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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'm going to talk about what happened this past week when I caught flu virus had to cancel a work trip and now I'm just getting back on my feet.

As you can probably hear a little bit in my voice, I still have a touch of this flu.

I am trying to get through it as quickly as I possibly can, and the title of this episode "Taking My Own Medicine" is both a reference to the copious amounts of flu medications that I've been taking this week, but also metaphorically to attending to my own advice on self-preservation, boundaries, and my word of the year devotion through which I need to remain loyal to my own needs first before taking care of others.

So as I record this, I got sick about a week ago with a sore throat and a pretty typical set of flu symptoms including fever, congestion, coughing, etc.

And this was on a Sunday.

My partner had actually been sick the entire week before, so I figured it was just a matter of time, but I was crossing my fingers and we were quarantining and doing our best because I had actually packed for a work trip that I was supposed to leave for on Monday.

And I was just in complete denial that I was getting sick.

I was really going to try to push through this work trip.

So I packed everything.

I had my snacks ready to go.

I woke up ready to get on the plane, totally ready to go.

And then I woke up Monday morning and I had to make the really difficult decision to cancel this trip.

Now, this was challenging for me for a couple of reasons.

One, I just hate not completing my obligations, and once I kind of sign on to something I really want to follow through.

This is also a part of a new set of leadership responsibilities that I've taken on recently and I just didn't want to let anyone down.

But I will say that when I got up on Monday and I felt, you know, pretty horrible just physically, and I sat on my couch and I imagined myself.

Walking through the airport, taking the two hour plane ride, getting a ride to the hotel, visiting with people at the reception, spending an entire day, listening to sessions, trying to figure out food, trying to figure out medicine, getting back on a plane, coming home late the following night.

Imagining going through all of that helped me to see I was just not going to be making the right choice to go.

I might have been able to muscle through it, but I've traveled while I've been sick in the past and it usually makes it worse because of the sinus pressure on the plane and I already knew I was probably going to be getting sinus infection, ear stuff, this is pretty typical for me.

And it's been about four years since I've had any kind of flu virus or respiratory virus.

And so it probably was going to hit me pretty hard.

So I canceled the trip, which felt horrible and also such a relief at the same time.

And then I proceeded to stay in bed for three days.

Now the silver lining is that my calendar was mostly clear because I was planning on going on this trip.

I did have to miss an important event on Wednesday.

I had colleagues who had to cover for me.

It turned out great.

They were wonderful.

And I have to say there were several moments in those three days where I was lying in bed, you know, in my like fever sleep haze of, you know, coming in and out of napping, where I just thanked myself for canceling that trip.

I woke up at a certain time and I thought, you know, if I was on the trip, this is where I would be and I would be miserable because I was not lying in bed, taking care of myself.

And I felt so relieved that I was not trekking through an airport and also just not infecting other people with what turned out to be a pretty nasty flu virus.

So on Wednesday evening, I got kind of my wits about me, and I started to make a getting back on my feet list.

Now, this is something that I love to do when I am coming out of being sick or when I'm just coming out of being in a period of I feel a little bit overwhelmed or I've got a bunch of stuff stacked up.

And this list included things like washing our sheets and other laundry, cleaning up our kitchen.

As you can imagine with my partner and I both being sick, we had like medication spread all over the house.

We were getting more groceries.

I was digging out of email.

I needed to take just a long shower after being in bed for several days.

And I also needed to move back into our main bedroom because with my partner sick and we were on different sick schedules, if that makes sense, like he got sick before I did so he was in a different phase of it, we ended up sleeping separately to try to give each other the most like uninterrupted sleep as possible.

So I had to move back into the main bedroom, reset our guest room, all of these things.

And making this getting back on my feet list, and starting to work through it helped me transition out of this flu-brain fog I had found myself in and into being a little more functional.

But the other thing I love about this kind of list when you aren't feeling well is it allows you to test and see what you can actually do.

So for example, when I took a shower, it was pretty energy sucking, as it tends to be when you're sick, and my inability to get up the energy to fold my laundry, this was a sign to work remote on Thursday.

I wanted to get back into things so that I wouldn't have to completely disrupt my calendar, but I did want to take it easy and ease my way back in.

So I spread this list out over a couple of days.

I remote worked on Thursday, and then I went back into work on Friday with cough drops and a mask and day quill and just making sure that I was kind of getting myself back up and running.

So on Saturday of this week, I woke up ready to be completely well and healthy.

Yet I was still sick.

I'm still in denial.

I'm still medicating with dayquil, cough medicine, still trying to get as much rest as I can, keeping a realistic view on what I can actually do.

I'm still feeling kind of that fatigue of not being completely well.

I've chosen not to go back to working out yet, which has been really challenging because it was such a good routine for me.

So I'm super disappointed, but it's also necessary.

I know that like, if I start to do a lot of labored breathing, I'm just going to be coughing more.

And that's not going to be helpful to anyone.

I'm also pulling back in areas where I can give myself more time and margin to recover.

So as I record this, I'm probably a few more days into like really trying to get this out of my system.

And I think the main lesson is sickness takes the time that it needs to take.

And knowing that I hadn't been sick for a while, I was pretty prepared to let this just kind of like take me down.

And I really tried to lower my expectations of what I was going to be able to do.

But as somebody who has a bias towards action, i.

e.

I'm pretty impatient, I love to get back on my feet.

And it's really hard for me to relax and just kind of hang back.

That said, I'm listening to my body, giving myself plenty of permission to slow down and rest.

This afternoon, I laid in bed for a couple of hours.

I watched part of the the eras tour, it was great.

I'm making sure I don't push myself too hard in an attempt to pretend to be better before I'm actually better.

I've done that a couple times already.

I've learned my lesson.

I'm trying to be, you know, really realistic with myself about what this is actually going to mean.

So in the upcoming week, I am going to head back to work.

We have a lot of stuff going on as we end the term and as we head toward commencement.

So I really do feel like I need to be in the office, but we do have some evening events that I might decide to pull back on a little bit.

I'm going to be bulk prepping a big batch of my soup, which I normally prep, making sure that I have that, which is just so kind of like hearty and warm.

It's perfect for when you're feeling a little bit under the weather.

I'm gonna be talking with my partner to see if there are additional ways that he can provide some support for me this week as he has come out of his sickness and I'm still kind of on the tail end of mine.

There may be some additional things I need to do.

And of course I'm going to keep medicating if that's something that is going to be helpful for me as well.

So thanks for hanging in and listening to this episode, listening to my voice.

It's a little bit, uh, starting to lose it and hopefully I won't lose it completely this week.

Um, but I'm curious, how are you taking your own medicine these days?

In other words, what are the ways that you're listening to your wiser self, even if it goes against your kind of default mode or something that you're more comfortable with?

You can always email me at hello@drkatylinder.

com.

I always love to hear from you.

Thanks so much for listening, and stay healthy.

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