You are listening to, you've got this Episode 325. 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 Lender. On this episode, I thought I would share a little bit about a recent closet refresh that I completed and, um, this is something that I do a couple times a year, and I thought it would just be kind of fun to walk through the steps as we head into spring.

I feel like this is just the perfect time to kind of refresh, especially as you're shifting between seasons. And here it's gonna go from colder to warmer. , and I want to make sure that I have kind of what I need as I shift in the seasons. So what I mean by a closet refresh is basically that I look at my clothes, I choose some that I want to donate, and then decide on maybe a few pieces that I wanna replace or purchase to fill in some gaps.

And, um, to clarify, I don't have any kind of like intentional capsule wardrobe, but I would say that my wardrobe is pretty minimalist. I really just try to keep the things that I actively wear and I cycle through a rotation of pretty consistent outfits that mix and match well. Um, part of that is I keep a set of base colors of primarily black grays and blues and I don't do a lot of patterns, um, in my, my wardrobe.

And so a lot of these things kind of mix and match pretty. and this kind of refresh, like I said, is something that I like to do once or twice a year just to kind of like see if there's anything that I'm not using anymore. And, and this allows me to keep my closet organized for one, but also just kind of at a decent size.

I don't like the idea of just having a bunch of stuff that I'm not using that maybe someone else could use or really enjoy. So I have a series of steps that I go through when I do this process, and I thought it might be helpful to share them here in case any of you are looking forward to doing this as well.

So to start, I like to spend a little bit of time just thinking through my current style preferences and what kind of clothes I need for work on a regular basis. And over the course of my career, this has really kind of shifted over time in terms of like where I was working and what the expectations were.

Um, so for example, right now I don't wear suits every day, but I do need them on occasion. So I keep some suit jackets on hand for that. And, um, I do have colors that I, I tend to wear more than others and this just really helps me to like match things in my closet. It also makes it really easy when I go out to like, replace something or I purchase something new.

It's very clear to me if that's gonna like mix and match with things I already. . So I, I also rarely buy clothes, like I mentioned, that have any kind of pa pattern on them because I just find that they don't have as much rotation in my closet in terms of what I wear on a regular basis. So I have a lot of stuff that I would consider, like basics, um, that are like, you know, black pants, black shirts, gray cardigans, you know, like things that I can kind of work with, um, other, other like scarves and things like that if I need to have some color.

But a lot of my stuff is pretty. . Now, in the past I've also looked at a Pinterest style board that I created, but this time around I felt like I had a pretty good sense of what I wanted to keep and give away. The style board that I created is really just to kind of, um, give me some ideas of things that might look good for someone with my complexion.

So I do have really light skin. I have really light hair, and there's a lot of colors that just completely wash me out. And, um, this is why I kind of stick to the colors that I found that that work pretty well. Um, because there's just a lot of things that, like the pallet just doesn't really work for me.

So, um, once I have that sense, I kind of think about my style and, and what I'm trying. Achieve or accomplish with it. Then I look through my closet and I first start by like pulling out the things I haven't worn in a long time. Now, I think about the specific role that the closing each clothing item that I haven't worn in a long time.

Like what is the role that it's, it's meant to serve, and do I still need it for that? So, for example, when I did this, most recently, what I realized is I had several short. Kind of more formal looking shirts that are meant to be worn under cardigans or suit jackets. But I wasn't really wearing them all that much.

And part of the reason for that is some of them had some patterns on them that I just wasn't really, um, liking so much. And some of them just didn't have like a fit that I. Found to be helpful. Like I, I tend to like shirts that are a little bit longer that I can like tuck in, for example. And these shirts were all relatively short.

Um, they also, I think I just found that I, even in warm weather, I don't really like short sleeve shirts. And I remembered back to when I first got these particular shirts and what I was hoping to use them for, um, which was really basically like wearing them on their own in the summertime when it was hot.

But because I work in an air conditioned office, I just wasn't really doing that. And I didn't like how they were layering under the things I already. Now, these shirts were also a purchase that I made where I found one of them on Amazon, and I like ordered one, tried it, you know, liked the fit. And then I bought like a bunch more of the same kind.

And so it was relatively easy to see how this kind of like grouping of shirts and the style just wasn't really working for me anymore. So those were relatively easy to set aside for donation. now, once I've looked through and found the things that I haven't worn in a long time, then I look through and see if there's any clothes that I don't like the fit of.

Maybe even though I'm still wearing these items. Um, there, there might be something that I want that's similar to that and maybe a different fitter style. Um, and so one example of this was a sweater that I really like the look of it, but the fabric is getting kind of more stiff over time and it feels and kind of looks stiff when I wear it.

And so I like the color and I like the style of it. Um, like the wear and tear on the, the, the fabric of the sweater is just like not great. Um, so that went into my pile. Next I identify any clothes that need repair that I just haven't gotten around to making a decision about. And one example of this is a hooded sweatshirt that I have, um, that I like and I wear it as like lounge clothes.

Um, but recently it lost its zipper mechanism in the wash. And, um, this is a sweatshirt that I didn't pay a lot of money for. I think I got it from like Old Navy or something. And it was just a good example of something that I needed to kind of make a judgment call on because it wasn't really functioning in the way that I need it to, and, and, and not having a zipper that functions.

So that was something that was relatively easy to decide on as well. . So once I have a clear idea of what I want to remove from my closet, I put all these items in a donate pile, and then I kind of preview what's left to see if I think there's anything else that someone would enjoy more than I enjoy it.

So it could be something that is like not really, um, coming into my consistent clothing rotation. Um, and I also just like to think about. , why do I keep some of these things that I'm not wearing? Um, and some of this is like, I have like some dresses that I wear specifically for like weddings or things like that, and they're not really in my rotation for like work clothes.

Um, and those are things that I'm kind of willing to keep, you know, on the off chance that I need them. But there were some other things I was able to kind of pick out as well. Now during this, um, kind of closet refresh, I also go through my accessories like. Um, my shoe collection, my dresser, which includes like my casual wear and workout clothes.

And basically one of the signs I look for when I decide to do this is like, is anything feeling too full? Or like, it's taking up too much room, because that means I just don't have, like, I, I feel like that means I have too many clothes. Um, and so when I have like my dresser drawer that fits in, like my lounge shirts, like my sweatshirts and things I wear on the weekends, when that's starting to feel kind of overflowing, I wanna go through it and just make sure I'm still wearing everyth.

and that there's nothing that I wanna kind of, you know, shift out and, and donate. So, um, what I have right now and what I hope to do is k kind of maintain this is every weekend when I do my laundry, I have, um, I like, I like to basically do everything at once and get everything put away. And so it allows me to see if there's anything that's feeling kind of full or overflowing.

And, um, that also helps me to kind of trigger whether or not I need to kind of go through and do this. . Okay. So once that's all done, I have the donation set aside. Then I decide if there's anything I want to purchase new. So this time around, I decided that I might like to find a couple of, like shift dresses that I can layer some sweaters over for work.

And I also might look for like one more pair of dress pants. Um, I have a black pair and a gray pair that I kind of go through and rotate throughout the week. I have some skirts and things like that, but um, I may want to get one more pair of dress pants just to have one more in rotation. And then I also have some Capri pants from last year's warmer seasons that I'm pretty sure I need to replace since they don't fit as well as I would like.

I wanna try them all on kind of one more time and then make a choice about whether I'm gonna kind of store them, you know, for future use. You know, as we all have like weight fluctuations and things like that. I don't necessarily wanna get rid of things just because they're in the wrong size. Um, but I also feel like we all fall into this trap of keeping things like just in case.

And I would so much prefer to have someone else like liking and using these things. then to have them just like sitting in a box somewhere in my closet. So what I do once I know what I wanna look for is I note those things on my phone, like I take a a note in my phone so that I can have the list handy for the next time that I go shopping.

Now I don't go shopping a ton , and in part this is because I don't really enjoy doing it. Um, but I like to spend when I do go shopping, like an afternoon or a half day, just a devoted to what it is I need to get. And, um, I'm probably gonna try to do this later on in March. I'm gonna be taking some time off work.

And it'll be easy to kind of go to like some local outlet stores that we have here and just like spend, you know, a few hours, like finding these things that I'm looking for. So I like to have this list handy so that when I have some extra time, I, I know exactly what it is that I'm looking for. . So I feel like these are pretty simple steps, but they do help me to keep the number of items in my closet manageable.

Um, and I do use one side of a walk-in closet that I share with my partner. So it's like when my dresser drawers are overflowing or when this closet, the side of the closet starts to feel a little. Bulky and full. This is when I start to think about how can I do something like this refresh. So I would love to hear if you are culling your closet on a regular basis and kind of what's your method for that?

Or if you have some kind of capsule wardrobe that you're put putting together, like seasonally, you know, what does that look like for you? I do feel like, um, my style has kind of settled into kind of. Longer term, you know, what, what I plan to be kind of wearing and using for a while, which is really nice because I don't feel like I'm constantly having to like, go in very different style directions.

I, I feel like I'm old enough that I have enough experience in the workplace to kind of know what I need. Um, and that is a really nice feeling to have. But, um, it is so nice to kind of go through and weed out the things that in some ways are like clutter or even distraction when I'm getting ready in the.

Um, and it's nice to always do this kind of refresh. So again, I would love to hear if you do something like this, you can always email me at hello dr katie leonard.com. I always love to hear from you and thanks so much for listening. Thanks for listening to this episode of You've Got This. You can access show notes and transcripts for each episode@drkatielinder.com slash podcasts.

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