You're listening to You've Got This, episode 375.

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 talk a little bit about mid-career, and I stumbled across some questions in a Harvard Business Review article by Rebecca Knight.

I will link this article in the show notes.

And she asks six questions for kind of the midpoint of your career, just to kind of like check in, reflect.

I love these kinds of things.

These are like the equivalent of like the 17 magazine quizzes.

I love reflective questions wherever they're coming from.

And I thought these were really great.

I know not everyone who listens to the show is at mid-career, But maybe you'll be able to take something away because I actually think that some of these questions apply at any stage of where you are in your current career life cycle.

So the first question that she poses is, "What will I regret not having done or learned 10 years from now?

" Now, for those of you who've stuck around for a while with this podcast, or you've just kind of like followed my career, you know I've picked up quite a few skills over a period of time.

And I can actually link to, I think there was a podcast episode that I talked about like 10 skills I picked up in the last 10 years or something like that.

Um, I have focused a lot of my early career on learning and I would imagine this is especially true for people who are in higher education.

Now, Harvard business review is obviously for people who are not just in higher education.

So there are a lot of people who might think about, you know, do they want to pick up an additional degree or do they want to pick up some, an additional skill set?

I feel like I've I've spent a lot of time in my career in this learning space.

So there's not a lot that I regret, um, or that I feel like I would regret 10 years from now, not having done, but there are a couple of things.

One of them is I do want to get my master certified coaching credential.

And I'm still 700 hours away from the experience I need to gain before I will be qualified to go up for that credential.

And just to give you a sense, I would say I'm earning about.

roughly 200 coaching hours a year, sometimes a little bit less, sometimes a little bit more, and that's just through like my private coaching.

When I do group coaching, things like that.

So it takes a little while.

I'm still a few years away, but if I 10 years from now did not have this, I think I would regret it.

I think I would regret not having gone those final steps to get that, that final coaching credential.

The second thing that really came to mind for me, um, and I've been thinking a lot about like my forties and what I want to focus on in this decade.

And, um, one of the things that keeps kind of coming up for me is trying to write more fiction.

Now, I think I have mentioned in the past that I was an English major in my undergrad.

I had a, um, a dual major between English literature and creative writing, and I have always loved creative writing.

I also write some poetry, and this is something that I think would be super fun to do a deeper dive in, in my forties.

Now that I've gotten a lot of my more like academic publishing stuff done, you know, like, I feel like that was a big part of my thirties was all of that publication that was more professional.

And I love the idea of trying to write more fiction along with that.

I love the idea of also trying my hand at self publishing because I do feel like this is a big part of the publishing world now for, you know, trade presses is you can have a press or you can self publish.

And so I would love to kind of learn more about that.

And I think the next 10 years offers like a good window of time for me to do a deeper dive there.

The second question that Rebecca Knight poses is how do I tap into my purpose?

I love this question.

This is a question that I've given a lot of deep, deep thought to in the last, I would say decade or so of my life.

Um, and one of the things that as I was kind of doing additional reflection, thinking about that question now was I feel like I need to create more margin in my life so that I'm not just going from like one thing to another thing.

And I need more time for reflection.

And processes to make sure that I can kind of keep holding space effectively for other people.

And I do feel like that's part of my purpose is what I do in coaching and what I do in my job is really trying to hold space for other people.

Now, this also helps me to ensure this kind of like margin and time for reflection.

It helps me to ensure that I'm staying aligned with my own values in my actions, in my decisions, instead of getting just like lost in the rush of every day.

So tapping into my purpose for me is about kind of like creating that space and that margin so that I can do more deep reflection.

Okay, the third question asked in this article is what mastery or gift have I developed that I can offer to the world?

Now, the thing that obviously came to mind first for me was coaching.

That probably will not surprise you.

This is something that I've spent a long, deep amount of time, you know, like practicing, thinking about.

Um, and of course now I train other people to become coaches, which offers like this whole other level of reflection on coaching, which I love.

Um, but the other thing that occurred to me is that I feel like I've developed a lot of experience and a lot of different areas that can help people who are trying to follow similar paths to what I've done in the past.

And I really do love sharing about process, uh, which I often do, you on the show and helping to shorten the learning curve for other people who are trying to do things that maybe took me a while to figure out.

And a good example of this is slow hustle.

So a lot of the content of slow hustle of the program itself is definitely stuff that people can go out and find, you know, like in books, in podcasts, in blog posts online.

But I spent years like gathering all of that and trying to figure out what is kind of the shortest way to learn about how to create and sustain a values led business and like, what does that look like to do that?

And that's what slow hustle became.

So I really do love to think about this question of, are there other courses that I would want to create or other experiences that I would want to offer to other people that would kind of shorten the learning curve?

Obviously, the coach training falls into this for me too.

It doesn't necessarily shorten the learning curve because there's a certain amount of time you have to spend in training in order to be credentialed.

But it does allow me to sequence the learning for coaching in a way that feels like it's really helpful, especially for people who are in the higher ed space and they're trying to unlearn some things that we learn in higher ed to actually learn the effective skills of being a coach.

All right, the fourth question in this article is, "What do I want my days to look like?

" Now, this one was a little bit tough for me because I had to be really honest with myself that my days right now are pretty challenging.

Like I have a lot of meetings that are just back to back and I'm not sure I can make a change in this particular part of my life right now for probably a year.

Just given the the load that I have at work and the kinds of things I've been asked to do, I definitely notice a difference in my day when I have less meetings or when I have some margin in between meetings.

But it is not uncommon for me to go back to back with either 30 to 60 minute meetings in the morning, take a break for lunch, and then do the same in the afternoon.

So a day where I have 10 meetings is like normal.

I think that that was something that was a little bit challenging for me to just be like acknowledging that that's not ideal.

And I know it's not ideal.

And it's kind of just where I am right now in my work life.

It can be really challenging to balance the relational aspects of my work with the admin work like email, the project work like writing reports, and the latter two, that admin work, the project work, these are the things I'm often taking home at the end of the day.

So I do think that I want my days to look less full.

That is probably the easiest way to describe that.

But I'm also kind of at peace with the fact that that's not really going to happen, at least for right now.

Okay, the fifth question in this article I thought was super interesting.

And it is what trade-offs am I willing to make or basically what trade-offs am I no longer willing to make?

And I feel like this is something that, again, it took me a minute to kind of like think through this and think about what trade-offs have I made, you know, like earlier in my career.

And I think about, for example, we moved quite a bit.

If you've been following my career, you know that that I've moved my partner from multiple states, across the country and back, to go to different jobs and to really kind of work my way, not just up, but across in terms of trying to understand different skillsets and things that I might wanna add into my portfolio of my career.

I'm not really willing to move all over the country anymore.

This is something that I feel like when I was younger and I was motivated to learn all of these things, it felt like the right thing to do.

And my partner really took a hit for that.

Like this was not something he enjoyed doing and he was really committed to supporting me.

And so he did it, but now I think we're both at a stage of life where that's not really something that we wanna do.

We would love to just settle in and stay somewhere for a little while.

Now I feel like for some of you, you're gonna be shocked to hear me say that because I was like moving all over the place.

But I definitely feel like that's kind of a deep seated feeling with me right now is just kind of like settling in in one place and the house that we have now, we've been here now for a little over two and a half years.

We love our house.

I think that this is a place hopefully we'll be able to stay for a while.

Okay, the last question in this article is what's getting better about my life?

I love this question.

I think it's so interesting to think about this.

So the thing that I kind of immediately thought about as my response to this question is the older I get, the better I understand myself.

And I actually love aging.

I think that for some people, this is really challenging to age.

And I would imagine, you know, 20, 30 years from now, when I'm like not feeling as healthy as I do now, you know, knock on wood, you know, that I continue to be healthy, it will feel different.

You know, aging will feel different, but I don't feel it in my body, you know, as much.

At 40 years old, you know, I still feel like I'm in a pretty healthy place.

But I do feel like with every year, I come to a deeper understanding of who I am and what I care about and what I can offer to the world.

And that feels really special and unique.

I feel like I'm more confident now than I've ever been about the contributions that I can make at work.

I'm more clear on like the unique things that I've developed as a leader and how they impact people around me and what they can contribute to an institution.

And especially as I've been able to compare my approaches and leadership to other leaders, other leaders' choices, other leaders' philosophies, Like I've become way more clear about like who I am and what I'm offering in those spaces, and that feels really good.

That feels like that's definitely getting better.

I would also say that as I learn more about myself, I also have just developed a really like deep understanding of my capacity of both for like creative things for work, for rest, like the kinds of things that I need in order to like be replenished and you hear me talk a lot on this podcast about.

About self care, about self preservation.

And I feel like I've gotten a really clear idea of what that looks like for me, um, which includes things like solitude and reading and really like leaning into my introverted self.

Um, and that's something that I feel like earlier in my life was not as clear to me as it is now.

So I love these six questions.

Once again, I will post this article by Rebecca Knight in the show notes, in case you want to take a look.

But I would encourage you to think about these six questions, where you land with them for yourself, whether you're at mid-career or not, I think they can be really interesting things to be kind of thinking about.

And of course I would love to hear if there's anything that comes out of this reflection that's interesting for you.

You can always email me at hello@drkatylinder.

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As you know, I always love to hear from you.

Thanks so much for listening.

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