You're listening to, you've got this episode 283. 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 thought it would update about how things went in March when I was trying to have more movement.

Now, I thought now that we're halfway through April, I probably should talk about this and let you know how it went. And I will say the best part about. Um, kind of focusing on this area for myself was that I did not set goals that were over the capacity of what I could do. So really what I was trying to do in March was just move more with the understanding that that could mean a lot of different things.

It could mean walking more. It could be more yoga, it could be stretching. But I wasn't setting massive goals like 10,000 steps every day, or, you know, yoga challenge or anything like that. And, um, what I found actually was that it was really helpful in keeping me more mindful about different kinds of movement that I could do throughout the day.

So here's some of the things that happened in March around movement that were really helpful. One was the weather got nicer here in Denver. And I was able to take some walks throughout the week in the middle of the day. And so now I look at my calendar and I try to figure out where I might be able to fit in a walk.

And especially if I have a full lunch hour, which I don't always have, but when I do, I can take a longer walk of maybe like 45 minutes to an hour. And that allows me to actually explore the city in a much broader way. I can kind of walk pretty far out and then walk back to my office. And at one point in March, I actually walked to the downtown public library, which I happen to do on a Friday.

So of course it was. But it allowed me to see that I could get there and back within the period of my lunch hour, which was great. It's a great motivator for me to have a place to walk to, um, knowing that I'm going, you know, to a specific location. And then maybe like walking back to my office. I also looked at a map and realized that I've got several local library branches within the distance of walking from my office.

And I have this goal this year of traveling to all of the different library branches in the Denver area and just kind of exploring them, um, ultimate nerd goal. I, I fully admit, so I wanted to see if there were some that I could walk to from my office and there are, which is great. So it really kind of opened me up to thinking about.

What are the different modes that I could use during the day, take it outside, get some fresh air and go for a walk. The other thing that this has really tuned me into is looking at my calendar and trying to figure out if there are certain meetings I have that can be walking meetings. Now it's kind of rare actually for me to have in-person meetings now, because I have a lot of zoom and I would say 90% of the meetings that I have are on zoom.

But I've just started hiring some people onto my team who are also coming into the office and that might allow for more walking meetings once they're onboarded and we're not taking as many notes and things during meetings, um, if we're just doing a check-in or something like that, we might be able to go for brief walk.

So all of those things were kind of excellent additions into my movement for March, really thinking about building in something like a walkthrough. Now, the other thing that I focused on with movement in March was yoga. And I got back into a morning yoga routine. And again, I did not set like specific limits or like, you know, goals of what this needed to be.

So it wasn't like, well, if it's not 30 minutes of yoga, it doesn't count. Um, and I think that this is actually something that in the past has really held me back because I'd feel like, well, it's not worth it. You know, if I can't do a certain amount of time, And for me, that is just not helpful. It's not a helpful mindset to have around movement.

And so what I ended up doing was, um, laying out my mat where I usually am in the morning, which is my living room. And I often sit there and, and journal, or do some reading or have breakfast or, you know, have a cup of tea. This is like my normal place to be. But to have my mat there kind of reminded me to, you know, sit down or do it even just a few poses.

Um, and that also increased my capacity, um, or kind of my willingness to build in meditation as well. So all of these things kind of hook into each other in some really important and interesting ways, at least for me. So what I ended up doing was, um, in the beginning, I really focused on how I felt. So if I felt like my hips were really.

I might start with like a downward dog pose where I was really like opening up my hips and my legs. Um, or I would do like a, um, what is called a Cal pose or, or some kind of like log cabin or something where I was really opening up my hips in a seated position. And this I think is really helpful for me in the morning.

I'm kind of getting into my day, I'm waking up. I don't want to do like a power yoga session. Like that's just not motivating to me, but to be able to sit and do some kind of gentle stretches felt a lot better. And for me, the yen practice, which you're supposed to do cold, you're not supposed to be warmed up to do yen.

Um, and that's when you hold poses for a longer period of time. So you kind of settle into a pose and allow yourself to just have like a deeper, um, release of like tissues or. Muscles that that might be feeling kind of tight. And for my hips in particular, when I sit all day, this is exactly what I'm looking for in the morning, just to kind of open everything up.

The other thing that I really focused on, um, and again, I just kind of did my own practice. I know enough poses now through the various training that I've done, that I can just kind of throw something together and it's not necessarily like a flow. It's more just like, what am I feeling? And what are the poses that I feel are going to be most beneficial to me at any given time?

I really focused on my neck and my shoulders. Now there's a bunch of different poses that work really well for this, but sometimes I would just do what is called Eagle arms, which is basically when you put your arms in front of you and kind of a twisted pose, and it allows your shoulders to open up a little bit.

The other pose I was doing a lot was, um, what some people call thread the needle, which is basically when you're kind of on your hands and knees. Um, but you, um, it's kind of hard to describe, but you thread one arm. Through the other side, so that you're putting one shoulder on the ground and you can also do a bind with this pose where you wrap the opposite arm around your lower back, and that opens up both shoulders pretty well.

Um, so I would do that. And then of course, just kind of some, some very gentle like neck stretches. I think sometimes we go for the fallback of like just rotating our necks around, which for me, when my neck is really tight, that doesn't feel good. It's actually a better for me to kind of like. Rotate my neck to the side and then dip my chin to the side so that I can like open up the opposite side of my neck.

So I was doing a lot of that in the morning as well. Later on in the month, I started to incorporate a couple of like yoga videos. So I would look and find something that was more of like a gentle morning practice or something that was specifically focused on like neck and shoulders. And I would build that in, um, I found that to be a little bit easier for me to do on the weekends when I didn't have a time limitation in the morning or as much of a time limitation of what I needed to do.

And, um, that was really helpful to have that guided practice as well. Now the other thing that I was able to build in, in March a couple of times, which was really wonderful, was taking longer walks. And so on the weekends in particular, I like to be able to do like a 10 K if I can. Um, and that usually takes me because I'm not rushing.

Like this is not like a power walk. Um, I would say it takes me almost two hours. And so. What I found is that when I do that on my treadmill, which is usually where I do this, because I, I don't want to be necessarily outside for two hours. Um, the sun is more intense here. And so if it is a nice day, then I'm worrying about sunscreen and like, just making sure you know, that I'm not getting sunburned and all that.

So when I do this, I typically do it inside. And that also gives me the opportunity to turn on. Uh, the TV that I have in front of my treadmill, or to listen to an audio book or something like that. And that is keeping, keeping me more entertained over a two hour. The other thing that I like to do is I do have a Peloton tread.

And so I turn on, uh, one of the videos that is basically like an outdoor walking video. And so you can pick from all these different locations and they have it divided up by distance. So I can pick a 10 K. And I can pick a location that I want to be seeing on my screen. So if I'm listening to an audio book or something like that, it's nice to be walking through, um, like the mountains and, and actually they recently added some walking trails in Oregon.

So I can kind of pretend like I'm back. West, um, and do some walking trails there. They also have a ton of different videos from different countries, which is really fun to explore. So I'll turn one of those on and then walk for a couple of hours. So overall, I will say that I met my goal of moving more in March.

I definitely didn't do anything major, which was not really what I wanted. And as I'm getting into April, the weather is remaining really nice here. It is helping me again to fit in those walks during the day. How the yoga practice on a regular basis and just make sure that I'm kind of paying attention to where I'm feeling tension or tightness or stress in my body.

And that was part of why I did the more movement in March to begin with is I, I felt like I wasn't being as attentive as I could be. And there was just a lot of stress and strain than I needed to be paying attention. So now I can say, uh, I am definitely feeling more tightness in my back, my neck, my shoulders.

I'm trying to be more attentive to it. I'm trying to, uh, stretch as best I can throughout the day as well. And then one more thing that I did, which I'm pretty excited about is I actually went out and bought an extra yoga mat and it's at my office. So I have this yoga mat in my house. That I actually just leave out, which is a great conversation starter, I'll say, because some people don't know that I do yoga.

And so they come in and see my yoga mat. Um, but also it allows me to be kind of reminded throughout the day, even to do just a couple stretches. Um, and I would say, especially because I sit so much during the day, it's made me think more about getting a standing desk or something like that, but even doing a quick, like downward dog, um, on the yoga mat to kind of open up my hips and my legs.

Really great. Um, and also it's a great spot for me to do meditation. If I want to do a quick, um, like meditation or something in the middle of my lunch hour or, um, even in an afternoon break. So I would encourage you to like set up your environment. That's what I really found over the month of March is by creating an environment where I had my yoga mat out more specifically, um, both at home and at my house.

It really did remind me to kind of just do a couple of poses and that can make all the difference. It doesn't have to be a 30 minute session for it to feel good. So I would love to hear if you're kind of trying to build a new habits or routines or even old habits and routines that you're trying to revive in your life.

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