[MUSIC] You're listening to You've Got This, Episode 386.

[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 want to return to the concept of bright spots.

Now, if you've been listening for a while, you know that I introduced this concept in a previous episode.

And these are things in your life that stick out as positive experiences or things that motivate you.

And I found that bright spots tend to be very personal.

What sticks out for one person might not even be noticed by someone else.

And I will link to that previous episode in the show notes if you want to hear the original description of the concept.

But this is something that I was kind of thinking about at the time when I published that episode as almost like motivational things that you can look for ahead in your week or your month that are kind of like motivating you to keep going.

And this can be when things are feeling especially challenging, whether that's like at work or in your personal life.

But right now, I also want to reflect on bright spots as a kind of gratitude practice.

So you can always look forward and find the bright spots in the future.

But I also want to look in like the now and in the recent past to identify the kinds of things, some which are I think very small that are bringing joy to my life right now.

And so I love using bright spots as a kind of gratitude practice.

So in this episode, I thought I would share some of my recent bright spots as examples and just encourage you to find your own recent bright spots as well.

And of course, if you want to look ahead and use them as motivational tools, you can always do that as well.

So first, the first bright spot that occurred to me was a few days ago, I got the physical copy of the book that I've been working on, the second edition of the blended course design workbook in the mail.

And what an amazing feeling to get to this point where the book is printed, and it's going into people's hands.

That was an incredible bright spot for this past week.

And I probably mentioned before, I feel like we're not always great about celebrating big milestones like this.

And even just acknowledging it as a bright spot and not letting it like pass me by of like, Oh, yeah, here's this book in the mail.

Like it's a big deal.

It's a really big deal to have that in my hands.

And all of the months and months of work that my co author and I did and our contributors did to bring that into being just feels really, really huge.

So that was a major bright spot.

I will also say the recent long weekend Memorial Day weekend was another bright spot for me.

So I had mentioned in a previous episode, I was creating a fill my cup week that was kind of culminating in this long weekend.

And I took an extra day off and was able to get some house projects done, including putting together a new bookshelf.

Since we had some books from other bookshelves that were overflowing, we were kind of full up.

So we needed a new bookshelf.

And it's already half full once I put it together.

So we had a lot of overflow happening on those other shelves.

And those kinds of organizational projects are usually bright spots for me.

So that kind of sticks out from the weekend, but also just having a couple days of uninterrupted time where I could just kind of like, you know, putter around my house and do what I wanted to do.

Major, major bright spot for me.

Another bright spot that occurred to me is I've been cooking some different meals for my bulk food prep lately.

Now again, if you've been listening for a while, you know that I do a lot of soups.

And that's something that I've been doing for like months and months and months.

But recently I made an Asian style slaw that had like cabbage and bell peppers and edamame and peanuts and air fried tofu.

And I use like a ginger sauce.

And then I made a version of that that had rice noodles that was also pretty good.

So it was nice to mix things up a bit.

Although I will tell you my bulk prep soup is definitely still in the rotation.

Another bright spot that I identify that is food related is that my partner recently found these vegan orange cream popsicles that are made with like this coconut milk base.

And they are just the perfect summer treat.

I remember last summer, I probably talked about ice cream sandwiches, because that was like the big thing for me last summer.

But this summer, it might be these orange cream popsicles, which are really fun.

Okay, the next bright spot is I recently read a book that's been on my radar for a really long time.

And I keep putting it on my list.

And then I wasn't getting to it.

And partly because it was kind of long.

And it's also a fantasy book.

And sometimes if I'm reading like one fantasy book, I don't like to read them back to back because I often get fantasy books confused with all the world building and things like that.

And this book had been hyped by a lot of people I follow on social media.

And it felt like it was just really overdue.

So the book is called The Serpent and the Wings of Night.

And I will link to it in the show notes.

And it's kind of like a romanticy like it's a romance fantasy novel that has vampires in it.

And it also includes a series of trials.

So it's a little bit like The Hunger Games, if you're familiar with that franchise.

And I sped through it in just a couple of sittings listening on audio.

And I think the thing that made this in a special bright spot for me is sometimes when books are hyped, I'm always a little bit nervous about like, is it going to live up to the hype?

And this book totally did.

And the second book is already out in the series.

So I'm going to be reading that soon.

And then there's a third book coming out in November.

So speaking of like future bright spots to look forward to, definitely something that I'll be keeping an eye out for later on this fall.

But I'm I was so excited that I really, really enjoyed this book.

Okay, next up, over the recent holiday weekend, I went to an outlet mall with the express purpose of updating my leisure clothes.

Now, I don't know if you've had this experience, but sometimes you'll like look at, you know, your wardrobe or like a section of your wardrobe and realize it just needs to be kind of like refreshed.

And what I was finding is that like on the weekends and in the evenings, there were a couple of things that were kind of in my more like comfy clothes, you know, category that I was leaning more toward those things than anything else.

But there weren't very many of those things like there were like a certain pair of sweatpants that I really liked or like a certain sweatshirt that I really liked.

And so I thought I'm going to go out and get some new sweatpants and some sweatshirts that I can wear in the evenings and on the weekends.

So and then basically like give away these other things that are just like sitting there that I'm really like they're there because I feel like I need to have choices, but I'm not actually wearing them like I'm not enjoying them.

And so I found some really great options that were on sale for Memorial Day weekend.

I do love going to the outlets when it is a holiday weekend because there's often extra sales.

And now I am all set for comfy clothes.

I found some great sweatpants and some great sweatshirts.

And this kind of like intentional wardrobe reset is always a bright spot for me because it allows me to rotate kind of what's in my closet and make sure that the things that I am no longer using might be able to go to someone else who will actually enjoy them.

Okay, the last bright spot that I could think of for this list for this episode was my partner recently surprised me.

And this past week he ordered new silverware.

So a little bit of backstory on this earlier this year, we got new dinner plates to replace the ones that we got over 20 years ago when we got married.

And I will just say it's this probably won't surprise you, I guess is the new ones look just like the old ones.

So we haven't gone for anything super crazy.

They're basically like very basic white dinner plates.

But we over 20 years, you know, as you can imagine, they got cracked or you know, we were down to like three plates or something like that, which we needed more.

So we went out and got new dinner plates.

And it was very helpful to me to kind of have old look like new, like it was relatively easy to make the decision about what to get.

But we also needed to get new silverware.

And when we would go into the store, we went to a couple different places, I could never decide which ones I wanted.

And I don't know the last time you bought silverware, but there's just something about like the weight of the silverware and like how it feels in your hand and like you like a spoon, but you won't like the fork.

I mean, like it's maybe I'm a little overcomplicating this, but like it was very challenging for me to find the right fit for this.

And so basically my partner did some research and he ordered a set from a different store that we had not gone to yet.

And he just got a few of them so we could try them.

And they're like perfect.

I don't know how he nailed it with this purchase.

But we ordered a bunch of more sets and we are replacing, you know, I think we had like three different versions of silverware in our drawers from like over time, we just like pick things up.

And so it feels really great to get that task checked off my list, despite me being really indecisive.

So that was a major bright spot win on behalf of my partner who was able to figure out how to solve this issue, basically without involving me.

And I love, I love that kind of solutioning.

So those are some of my most current bright spots.

And I would love to know what is sticking out to you as positive in your life right now.

As always, I'd love to hear from you.

You can email me at hello@drkatylinder.com to share your most recent bright spots.

Thanks so much for listening.

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