**YGT episode 225**

You're listening to, you've got this episode 225. 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 want to talk about whether February can be the new January, because I have heard from several of my clients who have said this year did not start out the way that I was hoping it would.

It's been a little bit rough. Yeah. And I think between everything that's been going on, politically, everything that's been going on with COVID, uh, there's just a lot that we've all been trying to deal with. And for some people starting up school again, um, has been challenging just for our own kind of teaching schedules and things like that.

But also many of us have, um, kids who are still at home, um, who haven't gone back to school, we're going back to the digital learning. Uh, I mean, there's just. So many things layers upon layers upon layers. So I've had several coaching sessions with clients where they have just said, uh, I feel like I'm giving up like a month into the year.

And so I wanted to do this episode to say it is not too late. And there are actually people that I followed on social media for a while now, many years who always treat their February as their January, because they feel like they need a little extra time to kind of ease into the year. Okay. And sometimes there's a lot of pressure in January to really set your goals and figure out your word of the year and try to figure out, you know, all the things that you're going to do.

And for a lot of us this year, we needed more time. We needed more time to ease in. We needed time to get through the events of January 6th. We needed more time to get through the events around the inauguration. Uh, and now it's like a little bit more of a fresh start coming into February. Now I also want to be clear as we're coming into February.

If you're thinking this does not feel like a first start to meet that's okay. Uh, I realized that we're all gonna have really different emotions around thinking about planning this year and what that's gonna look like. But I did want to talk about a few ideas for, if you feel like February needs to be the new January for you, and what are some things that you can do?

So the first thing I want to remind you is there are still two full months left in quarter one. Uh, it's a third of the way done, but you have the majority of the quarter to kind of get some things done. Think about, you know, if there are some goals that you want to be accomplishing in this first quarter of the year.

And so I'm going to go ahead and link my seasonal planning guide in the show notes. This is a free download from my website. You do not have to give me your email in order to get it. It is a PDF document that I created to really help you do quarterly planning. Uh, for people who are kind of in academic spaces, thinking about, um, teaching research, service, professional development, other kinds of things that you want to do.

So I'm going to link that in the show notes, in case you want to download it. And there's a bunch of different, um, kind of action worksheets in there that will allow you to think about what are you trying to do for this season of the year. Um, and so you could start this at any time. Okay. I define seasonal really broadly.

Um, but if you like to think about seasons in quarters, this might be something that would help you get started. Now, the other thing I think that is a good thing to do in February is to maybe go back and circle back to if you did set some annual goals in January or maybe late December. And just kind of re look at those things and say, what is this reasonable in terms of what I was thinking about doing, do I still feel like I have the energy to do these things?

Is the year already shaping up kind of differently than what I thought it was. We've gotten some new information in January about things like vaccines schedules and other things that may already be affecting your annual goals. So, um, just taking a look at that and being kind of realistic with yourself about.

What do I actually think I want to give my time and energy to this year. And if you're coming out of January and you're feeling a little bit depleted or a little bit exhausted, already take that into account and just really think about, maybe you want to pull back a little bit in 2021 and not necessarily push forward in some of these other areas.

The other thing I think that can be really helpful as we're heading into February is to start to think toward the spring. It's not that far away. And so doing some things like spring cleaning early, earlier than we normally would, might be something that gives you a little bit of motivation. So I'm going to link a couple of things in the show notes that might be fun for you to take a look at it.

One is a recent blog post I did about lessons. I learned from decluttering, my closet, and this was something I had on my list to do this year. I, I set it in my calendar to do it in January, and I ended up donating two massive bags of clothes and I break it all down. I talk about what I'm taking away from it, and it was really.

Just a good feeling to clean out a portion of my house that felt a little bit overloaded and to really understand, you know, what am I wearing? What am I liking? What fits me and, and to just go through that process. And I love a good declutter. I don't know about you. Um, but it just felt great to do that.

So that's something to kind of consider. The other thing I'm going to link in the show notes is one of my favorite YouTube channels, which has a lot of different, um, cleaning videos and decluttering videos and organizational videos. It's called do it on a dime. And it's really focused on how do you clean and organize areas of your house?

On a budget. And so there's some really nice, um, videos in there, which I find incredibly calming where the host is just like cleaning things and she walks you through her tips for how to clean. And it's just really nice to sit and watch a video of someone cleaning their house and having it go from kind of chaos to order.

Um, she has a couple of young kids, her name's Catherine. Um, so I will link to that YouTube channel in the show notes, because I think that. Sometimes watching other people create order out of chaos is something that can be really motivating as we're thinking about going into the spring. Once you watch those things.

And once you read the blog posts, maybe you'll decide you want to declutter an area of your house, or you want to do a deep clean on something. Uh, and, and I think that that is something that again, can, can bring some new energy. The other thing recently that I did that, how does surprising effect is we have blackout curtains in our bedroom and they are typically closed all the time.

We don't spend a lot of time in the bedroom other than when we are sleeping in the bedroom. But when I was cleaning out the closet, I was kind of spreading everything out and I went ahead and I opened the blackout curtains and just let light, like natural light come into the bedroom. And it just made it feel like cleaner and, you know, like it gave it a different kind of feel.

So that may be something else to think about. And I know some of us live in climates where it's really cold this time of year. So you may not be able to open windows and get fresh air. But as we are turning toward the spring, I would encourage you to like open up the windows, allow the natural light to come in, allow for maybe some fresh air.

If you have a little bit of a warmer day, even if it's just for a few minutes to kind of like clear out your house, we're all spending a lot more time in our homes than we normally would. And I think that it helps to kind of bring in that freshness when you can. The other thing I would want to kind of encourage you to think about as you're thinking about February as the new January.

Is, is there something that you can build into your schedule that feels like it's just for you and maybe it's something where you're having some solitude time, you know, if you've listened to me for awhile, that's what I'm always going for. So lately I'm building into my schedule, more reading fiction time, but maybe this is also like calling a friend or something that feels a little bit more social, like hosting a virtual game night or something like that with some friends or family where you can start to, uh, Have something to look forward, to have something on your calendar that is kind of drawing you forward.

Something else that I heard from some of my clients, as we were talking in January was they don't really feel motivated because they don't have anything to look forward to. They're not necessarily gonna get the summer vacation that they had planned this year. They're not necessarily gonna get the conference travel that they usually do.

And so I would encourage you to think about, is there something that you can put on your calendar that is kind of motivating you and drawing you forward? And sometimes these are just things that we schedule in ourselves. I would also think about, are there, um, small things that you can build in that you really look forward to even on a daily basis?

And this is something that I talked about. Um, I talked about kind of simple pleasures, several episodes back, so I can link to that in the show notes, but I have recently found a couple of things that I really like to do every day and that I really look forward to it. So one of them does have a little bit of a cost to it, which is I go onto Kindle book deals, um, pretty much every morning.

And I scroll through and see what are the books that are like a dollar 99. And I also go to my Amazon wishlist, which is where I always keep, you know, books that I'm thinking about buying. And I checked to see if any of them are on sale. And every once in a while, there ends up being a book that I've been really wanting to read for a long time or a book that's on my wishlist that goes on sale.

And I go ahead and I pick it up. But just this concept of like browsing the books has been really fun for me because I haven't gone to a physical library in. Almost a year. And if you've listened to the show for a while, you know, I used to go to the physical library in my old town that I lived in like multiple times a week and I would browse the new books and I would just spend time there.

And it was a really important space for me to have just like that solitude time to get in a walk in the middle of the day. And I have not been able to do that really since I have been, um, living here in Kansas. So this is kind of my version of that. And sometimes I go onto my library's website and I see what are the new eBooks that they've just purchased.

It is like the geekiest thing that I could possibly think of that I'm doing, but it does bring me a little bit of joy. And when I can spend less than $2 on something that is fun for me to think about, and I can kind of plug it into. My schedule of the fiction books that I'm reading and that I want to be paying attention to and, um, just enjoying, and then spending some time being distracted by, by these fiction books.

I really am enjoying that. Now the other quick tip that'll offer is that over this past year, my partner and I have invested in a bunch of different streaming services. I think I've mentioned this, uh, as well, and some of these streaming services. And the one I'm thinking of in particular is HBO max. Um, they have releases of movies that were going to be in the theater, but then they end up being streaming instead because.

Theaters are not as open anymore. And so part of what I try to pay attention to is the calendar of when certain movies are going to be released. And then that pulls me forward because I have a date to look forward to of like having a movie night, or I know that something is available now that we can kind of add to our schedule of what we want to watch.

And, um, it's just a little thing. It's a very small thing that kind of brings a little bit of joy. I know a lot of the streaming services, including Disney plus and Netflix and HBO, max publicize, what's coming out into the future. And so you can definitely check these things out, add these things to your calendar and maybe plan a movie night for yourself or for your family.

So I just wanted to offer a few ideas of how February could potentially be the new January. If you feel like the year did not get off to the best start and you want to do a bit of a reset, you can, you have permission to do a bit of a reset. Take a deep breath. Look at the rest of the quarter. Think about what you actually want to accomplish, and what's going to help motivate you as you head into the rest of the year.

I am here to support you. I know it's been tough for many of us during these past months, and I would love to hear from you. If you decide to do a February reset, 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.

Any way you contact me. I always love to hear from you and here's to a great reset for the new year. Thanks for listening to this episode of you've got this show notes and a transcript for this episode can be found at Dr. Katie linder.com/podcast. If you found this episode helpful, please also consider rating and or reviewing the show in iTunes.

Thanks for listening.

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