**YGT episode 167**

You're listening to. You've got this episode one 67 yeah. Welcome to, you've got this, a weekly podcast for higher education professionals looking to increase their confidence and capacity for juggling the day to day demands of an academic life. I'm your host, dr Katie Linder. Um, on this episode, I wanted to offer you a kind of exploratory and reflective exercise that I have found really helpful lately and that I've actually found myself using with a lot of my coaching clients.

I'm not sure what it is about this particular season for a lot of my clients, but they're trying to make. Big decisions or they're trying to really listen to kind of their own intuitions and really try to practice a lot of what I have called radical self trust. Um, and I find in our coaching sessions really needing to kind of separate out the different kinds of feelings and messages that they're hearing from their own kind of inner cells.

And this has been a, um, an exercise that I found really helpful. I first came across it in a book called the empowered entrepreneur, and this is a book that I was able to find on Amazon. I think it comes out of Australia. And, um, I actually really enjoyed it. I, I recently finished it on some of my plane reading as I've been traveling.

And, um, I am not Bravo remembering the author's name off the top of my head right now. I will link to it in the show notes so that you can find it. But she talks about this concept of separating out the. The messages that you're getting from your head, from your heart, and from your gut. And, um, the heart messaging is something that I've actually used previously in coaching sessions where I have people come into sessions and they're feeling kind of frenzied.

Um, when, when they kind of land into a session and I have been doing an exercise where I just asked them to kind of put their hand on their heart and take a few deep breaths to just kind of come into the session and be a little bit more of a calm presence. And that seems to be working very well.

Um, for some of my clients. And so this activity is kinda building off of that. And the idea of it is that you kind of hear the messages from yourself, that the self-talk that you give to yourself and you try to identify if it's coming from your head, your heart, or your gut. Now your head is going to be kind of the more logical, um, part of yourself.

And, um, this is the part that often tries to stop us from doing things that are pretty scary. Um, because we're like, Oh, that's not a safe thing to do. And so when your head is kind of saying. Know, Whoa, pause if we're going too fast. You know, like that kind of thing that's often coming from a logical place of just concern and wanting to protect you.

The heart messages I think are often rooted in kind of our deepest desires, the things that we really want and that we're really seeking in our lives, but may be kind of scary to admit that those are the things that we want. Um, and so it's often tempered by the messages we get from our head. And then our gut is more instinctual.

It's those feelings that we get that are kind of gut instincts about whether or not we should move forward in a particular way. And, um, when it comes to my gut, I always like to listen to it, but I also like to give it a little bit more time, um, because sometimes my initial gut instinct is reactive and I want to make sure that it's something that I really want to be listening to.

So thinking about these three different areas, when you're trying to make a difficult decision or when you're finding yourself kind of confused or overwhelmed and you're not kind of sure how to move forward, I actually recommend this exercise. Again, it comes out of this empowered entrepreneur book.

Where you basically pause and you can ask yourself a question if that's kind of what you're trying to answer. If it's framed in that way, you can use the question that you're asking yourself. You can also, um, just think of a particular theme. Um, so if you're trying to kind of make decisions around career, for example, but you don't have a concrete question around what that means, then you can kind of think about those aspects of career.

In a more general or an abstract way. Um, but the idea is to kind of stop and, um, in the beginning, put your hand on your head, like on your forehead or on your, um, the top of your head and just kind of ask yourself those questions or think about those themes or areas with the kind of intention of using your logic to kind of think through what it is you want to discover about that particular thing.

So, rather than kind of letting all the messages, um, tumble in at once and it's, it can be kind of unclear what the messages are, or they might be intentioned with each other because your head is kind of fighting against your heart, which is, you know, in conflict with your gut. You know, all of these things can be a little bit confusing.

It's actually just trying to separate out those channels a little bit so that you can think about them separately. So, um, you do this piece with your, your head and for however long it takes, and then you shift your hand to your heart. And you asked the same question or think about the same kind of themes or ideas that you're trying to understand.

And in all of these spaces you're doing kind of just some deep breathing. It's a little bit meditative. You're trying to just kind of reflect and I think that it can be useful to try to ask yourself, you know, what does my heart want to tell me about this? Or what does my head want to tell me about this?

And you can even write down if there are specific words or phrases that are coming out of that particular part of your body. I also think it can be useful when you're doing this kind of exercise to think about what is happening to you physically. So when you touch your head, you know, is your jaw really tight?

Or when you touch your heart, do you find that your heart is racing? Or, um, are you having a hard time getting a deep breath? You know, those kinds of things. And then when you're ready, after you've done your head and your heart, then you'd put your hand to your stomach. And do more deep breathing and shift and say, what is it that my gut instinct or what is it that my God is trying to tell me about this.

Now. For me, a lot of my anxiety and my nervousness can often be rooted in my gut, which is why I am. I'm a little cautious about what my gut instinct tells me about certain things. That said, I have had a couple situations recently where I had an immediate gut reaction to something, and it was.

Right on 100%. Um, and I, I knew it, you know, like in that moment, and it was also very aligned with what my heart was saying and what my head was saying. So, um, I think that it's one of those things that you may have different levels of trust of your heart, your head and your gut based on past experience.

And this is an exercise that can allow you to, um, bring that to the surface where you can ask yourself, how much am I really trusting each of these things? Um. And that can give you kind of some more insight, I think, as to what's going on. So, um, once you're done with the, the gut part, you can write down, again, words, phrases, things that are kind of coming to mind.

And then the idea would be to just kind of reflect on and compare what you're hearing. From your head, from your heart, and from your gut. And sometimes this can provide a lot of, um, perspective on maybe why you're struggling with a particular, a decision. You know, it may be that your heart is telling you something that is the exact opposite of what your head is telling you.

And it doesn't necessarily resolve the tension, but it can lead you to kind of understand if things are confusing. So recently I did this with a client, this exercise, and what we ended up realizing was, um, she had kind of conflicting heart and head advice that was coming out. And the way that she described it was it was making her gut feel kind of seasick because she was kind of going back and forth between these two things, um, and almost like a tennis match.

And it was causing her. Her got to be confused about what she was supposed to do. And I think sometimes just pulling apart these different messages that we're telling ourselves about a particular situation or a particular decision that we're trying to make, it can bring clarity to just kind of try to listen to each piece and understand it in its own right.

And I often find that when it comes to self-talk around big decisions, like I said, it can be kind of a jumble. And there is often a lot of variables, a lot of factors of, there's some maybe complicated contexts that we're trying to Wade through. And so this was an exercise that immediately spoke to me as something that would be helpful.

And. At this point in my, um, kind of this season of my life, I'm really drawn to reflective exercises. Um, I've mentioned morning pages, I've mentioned, um, lots of solitude and kind of thinking about things. And so this was an exercise that really spoke to me on that level as well, because it's asking you to pause.

It's asking you to listen to yourself and to listen to the different levels of the things that might be coming out that they want to be heard. So I understand that this might sound a little woo woo. Do people, and I know it's kind of a departure from some of the things that I typically talk about when it comes to coaching, but I do think that there is a lot of things within coaching that are very embodied.

And we often. Don't listen to that. And especially in kind of the academic realm, we may be more used to listening to our head and our logic than to our heart and our gut. And that's okay. That's kind of how we're trained. But I do think it's important to separate those things out and make sure that we're listening to all of the messages that are coming through so that we can make a really, um, educated answer or guests or move forward in terms of the things that we're trying to make decisions about.

So, of course, I would love to hear if you try this exercise or if you're finding that you're getting different kinds of messages from these three different areas around a decision or something you're trying to think through, you can always email me@helloatdrkatielinder.com you can tweet to me at Katie double underscore lender.

You can connect with me on Instagram at Katie underscore lender, and you can also write me a letter at PO box 1621 Albany, Oregon nine seven three two one. Any way you contact me. I always love to hear from you. Thanks for listening. Thanks for listening to this episode of you've got this show notes and a transcript for this episode can be found at Katie linder.work/podcasts if you found this episode helpful, please also consider rating and or reviewing the show in iTunes.

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