[MUSIC] You're listening to You've Got This, episode 355.

[MUSIC] 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.

[MUSIC] On this episode, I wanted to talk about the Sunday scaries.

And if you are on any form of social media platform, I would guess you have probably run into this concept.

Basically what this is, is the phenomenon where you start to feel a little bit nervous or anxious about your upcoming week, or maybe even more specifically Monday morning on the Sunday before.

And so some people refer to this as Sunday scaries.

And I think that the challenge of Sunday scaries is they can end up turning a portion of your weekend into a negative experience.

And you don't really get to to have your full weekend experience because you are worrying about the week ahead.

And so over time, I have implemented some strategies to help me combat the Sunday Scaries.

And I thought I would share some of them on this episode in case they might be helpful for you as well.

And this is one of those things that I do feel like it is about being in the present moment, not focusing too much on the future because that's where all of our worries lie is typically in the future.

And so by focusing in the present, hopefully we have a better experience.

So here are some of the strategies I'm using.

The first one is on Sundays, I really do try to build in what I consider to be true rest.

Now, whether that is taking a nap, watching a movie, um, maybe I go to lunch with my partner, read a book, I try to build in some downtime on Sunday afternoon and into the evening that allows me to feel like I got some rest before I'm heading back into another week.

And I think sometimes if you try to pack too much into your Sunday and you don't have this sense of rest, maybe it's distracting to pack in a bunch of stuff, but you are maybe leaving the weekend feeling kind of depleted.

And that I think can cause even more nervousness about heading into a week, especially if you have a lot going on.

The next thing that I like to do on Sundays is some light cleaning.

So I like to make sure that kind of my kitchen is in order, you know, Sunday night before I go to bed.

I also really like to fold and put away a bunch of laundry on Sunday afternoons and evenings.

And typically I do this while I'm like watching YouTube or listening to an audio book or something.

So like it can be part of kind of that restful time, but this really helps me feel like I'm starting the week a little bit ahead.

So on my weekends, I've gotten into a bit of a routine of like washing all of the laundry on Saturday and then folding and putting it away on Sunday.

And this includes, you know, pretty much everything, everything from the week, anything that's kind of hang dry.

It's like some of my professional clothes are hang dry and like sheets and towels and things like that as well.

Okay, the third thing that I like to do is get a little bit ahead for the week.

Now I'm guessing what this looks like for me is probably gonna be different than what it looks like for you because I try to complete my content creation for the week by the end of Sunday.

So what this means is I record my podcast episode the week and try to edit that and get it scheduled.

And then I also like to get my blog post that I put out at the end of the week also drafted and scheduled.

Now I cannot always fit this in, but whenever possible I really like to do it because when I get this done on Sunday or by Sunday, I don't have to spend an evening during the week completing it because I have a midweek podcast release and then a Friday newsletter release of my blog post.

So this is something that I like to kind of, um, again, get into a routine with and know that I'm always going to have this completed so I don't have to worry about it.

Now I would imagine that you may have similar things.

So for example, let's say one of your kids has like soccer practice on Wednesday night, you might spend Sunday finding all the equipment, washing the uniform, like making sure that that part of your week is ready to go.

Or if you have like a regular department meeting that happens on Thursdays and you're the one who sets the agenda, you know, maybe you start to think about that earlier in the week.

So we don't want to bring too much work into Sunday.

We have to be a little bit careful about that, but I do think there's a little bit of work ahead that allows me to at least feel better once I'm diving into the week itself.

Okay, the next thing that I do is every single Sunday I host a Sunday planning hour with my online community called ProLific.

And in this Sunday planning hour, I ask a series of reflective questions to help anybody who attends this plan for their upcoming week and kind of know where they want to put their time, their energy, and their attention.

And this is, I think, one of the best ways to combat the Sunday scaries, which is to have a true picture of what is happening in the week ahead.

Now, I don't necessarily participate in this because I'm facilitating it, but I have a couple versions of specific things I like to do when I'm planning my week each week.

The first one is, I like to look at my calendar and kind of name out loud to myself what are the most stressful upcoming events and how can I plan coping strategies in advance to help me with those particular things.

So for the purpose of this episode I did take a moment to kind of look ahead at my upcoming week and I have some examples here.

The first one is I have kind of a stressful meeting happening on Wednesday and this is a meeting that has a lot on the agenda.

I'm the one who's going to be facilitating it and there could be some topics that are a little bit tense.

So I'm planning to make a game plan for that meeting and talk it through with a colleague on Monday morning to give myself plenty of time to kind of feel like I'm preparing for that.

And I've already blocked some time on my Monday schedule to make sure that I've got, you know, a good amount of time to plan that out.

Also in this upcoming week, I have some family visiting.

Now I think we all know family visits are great, but they can also be kind of stressful because they're disruptive to whatever our normal routines are.

And this is certainly true for me.

I've got a couple of evening dinners and things like that that I need to do with this family that's in town.

So I'm also planning some downtime later in the week as recovery time for that because I know it's going to be pretty draining and it also overlaps with kind of this stressful meeting that's happening on Wednesday.

So I know that by the time I get to Thursday and Friday, I'm probably going to need a little bit more margin in my schedule.

Now the third thing that I'm kind of planning on is this week is when my assistant is on vacation and there's a lot going on at work.

This is the person who manages my calendar and so if anything comes up kind of last minute and I have to move meetings around it's on me this week instead of my assistant.

She does a ton of other stuff too in addition to my calendar but the one that's kind of the most urgent is this calendaring.

So I'm trying to build in extra pockets of time at the end of each day to complete any admin tasks that are kind of pressing or come up last minute, then I know that she would normally do for me.

So these are kind of just three things that stick out to me when I look at my calendar this week, and I want to be kind of keeping those things in mind as I'm heading into the week.

Now naming those things helps me to have a plan in advance, and that really brings down any anxiety or nervousness I might have going into the week.

Now the second part of this kind of planning for the week is to note if a week is especially stressful and if it is to make sure my partner knows that.

So the week I just described I would say is definitely on the higher stress scale for me.

I've got the combo of the family visiting, being without my usual admin support, the inclusion of at least one higher stress meeting.

All of this means I'm going to need to pay extra attention to my energy levels throughout the week and I'm probably going to be more stressed.

So I need to do my very best to take care of myself.

And my partner is a big part of that.

He really does help to talk things out, you know, at the end of the day, make sure that I have he does a lot of our grocery ordering, so making sure I have the right food in the house and things like that.

So that's another thing that I like to note is if I have an especially stressful week, just making sure that my partner knows.

Now I mentioned the kind of food part of the week.

And this is one of the last things that I like to do on Sunday, which is kind of wrapping up any food prep that I need to do.

So while I do the bulk of my food prep now, usually on Saturdays, and that's like I make like a big pot of soup, and that's my lunches for the week.

And it's really easy for me to just like grab and go in the morning.

I like to make sure that I don't need to order any food for the week on Sunday afternoon or evening.

So what I typically check for is produce.

Do I need any fruit?

Like we often have berries in the house, which I use for smoothies in the morning.

I often take chopped up red peppers as a snack into work on a weekday, so making sure I have those vegetables available to me.

And because my partner does most of the food ordering, it's really just checking in with him to see what's the timing of that order and making sure we have everything that we need.

So these are just a few of the strategies that I like to use, and they help me feel more prepared and in control as I head into my week.

The other thing I really really try to do is make sure that Sunday evening is just like unscheduled.

And that means like after dinner I could watch a movie or I could watch YouTube or read a book or just do something that's very relaxing and that always allows me to kind of ease into a good night's sleep to give me a good kickoff into the week.

So as always I would love to know what are some of the ways that you are combating the Sunday Scaries.

You can always email me at hello@drkatylinder.

com and let me know what strategies work best for you.

I am wishing you a great remainder of October.

The next month is coming up super fast, so I hope the rest of the month is going well for you, and thanks so much for listening.

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