Speaker 1: You're listening to Academic IG. Episode Two. Academic IG is a podcast for current and aspiring academic creatives, freelancers, and entrepreneurs. Along with every episode we post show notes with links to resources mentioned in the episode and a full transcript. You can find these materials, sign up for our email list, and share your ideas for episode topics and Academicig.com. Now, on to the episode.

Sarah: Hi Katie, how are you?

Katie: I'm good. How are you Sarah?

Sarah: I'm doing pretty well. Welcome all of you listeners to this episode of Academic IG where we are going to be talking a little bit about, how did we know we wanted out of traditional academic roles.

Katie: Yes and we are going to start this episode with a segment that we're hoping to do pretty regularly which is talking about kind of what's on deck for us, what are we currently working on. We're also going to try to end each episode with a resource, strategy, tip, tactic, something that you can look out for your own business that you might be interested in. Sarah, what's on deck for you right now?

Sarah: I am up to my eyeballs in video production currently. So, I am working on a couple of different projects. A couple of different clients, and then also working on building my own YouTube channel. I've had my YouTube channel for a couple of years now. I just recently took on a production assistant for lack of a better term, who is helping me streamline the process a little. So, we've been talking a lot about scripting and editing and making sure we're getting content up consistently. I have a pretty long to do list related to that and then working on some video productions for a couple of clients. One is a small arts non profit and the other is a group that focuses on children's mental health that is working on building some online training modules. I get to do a lot of different kinds of stuff in this business world, but a lot of it is really fun and I'm enjoying doing and learning different things about making good videos. So, what about you Katie? What's on deck for you this week?

Katie: Before I talk about what's on deck I think we need to make a note to do an episode about YouTube, because I would love to pick your brain about this. I do it, but like way more informally than you do it, and I'm sure there are people listening who are like, okay. Let's talk about YouTube, and what's your strategy there. So ...

Sarah: For sure.

Katie: We'll talk more about that. Okay, so what is on deck for me? I, right now I do a lot of my small business work on the weekends because I work a full time job, as listeners to our first episode know. So, right now I'm prepping for a speaking engagement that I have coming up in a couple of weeks where I need to do the slide creation and the handouts and some other materials for kind of a day and a half of consulting and speaking and then I'm also working on a build of a client website and I had kind of given a first draft to this client and got some really good feedback and so now I'm working on revising that site build for her professional website. So I'm really excited to dig into that but those are my two kind of big projects I'm working on in the next few days.

Sarah: Awesome. Sounds good.

Katie: Okay, shall we dive into our topic?

Sarah: Sure.

Katie: I'm very curious to hear from you about how you knew that you didn't want to go the typical academic track, especially because I feel like there is so much pressure to go into tenure track roles, despite the fact that there aren't very many out there. You know, it's definitely seen as the gold standard. Do you remember when you first knew that wasn't for you?

Sarah: Yeah. I knew pretty early in graduate school actually that I didn't want to do the traditional academic route. I went to graduate school kind of because it was the next thing on the list rather than out of you know, a deep and abiding passion for research. I really enjoyed research. I really enjoyed the process of thinking about a question and diving deep into the literature and doing actual data gathering and those sorts of things but I knew pretty early that that was not what was going to fulfill me long term. So, for those of you who aren't familiar with me and my work, I went to the institute of child development and the University of Minnesota and there I studied developmental cognitive neuroscience.

 So, basically how kids think and learn. I did things from basic cognitive computer tasks. We called them computer games but they were not so much games. The kids didn't always enjoy them, but things that were, measuring things like attention, and planning, and the ability to inhibit a response and those kinds of things and also then studied things like how the brain works by looking at FMRI scans and running an MRI machine. So, looking inside the heads of little kids to get a sense for how the brain works. All of that was fascinating. I really enjoyed my time doing that, but I knew pretty early on that I didn't want to do that full time forever.

 So, I began pretty early in graduate school, probably around my second or third year, really exploring what are the other options out there for me and so I ha the opportunity to be a part of an exhibit development team at our local science museum, the Science Museum of Minnesota. They had received a grant from the National Science Foundation to do an exhibit all about the science of early childhood. So, it was an exhibit for adults about kids. Basically all of the things that I had been learning in graduate school put on a museum floor and I got the opportunity to be a part of this exhibit team and was really the content expert. So, I got to bring in the research and say, here's this really cool concept in developmental psychology. How are we going to make it come to life for the visitors of the museum and it was a fascinating process.

 I love to tell the story of you know, we'd come and we'd have these meetings and talk about all of these really rich research concepts and then a week later show up and the design team would have a prototype sitting on the table, saying oh does this work? It was so cool to see the science brought into reality in that way and in a way that was really thoughtful about how do we talk about science and how do we communicate science? So, I got really interested in science communication as a potential career path for me and so after graduate school I worked for a group called The Children Youth and Family Consortium here at the University of Minnesota and really in that role focused on bridging the gap between academia and people who worked with kids and family everyday.

 So, we did a lot of professional development kinds of things as well as some community based work, that was really powerful getting a sense for how does the research that I learned in graduate school connect to real people in their everyday lives, but even that wasn't quite the right fit for me and I knew that again long term I didn't really want to be in a big university system in the same way. I loved having autonomy. I loved going off and trying new things and sometimes in a big bureaucracy like that you don't always get supported to do that kind of work and so I did things, like I for two in the last episode I started a side business called The Exchange Loop with my business partner Sara where we did some consulting around qualitative research and evaluation.

 I started my YouTube channel where I really got to dive more deeply into this idea of science communication and public science and eventually then you know, really was frustrated with a lot of the bureaucracy and those sorts of things that I was constantly, felt like I was banging my head against a wall with some of those challenges and just really felt like I needed to take the leap and I need to jump into trying this self employment thing full time. I know I had built a lot of skills over the years of graduate school but also after graduate school and I wanted to try my hand at applying them in lots of different contexts and trying new things and doing cool stuff with cool people and so that's kind of where I am today and how I got here. So, that's my story. I'm curious, Katie, what's yours? How did you figure out that you wanted out?

Katie: Well, I feel like in some ways I'm not out.

Sarah: Right. True.

Katie: I do have a full time job where I do research and it is not a typical faculty role. I am not tenure track. I have never been tenure track. So, in terms of that, you know, that kind of gold standard I have not pursued that pathway and I actually would not have expected even a couple of years ago to be where I am now. So, I think that I first knew that I wanted to do something a little bit different when I was in grad school and I started to engage in faculty development work and I did that in a couple of ways. I worked with the Writing Across the Curriculum unit and then also with The Center for Teaching and Learning at Ohio State where I did both my masters and my PHD and my disciplinary kind of origin is women and gender studies and my undergraduate degree is in English and in Creative Writing.

 So, I've come pretty far from where that started me out in terms of kind of my own research and I think people are always kind of, people are very curious about like my books you know, because my first book is very different from my second book is very different from my third book is very different from my fourth book. So, I mean everything, I just kind of pursue projects that I like and I actually think that's part of what lead me away from the tenure track path I was concerned that I would get kind of constrained and I wouldn't be able to just research and do the things I wanted to do and so when I went on the market in 2010 I was really looking for a full time administrative position and I feel like I kind of lucked into jobs where at least initially, I lucked into jobs where I could kind of have a lot of the components of a faculty role. Like, I could teach a little bit, I could research.

 I could be serving on committees, you know, that kind of thing but I was also really able to engage in a lot of coaching and workshop facilitation which I also really enjoy and then eventually I sought out roles that allowed me to do more writing during my day job which is basically what I have now because I write consistently for the job that i have now and it's something that I really enjoy. So, but I do remember having a conversation with my advisor and I think she really wanted me to be a bit of a protegee and she saw that I had the potential to be publishing and I think was kind of confused about like why I wouldn't pursue tenure track because I think she thought I could make it but at the same time when I went on the market, tenure track jobs and women and gender studies were and continue to be incredibly competitive and it's not that I didn't want to compete.

 I just didn't really want it that badly and I feel like you know, I was interested in other areas and tenure has just never really been on my radar as something that I really wanted. I wasn't even sure I wanted a PHD. So, I think that it's just not been like my life's goal to get tenure and I actually think tenure isn't going to be around I think during our kind of professional life times. Tenure will die. So, it's not a goal that I feel like needs pursuing.

Sarah: Yeah. I'm with you on that one and the surprise factor is always interested when, especially people who have been in academia for a long time, when you tell them I don't really want to do the traditional tenure track role they kind of look at you like, why wouldn't you want that, but you're right. Like, the same is true in psychology and developmental psychology with respect to the job situation. There just aren't jobs and so you have so many people who are leaving PHD programs going, well now what do I do? Like, it's going to take me another five to ten years of post docs and other positions in order to even be considered for tenure track position these days and it's just a huge commitment of time that a lot of people are like, if I'm not going to see another you know return on investment for another five years I don't know that I want to do that and so it's a valid question, I think a lot of people are wrestling with it.

Katie: Well then and I think it's interesting too because I don't know. You're still kind of I think connected to your discipline in pretty concrete ways in terms of the content that you're producing. I am less connected and I get a lot of people who assume I have a degree, like background that I don't have. So, they assume I have like a degree in Education or you know something like that and what I find really interesting about the PHD is I feel like over time it doesn't even matter what it's in. It just matters that you have it. It's just that you have the letters and so it's like however you get it it doesn't really matter as long as you have those letters and you have the credential.

Sarah: I would agree. I think that that has opened more doors for me than it's closed. So, whenever I have graduate students who reach out and ask to talk to me about whether or not to do a PHD or whether or not to continue a PHD if they're in a PHD program and are very frustrated with it, you know I think that conversation is different for everybody and I think that decision is different for everybody but one of the things that I say is that though if I went back and did it again I might not do a PHD I don't think it's hurt me to have done it. It's opened more doors than it's closed and so there's value to it even if you don't necessarily see yourself using it in the traditional way.

Katie: Yeah. I think that's really true and I think especially because I work with so many academic clients, I mean like academics are my audience for the, I mean I don't know that I even, there are no other people I serve. I mean, I really only serve academics and there's so many parts of my business model that are really built off of the fact that I have done the thing that I'm talking to people about. So, I have published, I have written those grants. You know, like I have gotten the book contract and so when I'm coaching people or when I'm you know, leading webinars or doing speaking gigs or workshops or whatever, that credibility is huge. I mean, it's like I could not have my business without having that credentialing that allows people to see me as credible in their eyes.

Sarah: Agreed. Agreed. I'm curious, could you talk a little bit about this sort of phenomenon of life we can look back on our career paths now and have it seem pretty coherent but I don't know about you, but when all of that was happening for me it didn't feel coherent and I often get questions from people who are kind of in the midst of graduate school or in the midst of kind of trying to figure out what they want to do next, talk about like I just don't where to go. I feel like I'm in an empty open field and I just, I don't know but it seems like you had it all figured out and you just, It was clear that you went from this to this to this. Can you talk a little bit about that journey for you and was it pretty clear or where you kind of making it up as you go along?

Katie: That's a great question. So, I definitely think there were areas that were not clear. I'll just say that from the start. However, I'm a big proponent of like multi-year planning and when I left grad school and graduated and went into my first job, post grad school I developed a five year plan of what I wanted to do during that time that I was there and I kind of modified it as I went along and it included things like I wanted to start keynoting, I wanted to get a grant. You know? Like, there were things I just did not have in my experience skillset, like in my toolbox that I wanted to collect and I feel that way about any job or any kind of experience, you know like window of time that you have that, thinking intentionally about like what do I want to get out of this time and I think I think about that with my small business too in the sense of like, I'm in a really kind of golden time right now where I can take all of my business revenue and put it back into the business.

 So, how can I intentionally create systems and processes and give myself professional development? Like, you know, like investing in my coaching certification now versus later? Like, now is a good time for me to be really taking intentional steps to building this business because I can and so when I've been in other situations with other jobs I've really tried to think about what is it that I want and when I moved to my most recent job I did the same thing but I, five years was too far out. I mean, it felt too long to me and so what I did instead was I created a thousand day plan which is basically like around three years and I thought about what is it that I want to do in the next one thousand days?

 You know, like what are the kinds of things that I want to be collecting, what are the experiences that I want to have, what are the new skills you know, like things I want to put in my toolbox and I literally created a list and it's on the whiteboard in my office and it's on a piece of paper and it's like a checklist of like how I can get those things done and I'll give you some examples. One of them was my coaching certification which I'm moving forward with. Another one was forming an LLC, because at the time I wrote the list I didn't have my LLC. It's putting, writing and promoting my third book is on that list, coming up with the idea for and writing and promoting my fourth book is on that list.

 So, they're just kind of things that I know I want to be doing and they're usually really big projects and that helps me to have a better vision for what I want to do and it's not you know like it's not set in stone. It's not completely cemented but it does give me a pathway but I want to turn that back to you too because I know that we can kind of like flail around [inaudible 00:18:21] a little bit. How are you giving yourself direction or vision? Both like when you were first starting out thinking about this but also now in your business?

Sarah: Yeah. It's interesting hearing you talk about this because I think we come at it from related but I think different perspectives. You're way more organized and on top of it than I am, which, for people in my real life who are listening to this it's probably a little staggering because I tend to be the really organized and together one and so to hear you talking about like, I have this thousand day plan I'm like, whoa that's a really cool idea. Maybe I should do that. I tend to be much more of a, not seat of the pants kind of person but much more of a go where the energy is and so sometimes that can, that can be challenging because I don't have as clear a vision as you're articulating about you know, what do I want to have done in the next three years.

 You know I'm a little amorphous about some of that stuff but I've also, I've also found it's really valuable for me both in terms of creative energy and in terms of feeling fulfilled in the work that I'm doing to go where I feel the most energy and so if that's not the thing that's immediately, like write another book for example for me that's on my longer term list but I don't feel a lot of energy there right now. I don't have the thing that I want to write about. I don't have the topic or the thing that feels really like yes I could write a book about this and so that's on the long term list but it's not something that I'm actively moving towards right now.

 That said, as you were saying picking up all of these, picking up all of the tools that you can along the way is really, really helpful and so I'm always kind of, I've always got my ear to the ground on okay what's this about or here's an interesting topic over here and always kind of mulling in the back of my head, okay what can I contribute here or what could I add to this conversation, which is I think why this podcast was so interesting to me because I didn't have an outlet for talking about some of these challenges with business and figuring this out as I'm building it kind of thing and so having the opportunity to talk with you who's also going through this and who's being more strategic about it has been really helpful to me to think about how can I apply that in my own framework.

 All of that said, as I articulated earlier I think it's important for my creative energy to be more nimble and a little bit more flexible in where I'm moving and how because sometimes you know, I get pulled in a direction and that opens up a whole new host of opportunities that wouldn't have been there had I not been open to that and so I think it's interesting kind of contrasting these two different perspectives but also underscoring that like we're both being very thoughtful about how we're approaching this business, these businesses that we're building and we're being thoughtful about it in different ways and with different perspectives but we're not, you know neither of us are going into this as let's just you know throw something at the wall and see what sticks. We're both being planful and thoughtful in how we're building the things but I think there's a little bit of difference there which I find really interesting.

Katie: Yeah and I want to dig a little bit deeper with this concept of following the energy, because it sounds kind of woo woo but I like it. I'm like totally there and also and I guess I want to ask you, like let me give a couple of examples and you tell me If you think this is like following the energy because I actually really, that resonates with me a lot and I think about how like I get asked a lot like how do you get all this stuff done, because I'm juggling like a gazillion things all the time in terms of writing and in my business and my full time job and all of that and a lot of it is I just like have an idea and I execute it like immediately. You know, like with this podcast it was like okay let's do it. When do you want to start recording?

 I mean, it's, I don't wait. I don't let the fear kind of like gets its hold on me so that I don't move something forward. So, I think a couple examples of what could be this like following the energy, like I want to give a micro example and a macro example and I think that you're talking about it from a more macro perspective but I feel like I do this a lot on a micro level too. So, the other night I was working on my professional website and I have a section of it that talks about website creation services where I work with people to create professional websites or websites for their books or another project they're working on so they can kind of showcase what they do and I primarily work with academics on this and I was like, you know maybe I need some videos to kind of have a portfolio so people can see what I've done but also I just revamped my own professional website.

 Like, maybe I should do a little video series of talking about my own professional website and I was like, that's a good idea and then I just like sat down for the next four hours and I did it and you know it was just like, you know that wasn't like oh let me add that to my list of things to do when I have the time. It was like, nope I feel like I'm going to do it right now. Like, but I felt that was like following the energy and it was like, boom and now it's done and it's up there and like, are the videos the best video quality of all time? No, but I don't you know that I'm a videographer. I say that I'm helping people create websites.

 So, that's my micro example and then my macro example is this webinar series that I'm doing, which I had this idea in like late June that I wanted to do it and then like basically I was like, okay, so I'm going to do it and then I just like over the next month created all these systems and processes that would allow me to do this webinar series which I talk about on a recent, you've got this episode which I can link to in the show notes kind of the anatomy of that launch and how I did all that work but again I didn't just wait.

 I just dove in and was like well this sounds like a good idea and I feel like it's a lot of things coming together that are my expertise and what people often ask me about and webinar sounded like a good platform and let's do this thing. You know like, so yes there's strategy and like long term planning involved and I have this like multiyear plan for this webinar platform how to academia but at the same time like I just like did the thing. So, if that what you mean by following the energy or am I just being completely irresponsible with my business?

Sarah: No. I think that's, I think that's really true. I think that's, that's a lot of what following the energy is for me and in fact as you were talking I was reflecting on the to do list problem. To do lists are obviously really, really important when we're juggling as much stuff as both you and I are but at the same time sometimes I find when I add a thing to my to do list it becomes work whereas if I, like you said oh I want to do this thing because this seems like a good idea. Let's just allocate four hours right now to do it, that's much more fulfilling creatively, partly because you can then check the box and say hey I did this thing but also because sometimes when the idea strikes is when the iron is the hottest in order to make the best quality of content. Especially when you're doing creative kinds of content development and so I feel like sometimes when I add stuff to my list it gets dry and dull and then I'm like, oh it's a thing I have to do on my list.

 So, yes, I think following the creative energy on that micro level for sure is something that, that I do and I think that I would posit a lot of successful entrepreneurs and business people have to work that way because otherwise you wouldn't get anything done because it just adds to the giant list of stuff all the so kind of diverting your energy where it is. The other piece of the going where the energy is for me, I have always loved working collaboratively with people and so a lot of the going where the energy is is kind of determined by the energy I'm getting back from the people I'm working with and so I can use you and I as an example. When you and I first started talking you know you were asking me these questions that were based on the content for your book and I kind of got talking and got excited and then you got excited and then I got excited that you were excited and we sort of fed on, we fed on each other and that energy.

 So, for me because that was such a fulfilling conversation and interesting and had a depth to it even though we had just started talking 20 minutes before, we were suddenly you know talking about all these really important and complicated things that we were grappling with. You know, I found that energy so compelling that I was like, when you said hey let's do a thing I was like sure, that sounds good. Doing a podcast was not necessarily on my five year plan but I was like you know, she's great to work with, this seems like a cool opportunity to do something new. I can see how it fits in to my overall strategy. I can see how this will help me moving forward but it was, it wasn't a cold and calculated decision. It was almost entirely fueled by, she's cool, I want to work with her and so a lot of my bigger, the bigger strategy decisions are made that way. Where is that energy with the people that I want to be working with?

Katie: So, we've previously talked about the idea and I think you're really getting it at this point that we're attracted to other doers. Like, we like to work with people who do things and who are executing, yeah, and I feel like this, to bring it back kind of full circle to, how did I know I didn't want to pursue the traditional academic track, I think part of the reason I was drawn to academic administration was because i like to execute things and I feel like you know, like, I mean there is definitely execution that happens when you're in a kind of traditional faculty position you get to you know execute courses and you get to write and publish but I think that if you look at the kinds of content that I produce, especially through my side business with the podcast and stuff, like I am launching new content in a bunch of different mediums through three different podcasts other than this one and to different newsletters and all these other kinds of things.

 Like, multiple times a week I'm shipping out content because I like that. I like the doing. I like to just like put things out there and see what people think about them and I think my concern with a traditional academic role is that I wasn't going to be able to do that. That I was going to get kind of stuck in a routine and I wasn't going to be able to kind of be as creative and I hear myself saying that and I also know that there are so many academics in traditional roles that are incredibly creative and they're shipping out things all the time. So, I think that's my own kind of mental limitation but I do feel like part of my draw to administrative work and to the work that I do now is because I like to execute.

Sarah: I would agree. I have the same, the same bent in general and if you even think about the peer review process for journal publications, don't even get me started on that one but it's a huge time commitment and you know, I had a publication that was accepted in January of 2016 and didn't get published until something like March of 2017. It was horrible.

Katie: I can beat that. I had a 2013 contract that didn't come out until 2017 for an edited collection.

Sarah: Oh man and you think about, whereas what you're saying you know you're shipping out content consistently, I could write a blog post that would have the same basic information in it and have frankly a larger impact on the field as a whole because it's on a blog that people can access rather than being hidden behind a pay wall and taking four years to come out. So, I have a bit of a problem with academic publishing and I will hop off that soapbox now but I think you're right. I think there are challenges in the academic systems that, that limit creativity.

 It's not that creativity isn't possible in those roles and as you said there are lots of people out there in those traditional roles who are incredibly creative and big thinkers and, who get stuff done but for a lot of people there are a lot of limits. There's a lot of review. There's a lot of you know checking to make sure that you know, author so and so agrees with this point that you're making in this paper whereas in the world of the internet you can be a little bit more free flowing and a little bit more consistent in your content delivery and get a lot more out more quickly and for like you're saying, for us doers that's a really compelling avenue and a thing to explore.

Katie: Okay, so I have a question about this because I've been thinking about this in other realms and that is the idea of like establishing expertise because obviously how you establish expertise in academia is the credentialing and the peer review and you know, there's a lot of different ways but it's time consuming I think to establish that, that credibility and I feel like in internet land it is a very different animal in terms of establishing expertise and credibility and I think that part of that in internet land really comes from producing consistent and regular content, that if you're shipping stuff out regularly about a certain topic or you're in the right kind of circles in terms of like you're tweeting out the same hashtag you know or whatever, you can establish that credibility and expertise in like an entirely different way and maybe more quickly and I want to know what do you think about that.

Sarah: Uh, yeah. I think yes. I think content is king on the internet. That's a phrase that gets thrown around a lot on the internet but to be successful in internet circles you need to be producing good high quality content and regularly, that that needs to be a significant portion and whether that's, and I also want to say it doesn't always have to be your content. So, we can talk more and I think we should have a podcast on being, being a professional in social media and what does that look like and what are some social media best practices, especially for academics who are just kind of dipping their toes into the water but you know one of the things i always say when people are asking, you know how do you maintain a Twitter presence and I say, you tweet other people's good stuff.

Katie: Yeah.

Sarah: You share other people's good content and frankly that paradigm shift between the academic mindset which is much more focused on this line of inquiry. You know, you might collaborate with a handful of other people but really it's you in your lab focused on this piece of tiny little minuscule question you know that I'm focused on whereas in the internet it's much more about sharing and much more about collaborating and having conversation with people who you might not agree with and with people who might have a totally different background than you do but the ability to share people's content more fluidly and flexibly across these different silos that academics tend to maintain I think is where things kind of blow up in a good way. You have lots of really interesting dialogues and conversations across disciplines that you wouldn't have in traditional academic spheres partly because of that ability to share.

Katie: So, I'm, do you think that that's changing though in traditional academic spheres, because I feel like with people being on social media more they are starting to cross those lines and they're being encouraged to for things like grant funding and stuff and I don't know, like I see that being a growing space. I want to be careful that we're not setting up a dichotomy.

Sarah: Good point.

Katie: Those old fuddy duddy academics who aren't you know, crossing their boundaries and being doers and executing, because I think there are people that are. I just, for me that is what drew me. You know, going back to our original topic, that is what drew me to not being in that track because I felt that I would be stifled but I think there's a lot of people who are making it work.

Sarah: I would agree. I would agree. There are definitely leaders in a variety of different ways who are looking at working across disciplines and trying to make that work. I think where, for me my experience I kind of you know banged my head against the wall was that a lot of the systems that we have in academic environments aren't set up to support that and so sometimes you'll get a lot of questioning and a lot of flak for wanting to share your science more broadly or wanting to engage in those more public spaces because it was unknown. At least when I was still in those more academic roles it was unknown what that meant.

 You know, what does that mean that you're on social media? What does that mean that you're talking about this research that we haven't actually published in our journal yet? You know, those kinds of things were questions and so maybe the systems are shifting. You would know that better than I would for sure and I hope, I'm hoping that they are because I think that that cross discipline conversation is really important and also there's a huge importance to sharing what we're learning. You know, in these academic spaces what are researchers learning and what are they taking away and where is the field going? I think that needs to be shared more broadly and so I'm very hopeful that those changes are happening.

Katie: Yeah, that is super true about the systems. Like, you are absolutely right that the systems are not set up to encourage it. I think people are starting to work outside the systems.

Sarah: Going rogue.

Katie: I'm saying that more and more. Yeah, they're going rogue a little bit but also I think people's curiosity is piqued you know like by these, and actually this is like I think part of the reason I wanted to start this podcast, because I think there are people who are intrigued by the idea of having a side business. I think the academic marketplace is changing and I think that we are going to start to see the demise of tenure. Like, I think that people are going to become way more free agents. They're going to move around more. We're going to see less loyalty to institutions and I think people are starting to get really curious about what does it mean to have kind of their own brand, their own business and this comes in part from the work I was doing for my most recent book but just like how do we represent ourselves in professional ways when the academic marketplace is changing and when those sands are kind of shifting under our feet? How can we prepare ourselves to not necessarily be tied to one institution?

Sarah: Agreed. Well said. Cheers.

Katie: Yeah. Good. We just agree on all the things.

Sarah: We just solved the world's problems. It's fine.

Katie: Yeah. Well, that's the purpose of the show.

Sarah: Exactly.

Katie: Okay, so why don't we shift into our resource for this week and I think we've kind of both agreed that we want to talk about the resource that could be of use to people who are starting to think about maybe not being in the traditional academic realm. You want to introduce it, kick us off?

Sarah: Yeah. So this person was and continues to remain a role model for me when I was, especially first dabbling in the social media world about how to be a professional. How do you be a professional person on the internet but also how do you still maintain your own personality and your own flare and so Jen Polk who is at From PHD to Life on Twitter and also has her own website, From PHD to Life, talks a lot about these questions about alternate careers outside of academia. She really has a knack for expressing those different stories and how do you think about moving to a different career when the pressure is there to be a traditional academic? If you feel like you're alone, if you feel like you're the only person in your department who might want to jump ship and go somewhere else and try something new, she provides a ton of great resources.

 She's got a huge list of question and answers that she's done with a bunch of different people who've made that leap before, who have gone into those non traditional tracks across a variety of things. Not just self employed but also people who work in government now or who work in nonprofits or other kinds of organizations and has asked those questions about how did you that, how did that happen for you and so I find those interviews really compelling and she's just got a really great personality on Twitter and I love watching what she's sharing and what she's putting out in the world. I think she's got some great resources, especially for those of you who are thinking you might want to shift out of the traditional academic role.

Katie: Absolutely. I love Jen's work. She also has a resource, kind of a virtual conference that she runs with her business partner called Beyond the Professoriate which helps people to kind of think about going beyond a tenure track position and she also works a lot with graduate students which I appreciate because I think that's the time in your career when you're really trying to figure this out but also Sarah, you and I are both in her self employed PHD community ...

Sarah: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Katie: Which is a paid service that she has that is a monthly fee and it's a collection of people who have PHDs and who are running businesses, whether they're doing it on the side of full time work or whether they're doing it as their full time job and this community has been huge for me. I just, I've only been in it a couple of months now but I love the support that I'm getting there. We share out things like what we're working on. We share out things that we need feedback on in our businesses. There are kind of live conversations that go on about topics like self care, marketing you know all different kinds of things and it's really useful to be in a community of business owners who have PHDs and who understand kind of the academic space. So, that's another thing that we can link to in the show notes in case people are interested.

Sarah: I would agree. It's a fabulous place to meet other like minded people who are struggling with some of the same stuff that you are and who are having some of the same successes you are.

Katie: Yes and they have book groups which I have not yet had time to join but I like always write down the name of the book and set it in my to read pile and I would love to eventually join in one of the book groups and actually have conversations about what they're reading and I know that you've been reading at least one of the books that, what, maybe this will be like our little second recommendation. What is the book that you've been reading that they've recommended?

Sarah: Yeah, I've been going through a book called Book Yourself Solid, by Michael Port I believe is the author's name and it's really all about how do you secure the clients you want and not the ones you don't and make the tap of the constant flow of clients coming your way and make that on all the time so you don't have as much as the sort of ebbs and flows that I know a lot of people often experience. So, it's been really great. There's lots of good workbook kinds of activities and things to get you thinking about how do you market yourself, how do you talk about the work you do, how do you present yourself to people to make sure that you're adding value to the work that they're doing?

Katie: That book is definitely on my to read list. I know he also has a book on public speaking. The name is flying out of my brain right now but he has a podcast as well on public speaking that we can link to in the show notes. He's doing a few different things that look really interesting. Okay, so that's our resource for the week. Do we know what we're talking about next time, Sarah?

Sarah: Yeah, next time we are going to be talking a little bit about the conundrum of staying with a full time job versus leaving one or also the question of how to balance side work with full time work. Katie and I are in different places in this conversation and so I think it'll be really interesting to dive into that topic more next time.

Katie: Awesome. I cannot wait to talk with you about this. This is like one of my favorite things to talk with people about, who are doing this work full time. Okay, so thanks so much for joining us for this episode of Academic IG. Remember, you can always find show notes at Academicig.com. There you can also sign up for our email list where you can get over a hundred free resources for academic creatives, entrepreneurs and freelancers. You can also submit a question or a topic that you want us to cover on the show or just connect with us more generally to tell us your story or the kinds of things you're interested in, as an academic creative, entrepreneur or freelancer. Thanks so much for listening.

Sarah: Bye, everybody.

Speaker 1: Thanks for listening to the Academic Ig podcast. We hoped you enjoyed the conversation and heard something useful that you can apply in your own business. Show notes with links to resources mentioned in the episode and a full transcript are available at Academicig.com. There you can also sign up for our email list and receive over a hundred great resources for recommended books, blog posts, and podcasts, for the academic creative, freelancer and entrepreneur that you won't want to miss. You can connect with us on Twitter @Academicig or you can also find Sarah at Dr. Langworthy or Katie at Katie double underscore Tinder. We've love to hear from you and continue the conversation about this episode. There are separate other ways to connect with the Academic Ig podcast. Visit the website to post a comment about a specific episode, suggest a future topic or ask a question that could be featured on a future Q and A episode. If you like what you heard please consider leaving us a review on iTunes. It helps us out and helps others find the show and as always, thanks for listening.