You're listening to You've Got This, episode 387.

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 want to offer some reflective questions to help you think about preparing for a new or upcoming season.

Recently I had a coaching session with a client who will be turning 50 soon.

Milestone birthdays are often something that indicate a new season, not always, but for this particular client, she is hoping to go on a retreat, to reconnect with herself, and to see what the next season of her life might hold for her.

It was such a privilege to help her think through what a retreat might look like and what she could maybe focus on to best take advantage of that reflective time.

If you've been listening for a while, you know that I love the concept of seasons.

I love the seasons that are tied to the weather and the time of the year.

I do seasonal bucket lists and I like to really think about how to connect in with the season.

But I also love that we get to define our own seasons and when those transitions can happen.

Seasons can be small, medium, large.

I like to think about just periods of time and how they can be defined and bound read in ways that really help us to learn more about ourselves.

As I was talking with this client, I was thinking about the kinds of questions that might be useful if you see a transition on the horizon and you want to use some reflective questions to help prepare for a new season of life or a new season of work.

The first thing that I think is really important is to start with some reflective questions on the past season.

So I might consider some of the following questions.

The first one is what would I call the season that is ending or how would I define it?

I think sometimes when we're coming into a new season, it's hard to name or define what it might be.

It feels maybe a little bit unknown.

But for the season that we're coming out of, we might be able to do that work a little more easily and name the season and define the season.

And sometimes that also can help us to indicate how a new season is going to be different from a season that we're leaving behind.

The next question is what have I learned in this most recent season that I want to take with me into this next season?

So even when we're transitioning from something old into something new, we definitely don't want to leave everything behind in whatever the thing is that we're saying goodbye to or we're transitioning away from.

There's probably some lessons that came out of that season that you want to take with you and apply into the thing that is coming up for you.

So taking a moment to really think about what are some of those things that you've learned and the lessons that you want to bring with you can be really helpful.

The third question is what do I want to leave behind in the season that is ending?

So thinking about the season that is wrapping up and that you're transitioning away from, what is something that you want to not necessarily bring with you, but actively leave in that previous season?

So that could be something that's like a mindset that you were cultivating or something else that is just really not serving you anymore.

What do you want to leave behind?

The fourth question about the past season is what have I learned about myself in this most recent season?

I do feel like every kind of professional or personal season that we go through is an opportunity for deep self-reflection and at all stages of life, we're continuing to learn about who we are and how we operate in the world.

And so asking this question about what have you learned about yourself in the most recent season is definitely something that might influence or be able to be applied to whatever is coming up for you.

And then the fifth question is what questions remain for me as the season is ending?

So even if we're transitioning away from something, it may not necessarily feel complete.

Maybe it actually feels like we're moving into a new season of life or a new season of career, but there may be some questions that we're still asking that kind of bridge between the old season and the new season.

And what are some of those questions that we want to be kind of keeping top of mind as we're moving into the new season?

So after reflecting on a season that is ending, I might then ask the following questions about the upcoming season.

So kind of transitioning from the old season into the new season, the first question I would ask is what do I hope that this new season holds for me?

Even if we're entering into a season that might feel kind of difficult, there might be hope in that season too.

So I do want to acknowledge sometimes we're coming into a season, maybe it's a season where we're dealing with like a family health issue or like a personal issue that feels like it's going to be really hard.

There can still be hope within that.

And even if it's not hard and we're just coming into a new season that we can kind of identify there's a transition happening, what do we hope that that new season will hold?

The second question is what concerns do I have about this new season?

So oftentimes when we're in transition, there's a lot of uncertainty, even if it's something that we're kind of looking forward to that we think is going to be something that's exciting or that's going to hold something really exciting for us, something new, something we've been wanting to do for a long time, there may still be some concerns or anxieties about what the new season might hold.

And so noting that, identifying that, defining that a little bit and just kind of naming it can be really helpful as you're heading into a new season.

The next question is what do I most want to learn from this upcoming season?

So you're probably hearing a little bit of a pattern here.

In the past season, I asked about what have I learned from the season that I want to take with me?

What am I learning about myself in this most recent season?

And coming into a new season, I always ask about learning as well.

So I do think that whenever we go through periods of transition, there is a massive opportunity for learning about ourselves, about the world around us, about how we interact with other people, about what kind of works best for us in different kinds of situations and scenarios.

And so I'm always kind of interested in asking myself, what do I most want to learn from something that I'm coming into?

And that also helps me to set kind of reasonable expectations for myself of what a new season might hold for me.

The next question after that is who do I most need to be in this upcoming season?

So whether the season that is coming up feels hard and you know it's going to be kind of testing you or whether it's just unknown or it feels new, you might think to yourself, am I someone who needs to remain open and curious in this upcoming season?

Am I someone who needs to have courage or bravery in this upcoming season?

Am I someone who needs to be there for other people in this upcoming season?

So thinking about who you need to be can help you to start to get into the mindset or kind of the frame of mind of what that might look like for you to embody that as you're coming into the new season.

And then the last question is what support might I need in this upcoming season?

So recognizing that you may need to be a particular kind of way, but also that you can ask for support in order to do that effectively.

So it may be that you need additional support from friends, family, or colleagues as you're coming into an upcoming season, or you might want to like have other kinds of supports.

Maybe you want to outsource something to someone else or delegate something.

Maybe you're looking for support in terms of new knowledge that you want to gain in an upcoming season and you're asking for someone else to help you to gain that knowledge.

So there's a lot of different ways to think about what support might look like, but asking kind of what are you going to need help with as you're coming into this upcoming season can be really important.

So as you're thinking through all these different kinds of questions, of course, I'm curious if there are other questions that you might ask or other questions you've asked yourself in the past as you've transitioned into upcoming seasons.

And as always, I love to hear if there's maybe a new season that you are preparing for and what that looks like for you.

You can always email me at hello@drkatylinder.com to tell me kind of what's going on and what that might look like for you.

And if you have found these questions to be helpful or if there's other questions that you're asking or that are on your mind, I always love to hear from you.

Thanks so much for listening.

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Thanks for watching.

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