**LWQA episode 137**

You're listening to lifework, QA episode 137. Welcome to life work QA where I answer a listener question each week and provide resources and guidance to help you take your life and work to the next level. I'm your host. Dr. Katie Linder. On this episode I want to ask how are you currently fertilizing your brain?

And this is something that I've been thinking about because I am definitely in an input season right now. I am starting to do some preliminary research for my next book project that I'm still deciding on. I haven't really figured out what I'm doing yet, but I'm starting to kind of just poke around a little bit and see if I can find some things.

Feel interesting to me that I want to move forward and but it's definitely become an input season where I'm definitely taking it a lot of information. I'm feeling like I'm about to get into kind of a pretty creative space and that's always a really generative time for me. So I'm really trying to actively fertilize my brain and what I mean by that is to try to give it a little bit of a boost to feed it in ways that I think are going to be really interesting.

So I wanted to share some of the ways that I am doing this but of course, I would always love to hear. How are you fertilizing your brain in this particular time in your life and career. So the big one for me that has been happening in the past couple of weeks in particular and I've just been loving is fresh air in the mornings through morning.

And I have bumped up my time for these morning walks to be between 60 and 90 minutes, which is definitely kind of a long time for especially a weekday morning when I have to still get ready to go to work and all those kinds of things but I'm loving doing the longer walks on the weekends as well when I can fit them.

And this has been such a good time to just let my brain wake up in the morning. But also just to kind of think through things to synthesize information that I have been kind of pulling together for this book project. I have some upcoming professional goals that I've been working on and I just been kind of thinking about that sometimes things will occur to me and I'll just take some notes as I'm walking or I listen to podcast during that time which have been another really great way to fertilize my brain to get new ideas.

Is and just to be inspired by what some other people are up to? So those morning walks have been amazing. And of course, it's great just to get out and move around and get some exercise, but I found that they're just really good in terms of getting my creative juices flowing as. The other thing that's really been helping me and I can actually take the walk idea and these next two ideas.

They come directly from Julia Cameron. So she talks about this idea of walking in several of her books. And then she also has this idea of morning pages and this has been something that has been really helpful in terms of just getting ideas out onto the page. Now, I'm not necessarily doing it every morning, but I am doing a lot of brainstorming and note-taking throughout.

A just as things occur to me as I'm wanting to make sure that I'm processing again like all the information that I'm taking in and that I don't lose anything and it's not exactly what she describes which is, you know, getting up and pretty much going straight to writing for three pages very much like a free writing but the idea of just writing down ideas and always having notes and like note paper and a pen that I can write with has been really helpful to me.

And then the third thing that she talks about which again I've been kind of tweaking and not doing exactly in the way that she describes but it's this concept of artists dates and it's this idea that you're going to go out and kind of do something specifically that's related to your creativity and it's in support of your creativity.

And this is something that I've been really just trying to schedule in a lot more Solitude and alone time and kind of time for my brain to synthesize information and for me right now that feels kind of like an artist date. Sometimes it does involve reading or listening to a podcast episode or just kind of taking some notes, but it is definitely time that I'm putting into my calendar to make sure that I am really giving my brain that time to work and process information.

The other few things that I think are really helpful is checking in with friends. And what I liked about this in terms of fertilizing my brain is especially if I'm checking it with someone that I haven't talked to in a while. It's really fun to hear what someone has been up to and what they're thinking about and what kinds of things feel important to them.

Right now in this moment and it can be kind of surprising and enlightening and inspiring to hear what's going on with people that you care about that. You haven't had a chance to touch base with in a while. So this is something I'm also making time for just to kind of see what is up with all the people that I have.

I usually check in with them maybe every quarter or every six months and these are some friends that I've had from previous cities. I've lived in or from grad school and it's just really fun to kind of check in and tell them what I'm thinking about see what they're thinking about and letting us kind of cross fertilize each other.

Now I also have found that I can use social media to also be pretty inspiring during this time. And I do think you have to be kind of careful about how you curate it and it's not always going to be everything is going to be inspiring on your social media, but I think I've talked about before that.

I follow a lot of artists on social media and they focus a lot on process and this is something that is always hugely inspiring to me. I'm definitely a systems thinker and a design thinker so I like to see what people are doing behind the scenes and this has been something that's been really helpful in terms of fertilizing my brain because it just kind of keeps me in the mode of thinking about my own processes.

And even if I'm looking at someone else's process that I cannot kind of replicate in my own work. It's still really inspiring for me to see what they're up to. So, I really appreciate the inspiration that I can get particularly from things like Instagram and Instagram stories. Things that are very Visual and I can kind of watch progression of something over time, which is really fun.

Now I already mentioned but it's important enough to bring it up again that I've been reading a lot. I've been setting aside quite a bit of time on the weekends to do this and even just today as I record this this is a weekend day and I was kind of skimming through like eight to ten books that I checked out from the library doing some deeper reading on some of them.

In other ones just kind of skimming through chapters and really just kind of processing them and doing some quick looking at the index the. Table of contents kind of jumping in and out of the different chapters to see what could be useful for me, but that kind of reading and then also I'm doing some deeper dive reading particularly with things that I find to be particularly inspirational for me right now.

So that's going to change I think in terms of just where I am in my life and my career so I just kind of. Follow the energy of what I feel like reading at that moment. Sometimes it's fiction. Sometimes it's nonfiction but ending my day with reading has been really wonderful and then if I can squeeze a little bit in during the day as well, I'm trying to do that.

Also. Now I mentioned on my morning walks that I'm doing a lot of podcast listening and this is also somewhere that I'm looking for inspiration and creativity. So I have kind of narrowed down the kinds of shows. I'm listening to right now and I'm really only listening to people that are really positive that are really introspective that are asking really good questions of themselves and their listeners.

I want to be fertilized. So I'm kind of really thinking very carefully about what's coming in to me right now in terms of what books. I'm reading the podcast. I'm listening to and the other kinds of inputs so that I'm really carefully curated. Getting the kinds of things that are only going to be fertilizing and that wouldn't for example plant seeds of self-doubt like I want creativity and I want inspiration and that's what's going to be really helpful for me during this time.

The other thing that I think could be useful for fertilizing your brain and I haven't been using this particularly in this kind of round of creative work for myself, but I'd know that other people are really inspired by things like documentaries. So I think that you could also look to things like that in terms of people who might inspire you or movements or other kinds of things that you can learn about that are more on the nonfiction side.

I think that a lot of those things can be really inspiring. So I'm really curious if you're in a phase where you are trying to fertilize your brain and what that looks like for you what are some of the things that you are finding really helpful. I'm curious if you're doing any of the things I've mentioned here.

And if so, you know, what are some of the details of that? I would love to hear or if you're doing other things that you think I should also be doing. I would also love to hear your suggestions as well. So you can always contact me via email at contact at Katie lender dot work. You can tweet to me at Katie double underscore.

Are you can connect with me on Instagram @ KD underscore lender and I should mention that I am posting a lot of stuff that I'm reading and listening to in my Instagram story. So if you want to follow me there you'll have a chance to kind of see what I'm up to and also you can write me a letter at Katie Linder PO Box 1621 in Albany, Oregon nine seven, three, two one.

I always love to hear from you and I hope this gives you some ideas of what you can do to fertilize your brain. Thanks for listening life word. QA is part of the radical. Trust podcast Channel a collection of content dedicated to helping you seek self-knowledge nurture your superpowers playfully experiment live your core values with intention practice loving kindness towards yourself and others and settle into your life's purpose learn more about the rst channel and access show notes and transcripts for each episode at Katie lender dot work / podcasts.

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