You're listening to You've Got This, episode 427. 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 share about my next big learning adventure. Now if you have stuck around for a while, you know that the last learning adventure I went on was doing another master's degree in organizational leadership, which took me a couple of years to plug away at. I really, really enjoyed it. It was kind of my gift to myself for my 40th birthday was to give myself a master's degree or the opportunity to pursue one, I should say. Before that, I would say my big learning adventure was over the pandemic when I did a ton of credentials and a lot of training in yoga and meditation. If you have been listening for a while, you would remember that I completed an online yoga teacher training program and I ended up doing a 500 hours of training there and then another couple hundred hours of meditation training. And I have a couple of episodes about that. I can link them in the show notes if you want to go back and listen. But basically since I completed all of that training, I have taught some yoga in combination with my coaching practice. I've also led guided meditation sessions in the prolific community that I facilitate and I don't really teach it in any studio settings because I just don't have time. So I do serve clients virtually at times. This is not like a regular consistent thing that I'm doing right now. But when I started my yoga training, it was really just a way for me to learn more about yoga to further develop my own practice. And I'm someone who really appreciates a structured way of learning, especially if I'm just getting into something and I'm not quite sure what the landscape is. I like to have it broken down. And so in my training, I had different parts of yoga from the physical practice to the other elements that make up the larger philosophy. And over the last several months, I have really felt myself kind of called to do a deeper dive back into this practice again. And I knew that I really wanted to do it through a structured program. So you may say, isn't 700 hours enough? And what I would say is I went to yoga during a period of like uncertainty and stress. And here we are back in a period of uncertainty and stress. And so I am turning to yoga again, and I do not think that it is the wrong move. So I decided to join a yoga therapy training program that I came across recently. And I'll talk a little bit more about the program in a minute. But first, let me share what yoga therapy is as a practice, because I can imagine some of you thinking therapy and thinking about like psychotherapy. And this is not necessarily what this is. So yoga therapy is basically when you utilize yoga practices therapeutically to support healing and wellness. And this can often be in collaboration with healthcare providers, but it doesn't have to be. So it's not like psychotherapy. It's more like physical therapy in some ways. And in order to call yourself a yoga therapist, you have to have up to 800 hours of training or more and a different certification than what is included for yoga teachers. So it's kind of a special thing to call yourself a yoga therapist versus calling yourself someone who is certified to teach yoga. And I decided to join a program that basically allows me to learn more about utilizing yoga in specific contexts. So for people who have specific injuries or health conditions, maybe also for certain kinds of mental health conditions or people who identify as neurodiverse, I've always been drawn to yoga practices that are more on the restorative side. So like yin or yoga, nidra, or just restorative yoga practices. And so I'm really looking forward to combining that interest with learning about how I can use yoga in therapeutic settings. Um, now to start out, I have decided to just go with what is called the foundational program, which is not the full 800 hours. That's maybe a little bit too much for me to commit to right now, but I do want to kind of dip my toe in these waters and kind of see what I think. And I also think of course that this kind of program is a way to deepen my own practice, which is something that I have been again, kind of called back to, uh, in this time of stress and uncertainty. And even as I'm kind of thinking about how I want to use what I'm learning in service to other people, it also allows me to, um, kind of apply some of these things to myself as well. Now, I know that these next several years are going to test my resilience and my stress management and I really want to build in some structured support. They can help me think about healthy ways of managing that stress. And this feels like one way to do that. So in terms of the program itself, I did find a place that's local to Denver, but that also offers online synchronous and asynchronous learning. So I wanted to have a mix of learning that I could do on my own time and my own schedule, as well as some live and virtual meetups where I could learn in community. So this program has several retreats that are offered throughout the year as part of the program that I can join as my schedule allows. And the, there's also this level of flexibility of joining this program and then doing it over the course of several years. So there's not like a rush, which I also really appreciate because if work like really picks up and I have to kind of pause and turn it away from this for a little while, I can come back to it and pick it up and it won't kind of cause me to like drop from a program or anything along those lines. So I would say that one of the most important parts of pretty much any learning experience from me, aside from the topics that are covered and like the structure that is offered is also that is flexible enough to fit into what is already a pretty busy schedule for me. So this program really fit that bill and I'm excited to dive into the materials and practices in the coming months, the coming years. Now I can also say as I was getting into these materials, of course I did a little bit of a deeper dive. I found some other kind of like mini courses that I wanted to invest in as well. So I did pick up a course that was kind of a introduction to restorative yoga practices to kind of get myself back into thinking along those lines. I also picked up a course on yoga anatomy because that was something that I struggled with my first time around. I am not someone who's ever studied anatomy before. And so I thought I would kind of brush up on that. I also found a series of lectures specifically on yoga for chronic illness, which I thought was really interesting. And then a second set on yoga for people who are neurodiverse, which I had not really done a deep dive on that. So I was kind of intrigued by that given all of the study I have done on that population and those needs in the past couple of years. And then I also picked up a course. I know this is a lot of courses, but I can chip away at them over time. I found another course that specifically on somatic practices for yoga and that's basically kind of embodied practices like breathing and how do you kind of incorporate. It's kind of a combination, I'm guessing, of like restorative yoga and different forms of meditation, which I'm looking forward to as well. So although this may feel like a big commitment that I'm taking this on, I'm excited that I can take it one step at a time and then I can spread it across a wide period of time. I can dig into different topics. And I will say just this past weekend, I had a little bit of extra free time and I dug into the restorative yoga class and it was so wonderful. And I just enjoyed it so much to kind of watch the videos and also engage in the practices. I also, of course, checked out, I don't know, 30 books from my local library on different yoga practices. I've done the deep dive. I'm like digging back in and this is how I always start is like, let me grab a bunch of books on this topic. Let me gather the classes and the materials that I want to look at. And how can I kind of immerse myself in the material in a way that feels really good for me? So I had talked about in a recent podcast episode about my four year plan, and I will link to this in the show notes if you want to go back and listen. But I talked about wanting to deepen my movement practices and this is definitely one step that I'm taking to head in that direction. And part of me just loves the concept of this taking place over multiple years and that it's kind of a commitment that I'm making both for myself, but also to thinking about how I want to engage this practice in the future. Now you might be wondering if this is me announcing a career shift. So I just want to clarify that I am not planning on becoming a full time yoga therapist, just like when I went through the yoga teacher training program, I was not planning on becoming a full time yoga teacher. However, sometimes I just like to learn things just to learn things and without committing right away to thinking about how they're going to be monetized or how I'm going to build them into my career. So for now, I'm just exploring this new area and seeing what new things I can learn. Now I of course would love to hear if you are planning on taking on a new learning adventure in your own life and what that looks like for you. You can always email me at hello@drkatylinder.com. I always love to hear from you and I will definitely plan on updating on how this is going throughout the coming months and years. Thanks so much 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/ygt. If you found this episode helpful, please also consider rating or reviewing the show through Apple Podcasts or sharing the show with a friend or colleague.