You're listening to, you've got this episode 285. 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 creating an end of month bucket list.

Now this is something that I tried, uh, for probably, I don't know if it's the first time or not. It's the first time that I remember doing this and I did it this April. But one of the things that I thought was important about this was the timing of it. So as this episode releases, I think it's probably a little too late in April to do your own bucket list because there's only three days left in the month.

But, uh, you could try this for may because I think one of the most important things is starting about. Thirds of the way through the month. So when you have like over a week left, you start to write down what you want to get done before the end of the month. Now I love monthly transitions. If you've listened to this show, you know that I have a monthly planning event in prolific.

I really love having that transition of going from one month to the next month, turning that calendar page. And if I start to make this bucket list of what I want to accomplish before a month transition. I need time to actually get those things done. So the point of this is not necessarily to. Rush yourself or put a bunch of pressure on yourself to get these things done, but to give yourself enough time to actually accomplish some of the items on the list without feeling kind of undue pressure to do it.

So some of the tasks that I ended up adding to this bucket list were things that had upcoming deadlines. So those were a little bit easier to plan out and it felt really good to get kind of organized with those things and know what I needed to get done before the start of a new month. But I also had some tasks that I ended up adding to this bucket list that had.

Like a timeline, but not really a concrete deadline. And they had fallen into a category of tasks that I have been probably putting off for quite some time, but I wanted to see some progress in these areas. So one of the things I really appreciated was having all of this collected in one place so that I could kind of start to see what was on the horizon of what I needed to get.

And then I could also start to track getting them done. So, um, I have talked before about how I'm using a sauna to track my tasks, but when I did this bucket list, I actually just did it on a notepad. So I have a legal pad and I just started writing things down. Like, what are the things just off the top of my head that I knew were kind of on my plate that I needed to get done.

And the list was pretty long. I mean, it was a full page in this notebook single-spaced list of, I would say probably. 20 to 25 things that I wanted to try to get done before the end of the month. And at first, honestly it did look a little bit overwhelming to me because I was just like, wow, there's, there's just a lot that I have on my mind that I want to move forward.

But I just took on the challenge of like checking off what I could before the month was completed. And even if you make this bucket list, just like with any bucket list, there's going to be items on there that are kind of like wishlist items, but it doesn't necessarily mean they have to get done. So I was also able to really segment what are the things that have like a true deadline.

Like for example, I had a conference proposal that I needed to put in. Um, I had, uh, a foreword for a book that I was writing for a colleague that really needed to get done by the end of this month. I mean, there were certain things that had those deadlines that were important, but of course I had other things that I could put off if I really needed.

So the idea was just to kind of get all this stuff written down in one place. But before you can check these things off and have that kind of satisfaction of working your way through this bucket list, you have to actually create the list first. So, um, here are some examples of things that made it onto my April bucket list.

So, um, I needed to draft and schedule the enrollment email for the June coach training waiting list. I needed to prep a launch email for my next coach training course, which includes finalizing the syllabus, getting the invoices prepared for the course. I needed to purchase some more bookshelves for our basement, which if you have, uh, read my blog recently, you know, I have some house projects I'm trying to complete this summer.

And one of them involves unpacking even more boxes of books that we have and trying to get those organized. And so I wanted to purchase more books for our basement. I needed to drop that forward for my colleagues book. I needed to email my editor with some next steps for an upcoming writing project that I'm going to be working on.

Um, I had a bunch of emails that had piled up that I needed to take action or file them. And this is more like my personal email, not like my work email. So I just have some, some emails that kind of get neglected because I really try to do inbox zero at work, but I don't necessarily do that at home.

Sometimes I just flag things and like save them for later. So I had a bunch of that stuff I needed to go through. Um, there was a training that I needed to purchase that I knew I wouldn't have time to complete. But I wanted to purchase it and I wanted to kind of understand the steps to get that. And then I also wanted to complete some assessments that I needed to grade for my coach training participants, because I ended a class and they have a final assignment and I need to assess that and send them emails, uh, with their assessment results.

So these are just some of the things, I mean, this is probably. Third or a quarter of what was on this list. And, um, I needed to figure out, first of all, like how could I set aside time to cert to do these things? Because these are all things that maybe a couple of them were for work. But when I really looked at the list, this was a lot of stuff that had piled up outside of my day job.

And I just never have time, you know, during the day to do anything other than my day job. And so I needed to figure out. How do I do this? How do I figure out a time, you know, in the evenings or the weekends that I can, that I can get some of these things checked off my list. And what I eventually decided to do was even though I usually take evenings off now, this is a real change that I've made in my schedule.

Since I started this new job, um, I decided to take an app. Here or there in the evenings where I could start completing some of these items and especially the ones that I could relatively easily do, like while we were watching TV or something else, like some of these things like ordering the training I needed to complete.

Like, I don't need to put a lot of brain energy into that. I just need to kind of find the email, check out the link, make sure I know how to purchase it, make sure I know how to access the training when I actually have time to complete it. You know, that kind of. So I decided that we could, uh, take like an hour while, while I was doing these other things.

Um, like with my partner watching TV, and recently we have started watching episodes of bones. Um, for those of you who have watched that show, um, it's, it's kind of a nice mix of like mystery and comedy. And so we just kind of put that on the background and then I get to work, you know, for an. And okay. So I'm going to make an argument here that some of you may be able to identify with.

And that is that sometimes when you have a productive period like that, like a power hour as Gretchen Rubin, sometimes likes to call it where you're just trying to get through a bunch of stuff. I actually find that to be. Relaxing. Like it's actually relaxing sometimes for me to be productive. And for me to get a few things off my list that have really been like bothering me and that I've wanted to get done and that I haven't been able to.

And so they just kind of sit in the back of my brain, you know, and I'm kind of, you know, Worrying about them basically that they're not getting done. And so what I find is that if I'm stressed by what's on my list, I'm not really getting true rest. Even if I'm like doing something that's, that's not necessarily productive, like watching TV or something like that.

So I often forget that, you know, I feel like, oh, I have to take, you know, the night off because I'm recovering or I need more, um, rest from, you know, a long day at work. But sometimes getting things done, like even like cleaning your kitchen, like it can feel really good and it can feel like a good use of, of the energy that you might have left at the end of the.

So, what I've started to do with this kind of bucket list is I basically spent the last 10 days of the month and I have a few left where every day I kind of look at this list and I try to get a couple things done of the list. And it's a lot of stuff that I have to do. It's not stuff that I can delegate.

It's, it's just stuff that's kind of piled up that I need to work my way through. And it's really. Great to be able to check these things off, to see at this point about half the list is currently crossed off and I'm hopeful that I'll be able to get even more done before April wraps up. Now I know for sure some of these things are going to bleed over into may, and that's not a big deal because I actually feel like part of the purpose of a list like this.

It's not necessarily about. Everything done. It's about getting some things done that you can feel good about because something is better than nothing. So if you hadn't made the list and you didn't know what you needed to do. And all of a sudden you've been able to make progress on this stuff. It actually feels really, really great.

So I don't know that I'm going to do this every month. I mean, I think sometimes we have periods of our lives where things just kind of start to stack up and we start to feel a little bit overwhelmed or. Like we need a plan. We need to have a sense of like, how is this actually going to get done? Where am I going to fit this into my schedule?

And, um, I actually find this really helpful to do that. Now, another thing that I would offer is I have a couple of days in may where I'm going to take a day off here or there, if I can. And part of what I can do as well as like, look at this list and decide, am I going to use one of those days as like an errand day or a day that I want to really devote to like this training that I need to complete, that I know is going to take awhile.

Um, and those kinds of things also helped me to just keep kind of a reality check on like how I'm using my time. Now, some days you take off and you need the rest, you need to just like watch movies or read books or. Um, go for a long walk or whatever it may be that you spend your time doing. Um, obviously these are like my introvert activities that I do when I have a day off, but I think that you can also plan to take a day off and it's like a catch-up day to try to get through different things or.

This is like a remote work day. If we have to catch up at work, I feel like at work right now, things are relatively under control. I hesitate to say that knock on wood. They will stay, uh, under control, but you know, it's really the stuff at home. That I'm starting to feel as a little bit piling up. So I think that that's the other thing is like, how can you take an extra day to kind of reset yourself, get yourself back on track.

And I'm really looking forward to being able to do that. Maybe at least once in the month of may and see if I can. Make even more progress on these kinds of lists that I'm building. So I wonder if you are thinking about creating an end of the month bucket list now, I guess it doesn't have to be at the end of the month.

It could be any time that you could create this list. It's basically just a master list. It's a brain dump of all the stuff that's piling up. That's making you crazy that you're not able to get it done. And then just slowly starting to. Oh, wait, I think you could do this in the early morning, over your lunch hour in the evening, on the weekends.

Like there's all different kinds of ways to squeeze this stuff into your schedule. But for me, it really meant repurposing some time for. Restful productivity if we want to call it that. So if you are going to try to build in some restful productivity into your schedule, I would love to hear about it.

You can always email me at hello at Dr. Katie linder.com. And I would love to hear about how you're building restful productivity into your week. Thanks for listening.

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