**YGT episode 201**

You're listening to, you've got this episode 201. Mmm. 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. Mmm. On this episode, I want to share a bit of a theory that I've been developing around the relationship between values and other kinds of tasks and goals and projects and things that we might have in our lives.

And I talked about this a little bit in an earlier episode, where I differentiated between, um, projects and life practices. But since that episode, I've been developing this further and I want to give a bit of a shout out to the people I've been working with this summer, my writing group, um, my coach training participants, because all of these people have really been helping me to think through these layers.

And they've been asking some really good questions that have helped me to articulate this kind of theory that I have. So. Basically, what I want to offer is a bit of a like relational hierarchy and maybe hierarchy is not the right word to use. Um, but I want you to think about kind of a series of layers, and I think there's all different kinds of ways you could think about this.

If you were thinking about it as a hierarchy, it could be kind of a pyramid. I tend to think about it as like a layer cake or something like that, where you have kind of foundations building off of each other. But the way that I want yeah. To kind of introduce this to you, is that at the very bottom, at the very, very foundational level, Are your values and these are the things that I've probably stuck around through a good portion of your life, um, that are kind of centered to you, very personalized to you, things that you think, uh, really matter, and that are getting infused into your life and work in different ways.

Yeah. And, um, I, uh, co I've given a lot of examples of my values in the past, but, um, some of them right now that I'm really focused on are things like creativity. Radical self-trust, I'm diving deeper into a value around mind, body connection, which has been really interesting lately to explore. So these values are sometimes kind of abstract, but you can define them.

You can kind of maybe locate them. I'm at different places in your life, in the jobs that you've held in the projects that you've done in your interactions with other people. Um, but these are things that you really hold dear to you. So those are the base layer, the layer above that, which is very connected to your values would be what I've called in the past life practices.

And I'll link to that past episode so that you can do like a deeper dive in this. But, um, the life practices are basically routines or things that you are doing consistently that you feel are tied to your values. So for example, my, my value of creativity is really, um, strengthened by my. Life practice of morning pages, which is a form of journaling that I do every morning.

Um, I would say it's also supported by my quarterly creative retreats that I do that are kind of consistent. My mind body connection value is really supported right now through my yoga practice, which is a life practice. So you have kind of these connections between your values and how you are implementing them into your daily life.

Through these life practices. Now the next level up from the life practices. This is your goals. Now, I think some people think about the goals as being the foundational piece like that the goals are at the very bottom. But if you think about the fact that your goals actually have these two layers beneath them, they have the layer of your values and the layer of your life practices.

Then your goals are kind of supported through those things. And you can think about the alignment of what are your goals and how do they align with your life practices and with your values. So I have a goal, for example, of completing yoga teacher training. And this is meant to further and deepen yeah.

My practice of yoga that I do every day. And it's also meant to help me better understand the model and body connection value that I have. And so there's this alignment and a motivation. And because of that alignment to complete that, because it feels meaningful to me because of the connection it has to my values.

Now the layer above your goals is what I've called projects. Now, some people might say our goals and projects, the same thing. Um, because I think you could say, well, taking a yoga teacher training is like a project, you know, it's, it's something that is kind of more time-bound it's um, has kind of a discrete beginning and an end.

And I think you could argue that. I think you could argue that yet. Something like yoga teacher training could be a project as well. Um, and I think that there's a real connection between your goals and your projects. But the other thing I think about with projects for example, is each month I typically do a 30 day challenge to kind of watch different videos on YouTube, do different yoga poses, try out different kinds of yoga.

And for me, that's more of a project where it's like very discreet. Um, it's, it's relatively short. Um, in terms of periods of time, I am kind of repeating it each month, but with different themes or with different ideas of what I'm trying to explore, and that contributes to my goal of deepening my yoga practice, my, my actual practice of what I'm learning to do and how I'm learning to do different poses with integrity and my values of that mind, body connection.

Okay. So let me repeat all this. Cause it's kind of a lot, especially if you're just listening and it's feeling kind of abstract. So you have your values at the bottom of the foundation, you build on that with your life practices, then you have a couple layers above that, of your goals and your projects.

And then I would say there's a couple layers above that where your projects might have certain objectives of what you're trying to do. And then above your objectives would be your tasks like your, to do list. So, this is kind of the crazy part. If you start to actually like write this out into a diagram, you'd realize that there's like four things in between your values and your to do list.

And this is why it's so easy to get misaligned. Look at your calendar. You look at your to do list and you're like, why doesn't anything in my. My day to day, life feel meaningful to me right now. Why doesn't this feel like the work that I'm supposed to be doing? Like there's all these different layers in between values and your to do list where you can kind of go off track and you can not even realize it.

So when I think about objectives, I'll kind of tie this in with the yoga theme. So if I have a project of doing a 30 day yoga challenge, I might have an objective within a particular challenge of focusing on yoga postures that are related to spine lengthening. Which is a, an important part of yoga. So I might say I'm really going to do a deeper dive this month on spine lengthening and thinking about my spine.

Yeah. And doing lots of different postures that are, are giving me a lot of attention to my spine. So my, my objective is to focus on my spine. My project is to do the 30 day. Yup. The challenge, um, the overall goal might be to just deepen my yoga practice and feel stronger and more confident within my yoga practice.

The practice itself is the daily engagement with, um, yoga Asana, which is the physical practice of yoga. And then the values piece is that mind, body connection. So the tasks that might come into that would literally be show up on a daily basis for like a 20 minute yoga video. Like that's the, to do on my list is I have this yoga video and I'm keeping a yoga journal.

So maybe another task is to complete my yoga journal entry so that I can think about how am I, what am I learning? And how am I applying what I'm learning about the spine and like the name of the spine. So when I started talking about this with my, um, participants for my different groups this summer, this was really helpful to them to kind of think about, as they think about bigger projects they're taking on.

As they're trying to prioritize different things that are on their plate, they were starting to kind of diagram out how were those things connected to their values, their life practices. What would they articulate as their goals, the projects within those goals, the objectives within those projects, the tasks within those objectives to really try to have alignment.

And I had somebody say to me is the goal here to have a hundred percent alignment all the time. And I don't think that's possible. We can't be like perfect, perfect, perfect all the time. But I do think that this is a tool that you could use if you feel. Off or kind of misaligned with something or there's something that you keep procrastinating and you just don't know why, or there's an area of your life that is just feeling not satisfying to you or not meaningful to you.

You could do this kind of diagramming and try to understand what is it that is kind of misaligned or where are you kind of going off track. And it may be just a small tweak that would bring it back into alignment for you. So I'll repeat all these one more time, because I think again, it's kind of hard to listen to it and you could easily diagram this out on like a piece of paper.

If you think about it as like layers building on each, on each other, the bottom layer is your values. That's followed by your life practices, followed by your goals and then your projects, your objectives and your tasks. And the reason that some people like to think of this is a pyramid, or you could even think about this as like concentric circles with your values in the middle, um, is that these things build on each other and they're, they're almost like nesting dolls.

If you think about Russian nesting dolls, where your tasks live within your objectives, which live within your projects, which live within your goals, which live within your practices and which live within your values. So all of these things are like, Part of a bigger whole, and, um, it's just something I'm thinking a lot about.

I think that it's a really helpful way for us to get beyond basic goal setting and task management, to be understanding the larger meaning behind what it is we're doing each day. So I would love to hear your thoughts on this. You can always email me at hello at dr. Katie linder.com. You can tweet to me at Katie double underscore Linder.

You can connect with me on Instagram at Katie underscore Linder. And if you end up diagramming this, I'd love to see what it looks like for you, um, with your projects and values and things that are on your plate. And, uh, let me know, let me know how it goes any way you contact me. I always love to hear from you.

Thanks for listening. Mmm, 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. Thanks for listening.