**TWR - episode 114**

This episode is brought to you by what's next my new group coaching program designed to help you find some clarity around your next steps in work and life times of transition can be challenging and frustrating as we wait for the pathway in front of us to unfold in this program. We focus on what you're learning during this in between time.

What obstacles are keeping you from moving forward and where you can trust yourself more to move forward with confidence. Over four weeks will reflect together and hold space for one another session starts Sunday, July 7th. And if you join in before July first, you'll receive a complimentary private coaching session with me on a topic of your choice.

Learn more and register a Katie Linder dot work backslash next you're listening to think bright revised episode 114. Hey there, and welcome to think right revised a podcast that offers a peek behind the scenes of productive writing life. I'm your host. Dr. Katie Linder. On this episode. I want to talk through some questions and strategies for doing a mid-year check in on your writing goals.

And this is something that we do each year in prolific. But I also of course do it every year on my own and sometimes I do this quarterly, but I definitely think. Helpful to do it part way through the year so that you can really see if things need to be adjusted or moved off your plate or onto your plate and sometimes I think we can avoid looking at our annual goals, whether they be writing or otherwise, especially if we feel like they're not going very well and this is one of those areas where I really do feel like mid year is a good time to just hit this head-on and try to figure out what's going on.

What do you need to have it feel successful for you? Because there's still half a year to go. And there's plenty of time to get back on track with a lot of the projects you might have on your plate. So the first task would just be to remind yourself of your coals. It may be a while since you've checked in and maybe you actually didn't really write these things down.

You just had in your mind some of the things you were hoping to get done over the course of 2019 or whatever year it is that you're listening to this and you need to just kind of sit down and say what was it that I was hoping to do and I think doing an audit is a really helpful way of doing this and that's basically just making a list of all of the projects that you were hoping to.

Forward in this calendar year. So once you have your list then I think it's really helpful to go through each project. However many there are and to track progress on each one. Now it's totally possible that by this point in the year. You will have finished some and you can say this was completed and I've moved it off my plate.

There are probably a bunch that are in various stages of completion because healthy pause scholarly pipelines, there's all kinds of things that we have going on. But the most important thing you can do when you're tracking the progress on these projects is to get honest with yourself and to acknowledge if things are not moving in the way that you thought they would what are the actual.

Obstacles that are standing in the way. And this reminds me of others a member of one of my current writing groups who has been working with a collaborator and that collaborator has not been as responsive as she was hoping they would be and the project is really going a lot slower than I think she had originally intended or hoped for and she's really had to adjust her expectations of when this project is actually going to get done the amount of work that.

Collaborator is going to be able to contribute to the project and how long it's going to take for her to get it out under review and it's a good thing to check out on stuff like that because it may mean that you want to move something onto the front burner and something else onto the back burner if it's not going in the way that you thought or maybe that you can take on a little bit more because something is just taking longer than you originally planned.

So getting honest with yourself is really important at this stage because if you're not honest, you can't make changes and this is really the point in the year where you want to say. Okay, what do I need to do to either remove these obstacles or to change my habits to reinvest in this stuff if I need to do it or you may find that you have habits already in place and they're going really well and you want to continue them in some cases.

You might also find that you pushed super hard in the first part of the year. And you're starting to feel burned out and you need to pull back at this at this stage to make sure you're getting some rest so that you can kind of stay strong and the rest of the year in terms of your projects. So that Honesty goes multiple directions.

It's about what do you not getting done? It's also about are you overdoing it and it's important to ask yourself both of those questions. Now the other thing that's really important to check in on at the midpoint of the year is our your original goal still working for you because six months is kind of a long time and it's possible that you have gotten to the stage in the year and realized you don't really have the same goals that you started out the year with and there's a lot of reasons that this can happen.

But sometimes you just shift Focus. Sometimes you realize that a project is just not working out in the way that you thought. Sometimes you might have thought a dataset would result in three articles and you realize that's not going to happen. Like maybe you're only gonna get one and so you just have to shift and change your goals and your focus throughout the year, and that would maybe.

Cause you to ask the question of what needs to be let go and are there certain goals that you've been hanging on to that? It's just looking like this is not the year for those goals and letting those things go can be really freeing both to the other projects on your plate because they can get more of your time and energy.

But also sometimes we're just carrying a weight around on our shoulders of a particular project that we need to let go we need to say this is not the year for that and it can be helpful to put it on the back burner and just say I'm going to come back to this another time, maybe an early 2020 and see what I think but it's important to do that work of letting it go so that you can focus your energy where it really belongs.

Now the other thing that this audit can help you to see is if you had anything that got added in this year that maybe you weren't expecting. So maybe you had some collaborations or just unexpected projects that got put on your plate and oftentimes when this happens, we don't really consciously understand a that it's happened and be that it's affecting our other projects.

So this is also a really good time to say. Well I wasn't planning on doing this other thing, but it got kind of thrown at me in quarter one or quarter to. And it is really impacting the amount of time that I can put towards specific things throw my plate. So adding those things into your list is important and also acknowledging that you might need to shuffle some things around or reprioritize things in order to make sure that you're giving the time and energy that each project is really needing.

Now one of the most important questions that I ask myself at this point in the year is what will help me to feel successful with my writing in the remainder of the year of what's left. So depending on how things are going that might mean completely re-evaluating my goals or that might mean just keep trucking along with kind of how I'm doing but I want to be able to say, you know, when it comes to December that I feel really good about progress this year.

And and what is it that. Help me to feel that way and it allows you to kind of recenter yourself. I think on the things that are really important to you that are important to your career growth that are important to your writing Pipeline and to help you to feel like you're making really purposeful and intentional choices when it comes to how you're spending your time.

So that is one of my favorite questions to ask to get re-centered. And again that is just what will help you to feel successful with your writing in this second half of the year. Now it's possible that you are asking these questions of yourself, you're doing this analysis of kind of how things are going and you're realizing that you really need to reprioritize your writing.

And again, there are so many reasons why this can happen especially for people who are just starting out in like new tenure-track positions. You have to get your feet under you in terms of your teaching and your other kinds of obligations and you might get to this point in the year and realize I spent my whole first year in my new job.

And I didn't really make the progress that I wanted to make on my writing or maybe some personal stuff came up for you this year and it just hasn't allowed you to give the mental energy and space that you need for the writing. So I want to also address what do you need to do at this stage if you're like, okay, I really do want to reprioritize this in my life.

You know, what are some ways that I can potentially do that from, you know, July through December for the rest of the year. So a couple of things one is I think to get accountable and to really devote your time and maybe even someone else's time to getting you back on track. There are a ton of ways of doing this and you know from listening to this podcast coaching and writing groups are ways that I have definitely talked about this but there are also ways of you know, finding a writing buddy or a colleague that you can be talking about this with on a regular basis so that you can set goals make a plan and.

Have kind of a strategy around what you want to do for the rest of the year. Now, if you're not someone who's great with strategy or planning find somebody who is and if that's a coach that you want to pay you can do that. But there's also I'm sure colleagues that are just down the hall from you.

That would be happy to help to help you kind of think strategically about how you want to do this. It's important. I think if you're going to make that kind of plan to think about milestones and month-by-month what it is that you want to do. I recently did a blog post about questions to plan your summer projects and I'll go ahead and link to that in the show notes because it's a great way to break things down into month by month and think about what are the kinds of things you want to get done?

The other thing that I think can be really helpful to reset yourself. If you feel like you need to reprioritize your writing is to go on a retreat and as you know from again listening to the show, I do this pretty frequently as I record this. I'm actually in the middle of a creative Retreat and what I typically do is I do them at home.

You don't have to go anywhere expensive but take some time out of the office. Even if it's just a long weekend or a day or two and really get back on track with your writing and the more you can do this, even if it's just half a day at a time where you're spending, you know, 3-hour chunks working on projects.

You can start to kind of reset how you're thinking about these projects in the kinds of priority that you're putting on them in your life in the midst of all the other obligations that you have on your plate. So I hope this is helpful in thinking about a potential mid-year check in on your writing goals.

I certainly do this. I always find it really helpful to reset myself. If you do this, I would love to hear about it, especially if you have other strategies of doing it or you get kind of any aha moments from asking these questions. You can always email me a contact it 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 write me a letter. He do under our PO Box 1621 in Albany, Oregon 97321. I always love to hear from. Thanks for listening. Thanks for listening to this episode of think right revised show notes and a transcript for this episode can be found at Katie lender dot work / podcasts think right revised is part of the radical self-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.

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