You're listening to You've Got This, episode 352.

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 give you some reflective questions to help you start

thinking about 2024 annual goals.

Now I know that some of you are thinking it feels way too early to be thinking about that,

but as we start heading into quarter four, I actually really like taking quite a bit

of time to think about my annual goals for the coming year.

And I feel like October is a really nice month to start brainstorming and planning for this.

And I often add things to my list.

I take it off my list.

I rearrange my list before I actually decide to commit to what my goals are.

And part of this is because I spend so much time on these goals annually, I really want

to make sure they're the right ones.

So I do like to really give it a lot of thought and I like to spend a couple dedicated sessions

over a longer period of time so that I don't feel rushed and I don't feel pressured into

what I'm putting into my annual goal list.

So if you've been following along, you know, for the past several years, I've used a list

model for my goals and I've also categorized them by different themes.

And this has been really helpful in trying to have kind of a certain amount of goals

that I'm aiming for.

I've also really loved leaving four goals open, one for each quarter that I can add

in throughout the year as new projects or areas of focus emerge for me.

So I wanted to give a few different questions that I'm thinking about as we are headed toward

2024 that are helping me to start to shape what this list might look like for me.

So the first question is, what are the goals from 2023 that are not yet complete and might

need to be continued into 2024?

Now I know that some of my biggest goals are not ones that fit kind of cleanly into a calendar

year.

And in the past, this has included things like book projects and kind of multi-year things

that I've wanted to complete.

And it's helpful for me to consider what I might need to continue to work on next year.

And one example of this for the past couple of years has been paying down our mortgage.

I know that this is a goal that is going to continue for years to come, and it's something

that I really want to keep focused on.

So that would be a good example of something that I know is going to continue into 2024.

Another question I like to ask myself is what habits or routines would benefit from a concrete

annual goal?

Now this is something that in the past I've really dedicated a lot of time to my movement

practices.

So over the course of the pandemic, I spent hundreds of hours on yoga teacher training.

And I also, over this past year, have really been focused on logging minutes in my Peloton

app.

I have found that these kinds of goals that are related to movement but also offer me

a little bit of flexibility, pun kind of intended there, help me to focus and stay motivated.

So for things like the Peloton app minutes, I can spend those minutes doing all kinds

of different things, but the idea is just to be doing something.

So this past year I also had a goal to be having my movement be more intuitive.

What is it that I felt like doing and making sure that I was really listening to my body?

So those kinds of goals I found to be really helpful.

The next question I'm asking myself is what goals feel fun or especially motivating as

I head toward a new year?

Now I think that goals should be fun and not just for people like me who love setting goals

and love checking things off of a list. But I also want to think about what do I want to spend my

time on over the course of a year because I do dedicate quite a bit of time to checking these

goals off my list. So in the past couple of years my reading goals have definitely fallen into this

category and I like to use my goals to think about how I can stretch myself with reading,

especially since I do so much of it. I would also put a lot of my media related goals in this

category as well. When I set goals to watch a series of a show or watch a sequence of films or

listen to Taylor Swift albums, it kind of forces me to build those things into my schedule and it

ends up balancing out the amount of work that I do on a regular basis, both between my day job and

the side business. So having fun goals that I incorporate and that I'm aiming toward and that

require a decent amount of time to get done means that I'm building that rest and recovery time and

fun time into my schedule on a regular basis. Now I also ask myself the question, "What new areas do

I want to focus on in the new year?" So over the past couple of years I've definitely had some

repeated goals because I just like them a lot and it was super fun to keep them on my list. So a good

example of this is my alphabet challenge that I do with my reading, which is every month I choose a

letter from the alphabet, I go into my Kindle, and I pick five books that start with that letter that

that I already own.

This is a kind of routine that has helped me

to really dive back into my backlist

of things I already have

and make sure I'm actually reading the things

that I purchase.

But also it gives a kind of spontaneity

to my reading every month

because I'm choosing those things live on my YouTube videos

as I'm recording them.

So that's a good example of something

that gets kind of repeated on a regular basis.

I do though find that goals in new areas

present me with new challenges

and learning experiences that I always benefit from.

And there are a few of those that landed on my list this past year, especially the

surprise that I kind of gave myself for my 40th birthday, which I haven't revealed

yet, but it's coming soon.

Okay.

Next question I ask is what is most important for me to spend my time, my

energy, and my attention on?

So I have a lot going on between working full time, running my side business, and

my goals become a shorthand for what I really want to be spending my time, my

energy and my attention on.

And because I track my annual goals each month and also report out quarterly,

I find that these goals are some of the things that I stay the most accountable

to throughout the year, because especially cause I'm sharing it with all of you.

So it really helps me to think about what do I want to be spending my time,

energy, and attention on, especially when it comes to things like professional

development or something that I want to learn, um, that can take a decent amount

of time, energy, and attention.

So that's a question I always ask myself as well.

And then another question that I ask myself is what goals would have a deep

level of meaning for me, given where I am right now, personally and professionally,

the kind of seasons that I'm in.

And I think that this to me is a little bit like how people choose a word of the

year. And in 2024, I'm kind of starting to narrow in on a particular theme that

could be kind of timely and meaningful for me.

I'm still kind of narrowing in.

I'm not sure I'm going to go with it yet.

But when I think about what I want to prioritize in the coming year, sometimes

picking something like a theme and then considering how I can set goals with

that theme from a range of angles is really helpful.

So this is another example of what I do with my reading.

I have a kind of theme of reading each year and I set, you know, six or seven

goals around that particular theme so that I can come at it from a range of angles.

I'm definitely considering another theme that I might want to be building into my

2024 goals, and I want to kind of flesh that out and see what it can look like.

Now, the last area that I really like to consider when I'm thinking about my annual goals, and

it's kind of tied to this last question about meaningfulness, is what do I want to do that's

tied to my values?

So I often find that annually, and I do this more than annually, certainly quarterly, I

like to look at my values and try to figure out if there's any misalignments or gaps or

just areas that I feel like need a little bit more time and attention.

And annual goals are a great way for me to do a deeper dive with my values and think

about if there's anything in particular that I want to be focused on.

Now, I can tell you right now, I have a value I've had for a long time around creativity.

And this is giving me a lot of food for thought as I head into 2024.

I have some kind of ambitious goals on my draft list that are tied to creativity.

I'm still trying to figure out do I have the kind of mental, cognitive, emotional, physical

energy to tackle some of the creative things that I would love to do in the years to come.

So it's a great reason again to spend a few months thinking about what your goals might

be because some of them are big and you want to kind of give them the attention they deserve

of can you really tackle them?

Does it feel realistic and reasonable to put these kinds of things on your list?

And as someone who often goes big or goes home with my goals, I like to really think

about is it something that I can commit to and then I'm going to be really serious about.

Because once it goes on the list, I am really trying to build in the time in my schedule

to make sure I'm actually committing to the things I said I would.

So I'm really curious if there are other key questions that you think would be helpful

for me or you as you are considering your next year's annual goals.

You can always email me at hello@drkatylinder.com.

I always love to hear from you and hear your suggestions.

And of course, as we get closer and closer to the end of this calendar year, I'm going

to be finalizing this list and sharing it out on the podcast and on the blog.

So stay tuned for that.

But until then, I would love to hear how you are also planning maybe next year's annual

goals over the coming months.

Thanks so much for listening.

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