wanting me to do with that.

JS: Yeah. That's good. Um, so, you know, several years ago, my husband and I wrote a book, um, it was titled Living With Less, So Your Family Has More. And um, it sounds like that's really the journey you guys...

AP: Mmh. [laughter]

JS: Have been on.

AP: Yeah.

JS: Um, but you know, a lot of times I think that, um, too many of us, we feel like we have to wait till we have more money, more resources, more time so that we can have the home or the relationships that we want to have. What would you say to that?

DP: Mmh. Yeah. I mean, we can only speak from our side of that experience on that. Which is that when we were stripped away of all the things, that's when you were actually the most fulfilled in all the... In everything you just mentioned, right?

JS: Yeah.

DP: So when we lost... Not lost, when we moved... When we sold our house and moved into a trailer. We... That was the time when our relationship our... Ash and I relationship had the most depth. And that was when we like felt the most fulfilled in our... And thankful about our living situation. We were so thankful to come home to that little trailer every night, um, just have a place. And we were... It wasn't a matter of like seeking out the next financial thing that we wanted or the next home that we wanted. Like those things are so fleeting and you really don't find the joy in those things.

DP: Like you you... The world says you do and your brain, says that, Hey, this is the way that you wanna go, but it's still counterintuitive. In reality, when you let go of all those things, that's when you really find this true fulfillment in either your living scenario, your relationships, you're like, that's... It's the opposite of what the world says, you know?

JS: Yes.

AP: And we've been able to experience it really because after the trailer moving into, you know, a 1300 square foot house thinking we were Kings and Queens, at that point. We had like a washer and dryer. We were living the dream. [laughter] And then the next house we designed was a very large house, it was really just an investment property. It was just such a great investment. And we had no intention of going so grand and big, but, um, really, it just... It was a beautiful home and it was amazing. We were so grateful for it. But we were no happier there than when we were stripped away of everything. And so it was very clear to see that these things are awesome. And, but how... We don't need them. How can we use them to give God glory? How can we use them for God's kingdom, but they're not giving us happiness...

DP: Yeah.

AP: Or fulfilling us.

JS: Yeah.

AP: They are completely just here for the time and we don't need them to fulfill us.

JS: Right. Right So very, very true. So very true. One of the things we talk about in, uh, Living With Less, So Your Family Has More is, um, how much adult peer pressure that we...

DP: Yeah.

JS: Deal with.

AP: So much.

DP: Oh.

AP: Right.

DP: So true.

JS: You know, because the word peer pressure is usually associated with like the teenage years. But it's like, no, and I think social media has really increased that.

AP: Absolutely.

DP: Yeah. Yeah.

AP: There's nothing you can do right. And you're doing... Everyone's doing something wrong. [laughter]

DP: Yeah.

AP: All the time. Um, yeah.

DP: We got a lot of flak when we moved into the trailer because of exactly that the peer pressure. Was just like, "what are you guys doing? This is not what you're supposed to do.

AP: This is odd.

DP: You're not supposed to go like from a big, nice house into this trailer" they were Like we're not... People stopped coming and visiting and hanging out with us because they felt like we were weird. And I mean, Ash and I have... Even beyond the trailer, we've had a very, very different style of living. Like we've bounced around all over. We've moved at a whim. We just follow where God kinda is... Has been guiding and leading us. And, and that does not look like everybody else. And...

AP: How beautiful is that though?

DP: Yeah.

AP: That like... How great that we all don't look the same and do...

DP: Yeah.

JS: Right.

AP: Everything the same way, but for some reason, we feel like if we're not doing it exactly like somebody else, there is that pressure. I even felt like that at the beginning of our marriage when I was homeschooling the kids, and I really didn't wanna homeschool the kids anymore. And I remember having a conversation with a girlfriend and she was like... This was just about before I was gonna start my blog on Instagram and all that. And she was like, "What if you're like, actually being disobedient by doing this right now and God really wants you to like, stop this phase of your life and move on to something else?" but I'm like, "But as a Christian, like, everybody around me is homeschooling, aren't, aren't I supposed to be a homeschool mom?" Like, I just felt like that was the norm, and I felt this immense peer pressure to do what everybody else was doing. And so again, it's that tuning everybody else out and really just tuning in to God by praying...

JS: Right.

AP: And reading his word.

JS: Yes, yes, and then... And that's where we get our marching orders...

AP: Yeah.

JS: For, for us, right? Which is, it's gonna be different than what it is for someone else. So, so very powerful. So, gosh, thank you so much, Dino and Ashley. This has been a really good conversation. The name of their book is Designed to Last: Our journey of Building an Intentional Home, Growing in Faith, and Finding Joy in the In-Between. Tell people where they can find you online. We've talked about you being on Instagram. What's your Instagram handle?

AP: Yeah, our Instagram handle is arrowsandbow, and we're on there every day, except for a couple of days when we take a break. [chuckle]

DP: Yeah.

AP: And then... Yeah, we... You could find the book Designed to Last anywhere you get books.

JS: Yeah. So, I'll make sure and include all of that in the show notes so that folks can find it there. One last question, what is... And this can be different for each of you. What is a favorite date activity for the two of you? A favorite way for you to spend time together and to connect.

AP: Well, I have, I mean, I have so many, but I know for sure one that I love because I love food and I love experiencing food, and so I would say one of our favorite dates, and Dino did this a long time ago for an anniversary, it's just the whole day was just spent just going around to different... We'd grab a coffee at one spot, we'd grab a donut at another spot and then a pretzel over here, and we just like ping-ponged getting food all day long. And so that was really, really sweet for me, just like Dinno, knowing like my favorite thing, which is food and then creating like a day around it.

JS: I love that.

DP: Yeah. Mine's... [chuckle] mine's generally around time. Just, so it, it's a lot of whatever Ash kind of wants to do, if she wants food or she wants to run around together there. I, I'm cool with just basically being able to spend time together and talk and hang out. So yeah, yeah, we both... It works out fairly good, I wanna be with her and she wants to run around and eat food. So let's go.

[laughter]

AP: He... So basically Dino watches me eat.

[laughter]

DP: Yeah.

AP: 'Cause he doesn't care about food like me. But we actually do like one of the things in our book is... One thing we love to do is gamify our relationship and so... Or gamify marriage. So we love creating games around things like and if we're doing at home date night or for out for a walk, whatever, like, creating little games. Like, hey, let's play a card game and the winner has to give the other person a massage or... Just little things like creating little challenges to help just create healthy habits in our marriage. So it was a kind of fun just throwing for date nights.

JS: Oh, I love that. I love that. Very cool. Would you guys uh, be willing for one of you to close in prayer and just pray for our listeners and their ability to design the life that God has for them and the marriage relationship that they long for?

DP: Yeah. Yeah. Absolutely. Father, we thank you so much for this day, we thank you so much for this time that we got to be able to come together and just, just chat and be able to find commonalities with one another, but also be able to... Be able to speak of the things that impacted our lives, that, that you've done to us and done for us. And we're so thankful for the intentionality you've put on our hearts and our... Around our marriages. We pray for those right now who are struggling with it, we pray that they will just be able to have a vision for what they wanna see in their marriage down the road, whether it's five or 10 or 20 years, that you'll just instill that in their heart, Father, and that they will desire to seek after you and changing who they are and changing the...

JS: Yes.

DP: Changing the relationship between them and their spouse so that they can move down that path closer to you and closer to the desires that you have for them. I pray this in your name, Father. Amen.

AP: Amen.

JS: Amen.

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