You're listening to, you've got this episode 275. 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 passion projects and, uh, I, I don't want to limit too much what we might consider a passion project, but I definitely have some ways that I would define what I mean when I'm talking about a passion project and I'm going to give a very explicit example of a passion project I have in my life right now that might help to explain it a little bit more.

But I was thinking about this the other day, because I was talking with a coaching client and they were talking about a project that they had recently taken on and they didn't know what the explicit benefit was going to be of this project. And this was part of what we coached on and they were like, you know, I want to do it.

And I think it's interesting and I'm learning a lot. But I don't know, is it like worth it in terms of like return on investment was kind of the question they were asking and they were looking to me, I think, to offer a little bit of like, reassurance that like, yes, you can put energy into something, even if you're not quite sure what's going to come out of it.

It could pay off. And, uh, the example that I would give is, um, some of the credentials that I recently did, you know, over the pandemic, I didn't really know what was going to come of those. I just, it was a great way for me to continue learning. I had a really good time, you know, like pursuing those credentials, but I didn't necessarily have like an explicit thing in mind that I was trying to accomplish by, you know, getting the PMP for.

And so I think that when I'm talking about passion projects, one of the primary things that I think about is this is something that you might take on and you're not entirely sure what the return is going to be. Like. You have a reason why you want. Into it, you're motivated to pursue it and hopefully you really enjoy it.

It's something you look forward to and you're carving out time for, and maybe even like spending resources on in terms of time and money, but it's not having a clear end insights. Some examples of what I've seen of this, like on a social media, for example, is like people who decide to cook their entire way through a cookbook and they're going to cook every recipe and like one cookbook that they really like, or, um, I've seen people who, um, D there's like a challenge to have your kids be outside for a thousand hours within a year's time.

And they kind of log, you know, the number of hours that they spend outside, um, in nature with their kids. And like, this is their project. It could be a craft project or an art project. Um, I think there's so many different ways that this can take shape. And so one of the examples that I was going to talk about was, um, unless this is like the first episode you're ever listening to of this podcast.

I think it's pretty clear that I like to read. Uh, I talk about it a lot. Clearly I'm reading a lot. And this year I decided to start to record some videos about books and reading, post them on YouTube and join this community that calls themselves a book tubers. And I talked about this in a couple different places, my annual goals.

And I'm sure some people were thinking like, what is she doing? Like what, what is this about? Like, you know, like it probably is just kind of a, an interesting choice for me to be spending my time, you know, in this. When it doesn't really have, you know, a goal, like it's just kind of something that I'm doing honestly for fun.

Now, I think you'll notice if you ever go to my channel and you watch any of these videos, um, one of the things that you might, you might watch a video and be like, you know, this, the lighting is not great. You know, the editing is not great. Uh, the, the camera angles are not great. And, and it's like, that's not the point of a passion project.

It's like you do something because you like it. And it's not about the quality necessarily, or it's not about like the return, like I'm not trying to like grow my YouTube subscribers or, or make money off of it. Like, like none of that's really involved in this passion. Now I know that there are probably some passion projects that do turn into this for people like it turns into a small business or something along those lines.

And I'm certainly not saying there's anything bad about that happening. Um, and I think, for example, when I started to pursue coach training, I mean, that's turned into all kinds of things for me that I didn't know that were going to be coming my way. But in this case, what I'm really talking about is having something in your.

That you like to give time and attention to that you find really enjoyable and fun and maybe a little bit like it's a little bit weird to other people, but it's okay for you because you really like it. And there aren't like expectations around it. I think this is the best part of a passion project, because when I think about all these other areas of my life, especially in like work, for example, there is a high level of expectation that you're going to be good quality that it's going to, you're going to show up in a particular kind of way, um, that you're kind of bringing all this expertise behind you.

There's all of this like credentialing that you bring. You have to be credible, you know, like there's just all these ways that you show up that are incredibly important in your professional life. And I, I enjoy all of that. At the same time, I need an area of my life where I don't have to do that, where I can just kind of play and have fun and experiment and like, not be worried about like what other people are going to think about it, or, you know, am I going to get more followers or what kind of money am I going to make off of this?

And so for me this year, it is this book to project. Now I have only posted a couple of. Thus far, if you look, you'll see like my January, um, to be read, pile video, I have a debrief for January. I have a couple other videos that are up there, and this is also the really great part about it is that my expectations for myself can remain relatively low.

So the goal that I set for myself this year was to post a couple of videos a month. And if I post more great, like that's totally fine. Um, but a couple of videos felt reasonable to me, especially if I do like a. Uh, video at the beginning of the month, about what I plan to read and a video at the end of the month about what I actually.

Now, the reason that I love this kind of low key approach to a passion project is because this week and last week, as well as I record this incredibly busy weeks for me, like just a ton of meetings, um, I was just over capacity, like so much going on. And when I got home at the end of the day, like I was not really in a space where I wanted to film a video, like this was just not going to happen.

And I had a couple of ideas for videos that I thought would be fun. Like I ended up doing like, uh, I got a bunch of books from my local library and there was a whole thing on BookTube about doing like library hall videos. And I was like, oh, I could do that. That'd be fun. And then I was just like, you know what?

I don't have time and I don't have energy. And like, I like editing it. Like I would have to sacrifice, you know, rest time and kind of reset and recovery time. And so I just decided not to do it. And it actually felt really great to be able to not feel like pressured, to have to like, add more into this project because I had like a really realistic baseline of what I was going to put into it.

Um, and I still think it's just an incredibly fun thing to do so. I think one of the best things about a passion project is like you can dip in and out of it, it doesn't have to have a timeframe around it. It doesn't have to have like super high expectations, but the best part about it to me is you can relax your expectations around like being good at it.

And I think that there are some things, many things really in our lives where we're expected to be good at it. And we're striving. We're striving to be good at it. And I think this is on the personal side of like, you know, people striving to be a good parent or a good partner or a good friend. And then also on the professional side, you know, striving to be, um, good at your job, like good at publications, good at teaching.

And then even, you know, um, even in our hobbies, like we want to be good at gardening or we want to be, you know, good at whatever, you know, cooking or other things that are in our lives. And, um, it's amazing to have something that you find enjoyable that you can play with, that you can be creative in, and that it doesn't matter if you're good at it or not.

And I just find that to be so freeing. So this is kind of my reminder to you. If you are in need of something like this to kind of look around and maybe you already have a passion project and you haven't really been able to devote time to it lately. Um, or, or you have it in, you have been able to vote time in which case I would love to hear all about it.

What are you kind of currently putting your time and energy into as a passion project, but it's kind of a reminder that we all need a space in our lives, um, where we can kind of just show up as we are. And, uh, that it's okay to like, just not be great at whatever the thing is that you're working. And it can still be fun and it can still be low key and almost relaxing to some degree because you don't have those high expectations for yourself.

So, um, I will link to this YouTube channel and in the show notes, in case anybody does want to check out what I'm talking about. And, uh, I would just say, um, You can find, you know, even if, so, I guess what I would just say is if you look at this channel and you're like, what, this is crazy, you know, her videos are not great or whatever, let it be the, um, rabbit hole that takes you down into other parts of YouTube, where people are really good at creating these.

Because I do think one of the reasons I started thinking about doing book tubing is because of how much I've gotten out of that community. It's such a relaxing thing for me to watch what other people are reading to be, um, getting recommendations from people, adding things to my own, to read pile, because I had such a, a good experience of like watching someone else talking about it.

Um, I listened to a lot of podcasts about books too, so there's a lot of different ways to do this, but I think that, um, let this be kind of a, uh, An entry point for you into what some people have been doing for years. And they put a ton of time into it. Some of these videos have incredible production quality.

It's more than a passion project. I think for some of the people who are producing this content. And they're just really incredible about what. So, if you go to my channel, I'm at the bottom. If you scroll to the bottom, I have a few other YouTube creators that I recommend, and these are the people. Um, some of them are like cooking videos.

Some of them are booked videos. There's a bunch of different kinds, but these are the ones that I've pretty much watch everything that they put out. And I think they do a really nice job in terms of production. So at the very least, I mean, skip over my videos if you don't care. Um, that's not the point.

It's really just. My creative way of processing, what I'm reading and enjoying. But also I want to point you to other people in the space who are just doing incredible, incredible work. Now, I think it'll be fun this year. If I do pick up some skills along the way, if I figure out how to edit better, if I figure out how to do better camera angles, like I'm always interested in some of those technical things that.

In the podcasting world. I feel like I figured some of that out in the video making world, I'm very much a beginner and I'm always looking for that next kind of new creative challenge that can help me to learn and grow along. So again, I would love to hear if you have a passion project that you want to share about, you can always email me at hello at Dr.

Katie linder.com. I would love to hear all about it. And, um, I hope that you are finding something passion project or not. That's fun, that's engaging. And it allows you to kind of relax and have a little bit of fun with whatever that thing is that you want to devote your time, your energy and your passion to thanks for this.

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.