**YGT episode 149**

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 at Katie Linder dot work backslash. You're listening to you've got this episode 149. 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 redefining what we mean by professional development. I think that sometimes we get kind of caught up in the idea that professional development is about things like conferences or maybe other things like trainings or webinars or things that are. Maybe expensive that we don't have the the money to do.

We can't travel we can't necessarily invest in those kinds of professional development opportunities. And I feel like this is an area where although I have definitely invested financially and certain kinds of professional development for myself. My coaching training is an obvious example of that if you've been listening to the show for a while, I also feel like there are a ton of other areas where I'm really engaging in professional development that are inexpensive.

Sieve and there's just so much knowledge that's available right now because of the internet and various other mediums that I want to kind of emphasize the professional development doesn't just have to be these other expensive kinds of things. So I thought I would talk about some of my favorite forms of professional development right now that are also pretty inexpensive.

And I might give you some ideas of places that you can turn to think about. What might be a good fit for you if you're trying to learn in a new area. So the first one and I think this is like really obvious for her academics and people who have been kind of raised in the academic environment is reading this is something that I have always turned to it is the first thing that I think of if I'm trying to learn something new I will immediately go to the library and check out a gazillion books and recently I did a deep dive on a topic that I was thinking about for a potential future Book Project and I checked out like 40 books and just kind of slowly processed my way through.

Skimming them looking for gaps looking for different kinds of ideas and inspiration of what I was thinking about and really just trying to familiarize myself with that particular area of the literature. And it was a great way to do kind of a deep dive into that topic it gave me some ideas. It helped me to see areas that I definitely know.

I don't want to go into in terms of writing a book and it was a really good opportunity for me to get a really large amount of knowledge. Not in a deep way but in a broad way where I could kind of see what are all the different topics are on the table around this particular subject area. I think reading is something that is kind of a fallback for academics.

It's something that we're probably all pretty comfortable with and I think that there are so many ways to do it getting books from your library and now there's all these apps to download audiobooks and ebooks and things like that that it really just makes having that knowledge at your fingertips so much easier.

Now the other thing and the should not commit as a surprise to you that I often turn to for professional development is podcasts and I am constantly Amazed by the amount of information that is available for free on podcast shows and my favorite kinds of podcast when I'm thinking about professional development are typically.

The ones where they're interview-based shows and it's a particular topic where someone is interviewing a bunch of different people who are looking at a topic from a range of different angles. And this is something that I have absolutely used in my Small Business Development. I've listened to a ton of shows that are focused on small business and how people are tackling all different kinds of things from marketing to onboarding clients to branding and sales.

I mean, there's just so many topics. Out there and this is an area that I just feel like there's an abundance of riches. Now. The challenge of that of course is you have to wait through all that and you have to decide what's good for you. What makes sense you have to go with kind of a critical mindset of what you believe to be true and not just kind of the gimmicky things that get talked about in that that space.

But I think that you know, the more you get different angles and perspectives on a particular issue or topic. The more you're able to form your own opinions in a really educated way and there are just really good sources of information that are people who want to share their gifts of knowledge and they are deep practitioners in a particular field and you can trust them now.

I think that I like to go from other people's recommendations and when I'm trying out a new podcast I listen to a few episodes and just kind of feel it out and see what I think. I don't always go to reviews. Don't feel like those are always a helpful source of information for me. There's a lot of ways to game reviews and the podcast world.

So typically what I'll do is just listen to a few episodes and get a feel for what I think of that show and if I feel like it's going to be helpful for me and then I'll usually do a pretty deep bench and I'll just listen to it. I do these long morning walks now and I can get through several episodes over the period of a week and that helps me to know, you know, is this something that's really going to be helpful for me?

So I just can't say enough about podcast. I think that they're just so helpful when it comes to professional development and giving you ideas and tips and strategies that could be useful in your daily kind of practical life in terms of what you're trying to accomplish. Now the other thing that I really like to do for professional development is watch what other people are doing and observe what other people are doing and try to just sacked what they're up to and this is definitely a more kind of passive way of professional development where let's say, for example, I'm trying to really up my game in terms of public speaking if I have the opportunity to watch people public speaking, even if this is like through TED Talks, so if you can't go to conferences.

No, you can watch things like TED talks and I might say like what are they doing? That's drawing me in. Is it something about their physical motions that they're making with their hands? Is it something about how they're framing the argument that they're making is that the visuals in their PowerPoint?

You know, what is it? That is really keeping me engaged in this talk and I'll try to dissect that and really understand. What are the skills. What are the kind of rhetorical moves that? Person is making that maybe I could potentially emulate if it feels like it's a good fit for me for my personality for the strategies.

I might want to use in my own public speaking. Now, I think along with that. The other option is to experiment and to try out the things you're seeing that other people are doing and to see if you think it's a good fit for you. Now, this is something that I see a ton in like productivity spaces in Academia where you'll see like something mentioned on Twitter.

And then you go try it, you know like you see someone using a particular like highlighting method with their lit review and so you try that method and you see if it works and blogs are such a good place to find out these kinds of tips and strategies that maybe you would want to try on your own and of course this podcast channel is all about that.

It's all about sharing different ideas for how you can optimize your productivity how you can think about long-term strategic planning for your writing and for other projects. And by experimenting with those things to me that is a form of professional development because you're seeing the kinds of things that work for you and it don't work for you and you're actively seeking new strategies and trying them out and seeing what's a good fit.

Now, of course, there are also options like webinars and courses and things like that that you can also seek out for professional development. I think that massive open online courses or moocs are a great free form of potentially giving you especially introductory information about a particular topic.

That's what I turn to several years ago when I was trying to get a basic understanding of Statistics because my graduate program did not require me to take a statistics course if you can. That and so my quantitative literacy was just really low and of course for the job I have now, it's pretty important for me to have a basic understanding of stats and how they can be incorporated into different research designs and methodologies.

So pre this job. I basically taught myself statistics through a massive open online course, and it was free. It was great. I felt like it was a really good introduction. I also think that now there are a lot of companies that also offer free webinars because of course they're trying to get you into their sales funnel or their Pipeline and sometimes you have to give up your email address to have access to these things.

But there are free resources that have good quality information and that might be something else to take a look at as well in terms of one-off webinars that are available and that you can kind of learn about specific topics and usually you can just find that through a kind of Google search about the topic that you're looking at.

To see who are the brands who are the companies that are really talking about that on a pretty regular basis. Sometimes they also have really good blog post as well that are very actionable that had a lot of really good information that you can look up as well. Okay, and then the last strategy that I have for this which is a little bit connected to this idea of watching and observing is to find a mentor find somebody who does whatever it is that you want to do better or to learn about and ask them if you can basically be their apprentice and come alongside them and and say can we have you know a series of conversations about how you came to learn this thing or.

What your tips and strategies are I mean if someone were to contact me and say, you know, Katie can I have three 30-minute sessions with you to talk about podcasting and these are exactly the things I want to know. I'm hoping you'll walk me through, you know, this particular stuff. I would be much more willing to kind of think about having that kind of time commitment of working with someone if I knew that it was very discreet and they had very specific questions that they were wanting to ask.

Now I should also say we have put together a resource on how to podcast through my eCampus job because I was getting these kinds of requests all the time. So we have created some free resources on it. But to give you an example, you know, like I think that if you approach someone and say I really want to be mentored in this specific topic, can you give me you know a certain amount of time to talk through?

And to show me how you've learned how to do something or the tips and strategies that as an expert in this area. You can explain to me as someone who is a novice sometimes mentors can be a really effective way of cutting through a lot of the extra stuff that you don't need to know because they'll just say, you know, you don't need all of that.

Here's the very specific things that are the most important for you to figure out when it comes to a particular topic or a particular subject area. So all this to say. I think professional development is a really broad spectrum of things and I'm sure there are things that I did not mention here that you would also put into the realm of professional development that are either low-cost or no-cost ways of really upping your skills in a particular area.

And of course, I would love to hear what are some of those things that you're thinking about that you've tried that you found to be really effective. You can always email me at contacted. Katie lender not work. You can tweet to me at Katie double underscore lender. You can connect with me on Instagram @ KT underscore lender, or you can write me a letter at PO Box 1621 in Albany, Oregon 97321.

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