

Episode 173 Transcript : The Turf You Claim Is Crucial

00:00:00:34 - 00:00:17:26

Karen Brown

Hi, everybody, and welcome to episode 173. Now I'll warn you, this episode is going to be a little hard for some people to hear. Many of you have lived in the home where you're living for many years, decades even.

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Karen Brown

You've raised families there. You have led a full life. You look around your house and you don't just see a house. You know, you see that chair and you don't you see a chair, but your memory sees your partner sitting in that chair with your youngest on his lap reading a story while the others are gathered around

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Karen Brown

. You look in the dining room and you see not just a dining room table, but a table filled with all your favourite foods and family gathered around the table enjoying the food. Sharing stories. Laughing and celebrating that birthday or holiday.

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Karen Brown

Maybe some of you have a door frame where you have measured the height of your children as they've grown. On the other hand, maybe you look out into the garage and you see that space where you remember going with your partner when you were having an argument and you didn't want the children to hear you look

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Karen Brown

out on the patio and you remember sitting in that Adirondack chair, crying your eyes out because you'd had a really bad disagreement, but then made up later, you know, a house is filled with memories. You look around the neighborhood and, you know, much like my neighborhood did.

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Karen Brown

It may have changed. The children grew up. They went away to university or college or to find better jobs, and they stayed away. They didn't really come home. And, you know, people are so spread out geographically now. They don't come home so often anymore.

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Karen Brown

Some people have sold their houses. New neighbors have moved in. It's not quite the same. Other people have stayed. Maybe most have stayed, but they're living in the big houses with fewer people to occupy the spaces. When you think about your goals for the next decade or two.

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Karen Brown

It's important to separate the things that you need to support that vision you have. From the things that are just familiar. And you do them because you've always done them this

way or because you never really thought about what a change would mean, you need to think about these things.

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Karen Brown

Setting goals for yourself so important you need to set goals that incorporate a vision for the space that you live in as well. Maybe the space that you live in now? Isn't the space you need to live in?

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Karen Brown

For the future. I'm going to say that again. Maybe the space that you live in now is not the space you need to live in for the future. Separate needs from once. If your vision includes independence. Health. Wellness.

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Karen Brown

Then you need to look at the space you live in now with that reference and see if it still suits you. Here's a, for instance, at some point as we age, we will all have to stop driving. Yeah, I know it's hard to think about.

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Karen Brown

But, you know, maybe it's a conversation your kids will initiate. God forbid there should be an accident and your health care professional forces the discussion on you. Maybe you just don't feel as confident anymore. And you decide it's time.

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Karen Brown

How are you going to get the groceries? You know, do you live in that beautiful place that has that gorgeous view overlooking the countryside or the lake? But the grocery store is 20 minutes away? Or do you live in a suburb?

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Karen Brown

And it's too far to be hauling groceries home. Maybe there is a grocery store that's only ten minutes away, but a ten minute drive when you don't have a car is a much longer walk. How will you get to church?

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Karen Brown

How will you get your appointments, how do you socialize with your friends? All of those things are important to your life, and you need to think about how you are going to accomplish all of this and you need to have a plan.

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Karen Brown

Now, for me, independence is a really big deal. That is a hard line. So the idea of depending on my family or even other friends who have a car. Not going to happen for me. Maybe it will for you.

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Karen Brown

Maybe you don't mind being dependent on your children. This may sound harsh. But your children have lives. Your children may be raising children. Your children have jobs and volunteer jobs that they do. Clubs that they like to attend.

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Karen Brown

Hobbies. I would not take my children away from that. Not too often the odd time, the odd time, not on a regular basis, as I have said on this show before taking mom to the grocery store once a week.

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Karen Brown

Soon turns into a lot of other stuff. And it happens much faster than you think. How about taxes? Does your community have taxes? Are they safe? Are they reliable? Does it fit in your budget to have taxes if it does great?

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Karen Brown

That's not going to be the case for everybody. How comfortable are you with all of that? How about your finances? You know, if you live in a typical suburban two story house with a finished basement? And everybody's gone.

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Karen Brown

Maybe they come home once or twice a year, maybe even three times. But the vast majority of the time, 90% or more of the time, it's just you or you and your partner. Yet you're paying to heat it all, you're paying taxes on it all, you're having to maintain it all.

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Karen Brown

If you didn't have to do all of that, what would you do with the extra money? Now maybe you can afford it. Your budget is your budget. It's none of my business. If you can afford it, that's great.

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Karen Brown

But even if you can afford it and you no longer had to pay that, what would you do with the extra money? Maybe your retirement savings are not quite as healthy as you'd like to see them. Maybe you'd like to contribute to your grandchildren's education or your children's mortgages.

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Karen Brown

Maybe you'd like to travel more. Maybe you'd like to take up photography. Believe me, I know that is a very expensive hobby. You know, there are lots of things you could do with extra money. But now you're spending it on a space that's really too large for you.

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Karen Brown

You could rent it out. College students are always looking for a place to live. Do you want to share your space? It's becoming more and more popular. We have articles on that subject on the oldish. There are agencies where you can have people vetted.

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Karen Brown

And they move in and they stay with you. Maybe in exchange for maintenance. Who knows? You know, you can get a little bit creative with all of this, but you know, at the end of the day. Most of us are going to benefit from having a smaller space to call our own.

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Karen Brown

Here's a big one for me. Your personal well-being. Do you live in a home with stairs? And by stairs, I mean, do you walk up stairs to get into or out of your house? Do you have to go downstairs to use the laundry?

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Karen Brown

Do you go upstairs to your bedroom? Stairs are a problem. And if they're getting a little harder to manage all the time, that's something you may need to think about. Now, if your budget allows renovations, can you renovate so that everything is on one floor?

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Karen Brown

Could you actually live on one floor? You're still paying the taxes on the space you're not using, you're still paying to heat it, you're still paying, paying to cool it in the summer, you're still paying to maintain it.

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Karen Brown

But if your budget can afford for you to do that, then maybe renovating is the solution you're looking for. What do you think about that? How about your kitchen space? Are you having to reach too far? To get those dishes.

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Karen Brown

How about the lower cabinets? Are you on your hands and knees because you're rummaging around in those deep dark spaces trying to find what you want? You know, our eyesight dims a little as we age and so do our knees.

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Karen Brown

Rummaging around in those cabinets may not be a friendly option. How about your counters, you know? Do you find it difficult to stand too long to do the meal prep tasks that you're doing now? You could bring a stool over, but then the counters might be too high for you to get the leverage you need to cut

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Karen Brown

things or to roll pastry. Whatever it is that you're doing. Kitchens aren't usually very friendly spaces for people who have a multitude of needs. How about your bathroom? Is the toilet too low? How about getting in and out of the shower?

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Karen Brown

You know, even that lip in the shower that we have to climb over or step over can be problematic for people who use mobility devices. Even people who have sciatica and you can be any age and have sciatica.

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Karen Brown

How about your tub? Can you get in and out of your bathtub if you're a tub person? Easily. I'll tell you, as you age, that becomes more and more challenging. What are the solutions? Well, you can renovate your bathroom too.

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Karen Brown

If you have the budget for it, if you don't have the budget for it. That House may not be the place for you, and you may need to look for a place where it's already done and set up for you.

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Karen Brown

You know, things like lighting are really important as we age as well, the natural light coming in windows, although as we get closer and closer to the end of the year, it's darker earlier and earlier. How about air quality now?

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Karen Brown

Air quality is something we're going to do an entire show on, and I'm going to find somebody to come on and discuss it with me because it is a really important issue for today's show. What I will say to you is that I have heard many people say and I believe that it's true that the air inside

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Karen Brown

of our houses. May very well be more polluted than the air outside of our houses. Depends on where you live, but. They now have some pretty fancy air purifiers if you're still living in a 15 hundred, 2000, 3000 square foot house that cost to purify the air in that big of a space.

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Karen Brown

Might not be affordable. I have just purchased two air purifiers. I attended a conference last week and air was one of the subjects they discussed, and I kind of kicked myself in the butt because a conference I attended in the spring also talked about air purifiers, and I intended to do it then and I didn't, so I

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Karen Brown

did it. Let me tell you, I plugged in about two air purifiers because that's what was required to do the space that I live in. I plugged them in about 4:00 in the afternoon. The next morning I noticed a difference.

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Karen Brown

I noticed a difference waking up to how clogged my sinuses were, to how often I blow my nose through the day or sneeze because the cat walks by. Yes, I have a cat and I love him, and I think I'm a little bit allergic to him.

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Karen Brown

But anyway, the air purifiers are helping all of this, and it's not just that sort of stuff, it's it's the food we eat. It's the products we bring into our homes that give off gases. I could go on and on because it's a really fascinating topic.

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Karen Brown

But suffice it to say that the air quality in your home speaks directly to your health, and it's something that we should all be paying a lot more attention to. So, you know, if issues around transportation are not an issue for you, if you can renovate your house if you are close enough to a grocery store.

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Karen Brown

If your kitchen works for you, if your bathroom works for you and you don't hurt yourself in making use of those facilities in your home, then maybe you can renovate. Maybe you can make a few changes and then Bob's your uncle.

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Karen Brown

You're good to go. It's just simply not the reality for most people. Not everybody can afford to do it. So, you know, if you are. In a home that you have lived in for a long, long time, I would encourage you.

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Karen Brown

To look around it through the lens of your future, plans for your life for the next ten years, for the next 20 years, and see if it is still going to serve you. Being proactive and making the changes that need to be made before they're forced on you is a real life renovation that you have the power

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Karen Brown

to make. Can you? Will you? Join us next Wednesday at twelve noon, and I'll see you then. Until then, take care of yourselves. Bye.