You're listening to You've Got This, episode 372.

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 life-giving energy of routines.

When I was thinking about titling this episode, I felt like an alternative title could be why boring can be so great because sometimes routines can be the thing that just keep you going in the midst of a lot going on.

So it is not a secret that lately my life has felt very full and I have a lot going on at work and I think I can say I am probably stretched as far as I've ever been in terms of trying to keep all the balls in the air, all the projects organized all the tests moving forward.

And on the one hand, I will say it's kind of exhilarating to be pushed that far to the limit because it allows me to practice and test like almost like strength test a lot of the organizational and time management strategies that I've gathered over time.

And to kind of see what works, what doesn't, and what like flexes to, to kind of respond and deal with like these really high levels of work.

On the other hand, though, I will say it feels like a lot of pressure.

There's a lot going on and having a schedule like the one I have now feels a bit like living on the edge because I feel like even a small disruption, like getting sick, for example, it feels like it could cause everything to come like crashing down.

Um, and so I'm trying really hard to stay in my routines, which are meant to keep me kind of healthy and well.

You might remember that my word of the year is devotion and trying to really stay devoted to myself and have my own kind of like boundaries and, and healthy habits and routines has been a big part of that.

So I've really been leaning in to my routines and I thought it might be helpful to talk through some of the routines that are really serving me right now.

Um, and that are really kind of keeping me on track and some of them are just super boring, but when everything else is kind of nuts, like it feels okay to have some boring things.

So the first one I'm going to talk about is exercise.

Now this is something that I've been doing pretty consistently since the beginning of the year.

And I exercise for at least 45 minutes in the morning.

And typically that is a mix of a bike.

I bike about five miles and then a row.

And I usually do about 20 minutes of rowing.

And what is making this easier for me to do is a couple of things.

One, I have a plan that I create at the beginning of the month with specific things to do each day.

And I have mentioned in previous episodes, previous blog posts, that I'm trying to hit kind of the gold level badges in Peloton.

And so basically I take the amount that that is and I divide it by the number of days in the month and then I make my plan of what I'm trying to do to roughly stay on track to hit those badges.

And I sometimes will go a little more on one day and a little less on another day.

So it's not super strict, but it is kind of helping me to track what I'm trying to do on a consistent basis.

The second thing that's really helping with this routine is I have a wide variety of exercise activities built in and that just keeps things kind of entertaining for me.

So I do have a treadmill, I have the row, I have the bike, I do strength workouts, and of course I can always do yoga and things like that.

And having that kind of mix has been really helpful for me.

The second routine I feel is one of the most boring ones that I do, but it really, really works for me and this is around meal prep.

So I am a huge fan and I know not everybody can do this, but I am a huge fan of finding something that works and just replicating it.

And so right now for me, this has been a lunch meal that has been pretty consistent for a while now.

And that's basically just this like vegetable soup that I make.

I make a big batch of it every week and I eat it for lunch pretty much every day during the week and on the weekends as well.

And just having this this kind of like cooked and portioned out.

So I just grab and go has been super helpful.

I've also started to do more of my snacks as well.

So when I find something that works really well, I will just like lean into that.

So I have a mix of crackers that I have for snacks.

I have, uh, I think I've mentioned some Chia pudding stuff that I do.

I will grab an orange and, um, or different kinds of fruit and bring that to work.

And having those lunches and snacks, like pretty much ready to go that I can just pack them and leave the house, you know, with what I need has been super, super helpful.

I also have a pretty standard breakfast option as well, which is basically like toast and fruit in the morning.

I will often do smoothies in the warmer months, but in the colder months I often just do like toast and fruit.

So I am super boring when it comes to meals, but I have found that this really helps to kind of like lower my stress and ensure that I'm eating healthy things in the midst of what can be really, really busy weeks.

The third routine is around reading.

Now you might wonder how I have any time to read outside of everything else that's going on, but I am making the time.

This is a really important routine for me.

It's my solitude practice.

It is my reset and recovery time.

And having significant reading goals every month is really keeping me accountable to having that rest and recovery time built into my schedule.

So I definitely am listening to an audiobook in the morning when I'm working out.

I'm reading a little bit at night.

I'm definitely reading on the weekends.

So I'm really trying to build this in to hold myself accountable to those kinds of activities that are really helping me to stay a little bit balanced in terms of my own self-care.

The fourth routine that really occurred to me when I was thinking about this is around my morning.

I get up at roughly the same time every day and I do the workout that I mentioned.

I have breakfast, I jump in the shower and get ready at roughly the same time every day.

Then I leave the house at roughly at the same time every day, my commute is pretty consistent.

And this kind of like normalcy to start the day and know that I'm going to just like go through the steps that I always go through is really helpful because when I get to work, who knows what is going to happen.

I have all kinds of things that crop up in my schedule.

Even though I have like a fully scheduled day, there's just all kinds of things that happen that meetings get added to my calendar, things get moved around.

And so I can't always expect my day is going to be consistent.

And especially because when I look at my day, all of my meetings are different every single day.

Like even if I have like weekly meetings with certain people, they get moved around.

Sometimes they're shorter.

Sometimes they're longer.

I mean, I really feel like I don't have any consistency.

And even where my lunch falls during the day moves around, because if I have to have meetings scheduled, so, and I stay late some days.

So my, my day to day schedule is very, uh, variable, like it moves around a lot.

So to have like that consistent morning routine where I know, you know, kind of like what that's going to look like has been really helpful.

And also I can't always count on having a consistent evening routine now, because sometimes I'm staying late at work or I have an evening event or I have something that I have to do.

And so I love starting out my day with like having that routine and knowing that I have that kind of stronger foundation.

And also because I'm fitting in things like exercise and, you know, a good meal and things like that.

I do like kind of tell myself like, well, even if the rest of the day, you know, is, is not going the way that I thought it would or, or it's not great.

Like I've gotten these other things done and like, that feels good to me that I'm kind of staying healthy and, you know, working through, um, that normalcy to kind of build a strong foundation for my day.

The other routine that I wanted to mention is a weekend set of routines.

So I have a pretty standard set of routines on the weekends.

I think I mentioned this in my baseline episode where I talked about like doing laundry and certain kinds of things that I try to kind of do in the margins on the weekend.

And sometimes that involves like meal prep, but it's kind of like a reset of the week to make sure I have everything that I need to be successful as I'm heading into the week.

And also just to make things as easy as possible for myself.

So I am trying to do things like this content creation as I record this.

It is a Sunday afternoon.

Um, and I try to get this kind of stuff done ahead of time so that once I go into the week, I don't have to worry about, um, fitting it in, you know, amidst everything else that's going on.

And because I just don't always know what's going to happen in the week and I have to be kind of responsive and reactive to things, getting some of these routines done in advance has been super, super helpful to me.

And it just brings my stress level completely down because I know that I can just be kind of in the moment during the work week and know that I can be kind of responding to whatever it is that I need to respond to.

So as you can see, a lot of these routines are super boring.

They are the same thing every time, which is what makes them a routine.

But I will just say right now they are giving me energy.

This is such an important part of what is helping me to function in the midst of a lot of things that are feeling a little bit chaotic and a little bit, I will just say, overwhelming.

Like there's just a lot going on all the time and I don't anticipate that it's going to be that way forever, but certainly for right now.

I'm kind of juggling a lot of things.

And this kind of routine setting and having something that feels really familiar and comfortable and that I know is tied to kind of my health and wellness is really, really important for me.

So as always, I would love to hear what are some of the routines that are giving you life-giving energy.

You can always email me at hello@drkatylinder.

com.

I would always love to hear from you and I would love to know if there's any routines I should be adding into my schedule as well.

Thanks for listening.

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