You're listening to, you've got this episode 259. 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. I'm your host, Dr. Katie Linder on this episode, I want to talk about the concept of bright spots.

Now, last week, I talked about walking to the finish line, and I think that if you are in that mode where you have so much on your plate and you're focused on all these different things, you're just trying to kind of get through the day. It's really important to focus on this concept. Also a bright spots, and I want to talk about.

Bright spots in your day, your week, your month, and even in your season. And these are things that can help you feel motivated to keep going. There are the kinds of things that you might look forward to if they were marked on your calendar or they just give you immense amounts of joy for even a very small period of.

And I want to give some examples of where I'm seeing these kinds of things in my life. Um, so you can maybe identify them in yours too. Now these can be rituals. These can be routines, things that just light you up. And I think sometimes we forget that we can embed these really small things into our schedules and they can actually be incredibly motivating as we're kind of working through a really busy days.

Now, just to give you some context, um, on a daily basis, my calendar is. Packed. I'm still in really heavy meeting mode. And, um, I would say about 85 to 90% of these meetings are on zoom. So I'm in my office at work. I do have a chance throughout the day to maybe shut the door, take a minute to myself. Um, but I'm, I'm really in meetings pretty much all day, every day.

And I try to kind of ease that off on Friday so I can get a few things done. Um, but it's, it's a pretty full schedule. And so it's important for me to be able to kind of pass the time, to see the time passing, to notice that I am. Growing and learning and evolving in this role. Um, but I will also say that sometimes I need a little bit of a bright spot in the midst of all of these meetings and projects that I'm working on.

And I'm sure that some of you probably can feel the same. So let me share first daily bright spots. These are the things that really stuck out to me, um, that I look forward to every. So, first of all in the morning, while I'm still in bed, I wake up and I have kind of a, a series of things that I look at on my phone.

And I will usually stay in bed for a good 20 to 30 minutes. I'm looking at the news, you know, quickly checking email, maybe looking at some social media, but the bright spot of this part of my day is I go onto Amazon and I look for. Deals. Now I've talked about this in the past, but basically every day on Amazon, if you don't know this, you can look up Kindle daily deals and there will be a series of books that are usually around 1 99 or 2 99.

Now, sometimes this is themed. You're going to find out so much more information about this than you ever needed to know, because I've been looking at this. A very long time, months and months I've been going to these Kindle deals. Sometimes these books are themed around like non-fiction or sometimes, you know, it's a genre like mysteries or something like that.

But for the most part, it is a random assortment of whatever Kindle books are on sale that day. And sometimes you hit the jackpot and you read, you find something that you've been wanting to read for a really long time, or it's a book that was a bestseller like a couple of years ago that you never got to or something like that.

It's not every day that I find something in these Kindle deals, but it's always fun to look and kind of see what's. And it also just reminds me of their kinds of the range, the wide range of things that I could be reading. Now, the other thing that I do is I've collected a lot of things in my Kindle, um, or in my Amazon wishlist that I want to eventually pick up, but only if they're on sale.

So then I'll go to my wishlist at do this every day. I mean, this is telling you something about me, that this is. And I'll look at all the books that I have on there, which at this point is just dozens and dozens. There's a lot of books series that I have loved over time that I know I'm going to want to revisit that kind of thing.

And, um, also like professional development books that I want to pick up nonfiction. There's a ton of different things on this wishlist and I'll, uh, I'll sort them by, um, price and see if anything has gone on. No, I would say like every three to four days, there are several things on my wishlist, probably because of the volume of what's on there that I'm tracking that things do go on sale and I can pick up these books here.

Now you're probably saying to yourself, Katie, are you reading all these books? Of course not. It's not really the point. I think that sometimes I think, you know, when I'm looking and checking these Kindle deals, I tell myself this is like me planning for my retirement, that I'm going to have all these books that I can kind of sort through and look at.

But I would also say too, that I'm, I am regularly reading things from this library. It's also helping me to kind of tuck away books that I'm getting recommended by other people that are telling me that I should read them. Um, but for the most part, I love this idea and I saw this meme on social media the other day, that when you buy someone's book, you're buying.

You know, sometimes four to five years of their life that they spent, like writing that book. And as somebody who is a book author, I do know that that's what you're doing. Like you're, you're kind of purchasing this. Person's like life time and experience that they put into whatever this thing is that you're reading.

Um, and for me, 1 99 or 2 99. I mean, that's a, that's a crazy price for something like that. Given like the amount of work that goes into a book. So, um, now I know that not everybody is on Kindle, you know, you could certainly do something like this with an indie publisher or, um, bookseller, if that's kind of your thing, but finding something that like you want to track and keep an eye on, I think is definitely something that can be.

Okay. If I keep talking about these things at this link, I've never going to get through this episode because I have so many bright spots to share with you. So let me keep going along daily. I also look forward to journaling. I do this every morning after I get up out of bed. I go downstairs. Um, I sit on my chair.

I have a heating pad cause, cause it gets cold in my house, especially this time of year. Um, and I sit under a blanket. I turn on my little lamp and I think. And it's wonderful. I love it. After I get to work. One of my bright spots is I make myself a morning cup of tea right now. I'm really loving Earl gray with almond milk, a decaf.

And I also have some chai that I bought for the fall season. I have some pumpkin tea that I'm really into, or sometimes I just have peppermint, but that morning cup of tea is basically part of my routine. I walk into my office, I fill up my kettle. Uh, in the little kitchen area and I have an electric kettle that I keep in my office and I get that started right when I get into.

And then the last thing that I would say is, is really a bright spot for me is my commuting rides with my partner. Uh, right now we did decide to have me kind of not take the train as much, just because there are a lot of people in the train who aren't really following masking procedures and he feels more comfortable if, if he's driving me to and from work.

Basically door to door service right now. That's not going to be forever, but those are really wonderful times with my partner to just like come into our day together, leave, you know, the end of the day, um, debriefing, you know, everything that's happened to both of us. And I've really been enjoying that as a break.

Okay, let me talk about weekly. Now, these, I think are sometimes positive associations with certain days of the week that, um, it may be something that you're doing roughly on a weekly basis, or you've decided that a certain day something is happening. So for right now, one of these things for my partner and I is on Tuesday nights, we're ordering.

And part of this is because I have an evening event that I do, um, for coach training and it ends at seven o'clock and he'll leave the house and like right as I'm wrapping up, he'll bring us, take out sushi and we'll sit down and have dinner together. So that's a really, uh, fun, bright spot. I also mentioned in a previous episode that I'm loving YouTube and there are several channels that I follow that have certain days of the week where they release new content.

So that's super fun for me to track. I will also say, and this is like so nerdy and I know it, but I love Tuesdays into Wednesdays because it's our trash and recycling day that we put out on Tuesday night. And we are still in the mode of like breaking down some of our moving boxes. And like, there's a lot of like clutter in our garage because we've been like slowly trying to break this stuff down and you guys.

To recycling bins and we're still like trying to get through all this stuff that we want to recycle. Um, so this is actually something that, because I love organization and decluttering, I love trash and recycling day and the recycling part only happens every two weeks. So. Especially special. What I can clear out our garage of all this stuff that gets accumulated in there as we're still unpacking our stuff.

And then I would also say a weekly bright spot for me is finding time to read. Um, I it's like anytime that I can do it, sometimes it's at night. Sometimes it's over my lunch break, sometimes it's on the weekend. Um, but I'm still able to get in a lot of good reading and that's always something that I really.

Okay, then there's the monthly bright spots. So I think this is something where I try to have something positive for each week of the month that I'm looking forward to. And sometimes this is where you have things that you're just like marking on your calendar, like somebody's birthday or an anniversary, or a holiday or a day off or something like that.

That's not necessarily going to be consistent, but you, you could like plan something like, um, doing a massage or self care or something like that during a part of the. For me. What I have found is that in the first week of the month, what I am really loving right now, this is my bright spot is when I go onto LinkedIn.

The way that LinkedIn counter work experience is every time a new month turns over, they don't kind of say, what day did you start your job? They say, what month did you start your job? And because I'm so early in my job seeing like one more month, I get added onto my LinkedIn experience. It's just a really good, bright spot reminder that like I am accumulating experience.

I am learning. I am becoming more comfortable and settling into this role. And that's a really nice bright spot for me. I also will say, if you don't know this, that on Amazon, um, at the beginning of the month, there's a new free ebook that's available for Amazon prime members. And these are things that are recommended by various editors.

So I always do go on in that first week of the month and just see what these new books are. And if there's anything that I want to download for free, it's a program called first reads, and I'll go ahead and link that into the show notes in case you wanted to. The other monthly things that are my bright spots.

We do have cleaners that we've hired every other week to come into our house and do kind of a refresh. Um, and I will admit openly, I'm not doing a ton of cleaning right now. I mean, I do the basics of like washing the dishes, washing our laundry. Yeah. But I don't always have time to do, you know, other kinds of things that I would want to do.

So knowing that we have cleaners coming in, do vacuuming, wiping down, you know, our bathrooms, our kitchen, you know, all these kinds of things. That's really wonderful. And I'm really grateful that we have the opportunity to do. Now, the last thing that I'm looking forward to monthly is something I just started.

And I'm going to link to this in the show notes too, in case any of you are interested. I started following someone on Instagram who does something called an extravagant hope mailer. And this is an artist who creates different kinds of like postcards art pieces. Sometimes it's like a decorative quote, all different kinds of things.

And once a month, she sends out these mailer envelopes where you get a bunch of this stuff kind of grouped into a package and you pay for this monthly subscription. Now I don't know about you, but I could definitely use some extravagant hope at least once a month. And this comes like the third week of every month.

And I thought that is such a wonderful way to kind of. Give yourself a bright spot that far into the month when you're not quite ready to turn over into the next one, but it gives you a chance to just kind of like have something to look forward to. So I think this is definitely something, um, it could be like, you treat yourself with like a small order of like food, or even like a small gift that you want to give to yourself at a certain point in the month.

But this was something that I just thought was a wonderful idea. Everything she sends out is so bright and hopeful and positive. And, um, I definitely thought I could use that. Now I will also say there are seasonal bright spots. And I think that for many of us this time of the year, because of the holidays and other kinds of family time, we're going to have all kinds of bright spots that we would associate with the season.

But just some of the things that I associate with it is, um, one of the things I don't really make throughout the year. Is mashed potatoes. I've really associated with like Thanksgiving or Christmas meals and I could make them any time, but I just don't. And so this is something that I really look forward to in this season because I could eat potatoes and pretty much any form.

Um, but mashed potatoes I think are super fun. So I like doing that. I like making soup. So really any kind of food is like a bright spot. Forward to, I would definitely put into this category, but the other thing that's, I think kind of an obvious one, but that I really enjoy is just listening to holiday music and watching holiday movies.

So really kind of, um, leaning into the familiar, leaning into the things that feel comforting and fun, and that you look forward to every single year. Those can definitely be bright spots along. So, I just want to encourage you to think about what are your bright spots, what are the things that you can identify that are really helping to kind of pull you throughout the week, throughout the month, throughout the season, and even throughout the day, if you have kind of a jam packed schedule like I do, or maybe you're just in a situation each day where it's not ideal and you're having to kind of find some kind of bright spot that you can look forward to.

It doesn't have to be a big deal. And as I mentioned here, it could be a cup of tea. It could be that your recycling is getting taken out. I mean, like this is like stuff that could be so personal to you and maybe no one else would see it as a bright spot, but you see it as a bright spot. That's the most important.

So I want to wish you so many bright spots as you're heading into the season into the end of the year. And I hope this gave you a little bit of encouragement or inspiration to see where you can find a bright spot in your own life. 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 Dr.

Katie linder.com/podcasts. If you found this episode helpful, please also consider rating and or reviewing the show in iTunes. Thanks for listening.