**YGT episode 144**

Hey there, ygt listeners this episode of you've got this is brought to you by my summer virtual writing groups program because some are 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 writing this 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 144. 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 doctor Katie Linder. In this episode.

I want to talk about a prioritization tool that I call the stress meter and this is something that I recommend to some of my coaching clients. It's also something that I think can be really helpful for people when they're thinking about. Any kind of to-do list in terms of larger projects you have on your plate that might be competing with each other and you're not sure what to do first, or you're just having a hard time deciding how to move forward and you're getting a little bit of paralysis and the idea of the stress meter is to think about first.

What is it that is on your plate that is stressing you out the most now, this is not what we typically do I think by default typically, I think we look at our list. Will say well, what is do first? What is the first deadline? And that may or may not be the thing that is really stressing us out and often times.

I think there are there are a lot of reasons why things might stress us out but it can sometimes be because we know there's not like a clear finish insight and we know it's going to take awhile to do maybe a bigger project. Sometimes I think it's because we don't know how to move a project forward or maybe because there's someone else that's working on the project with us and maybe we don't have a great relationship with that person.

So all of those things can cause stress and strain but it ends up being that this thing because it's kind of a monkey on your back grows and grows and grows into being something that just feels really big and it feels just super stressful. So one of the things that I would encourage you to think about with your to-do list is what is the thing that's on there that maybe you keep putting off but it's going to feel so good.

If you could just kind of buckle down and get it done. And what is kind of the thing that's on your mind the most right now that kind of you keep circling back to and you're. You're spending so much energy thinking about it. When really you could just be spending that energy somehow moving it Forward even with a very small step.

So the idea here is to really think about what is going to feel good to get off of your plate. And also I think it is important to consider. Why haven't you moved it Forward because sometimes there is a very real obstacle for moving some of these things forward that are the most stressful for us.

The biggest ones I think are when someone else has a task that they're supposed to do and they haven't done it yet. And so it's really not on your plate right now, but it's kind of hanging over your head and it's stressing you out. You're waiting on someone else and that can just feel really out of your control.

So a very small step that you could take is to email the person that you're waiting on and say just checking in. I want to see how this is going. It's feeling kind of stressful to me because of our impending deadline or whatever reason that's causing you to feel a little bit stressed out. And just kind of do a check in and see how things are going with it.

I think a second reason that we often don't move things forward is just the our old friend fear where we don't feel like we can do it. We don't feel like it's going to be done well, or to the level of quality that we think it deserves maybe we fear that we're not the right person do that particular project or we're just not going to have the skills or abilities to do it.

Well, and that's a really important thing to. To if that's the thing that's stressing you out. It may be that you want to talk to the person who assigned you the project and and say, you know, I have some concerns about this or even just have a pep talk with yourself about you are the right person and you are going to be able to do this but I think often times we will kind of procrastinate our projects that we are afraid of because it's a kind of protection mechanism of once we get to the end and maybe if it didn't go so well, we can always blame it on the fact that we didn't.

Much time on it versus giving something are absolute all and then failing that can feel really scary. But I think that if it's something that is stressing you out recognizing that that fear exists and deciding what is the next small step that you can do to either kind of talk with that fear in a pep talk with yourself or talk with someone else that you work with who you think might be able to also give you a little bit of a pep talk to get you moving forward with the project.

And I think a third reason that we often will not move forward with something that's really stressful for us is that we just literally don't know how we don't know how to take the next small step that's going to make it a progress on a particular project and this can be sometimes because we've never done that project before or we are really stuck.

Like maybe we're in the middle of a project and we don't know how to move it forward or even though we don't know how to wrap it up. I mean, sometimes we get involved with projects that you. For the end and you don't really know how to get it out the door. So all of those things can be helpful as well because you can really just sit down with a trusted friend or colleague and say okay.

I need to brainstorm with you about how to move this forward because it's feeling stuck. It's stressing me out. I want to go ahead and take the next step. What do we think that could be? So knowing the why of Wyatt stressing you out is really important because I think that that often leads to what is the next step of what I can do with this particular project to move it forward.

Now the other thing that I think can be really helpful, if you are using this kind of stress meter as a prioritization method is to make a choice in your calendar of when you're going to work on this thing and that will allow your brain to take a breather and a break from worrying about it because you know, you've assigned yourself.

For example two hours on Tuesday Morning from 10 to noon and you're going to work on moving it forward or maybe it's a small thing that you're just stressed out about and you know, you can get it done in like 30 minutes, but you just need to set the size of the time and do the thing and this is often something that happens to me if I have like a really important email to right I will just let it build up in my mind and it will really stress me out.

When really I just need to set you know, 15 to 30 minutes this item my calendar right the email. Then at least it's in draft form. I can kind of revise it or edit it take a look at it share with a colleague before actually send it out, but it's getting me started. It's kind of saying, you know, you don't have to worry about it now, but I am going to schedule a time when you will be devoting time to completing this thing.

So I think that this dress meter is something that like I said, we don't really use enough in terms of prioritizing our projects and it is meant to be something that is helpful in the sense of getting something off your mind that's been on your mind for a while and how can you look at your to-do list through that lens instead of the lens of just what is the thing that is do next in the hope that it will actually get that monkey off your back and you'll feel a lot better.

So, of course, I would love to hear if you use this kind of. Organization method with your to-do list or your project pile. You can always contact me via email at contact. Katie lender 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 write me a letter at Katie Linder PO Box 1621 in Albany, Oregon nine seven, three, two one.

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