[MUSIC] You're listening to You've Got This, episode 388.

[MUSIC] 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.

[MUSIC] On this episode, I wanna talk about the concept of starting with a to-be list instead of a to-do list.

Now, this is a tool that I've recently used with a coaching client who came into our session just completely overwhelmed.

And she said she felt almost frantic as she was transitioning into summer and already just felt behind on her projects, even though it's still pretty early in June.

And I would just say, I think these are all feelings that we can relate to when we're going through transitions.

It can feel really like there's just a big upheaval and it can be very unsettling.

So as an aside, I also just wanna mention I've been talking with a lot of coaching clients about the transition into summer and the challenges of figuring out your end of your activities and alongside those of your kids and your family.

And if you're feeling the strain of that, you are definitely not alone.

I feel like this is a bunch of conversations that I've been having recently with folks and helping them to kind of get organized and to think about what they wanna prioritize.

And it's been really hard, so I've just mentioned that.

But going back to my client, it was very clear that she wanted to feel a different way than she did in the moment that she was coming into the session.

And I asked her if she wanted to work on a to be list first before we started with any other planning and she agreed, she thought that was a good idea.

So what I mean by a to be list is basically it's something helpful to note how you are feeling now and how you want to be feeling in the future.

So it's not just about getting things done like we would focus on with a to do list, but it's also about how you wanna shift into kind of a different state of being and starting there first and seeing how it kind of impacts your other planning.

So for this particular client, she talked about things like feeling calm and balanced and feeling a sense of freedom as the core elements of her to be list.

And once we had that to work with, we were able to move forward with figuring out a plan that would get her to that state of being.

So it's kind of a way of focusing on yourself without like going straight to the tasks and the things that you need to get done.

So I think that in this case, it was really helpful to just talk through what was getting her to that point of overwhelm.

And part of it was she just hadn't had time to sit with herself and do the kind of planning that she liked to do.

And again, I think this is something that we can all really relate to.

When I can't have my like solitude practice, I start to feel a bit unsettled.

And so from there we carved out time in her schedule for planning and organizing her summer projects.

And I think that it's important to note that sometimes a to be list doesn't result in the same actions as a to do list might.

A to be list really allows you to go deeper with how you wanna feel.

And that's something that I think we often will skim over the surface with when we're just focused on our tasks.

So this session could have been about like creating her list for her summer projects, but we wouldn't have gotten to this deeper place of how she really wanted to be feeling as she was working through those projects.

So I was super inspired by my clients work in this area.

And I thought I would share what I would put on my own to be list.

And some of the things that kind of immediately came to mind for me.

And also just encourage you to think about in this stage of potential transition, you know, between seasons.

And as we're closing out an academic year and heading into the summer season, at least here in the hemisphere that I'm in, what are the kinds of ways that we want to be?

I also love that this exercise helps with transition.

But I think it's also a great set of questions to ask like at the beginning of a week or a month to say, how do you wanna be in a particular time period?

Or even coming into like a particular season, you all know I love talking about seasons that you're defining, you know, how do you wanna be in that space?

So one of the first words that came to mind for me when I asked myself this question of what would be on my to be list was the word present.

I will say lately I have felt like I've had a lot of distractions and it's been really difficult for me at times to just focus and give my attention to the things that I need to do.

And without realizing it, I think I was responding to this to be list item with a commitment to get back into meditating in June.

This was something that I put on my monthly to do list that I release on my blog.

And it's been lovely to just listen to guided meditations at different points throughout my week as a way of just kind of recentering and being present with myself, being present with my breath and just kind of focusing.

I think that the other thing I would say too is I feel like there's been a bit of a downshift at work.

I still have a decent amount of meetings, but I definitely have less than the load I normally have.

And whenever you have like things like put on your plate or taken off your plate, you know, in a relatively sudden way.

That's another time where I feel like it can be hard to be present.

You're just kind of just combobulated.

And I think that's a little bit of what I've been feeling as we've transitioned into June.

So it was nice for me to kind of name that and think about what I can do to, to feel more present.

The next item on my to be list, I think would be the word consistent.

I have recently been trying to shift my diet to be a little bit healthier and to cut out some sugar and more processed foods.

And I've also been adding more protein into my diet, which I think when you're plant-based, which I've been for a long time, it can take a little bit of extra thought because there's less protein available in certain foods.

And so you have to kind of think about like, how do you fit that in to different meals in a way that just makes sense in terms of like how I typically bulk prep my food?

So I will mention as an aside here that I did ask chat GPT last week to help me with some meal planning.

And it was super helpful because I was able to basically say I'm trying to add in more protein.

Here are my restrictions.

How can I do this?

Like give me some ideas.

And I walked away with some really helpful ideas.

And so I really loved using that tool for that.

So for now, I decided on basically three main meals that I'm going to repeat for a while just because it helps with my bulk food prep.

And I want to stay consistent with those and kind of see how I feel with additional protein added in.

So consistency is going to be a helpful thing for me to kind of focus on, I would say for the next several weeks at least.

Another item that I could see adding to my to be list is reflective.

And I again feel like lately because I've been very focused on doing things, you know, and feeling like I'm less present and I'm distracted by a lot of things going on.

I would like to step back and just think more about my approaches and the results of my approaches and, you know, really just take like a beat.

I mean, I think coming out of this academic year, and I would imagine this is true for many of us, there was just a lot on our plates.

And I think that there's, you know, I was talking with another client earlier this week about all of the variables that she's been juggling and like, wow, super complicated.

And I just thought like, how are you still standing?

I mean, like thinking about all of the different kinds of things that she was listing off.

So I think that it's really easy to get like lost in the tasks and just trying to like survive and like get through our list and get all the things done and hit the deadlines that we need to hit.

And it's easy for me at least to do that and not step back and take a moment to reflect.

So I am hoping to use my annual restful July period for that to just kind of like take stock of some things and do some reflection.

And I think that setting aside, you know, decent amounts of time to do that can be really helpful.

I've definitely talked with many people lately who are thinking about doing some kind of retreat over the summer season or just building in some time to just reconnect with themselves.

And I think that that's definitely something that's on my list as well.

So I can imagine probably a bunch of other items that could be on my to be list, but already I feel like a little bit more calm and centered just by talking through those things.

And it's almost like a little bit of a return to yourself to kind of set the to do list aside and just say like, who am I in this moment?

And who do I want to be in this moment?

And what is the difference between who I am right now and who I want to be?

And what are the kinds of actions or approaches or strategies that I want to do to help myself get to that place that maybe feels a little bit more healthier, a little more balanced, a little more present.

So I would love to hear the kinds of things that you might put on a to be list.

You can always email me at hello@drkatylinder.com to let me know.

I always love to hear from you and thanks for listening.

Thanks for listening to this episode of You've Got This.

You can access show notes and transcripts for each episode at drkatylinder.com/podcasts.

If you found this episode helpful, please also consider reading and or reviewing the show through Apple podcasts.

[MUSIC]