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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 want to talk about the concept of an end-of-the-year sprint.

As we have entered into quarter four, now is the perfect time to acknowledge that even though there is less time, the year is rapidly coming to a close, there is still plenty of time left until the end of the year.

And I do think some people look at the calendar and they're like, "Oh my gosh, the winter holiday break is right around the corner.

" But there is still actually quite a bit of time, like two and a half months left of this year.

And as I'm feeling energized to wrap up my 2023 goals, I'm also starting to look ahead the new year and I'm starting to think about if there are any changes I want to make now so that I can enter into 2024 strong.

And this is kind of the concept of the end of the year sprint.

How do we want to close the year strong.

Now I do want to acknowledge I know some of us may not be feeling that sprint energy right now and that's okay.

You might think about what is the end of the year jog that you want to do or the end of the year speed walk or anvil.

You know like what are are the things that you want to be doing that you can kind of start to think toward how you want to end the year and begin the new year.

Now ironically I think sometimes we use the start of a new year as an excuse to not make big changes and we'll say to ourselves you know I don't want to make any big changes or starting new routines until the new year begins and so it becomes kind of a downhill slide toward the end of the year instead of kind of an uphill sprint and I also think with the holidays coming up you know we're afraid we can lose momentum with new routines and habits and things like that.

So acknowledging that, but I also want to challenge myself and perhaps to challenge you to think about how you can use these last few months of the year as a sprint towards a goal or a change that you've actually been wanting to make for quite some time.

So for example, you might decide to meditate more, you know, in these last few months of the year, or you might decide to get more consistent or regular with your writing and research practices or try a new, you know, movement practice you've been wanting to engage in.

This is the perfect time to actually use this window to think about how you might want to make a change.

So if you are interested in this concept of an end of the year sprint or an end of the year jog or an end of the year speed walk, wherever you are, here are some possible questions that you might want to consider.

So the first question is, who do you want to be in 2024 that you don't feel like you are that person now.

So think about who who you might want to identify as in the new year and also how you want to feel.

Maybe you want to feel more calm or maybe you want to feel more confident in a particular area of your life and think about what you could start now to get yourself to that feeling over the next several months.

So, um, if I wanted to dedicate myself to practicing something like a particular tool in my coaching or a particular form of like yoga postures and things like that, I might think about, you know, what is the regular consistent thing I could offer to that each week.

Is it an hour, you know, of practice or even 30 minutes that would allow me to start to feel more confident about something as I'm heading into the new year.

The next question is what incremental changes feel manageable.

So I did acknowledge the end of the year can be a really busy time and I don't think we can ignore that.

There is holiday time, there's family time, even if you have things like breaks, you know, like holiday breaks, it can still feel like a really busy time.

So thinking about small incremental changes you can make that will stick is important, and starting small can still add up to big results.

The next question is, "What will help you to feel ready to tackle the new year.

" Maybe you want to get a project off your plate.

That is definitely the case for me in terms of my book project that's due in November.

I'd really like to get that off my plate and get the major work of that done before I start the new year.

Or Or maybe it's that you want to start a new year's resolution a little early so that it starts to feel more comfortable and you don't have the pressure of like starting something new in January.

I think now is the perfect time to kind of prep yourself for the transition into 2024.

And part of why I say this is because I think while I certainly get that kind of like new year energy in January, I also sometimes feel a bit of a downturn in my energy because it's cold, it's dark, it's the middle of winter, at least here in this hemisphere.

hemisphere and it's really challenging sometimes to like get myself motivated to do brand new things in January.

And so this is a great way to think about kind of how do you transition or kind of slide your way into something before the new year hits.

Another question that I think can be really helpful with this is what do you feel distanced from.

So you might set a goal to come back to something that you feel like you've moved away from and a period of time like you know eight to ten weeks to twelve weeks is a wonderful way to kind of come back to something.

So that might be like connecting with family or reconnecting with your teaching or your research or your students or even recommitting to some kind of self-care practice.

If you feel like you've moved away from something and you've been wanting to go back to it, you've been kind of craving to go back to it, now could be a good time to consider that.

Another fun question that I like to ask is what date do you want to have with yourself.

So if you were going to set aside an hour each week to go on a date with yourself, how would you use that time.

Would it be to work on a special project.

Would it be to have like reflective or processing time.

Would it be to take a nap.

I think that's true for many of us.

With two and a half months left in the year, you could book potentially ten hours worth of dates with yourself for anything.

So you want to devote a little bit of extra time to.

And again, that kind of small piece each week can really add up over time.

And then of course, you can also ask yourself what habits or routines might need more attention from you.

And lately I've been thinking about my own kind of morning wake up time, which impacts my morning routine.

And I've gotten away from a consistent time that I'm getting up.

I've really been prioritizing So I kind of set my alarm for a later time and then I kind of just wake up when I wake up and what that means is I have a really inconsistent time in the morning to build in you know, anything that I want to do with my routine and so this has impacted you know the various kind of habits and and Routines that I have in the morning and I love the idea of spending the next 10 weeks kind of getting back to a schedule That works for me now.

I could tell myself.

Well, that's just going to be disrupted by the winter break Like that schedule is not gonna stick, but that's still, you know, there's a good chunk of time there before I hit winter break that would allow me to get back into a solid routine that feels really good for me.

So as we all know, and as I often remind myself, time is a social construction.

We assign meaning to various, you know, bits and pieces of time, and it's something that we do socially.

And so I have to remind myself I can decide to start something or make a change at any time.

I don't have to wait for the beginning of the week or the beginning of the month or the beginning of a new year.

If there's something I've really been wanting to do, I've been craving it.

I've really been thinking about it a lot.

Why not start it now.

So that is really the question I'm posing to you today in this episode is, is there something you've been putting off and that you actually really want to start now and what is that thing.

So hopefully some of of these questions can help you to think through any changes or adjustments that you might be wanting to make as we do this kind of sprint jog speed walk toward the new year.

And as always, you can always reach out and let me know if this is resonating with you as you're thinking about these next few months.

You can always email me at hello@drkadylinder.

com.

I always love to hear from you.

Thanks for listening.

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