You are listening to, you've got this Episode 332. 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 Linder. On this episode, I thought I would share some of the ways that I'm planning for an upcoming trip that I'm going to be taking.

Now, I will be traveling on a plane for the first time in over three years, and I have to admit that it's a bit strange if you've been listening for a while. You know, I used to travel all the time, often, at least once per month in previous jobs. Um, doing a lot of conference travel, a lot of. Uh, presentations for conferences, but since it's been a while since I've navigated airports, I'm feeling a little bit rusty.

And this is actually the first time that I'm gonna be flying out of Denver's airport since we have lived here. So I thought I would share some of the things that I'm doing to prep my trip and to get more comfortable with kind of easing back in to this kind of activity, uh, after a while away. And I think that maybe some of the things that I'm suggesting here, Could work for anything that you're trying to kind of ease back into, cuz you're taking it like piece by piece.

So the first thing I wanna mention is that I actually am really glad that I eased back into the conference circuit this past fall with some events that were just local to Denver. I didn't have to travel to the conferences, but it got me back into presenting. It got me back into feeling the, um, Kind of energy of, of being in a conference event.

And it, it, it means that for this kind of conference, it's not the conference that I'm getting back into, it's more the plane travel. And, uh, so that helps to kind of ease back into part of these experiences. Um, I also revived my packing list for this trip. This is something that I keep in a notes section of my phone.

And I think if you don't have this, it does help so much with the stress of just thinking you're gonna forget something. I will say that I feel a lot less stressed, uh, when I travel because there are so many things you can get like within. Four hours. If you're in kind of a major city, you can like order something on Amazon and it'll just get delivered to you.

It's, it's really easy to get things now, so that helps me to feel a little better If there's something I forget, you know, it's relatively easy to pick up. The other thing that also helps me to feel slightly better about this trip is it's relatively short, so if, if I do forget something, it's just not that big of a deal.

So I did start to, uh, get out that packing list to kind of use it as a base for what I used to do when I traveled. Um, and just to make sure that I bring the kinds of things it would be kind of a pain if I forgot it. So the main thing I, I really, um, get concerned about is things like my medication, cuz it's hard to get that, you know, um, on a whim, you know, if I, if I forget it.

And also things like, um, chargers and, and just stuff that I'm using kind of all the time. I really wanna make sure I have those things. The other thing that I used to do, and then I also revived for this, is I start to collect the documents that I need for the trip into a physical folder that I bring with me.

Now, I know that there's all this kind of stuff that you can put on your phone, like there's digital wallets and I can pull up websites and things like that, but there is definitely something that's a bit of a like comfort blanket of having everything in a folder. So this is, uh, stuff like my itinerary for the trip.

My hotel confirmation, um, my printed boarding pass, if I feel like I need to do that. A copy of my presentation slides, my presentation notes, some business cards, like all the stuff that I feel like I would like to have a physical copy of. Now the other thing that I feel like I always struggle with is, um, doing my boarding pass, like, and, and checking in for my flight at like the earliest possible time that I can do it.

And so I'm also gonna be setting a timer on my phone, like an alarm that tells me when I need to do it, so that, especially because this trip that I'm taking, I kind of come into town and then I leave like the next day. So it'll be relatively easy for me to just set a timer of when I need to check back in for my, my flight.

Now the other thing, speaking of that kind of shortness of the trip, is I really intentionally plan this trip to be on the shorter side on purpose. Um, in addition to the fact that work is very busy for me right now, and even two days away feels like kind of a lot. I decided to fly in the day before my presentation.

I leave early in the morning to give myself some buffer in the afternoon. And then I plan to fly back the following day after the presentation is over. I present like mid-morning on the following day and I feel like this is going to allow me to enjoy some of the conference sessions and, and to be a little bit, you know, in the setting of the conference, but also maybe limit the fatigue from the trip itself.

And I'm hoping I can connect with a couple of people that I, you know, haven't seen in a while, but I don't feel like I have to kind of overdo it with this particular. Okay. Now some of you might be thinking like, why is this such a big deal? And I'll just say, I'm not the best flyer. I don't really enjoy flying.

And even though I have done it a ton, um, getting back into something like flying, which I have just never really enjoyed is nerve-wracking for me. I mean, it, it creates some anxiety and I've even had, you know, conversations with my partner where I was like, will I ever fly again? I'm not sure. So to like get back on a plane.

Definitely considering, like, do I ever have to do this, um, ever again in my life? Given kind of the, the pandemic, um, it, it feels momentous. It feels momentous for me to get back on a plane. Now the other thing, uh, that I did for this particular conference, Is I did not plan any social meetings. Um, in the past.

I contact people ahead of time, make sure we can meet up, you know, might plan a meal with someone. But this time I decided to just let myself kind of run into people organically and kind of see where that leads and that helps to free up my schedule. Also lets me to do some other work if I, if I need to.

While I'm there, I'm, I don't wanna like schedule myself too, um, back to back because I wanna have a little bit of flexibility even in the short period of time that. So the other thing that I did, and I'm gonna actually post this to the blog, um, later on this week, is I drafted out kind of some of my travel essentials and the kinds of things that I think are gonna be really important.

Um, one of the things that's kind of interesting. What after you've gone like a few years from, from doing something that you used to do all the time is like your routines change and the kinds of things that you would've done in the past are not necessarily the kinds of things that you do now. So some of the things that I, um, Drafted in this blog post, for example, is I have a really different kind of sleep regimen than I did three years ago.

I use a white noise machine, I have an eye mask. I feel like I'm a way more high maintenance sleeper than I was when I was traveling all the time. And I've also started to take a little bit of melatonin at night just to kind of help me go to sleep and stay asleep. And it's actually really been working.

And so one of the things that I'm planning to do, what I can do an upcoming, um, podcast episode about this as well, is, um, really. Bring all of my sleep stuff with me to make sure that I'm getting a good night's sleep when I'm there. And it actually allows me to like test some of these things out outside of my normal environment.

Um, so that was something that I, I talked about in the blog post. The other thing that I'm really trying to do is think about stuff that I feel. Would be like positive rewards or like treats for myself in, in a experience that might feel a little bit stressful for me. So, for example, I'm really trying to think about like, what is the audio book that I wanna listen to when I'm on the flight.

And um, I have this puzzle app, which I've talked about before, that I really enjoy. And is that something that I wanna do to kind of distract myself on this flight? Now it's only a couple of hours, so I, I feel good about that too. This was part of the reason I kind of agreed to do this trip was because it's not that far away.

Um, and, and that made me feel a little bit better. Um, and so trying to kind of find some things, maybe I'll find like a local restaurant that I would enjoy, or just things that I can kind of do when I'm there that help me to feel like I'm getting some like positive reinforcement for doing something that feels kind of stressful.

The other thing too, and I don't know the Denver airport, it's just been so long since I've gone through it, but the Denver airport had a couple of options for food. Um, before, I don't know if they still do, airports have changed a lot in three years. Um, but they had some options that were really great, like vegan, gluten-free, um, options.

When I would used to go through the Denver airport in the past and there was this really wonderful seating area in the Denver airport that's kind of like an atrium. And it has really tall ceilings, glass, glass ceilings, and all these birds end up in this little atrium. And it was always a place where I would sit and like, call my partner and have a, like something to eat when I was in between flights, whenever I used to fly through Denver.

And so I'm kind of looking forward to seeing like how the airport has changed. Um, and if I, this place is still there, you know, that I used to eat at. Um, and also to check out, um, different, you know, parts of the travel experience that. Think have like shifted or evolved over time. Now, three years is not that long, but I also think that it's enough time and there's been enough things that have happened in between that I might see, um, some kind of shift.

Now the other thing I think that is gonna help me to feel a little more comfortable with this trip is I'm definitely masking, you know, on the plane, um, and at the conference. And this is something that's very normal for me now, I do it at work. I'm still probably one of the only people left that is masking at work.

Um, but I'm also one of the only people at work who has not gotten covid yet. So I am still crossing my fingers for myself and for my partner who has also not gotten covid yet, um, that we are, we are still pretty active in, in terms of our, um, Methods of trying to avoid covid. So I am gonna be masking on the plane and I'm, I have a mask that I, I consider to be a little more hardcore, uh, that is not the one that I normally use every day.

Um, that I have a couple of these at work, um, that my work has provided for me that I'm planning to use. You know, when I'm going on the plane and then when I'm coming back on the plane, because they're supposed to be a little bit, you know, um, more difficult for those covid germs to, to sneak through. So, um, that I think will also help me as I'm, I'm going through this process just to feel like I'm doing everything I can to try to avoid covid, not just for me, but really for my partner, which is my primary, uh, priority in this whole process.

So, uh, those are a few things I'm doing to, uh, prep for my travel and I would love to hear if there are other suggestions that you have. You can always email me at hello dr katie linder.com. Um, I always love to hear your suggestions and also just remember if you're gonna be doing something that feels personally hard, For you, you can always do all of this kind of planning and, and thinking about it in advance.

Now, I will say the thing that I'm not allowing myself to do is a lot of worrying in advance. I'm just trying to prep and plan for different scenarios, so I feel like I have what I need. For example, I'm taking my carry-ons with me on the flight, um, so I don't have to worry about losing luggage and things like that.

But I'm not spending a lot of active time worrying about it because I'm going on this trip and there's not a whole lot I can do about it, and I think it's gonna be just fine and I'm gonna have some fun along. So I hope this helps you if you're planning for anything that's feeling a little bit, um, anxiety inducing or stressful for you.

And if you are, I am wishing you all the best. Thanks 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. If you found this episode helpful, please also consider reading and or reviewing the show through Apple Podcasts.