**YGT episode 143**

Hey there, ygt listeners this episode of you've got this is brought to you by my summer virtual writing groups program because summer writing is coming and I want to support you. This is my favorite time of year to be writing. This program is a series of weekly group coaching meetings that will help you stay accountable to your writing goals in the summer, which is the hardest time I think to stay accountable to those goals.

Each virtual writings package includes weekly meetings some private coaching sessions with me. On topics of whatever you want to talk about access to my nine-part course on academic writing and Publishing and of course a lifetime membership to prolific which is my online community for academic writers.

So if you are ready to tackle your writing goals and also have a little bit of fun along the way. I hope you'll join in groups for summer 2019 start the week of June 10th, and you can check out the program today. I'm offering. Four different options for the summer. So plenty of room for you to join in.

You can learn more about the upcoming virtual writing program or sign up to be notified about future offerings of the program at KV Linder dot work backslash virtual - writing - groups. I hope you'll join in. You're listening to you've got this episode 143. 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 talk about what to do when you're feeling stuck and the kind of metaphor or image that immediately came to me when I was thinking about this was way back when I was an adolescent. I remember going to the movie theater and seeing the Austin Powers movie.

And if this is something that you are not familiar with I definitely don't recommend that you rush out and watch this but there's a particular scene in I think there's multiple of these movies so I'm not sure which one where the main character is in a hallway and. Driving some kind of cart and he's stuck in this hallway, and he keeps kind of like trying to do a three-point turn and this cart but there's literally like, you know 5 inches of clearance and so he ends up backing up for 5 inches and hitting the wall and then.

You know trying to go forward for 5 inches and hitting the wall and he's not really making any progress in turning this car around and I think sometimes this is what it's like when we're feeling stuck is we're trying to get out of it and we're like backing up and hitting the wall and going forward and hitting the wall and we're just not able to kind of get ourselves turned around and it can be really frustrating and we can spend a lot of time and a lot of energy trying to get out of this stuck space and sometimes it's just not really possible in that moment.

And I've written elsewhere maybe a couple years ago about this idea of putting your energy in a different place when you're worrying a lot. And so that's really what I want to talk about today is what to do when you're in a stock place and you can't stop thinking about it and you know, you're just not in a place where you can move something forward, but it's hard to let it go at the same time.

And this is something that I actually have a lot of coaching clients who deal with this and for a number of reasons, they might feel stuck in their career. They might feel stuck with a particular life situation or personal situation and they don't see a way out of it. So the first thing I want to say is that when it comes to being in these dark places, sometimes you're just not.

In the place where you can kind of put the right key in the right lock and unstick yourself and you can kind of imagine yourself with a huge key ring and it has, you know, a hundred keys on it. You're standing in front of a lock and you're trying to unlock the door, but you've got to try all these Keys first and there are definitely situations in which you need to kind of systematically work your way through a range of different options and this could include, you know talking it out with someone else.

Like a therapist this could include brainstorming lots of potential Solutions. But sometimes we're also in these stuck situations where we do to just kind of let go and so here are some ways to kind of think about this if you're feeling stuck and you know, it's something that you can't really address right now or you don't seem to have the right key for the right lock.

The first thing I think is to think about, you know, is there anything you can do in the moment? That would help you too? Feel less stuck. And I think the challenging part for people is when they're at that place where it's like no, they can't do anything in the moment like for whatever reason they know they're going to be in this stuck space for quite some time like six months or more and they have to just like sit with it.

So I think that the next question to ask for yourself, if you know, you can't be unstuck at least immediately is what needs the energy that you're giving to this stock place because I think the biggest challenge of being in a stuck place is that we think about it so much that we can't let it go that we are constantly trying to get unstuck at least mentally.

And this can cause us to lose sleep it can cause us to be really distracted and so, you know that that energy is just kind of going into a black hole that's not really all that productive. And so I think one thing to do is kind of acknowledge that that energy is sitting there. It's maybe not going in the direction that you want it to go.

And so once you kind of think about where could that energy go instead like is there a different? Eject, maybe that it could go toward or do you need to develop a project to put that energy in a place that's going to be more productive. Do you need to work out more or take on, you know, maybe additional responsibilities at work, you know, like where can you kind of funnel that energy into a different place that's going to feel better.

I think when we put that energy into the stock place it just kind of bounces around. It doesn't really help us and it feels unproductive if yields really frustrating. The other thing that I think can be really helpful is to look ahead and say is there a time when I can look forward to being unstuck.

So is there a time when you know, the situation is going to be resolved or I'm going to have an additional piece of information. So I think about for example, I have a couple of coaching clients who are trying to figure out job market stuff. They're trying to figure out when to go on the job market or they're trying to figure out are they going to get promoted in their current position?

Shen and these things can take time. I've had clients in the past who decided not to go on the job market until their children are a certain age for example, but then they're kind of stuck in their current position. It may not be the best fit for them and they're just like trying to figure out what to do and they're constantly trying to figure out a way out of that situation, but the truth is they can't really change until.

A certain amount of time passes. So by looking ahead and saying well in six months this is going to be a totally different situation or in a year. This is going to be a different situation. It allows you to kind of make a plan for what to do in that remaining time and it may be that you want to develop a new skill or take on a new project or.

Even like plan a really fun vacation for the halfway point or something that's going to be distracting or setting up kind of a milestone that would allow you to check off. You know what you're able to get done during this time period. Now the other thing that I think is helpful when you look ahead to being unstuck and when that time is going to happen is to think about how that will feel for you.

When you are unstuck, will you feel more at peace? Will you feel relieved will you feel a sense of achievement will things feel like they've been put into motion, you know, like what is it that you're going to feel is it literally like a weight lifted off your shoulders and just kind of have a short time where you're doing almost like a vision exercise of what that's going to feel like when you get to that place of being unstuck and then I think the most important question is, how can you feel that way right now?

So instead of having this, you know constant thinking about the stock place. Can you replace that whirring or that kind of more negative energy with that feeling that you want to have and what is it going to take to help you have that feeling? So sometimes it's making a plan. Like I said like having those Milestones where it's like, okay, I'm going to do these kinds of things in the the meantime, sometimes I think it's talking it out either with a partner or a friend or a therapist, you know of what it is that feeling stuck for you and what you can do in the meantime.

And then I also think sometimes it means just letting it go for a predetermined amount of time and saying like this is literally something I can't do anything about right now. I have to leave it. I'm going to revisit it in three months four months six months, you know, whatever the time frame is but really just kind of saying I'm officially like back burning this I'm officially taking it off my mind.

Now I think with any habit that you're trying to replace it's helpful to have something to replace it with. So if you're trying to stop doing something you need to start doing something else in its place. So you would want to say if I'm not thinking about this. What am I thinking about instead? And hopefully it's something a little bit more positive.

But the idea is to kind of set it aside and make a decision to set it aside. So if you're feeling stuck right now, please know that you're not alone. I work with a lot of people who have these feelings. I certainly experience these feelings as well. And I would love to hear what you're doing. In this moment of a feeling stock, and especially if you try any of these ideas and you find that they work for you.

You can always email me a contact at Katie Linder dot work. You can tweet to me at Katie double underscore lender. You can connect with me on Instagram @ KD underscore lender, or you can always write me a letter at Katie lender PO Box 1621 in Albany, Oregon nine seven, three, two one. I always love to hear from you.

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