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[00:00:00] Welcome to coach, to coach a podcast dedicated to showcasing the power of coaching. I'm your host, dr. Katie Linder, and I offer coaching to academics and higher education professionals to bring more ease to their lives and work. Before you dive into this episode, here's a quick introduction to the structure of the show in each season of coach, to coach a new guest coach and will come on the show to demonstrate a range of coaching tools and strategies.

The first episode will offer you an introduction to the guest coach. Then I'll coach the guest and they'll coach me for the next six episodes and always on real topics and issues we're dealing with in our own lives. Each season, we'll end with a debrief episode where we'll talk about how the season went.

And offer any updates on the topics covered in earlier episodes. It might make the most sense to start each season in the [00:01:00] beginning and listen to the episodes in order this season, I'm delighted to introduce you to dr. Danielle Barkley, a higher education professional and coach in training. Danielle currently works as a career and professional development educator at the university of British Columbia, where she specializes in supporting students at the masters and PhD level.

Coaching gives Danielle the opportunity to engage in career conversations with a wider audience, including mid-career professionals, career changers, and anyone wondering what their best life could look like. Hi, Danielle. It is wonderful to be back with you again today. And Katie, it's great to be here as well.

I am excited to coach you and I know you have a topic that is on your mind. So what is it that you want to be coached around today? So just a couple of days ago, uh, I had the good fortune to have a, I'll say a mini project. It wasn't a huge timescale, but something I've been working on for maybe three or four weeks, and that was gearing up to a life event.

So the event happened on Friday, [00:02:00] went seems to have gone really well. The initial feedback was positive. My kind of read on it during and after it was really positive. So I'm hoping today that we could spend some time kind of unpacking. What might I take forward from that experience? What are some lessons I learned?

How can I maybe translate some of a moment where something went well into maybe other things that I have coming up or that are on the calendar? I think that think that there's often a lot of reflection built in around what could go better or what. Once it's successful. And of course that that's really valuable too, but I know for myself, but I think for a lot of folks, we don't, we spend a lot of time thinking about how do I learn from something that did feel like it went really well.

Okay. So you mentioned that this event ended on Friday, so it's just temporarily, you know, re relatively recent. Are there other reasons why this is kind of top of mind for you right now to be doing this reflection? I think because I [00:03:00] know myself and I know my tendency is to dive headlong into the next thing.

Like, I think the fact that even today that I've, that I'm still thinking about processing. This is Testament to both some of the experiences with coaching and some of my kind of processing that I'm learning about coaching, but then also the fact that I am still kind of writing. That wave. Like, I think I was really struck by how energy I felt after the end of that event, by how much that energy kind of now has carried forward into my weekend.

And it stands out to me that my instinct wasn't to just go on to the next thing. Which I think is very much usually typically my instinct, whether or not something went great or fine, or just sort of, so, so I think I'm hugely very much in the what's next mindset. Some of that, as I'm speaking, I'm also thinking about, you know, the working from home space.

Does that invite a different sort of processing or space for reflection? [00:04:00] Okay. So when you think about our time together today, what would feel like a meaningful outcomes to walk away with? I think for me, the meaningful outcomes would be to have. One or two ideas about, I want to say like maybe principles or, or practices that may be were part of, of this event that happened.

That I can think about where else am I work that they might show up and maybe even a plan for applying them, but that doesn't feel as actually important as just getting that clarity around what was it that allowed this to sort of achieve a certain kind of synchronicity. And I think once I can articulate that a little bit better in my mind, the opportunity to then locate that in other types of work will come.

When it needs to, or when the time is. Right. Okay. So it sounds like we're going to be doing some reflection [00:05:00] on a success in your life and try to pull out one to two principles or practices that might be able to be applied into the future. Now that you're past that successful moment. Yeah. That's exactly right.

Awesome. Okay. So I'm curious if you can share with us Danielle, a little bit about what your priorities were. When it came to this event, what were you really giving your time and energy to, to make sure it went well?

It's interesting because when you say giving time, I'm an energy. I think a lot of it was actually about conserving time and energy was actually a big motivation. Uh, we are currently working with a small team. Uh, we have a few folks who aren't with us right now, so everyone's kind of stretched. Uh, it's a time of year in my field of work where there's a lot going on and one of the big pieces.

So I think actually one of my key goals for this event was how can I make this as. Simple as possible. [00:06:00] And how can I kind of achieve maximum impact for the students that are going to participate in this event with not quite minimum, but like a highly efficient input as far as investment of staff hours, as far as investment and planning, knowing that knowing that it was a busy time that people were had a lot of other things on their plate.

I think my goal was actually really thinking about how to be really efficient with the time and the energy that went into it. How would you say that compares to maybe something similar that you've done in the past? That was this kind of event?

I think, and I think this is going to be a running kind of theme or aspect of this conversation. I think this was this approach of kind of, I'll say, low input, high impact. And the balance between those pieces is a strategy I've often been curious to try or is a strategy that to me has often felt quite.

Intuitive. [00:07:00] It just, at other moments, it sort of seemed like maybe I haven't quite had the courage to say what if we took this approach or maybe the moment didn't feel as ripe to suggest that approach. So it wasn't, I don't think that I stepped. Out of my comfort zone, if anything, it sort of felt like I stepped into my comfort zone and the moment that this was happening, that it was added busy time that we didn't have a ton of runway time leading up the event actually felt like moment of kind of opening where this approach that often might have been my kind of go to felt like it was going to be a good match for what the needs worth is particular.

Okay. Interesting. So you mentioned energy earlier and this idea of conserving time and energy, what was the energy that you felt while the event was it's happening? So this I think is also why it stuck in my mind. I was on zoom for pretty much four hours straight with like, [00:08:00] Literally a couple of breaks with like grab some water, grab a snack more or less pretty consistently for a big block of time.

I was either facilitating or answering student questions. Like the vast majority of that time I was on. And I came to the end of that and I felt super energized. And I think that was what was really striking to me that there was actually on the day of. Wait a lot of effort and kind of presence and intensity, even that went into it.

But I didn't leave at the end and steal like exhausted or completed, or at any point during the event, I never felt any of those things. It actually felt like there was a really strong alignment of the energy I was putting into it. And how excited or energized I felt by it. What do you think contributed to that?

I think that it was that I felt like I was active. The [00:09:00] entire time, I think in a way, what might have seemed like it should have been maybe exhausting, like you're going to be on camera or you're going to be actively talking to students the whole time. There were, some of my teammates were, were there to support me and to help with some pieces.

But I would say I was kind of in a, in a visible and, uh, yeah, visible and active role the whole time. And actually to me, I think what I found energizing about that. Was that it felt useful and it felt necessary. There was never that. And I think maybe that comes back to like input and impact. It felt like everything I was putting into it.

Needed to be there and was creating value as opposed to, you know, and I think this is the reality for lots of different kinds of work, but maybe much other things that were much shorter or maybe less intense in duration. I've actually left feeling much more depleted because I've left with a sense of like, I don't know if I contributed or I don't [00:10:00] know if that was a good use of my time, whereas this, it felt to me totally clear in my mind that I had created value.

That I had been an active presence and that there was something generative about pretty much the entirety of that block of time. Hmm. What are the strengths that you think you brought to this particular event that are unique to you?

I think some of it was the, the agility and the adaptability that I went in feeling pretty confident that, you know, given that there was a lot, it was a live event. There was interaction with students. I knew I couldn't predict how many students would be there. What this word is. Peak rhythms of students.

Entering in. Cause they could kind of enter and exit the virtual event at different points. So I knew, I couldn't predict at 11 o'clock would he have 300 students or 30 students in the room? I could necessarily, I could predict a bit what some of the questions they would raise my ear, but I couldn't know for sure.

And I think [00:11:00] I was okay with that ambiguity and I felt confident that however, those rhythms played out and however, the event kind of folded, I was going to be able to. To respond to that. And then I was going to have the knowledge and the resources to engage with that. Hmm. Was there anything about this event that felt unexpected to you?

When you say unexpected? I'm curious. I can think of like a few. You mean like the way it unfolded or the way I responded to it, or any idea of it maybe above.

I think, I think it was a bit unexpected how good I felt at the end of it. Although, as I say that, I don't worry about that. Unexpected is the right word in the sense that like, I. Had it been imagining I would finish that. I would come to the end of it. It'd be like, Oh, I feel [00:12:00] awful. Or I feel exhausted. I just don't think I had thought at all, how I was going to feel at the end of it.

So it was sort of unexpected or surprising by how energized I felt. And I think I had also felt a bit. Curious about student engagement, sort of student responses. And, you know, we don't always get feedback from every student to engage us in an event, but I think I was pleased and, and a little bit surprised, although not entirely to sort of see that students were engaging.

They seem to be getting three the event. Okay. When you think about kind of metrics for success for this event, what were you most hoping to achieve?

I was hoping to show primarily to myself, but maybe to some other people [00:13:00] that there doesn't always need to be a lengthy or elaborate planning. And there doesn't always need to be a lengthy or elaborate kind of, or I guess I should say, elaborate infrastructure to make an event successful, um, that it is possible to do.

A pretty successful event with kind of a fairly lean set up with fairly lean resources in terms of the number of hours and the number of staff involved and that the structure of the event doesn't have to be complex necessarily. I think of course those decisions are going to be determined by your goals for the event.

And I think some of those choices were. A strategic choice in this case, knowing what the nature of the event was. But I think I wanted to see if it was possible to do something in a pretty simple, straightforward. I was want to say like, like lo-fi, I think some of this comes from, you know, as we're thinking about these conversations about learning in digital [00:14:00] spaces and what.

Digital engagement looks like there is of course, this desire to look for, for innovation and trying new things. And I wholeheartedly support that. I think there's great value to that, but I think it was getting to a point where some of that was starting to feel a bit noisy to me, or some of that was starting to feel like there were sometimes too many moving parts.

And I think one of my measure of success. So it's kind of like, what if we just kept it simple? Could we still do something that was good and that created value? What do you think are some of the benefits of this low input, high impact strategy that worked for you in this case?

I think you can do a lot, right? Because I didn't necessarily spend a ton of time. Prepping the other team members beforehand, we did some prep, but we didn't spend like extensive time training for the event because the structure of the event was such that there [00:15:00] didn't need to be at extensive time training in the lead up.

Those people and myself were freed up. To be doing other things. Like if I calculated out the hours, most of the hours for the day off, rather than sort of an extended, and of course that's going to vary on what you're trying to do and whether that makes sense, but it does mean that there was both time.

And I think also mental bandwidth, um, leading up to it that wasn't being spent on this. I think that, I think that there was also. Hmm, a simplicity to it that meant that other people, um, that it didn't kind of need a lot of infrastructure around it that we need to do a lot of like tools or set up or take down at the end that it was really streamlined.

And I think, again, going back to just that question of resources, whether that's time or, or whether that's going to digital pieces, [00:16:00] uh, it felt like we were able to get a lot done without. Overstretching resources that I think are already kind of having a lot of demands for them. are there other areas of your life where you feel like you've already kind of tested out this low input, high impact strategy, um, and like, cause you seem to really think it could work.

Like you had a lot of trust in us. Where else have you seen this working in your life? That's a great question. I think a lot of it comes from my previous experience and more of a classroom teaching format where, I mean, I definitely prepped, uh, but I didn't necessarily. Do like hugely elaborate lesson plans or I would say, you know, a lot of my focus in teaching was pretty organic and I'm pretty emergent, you know, all show up in a spirit of curiosity and openness, and then we'll, co-create something together.

Uh, also my [00:17:00] facilitation tends to be pretty sort of in the moment. Uh, certainly there's some prep things that I like to do beforehand, but I. I do tend to, uh, it's funny to think about some of them context. I always have this image of like, I've seen people and I think this works well for them. I've seen them create really magical things with this, but they'll come into facilitation with like bags and stuff.

They've got like markers and posted notes and I've seen them do really amazing activities with that. But I've also like, said to people like. The idea of having to bring stuff with me, stresses me out. There's something for me about coming in this space, in this, like, what you've got is what you're bringing with you and what shows up in that moment with the people that you're engaging with.

So I think my, my previous teaching experience and some of my in-person facilitation has leaned really towards. Yeah, towards, towards thinking about what is the balance of what you do before the session, versus what happens [00:18:00] in the space of that activity or that engagement and what does the tradeoff between them need to be?

Or what are the different options? As far as what that trade off could look like. So I want to do a little check in to see what are you taking away already from this conversation about principles or practices that you feel could be applied elsewhere when it comes to what made this event successful for you?

Right.

I think I'm taking away this idea. Is that like the connection between some other things that might have done in previous years, professional experiences or other aspects of my role. I haven't really, we thought about. And that helps me to see it as kind of much more of a, of a continuum in terms of what I might take into other experiences.

I mean, the one thing I should, or one thing I should say about all of this, which I do think has been a consideration in [00:19:00] other pieces is. It had a lot of it hinged on me, like the sort of flip side of it being kind of resource light in some ways. And, and running pretty lean was that if I, if I had broken my bank the day before, we might not have been in a great place.

Um, and if, if this had been designed with a different focus on creating collaborations or kind of. They're trained collaborations among the team or creating a higher degree of involvement so that people had a sense of kind of working together. It wouldn't have met those boxes. So I think the other thing I'm kind of reflecting on with, in all of this is it.

It worked, but it worked in ways that had some risks associated with them. And that has yeah. Some costs associated with it. No, probably that's always true of everything. Uh, but I think I'm trying to sort of balance it out those [00:20:00] pieces of not just saying, well, I should do everything like this, or we should do everything like this in the future.

Uh, what were the ways in which something was successful this time, but could have not been successful under other circumstances? It sounds like it operated well within a set of certain parameters. One of those parameters being, like you said, you were kind of responsible for a section of it. Are there other parameters that you would say if I was to do this again, it would need to fit this criteria in order for it to work well.

Yeah, for sure. I think, I think I had a lot of autonomy over the event and I. What's the best way to articulate this. And I had a lot of, um, I was sort of given this opportunity and people believed that I would be able to kind of take some initiative around this. And then there wasn't necessarily a lot of need for check-ins beforehand or [00:21:00] sort of oversight for kind of documenting in the lead up.

And I think if there had been. Some of that, I would have had to be doing more things beforehand in order to be able to communicate that with other people. So I think another kind of crucial condition for success in this case was that I was given a lot of autonomy, a lot of trust, and it was sort of assumed that it was going to go fine.

And that people would hear about it afterwards. And that just practically speaking, isn't going to be the set up for every type of project or every type of activity. Are there certain kinds of projects or activities that you think this would work especially well for when you think about what you might consider doing it for in the future.

I think it works well for things that are a little bit niche. I think if there is a something that's a bit more specialized, uh, I think this approach works better because it does allow for kind of. A concentration rather than trying to [00:22:00] bring a lot of people into something they might not be as specialized in.

Uh, I think there's that, I think it works well for things where there is a fairly short runway up to, up to the activity. So if we have months and months to plan, then I think it would have been yeah. Sensitive to do things differently and, and kind of have more build up beforehand. I also think it works well for activities where there is, I'll say like a moderate to high degree of unpredictability.

If you, you know, you're doing a more standardized type of workshop facilitation, and you could, you knew you had one hour and based on registration, most likely we're going to have about 25 people for that one hour. Then I think you can become more structured in your approach to it. And it makes sense to do that.

I think in the cases where it is much more kind of uncertain, who's going to be there, what their needs are [00:23:00] going to be. I think this type of model is a better fit for that. So I'm curious if there's anything Danielle about this event that you felt like maybe it didn't go the way that you wanted it to, or you would like to change somehow in the future.

I do question. I do question whether, so the other staff members who were involved, I question whether I gave them what they would have wanted from this experience or whether I gave them enough opportunity to reflect on and articulate what they. Um, might've wanted, I think they did incredible work. Um, and you know, knowing that they had other things on their plate, I think my goal was not to overburden them.

And I think I achieved that goal of like, not creating a lot of extra work for them and trying to make it as [00:24:00] easy as possible. But I think maybe in, in my efforts to. Not make sure this became something that ate up a lot of their time or took up a lot of energy. I do wonder would they actually maybe wanted to spend more time on it because they saw an opportunity for learning and growth.

And maybe we didn't consider that as much, or maybe there wasn't as much conversation around that. How do you think that that is kind of prioritized related to some of these other strengths that you talked about around time economy and independence and having, you know, conserving your time and energy?

Still getting high impact with low input. Yeah, I think, uh, uh, the area of kind of work and reflection and probably ongoing roasts for me is the balancing of all those qualities you just named or values you just named with space for collaboration and consultation and [00:25:00] bringing others into the work. Um, I think that.

I wouldn't say this was like a failure on that account. I do think, I wouldn't say that this was a huge success as far as, as that piece either. And I think given the nature of this event that might not have been as much of a priority, but I think for many events it would be more of a priority or it could be more of a priority.

So for sure, a reflection. For me thinking about how do I keep some of these pieces that worked well, but what would the balance be between also ensuring other people got it chance to try out stuff for skills that they've been wanting to try, uh, got a chance to learn or got a chance to kind of. See themselves in the design and the creation of, of a plan or an activity.

How would you say that this event and the success of it is connected to your values?

[00:26:00] I think it's deeply connected to, um, values of round around impact around output around high quality standards and a value about achieving those. It's also connected to. Yeah, I'm struggling a bit to even articulate it. So I'll share what's coming up for me. I, you might know a stair Parral. She does a lot of relationship kind of coaching, but also has done some stuff around work.

And in a podcast episode, I listened to, she was talking about kind of how people's values might show up in their work. And she said a question she often asks is where you raised for loyalty or autonomy. And not, of course, if [00:27:00] that's a complete dichotomy and it's a spectrum and I'm sure people operate between them, but that resonated really sharply with me in a sense of feeling very strongly that I was tipped towards the autonomy piece.

So I think the values piece around all of this is. Is not that those values around, uh, achieving achieving results that are giving results quickly and performing well sometimes with, with lean resources. I don't think those necessarily are in conflict with the values around kind of collaboration or bringing other people into the work or learning from other people.

But they do think that there's sometimes a yeah, sometimes it kind of is. Balancing or a way to, and fro between them. And I think one thing. That that made the event kind of energizing for me was it felt like a sandbox where I really got to play with and [00:28:00] exercise some of those values that are kind of a GoTo for me.

And I think in a lot of my work I've often. Reigning some of those qualities in, I think I'm often sort of striving for that balance, striving for that. And I think one reason I felt really energized by this particular event was feeling like I kind of got to let them them run wild for a day. So I'm curious, Danielle, what this experience is, um, teaching you were kind of what you're taking away about the kind of role that you want to play professionally.

Yeah. Yeah. And I think that that really takes us to the, to the heart of it. Because as I was kind of thinking about how energized by this activity that I felt like the thought definitely came up in my mind afterwards of like, can I just do this all the time? And, you know, as with most things from chocolate ice cream, Certain types of [00:29:00] tasks.

We might think we want it all the time. In reality, probably go the time. But, but one thing, uh, that I think you're hearing in the definitely surface for me was like, how do I get more of this in my professional life? And then I think my decision around coaching today was maybe that the first step towards how do I get more of that is how would I explain to someone what the, this is in order to be able to.

Advocate for it or ask for it or look for those opportunities. So I think, yeah, I think some of what it is healing to me is, uh, is a desire. And maybe, maybe this is useful reframe like collaborating with small groups. It wasn't that I did it alone and I wouldn't have wanted to do it alone. I wouldn't have been able to do it alone, but we were a small group.

And I think that created agility in the planning process and agility on the day of that just gets [00:30:00] harder in, in bigger groups. So that might be a really concrete thing that collaborating in, in smaller groups and with people I knew quite well created a certain amount of kind of fluidity, even in the work.

Together that I think allowed me to feel like I was still being pretty. Like we were being pretty agile and responsive and to just like text each other and figure it out. And I think that felt more organic to me than sometimes things that become more heavily structured because there's more inputs involved.

I do think the, if possible. Being being conscious and intentional about the front loading that like I've really, if I can, and this is going to depend on the task, what my energy does show up in the doing of the thing. As opposed to the preparing to do the thing, and that's going to look different in different contexts, but I [00:31:00] think that's a big takeaway for me.

I can kind of think about if there are different opportunities to play different roles within different projects, or if I'm getting a chance to sort of speak to how I would like to contribute, uh, knowing that I'm might. In some cases might be better served by the action or the implementation stage rather than perhaps the planning or the development stage about these different components and kind of the current role that you have within your work.

Where are the areas where you feel like you have the most control or capacity, and where are the areas where you feel like you have less control and capacity to make some of these requests?

So there's a high percentage. My role that I do have a lot of control over, uh, where in fact, I do a lot of stuff either. Sometimes [00:32:00] quite independently or sometimes that a small group of key collaborators where I do make a lot of decisions over the structure. So it's not that this was. Unlike other things I'm doing.

I think it just felt like this was, this was more visible than a lot of the work I kind of do in my day to day. So I think it was more about taking them or having a method that I. Do use fairly regularly in my work, kind of be seen by others or, uh, be used to create a deliverable that was more visible than some of the other things that I do.

Doesn't really speak to your question, but that came up for me as you were, as you were asking it, where do I feel like I have less of it? Um, I think sometimes when I'm. Asked or invited to engage in a project as a contributor or a collaborator. And I come in and it sort of feels like the [00:33:00] default has already been set that there's gonna be, but of this template around a long design process that focus heavily on collaboration consultation, a fairly involved kind of infrastructure about the running of it.

Um, and I think there's a hundred percent cases where it, those are necessary. I think what for me is coming up is that it often feels like those things are, are taken for granted like that. There isn't always a sort of space of decision making of, are we going to use these things? Is it a strategic way to do it in these ways?

So you mentioned the visibility piece, Danielle, and I'm wondering if there. What's something about this, where kind of in your heart of hearts, you want it to be seen, you wanted something to be seen that isn't normally seen because it's not typically as visible to people. Is there anything like that?

Yeah, no, [00:34:00] there really is. I wanted. Funny cause there's, there's a play there between like seen and showing. And I know saying like I wanted to show them can sound like a bit like defensive or assertive. But I think for me, it was actually wanting to show people that a different approach to planning this type of event or activity.

Not in all cases, you need to consider your variables. You need to consider your context, but could be successful. And I also think I wanted to show them that a particular way of showing up pedagogically or showing up as a facilitator could be successful. Um, I think that I have sometimes felt. Yeah. I felt a sort of range of what the expectations are for how to facilitate successfully or what that looks like.

And I think it was satisfying to [00:35:00] me to feel like an approach that I sometimes use, but Austin, not in very visible ways. Could work on a bigger scale in a slightly more environment. I wouldn't bring it to bear in every context. I think this was a particular alignment of like need and approach. And I was conscious of thinking of that.

Um, but yeah, I do think there was something about wanting. To be seen and wanting to, to show people in a gentle and collaborative way. Like this could also be good or this could also be okay, what are the indicators you have that maybe people did see that. I think, I mean, I think just the fact that it worked like went smoothly, the students were able to access it.

They were able to get in. Um, there was like people knew where they were supposed to be at what times, and there didn't need to be any sort of, um, Last minute kind of [00:36:00] tinkering or adjustments. I haven't heard a ton of the feedback yet because the event was quite fresh, but I did get the sense that some of the feedback had been fairly positive.

So that's going to be a strong, strong indicator. So yeah, I think it felt like it went smoothly. I felt this is it. It's funny. It feels sort of like a notch data-driven way to approach it. But like, I do think when you're facilitating or when you're in conversation, there's a bit of an energy from it. And I like, it just felt like there was a good energy around the digital space and around the conversations that were happening there.

So Danielle, I have a sense that there's kind of something under the surface. Well, you had mentioned earlier, like not wanting to be defensive or, you know, I'll show them, but that there is a little bit something that you were trying to prove here. Maybe even beyond the low input, high impact strategy, um, either about [00:37:00] yourself or about, you know, this work style, what's under the surface of this for you when you're really thinking about.

What was happening in this situation, what made it successful and what the potential longer term outcomes could be? Okay.

I think that what's under the surface is

I think that what's under the surface. Is a sense that I sometimes feel like my instincts for how I might approach something are different from other people's instincts are different from what the kind of more standardized approach seems to be. And I think as is often the case, I think I was starting to doubt.

I was like, okay, well, if I'm the only person who thinks this is a good way to do it, then. [00:38:00] I guess it probably isn't a good way to do it. And I think then I had this experience where I had the opportunity and I chose to kind of go with some ways of approaching it and ways of doing it, that felt more intuitive to me.

And again, not that they're radically at odds, but I do think there were, there were some things that had someone else taking this on. They might've approached differently. And then. And then it kind of worked and I mean, you know, there's good fortune and there's luck and authors, all those things. But so then I think I'm now left with this bigger question around.

So now what do I do with a bit more affirmation that those instincts or that gut feeling that sometimes felt like it was at odds maybe has value to it or maybe has merit. Are there places and spaces where I need to start advocating for that reaction rather than thinking like, Oh my, my first thought on how to approach [00:39:00] this must not be the right way to go about it.

What connections do you see between that kind of under the surface, um, component and the conversation we had about how you're defining professional development differently for yourself?

That there's no one way to do things. And then I think that probably what appears is consensus is more complicated and messier than that, that it's probably not just a. United front of everyone else who thinks a certain way about things and me who thinks differently about them, that there's value sometimes to offering and surfacing those.

Like what if we dot.dot or what if I dot.dot? So yeah, there is something around, I think, remembering [00:40:00] that different approaches have their functions to serve. And I mean, And that there is a reason. I'm there. Right. And I think about that both like practical level, there is a reason I am asked to take these things on.

There's a reason I'm asked to continue to these ways. And I'm probably not the only person who sees these things about myself. Like whether it's explicitly communicated or not. Some of these opportunities are probably invitations to bring this mindset or these instincts to bear on some of the work. So, if you had to name this kind of unique contribution that you're making, what would you call it?

So I'm tempted to think like [00:41:00] either descriptively or then almost when you say like, What, what do I call it? Like, do I anthropomorphize it and just be like Fred, Fred with their ideas over there? I think I would call it. Oh.

Yeah. I don't know. I'm wrestling with that. I think there's something around the naming that's tricky, but that unique contribution, what would I call it?

I think I would call it like, there's something that's coming up for me, kind of an image around like, It's streamlining or trimming away the excess, or like cutting out the noise, like something around funneling down to [00:42:00] like, what's really important here. What do we need to focus on? What can we let go of?

Like carrying out, like something about pair down or essentially, I guess maybe focus for or targeted. Would be, would be part of it. And then there's this other piece around the, the flexibility. Yeah. I it's funny. I was talking with a colleague and I had sort of said, and you know, I like to just like show up and figure it out.

It's actually probably one way of naming my unique contribution and see, she said to me like, yes, And you're so good at that, figuring it out. And I think that maybe that's the other piece that I don't own these recognize that what, for me often fields with a sense of ease around, or maybe that I take for granted that ability to then navigate that, that space or [00:43:00] that kind of emergent space is a skill or is a strength in and of itself.

Hmm, you've used the word simplify in a few different places. What's the relationship with what you're describing and simplification?

I think I. Yeah, I think for me, simplification has to do with really working from a, is this necessary? Do we have a clear idea of why we're doing it and what the value it's going to bring? Is there something around the idea that like more, more for more sake or more isn't necessarily better or more.

Doesn't always get us closer to where we want to be. So I think simplifying has to do with like, not creating additional. [00:44:00] Pieces that maybe don't need to be there or where the value isn't always invalid to, to them, the effort that aligns with that. And I think the desire for simplicity education also has to do with a certain degree of trust that I think I often think that the.

The more newness of like, we need more activities and we need a more detailed plan or we need more something. I think in our getting like very deep, but there's something around almost like surrender tied to simplicity for me that like, what if you just believed that you could take off that armor of like all these more things and that it would still be okay.

And I think that that's a space that I just have like a deep poles to operate from. Now that said, I absolutely need the balancing checks of like things that I just would realize I hadn't even thought about in there times [00:45:00] where, where that's shown up for me. Uh, but there is, yeah, there is something for me around simplicity as kind of an act of faith in, in myself, in circumstances, in the way that, that moment and that opportunity is going to provide for itself.

And for me and for the people who are involved, what would it look like? Or what would it mean for you to operate from that place pretty consistently in your professional life? That armor list place?

I think, I think I'm often there. I think the challenge is more that I don't talk about it and that I don't. Own it. I think that because of the nature of my role is that I often have a lot of [00:46:00] autonomy and I'm sometimes like doing things that people aren't as deeply connected to, or don't have as clear of a sense of that.

I think I actually get the opportunity to operate from that place pretty often. But going back to your really incredible point about wanting to be seen, doing that. And wanting to kind of have others know that that's what happening. I think for me is where it's, where the shift is happening or where it feels like there's power.

What do you think would happen if other people saw that you were operating from that place?

I mean in my dream, in some contexts, there might be some radical conversations and radical rethinking about some modes of operating. Um, again, you know, as I've said the whole way through, it's not going to work in every context [00:47:00] and it's not going to work for, for everyone. Um, but I think what I am.

Thinking about is if that was seen as a real possibility as a viable option, would there be more conversations about where on the spectrum from lots of stuff to showing up and seeing what happens? Where would we start to fall? It could be kind of intentionally. Locate different projects in different events, along that spectrum, knowing that some are going to need to be more to one.

And then the other, what's the relationship between some of these desires to kind of really step into this, um, harmless space and capacity for leadership within your role.

I think it's a balance because I [00:48:00] think, I mean, the are the armor metaphor is an, is an interesting one. I think the other thing that I forget, or that I sometimes lose sight of, and that if you people in different kinds of conversations pointed out to me is like, Not everyone's ready to go there and that there can be a huge amount of risks in asking someone to go there.

And I think, especially in kind of a leadership space, I think it's about kind of working with others to navigate when they feel ready. Um, and you know, knowing that a degree of support is often valued. I think I had a somewhat. Not unique, but like now only now looking back, I think how much of some of my early professional formulation happened.

And if, with an experience of like, nobody had my back, like, like either I was teaching or I was writing a thesis or I was doing these things where it was like, you're going to have to figure this out and [00:49:00] you actually are. Unsupported in that experience. And I think as a result of that, I sort of take that as maybe more normal than, than some people do.

So I think for me, it's definitely, especially in leadership about what is kind of helping people and giving people the tools to step into that space in a way that feels supported. In like a getting to that place of if they want to maybe operating in this way, but without feeling like you're completely alone in it.

And also knowing that there's probably going to be, as I've said, a spectrum of work styles, I, I don't, I don't think my goal. And I don't think it would be a realistic goal to be like, Oh, well, everyone should work this way all the time. Like, um, and there's so many things I gained from working with people who work in very different ways, but I guess I also wonder around leadership keys or even, you know, people that I am kind of working [00:50:00] alongside.

Is there an opportunity for people who may be also have this inclination to step into it more fully? When they see me. Embodying it or do they also have a weird thing that they walk around being like, Oh, I guess I'm the only one who thinks we should do it this way. And is there an opportunity for them to bring that to the table?

If there's some more kind of fulsome conversation,

what have we not covered yet, Danielle, that you want to reflect on when it comes to this experience and what you want to take away from it? Okay.

I think there still are some membership pieces, as I mentioned before, uh, that the been fairly early, so we haven't sort of gone through the feedback in detail. So I think there's more to be said about that. Uh, hopefully I'll get some insights about what [00:51:00] worked or if there's more specific pieces that I can name about what works.

So I think that will be a piece of it. And then I think the one thing. One thing we haven't covered or is. How else do I find these type of events or these types of projects? Because they do think like, as I, as I mentioned throughout, there needed to be a specific alignment of factors. Um, and I think what's coming up for me is how else do I start to look for those types of opportunities?

And I think that might be a useful thing for me to spend some time on for kind of going through the calendar for things I have upcoming maybe going. Back to last year's calendar to think about some of the things that might be likely might likely come back again. Um, where else are there things that have some features in common with this project and would they benefit from that sort of strategy or that sort of approach [00:52:00] again?

I'm also curious, Danielle, if there's anything about this particular kind of COVID 19 period that contributed to your ability to do more of a low impact, high impact strategy, maybe more working from home or different expectations that people have about virtual events. Is there anything in there that is useful to reflect on?

Yeah, I mean, I think what's actually standing out for. We is the recognition that even do that, the COVID and even with, you know, all the changes that that has necessitated, we still don't necessarily have to reinvent the wheel or we don't eat. You reinvent the wheel every time. So I think there's something around.

Remembering. And I could see it as being true of lots of different types of work and people working in different roles, like knowing what. Stays [00:53:00] true or what stays consistent, even across very different modes of working and very different setups. And then where are the places where we truly need different strategies and different tools?

All right. Well, as we're starting the wrap up our session today, what are some of the things that you're taking away? We had originally wanted. Some principles or practices that you thought could be applied elsewhere. And then we maybe kind of went a little further than that in terms of this reflection, what are some takeaways for you?

The practical pieces, you know that, and I think I knew this, but it's been really helpful to have some time to kind of work through it. It won't be. Everything I do about what are some things that could be closer to this, finding them planning to kind of bring that forward? I think the piece around the small collaborators was really helpful because I think I was starting to slide a bit into like, [00:54:00] What if can't ever achieve this.

And it's sort of like, I think I couldn't, but maybe one really practical condition that could be helpful with thinking about that sort of small close knit group of collaborators. I think the piece around kind of considering what others need from this experience, what they want to check in on how they best feel supported, all those feel like kind of the practical pieces to me, of how would I take this forward?

What am I going to. Do as far as the like thinking and the reflection. Piece, I think the piece around wanting to be seen and wanting to kind of hold up as sort of a practice or an approach that that's tied up with my values. I think that's really important then that's the big takeaway for me that I don't think I had fully kind of put my finger on that.

Why this felt different from some of the other things I had done and I'm not quite sure. [00:55:00] What I want to do with that yet. I think that for now is a good thing for me to know, and a good thing to be aware of and to think about what might be generative coming out of that. Are there one or two reflective questions that you want to pose for yourself as you continue to process this and look at the additional feedback that comes in.

Okay.

Yeah, that's a great question. I think I would want to Polis.

I think I would want to ask, you know,

How, how did the students feel supported by it? I think often the big goal of course, is that students do [00:56:00] feel both engaged, but also supported. So yeah, maybe what do we need to support students? What is kind of the core functions that actually create that again? Maybe coming back to the idea of SIM. and if we can really boil it down to, as long as you have these couple of things in place, we can probably feel confident that we're achieving that goal.

So maybe a better understanding of like what actually helped folks to feel supported given that the event wasn't particularly complex and didn't have a lot of moving parts. And I guess the other piece. That I think I'd like to take back to my collaborators and the individuals who worked on this with me was what else would they have needed or wanted from this experience?

Um, what else might have helped them to feel like they stepped more fully into it or with the same amount of time? So going like, again, not wanting to necessarily say if we've worked on this for X more [00:57:00] hours, but with the same number of time, how could we have spent it differently? For you to maybe have felt like you got more from that experience.

All right. So you've mentioned a couple of potential action items to follow up with as you continue this reflection. Is there anything that I can do to support you as you take your next steps?

I think this for me definitely feels like it's a little bit of, of letting it, letting it sit for a while. And sort of my, my gut sense is that the opportunities around applying some of these lessons are going to be in the moment. And I think part of the reason why I wanted to do some of this processing was there might be a couple of strategic places, but I think I wanted to have it clear in my mind because my gut is telling me.

That I'm not necessarily going to be able to predict the moment to apply these lessons. I'm going to be like sitting in a meeting or something's going to come up and it will be like, there, there, there is the moment to work with these. So I think [00:58:00] it's going to be a little bit organic and it's going to depend on how things unfold.

Um, but I do think I'm taking away from things that are incredibly valuable. All right. Well, as always, Danielle is such a pleasure to coach you today. Thanks for spending the time with me. Thank you so much. Thanks for listening to this episode of coach to coach for any resources mentioned in the episode, check out the episode.

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