**YGT episode 191**

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You've got this episode one 91. 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. On this episode, I thought I would share a little bit about what I'm learning after one month of daily yoga practice.

Now, this is something that as of today, as a releasing this episode, I will be officially a month of doing daily yoga. So I thought I would talk a little bit about how I started this because it's been something I've been wanting to do for a really long time. And some of the things about what I'm learning and what I'm planning to do next.

So how I started this was literally one yoga pose at a time, so super, super slow. I picked a foundations of yoga series from yoga with Adrian, which is a YouTube channel that I'll link to in the show notes. And in the foundations of yoga series, she basically focuses on one yoga pose per video. And so I would pick maybe just a video or sometimes.

Depending on how long they were and just focus in on those individual poses for my practice each day. Now this was really. Amazing because it allowed me to really understand a little bit more in depth what yoga is meant to be. I think some of us, if we haven't been introduced to it in maybe a more deep way, we think about it, it's just stretching, which is basically what I kind of thought it was.

Um, I thought about yoga is kind of more about stretching and flexibility and things like Pilates as more about strength. And so I just felt like I had a really surface level understanding. Of what yoga was meant to be. So I started with just that foundations of yoga series, which I would highly recommend.

I thought it was really good. And then I started to phase into sequences after that foundation series was completed. So I started doing some kind of full sequences where there were multiple different poses, um, being strung together. And, um, what that has led to is I do about 25 to 30 minutes of yoga each morning.

Um, I definitely feel the urge to do a little bit more than that some days. And then I'll do just kind of my own, um, additions to whatever the video is encouraging me to focus on. Um, but I think that I am kind of slowly, slowly onboarding myself into this, which is what has been kind of really not. Um, pressuring me.

I feel like zero pressure about it and it's making it more fun. And I feel like with stuff like this and writing I think is another good example of this. If you find yourself wanting to do more, um, and you can kind of hold back on that a little bit and kind of create some anticipation of doing more, it can really help, um, to keep you motivated with new things.

So the other thing I did is I started, this was, I kind of approached it like a study. And I think I've mentioned in other spaces, um, and I know I've blogged about it, how I created a schedule of readings and practice to guide myself and I blogged about this concept of having a personal syllabus. And I posted about kind of what I was planning to do, um, with my yoga study and I had extended it out for multiple months.

So I made kind of a longer term plan. And I've since built that out even more so that I have a sense of like what I want to read and what I want to be focused on in those individual months and how I can kind of keep myself motivated by making kind of incremental improvements or increases to my skill base over time.

But again, super, super slow. So I already had somebody jump into my email and cause they'd heard I was working on yoga and they asked if I was going to become a yoga teacher. And the short answer to that is no. Um, at least not right now. I feel, um, a lot of respect for the yoga community and a lot of yoga teacher programs, um, really want you to be practicing.

In a pretty committed way for years before you would consider going into some kind of yoga teacher training program. I will say though, I've been looking at some classes online that are kind of the equivalent, but it wouldn't really be to train myself as a teacher. It would be more to just kind of deepen my understanding of yoga in a more formal way.

So that is something I've looked into. But here are some things after a month of daily practice, here's what I'm learning. Like I mentioned, yoga is way more than stretching. There was a lot of connection between the mind and the body and the breath as being really important to yoga. I love the idea of setting an intention before my practice.

Um, and so that's something that really kind of ties in with some of the things I've already been doing in terms of my reflective practices. And I also do yoga right after I do morning pages. And so I feel like I've kind of emptied my brain out a little bit right before I get into the practice, which feels really good.

The other thing I'm really learning is that even very simple poses can be challenging to do if you engage the pose in all the different parts of your body. So for example, if you go to the foundations of yoga series that I mentioned, and again, I'll link to it in the show notes and look at the mountain pose.

So basically a mountain pose, if you're not familiar with it, it's just standing. You're just standing straight, like your arms are to your sides. You're standing. And the way that you can really engage these different parts of your body is if you're really focused on the placement of your feet and the idea of the four corners of your feet.

And also you're really engaging, um, like your thigh muscles as you're doing this mountain pose. And there's definitely other ways to kind of tweak this post. But this is a really good example for me of, you know, this is a relatively simple thing when you're looking at someone in mountain, it just looks like they're standing there, but there's actually all this stuff that's going on with their feet, their thighs, their, um, their core muscles.

Um, your back, your shoulders, you know, all of these things. And that part has been really interesting to me to really kind of be present in my body. And it's gotten me thinking a lot about how for the last like 20 years or so, I've been pretty engaged in intellectual pursuits, as many of us have academics, this is what we do.

Um, but it's really meant that I've ignored my body a lot of the time. And this is something I've definitely talked about before. So it's been really interesting for me to see some of the direct benefits already from just a month of doing this. Um, I've forgot better posture. I'm definitely noticing that it's really a lot easier for me to engage different muscle groups throughout the day and really basic movements.

So for example, when I'm unloading or loading the dishwasher and I'm kind of rotating, you know, my shoulders, or I'm like twisting around. Or I'm bending over, you know, all of those things. I'm starting to see kind of connections between those movements and the yoga postures, um, that I've been practicing.

And I'm also getting way more awareness of just needing to move my body throughout the day. I think that we have, um, a tendency whether we're just kind of sitting at a desk or sitting in front of our computers to get kind of stiff, but then I feel like we kind of curl into the stiffness. We don't always respond to it by kind of stretching and moving.

And I was definitely someone who was, you know, pretty sedentary throughout the day. Um, even though I had a standing desk, I, you know, I was probably not having the best posture with my standing desk. So just this kind of. The, the desire to move more throughout the day, I feel like is a really huge sign, um, of kind of positive impact of the yoga practice.

And I'm getting to the point where some days I do almost like a second practice in the afternoon and I'll pause, you know, for like 10 to 15 minutes and do some, um, brief poses in the afternoon. And that feels really good after, you know, a morning and a few hours at the computer. Some other games that I'm really starting to see is a better kind of intellectual understanding of the basics of yoga.

I think that it really helped me to approach this like a study and not like a form of exercise. Um, I've really felt like I was pushing myself, especially in the early part of the coven 19 response. You know, I was trying to kind of stay on track with my exercise. And I was just really physically fatigued and it was very difficult for me.

And so to approach this as something that I'm kind of learning and growing through, um, on a personal level, in addition to kind of the physical components of it has been really helpful. So part of that for me has been reading about it as I'm also practicing. So I started by reading Donna far. He's bringing yoga to life, um, which offered a really great introduction.

I had seen this, um, other people reading it and was kind of interested in it. And I can link to that in the show notes for people who might want to check it out. Um. I've also found that I have a better kind of, in addition to that intellectual understanding that's growing, a more embodied understanding of the challenges of yoga in that, you know, it's hard for me right now to align my breath with the movement.

You know, like even just that kind of sequencing is, um, a little bit challenging. I'm definitely more aware of my own impatience. Um, patients is not something that's, that I'm really good at. Uh, and so being able to kind of continually remind myself that this can take as long as it needs to take. Like there's no race, there's no competition of like how quickly this goes.

So I'm getting a good opportunity to practice also, non-judgment, you know, with my body, with my abilities, and just kind of this constant reminder of. It's okay. You don't like, there's, there's no kind of competition that I'm trying to have with myself around this right now. So some of the next steps that I have for this, um, I am continuing my daily practice.

And in the month of may, I'm doing a 30 day yoga series from yoga with Adrian called home. And, um, it's like 25 to 30 minutes. A day of different kind of word intentions, which I find really useful at home, just seems like the perfect fit right now. Um, since I'm home all the time. And then I'm also continuing to read, um, about a book a month is my plan.

Um, and so I'm reading Donna far, he's other book, which is called yoga, mind, body, and spirit of returned to wholeness. And this is a book that focuses more on the actual poses and postures themselves, so that I can learn a little bit more about, um, actual things. That are, that are more formal education around this, um, around like tendons and muscle groups and things like that.

So that's kind of interesting. And then the other thing that I invested in, um, back in April that I don't think I've mentioned yet is I ended up purchasing a class. Um, that's a several month long class on something called somatic coaching. And somatic is basically another word that means embodied. Um, and the idea of it is to help me think about how I can engage the body more in my coaching practice.

So for example, um, I've had a couple of. Coaching clients recently that have been dealing with some really challenging circumstances. And in the session I would ask a question like, um, what does that feel like in your body when you're experiencing that emotion? So to kind of try to route some of the experiences of the client in an embodied way, rather than just trying to kind of tackle it from a more intellectual perspective.

Which some of the questions, um, even when they're focused on emotion, kind of keep us in our heads and not in our bodies. So, um, I've been curious about this for a while and I feel like there may be some ways that yoga in particular can be a useful, um. Tool to be incorporating into some of my coaching and somatics goes beyond yoga.

It is not, um, they're not the same thing. So let me be clear about that and I can link to another book called the art of somatic coaching in the show notes in case this is something that's of interest to you. So I have been diving into that as well. So I feel like I'm kind of shifting this in a range of directions and kind of as I expand, um, the time that I'm doing the daily practice, I'm also kind of expanding out the kinds of questions I'm asking and where I think this might be useful, not just in my personal life, but also thinking about it in terms of my coaching practice as well.

So I would love to hear if there's something that you're kind of doing a deep dive with. I also completely understand if you don't have the capacity for that right now, but maybe you hope to do a deeper dive on something in the future. And of course, if you're practicing yoga and want to talk more about that, I would love to hear that.

I'd love to hear about your practice and how it's impacted you. So you can always email me@helloatdrkatielinder.com. You can tweet to me at Katie, double underscore Linder. And you can always connect with me on Instagram at Katie underscore Linder as well, and any way you contact me, I always love to hear from you and thanks so much for listening.

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