You're listening to You've Got This, episode 402.

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 talk about how Thursdays can be magical days to start new habits.

Now, I know we often wait for milestone days like Mondays or the first day of the month or the first day of a new year to start a new habit or routine.

But I want to try and convince you that Thursday is the best day to reset and dive back into something that you've been meaning to do or something that you've been wanting to try.

And I was thinking about this because I do think we give ourselves way too much pressure when we try to start up a new habit or restart something that we've done before.

It gets built up in our minds and all of a sudden we psych ourselves out of doing it.

And I certainly fall into this trap where I want it to be kind of special when I'm launching into this new thing.

And this can be also a very all or nothing kind of mindset.

So if I don't start something on the first of the month, well, I might as well just wait until the first of the next month to get started.

And I think sometimes we have to just ask ourselves the question of why aren't we just starting?

Why are we kind of procrastinating until we get to a certain kind of special day or the beginning of a month or a new year?

Now I can talk about this very specifically because I was thinking about this Run/Walk plan that I've been doing.

And this is something that I podcasted about a while back.

I'll go ahead and post it in the show notes if you want to see and download the PDF of the exact Run/Walk plan that I'm doing.

But I had thought about like, oh, this would be like a great goal for me to do in 2025.

And this was like back in even like August.

And I looked at the rest of the year.

It's a 16 week plan.

It's four months.

And I thought, why am I not just starting it now?

Like now, of course, you can hear me even saying, oh, I only have four months left.

What a perfect fit for the Run/Walk plan.

Like I'm already kind of doing that like special timing thing.

But I didn't want to wait.

And I thought, you know, why not?

Why not just do this now instead of waiting until 2025?

And as I record this, I'm about six weeks in to the plan.

I'm really enjoying it.

It's been really fun.

So it was one of those things where it's it's you always want to ask the question of what are you waiting for?

And are you just using that as kind of a tool to procrastinate?

Because I certainly have done that in the past.

Now the nice thing about a Thursday is that it's very unassuming.

It's just a normal day.

It's not Monday.

So there's no pressure there.

Tuesday can feel like Monday's hangover.

So that doesn't always work well in terms of when you're trying to start something new.

Wednesday is hump day, middle of the week.

So it's already a little bit special because you're kind of getting over that hump of the beginning of the week and moving into the latter half.

And then Friday is always amazing because it's the last day before the weekend.

So it already has kind of the special place in our minds.

So I think that Thursday becomes like the most boring weekday to get back started with a habit, a routine or a reset.

Now you might be thinking like, why wouldn't you do this on a weekend?

Well, I have a rationale for that.

I think the other thing about Thursdays is it gives you a couple of days of a normal weekday schedule before you shift into your weekend schedule, which might need some kinds of adjustments depending on the habit or routine you're trying to build in.

And so within a four to five day window, you are kind of like stress testing the new habit or routine on both weekdays and weekend days.

And you can make any adjustments that you might need to make.

So it gives you kind of that hybrid approach of having like a week, a weekday and a weekend that you can try this out.

Now I have spoken before about how February can be the new January if you need a little more time to ease into a new year.

And I think that treating Thursdays as habit starting days is kind of like the same thing.

It allows you to start a new routine without the added pressure of this perfectionism of aligning it with a new week or month.

You're just kind of like accidentally trying it out.

And I feel like that's something that sometimes we need that.

We need that kind of unassuming approach when we're trying out something that maybe feels a little bit hard or maybe feels like something that we're not quite ready to do.

And Thursday just becomes the perfect day for that.

Now the other thing I like about starting new things on Thursdays is that it's often the time of the week where I'm feeling pretty low energy.

And you might be asking like, well, why would you want to start on a day where you're feeling low energy?

And there's a twofold approach here.

One is it allows me to have a boost of trying something new.

So that might actually give me energy because I'm adding something new into my schedule.

But it also kind of helps me to not try something that is not going to be manageable when I'm tired.

So it's kind of a win-win all around because if I try something and I have like the boost of energy of like a new month or a new year or even a new week, I might have like a false sense of what I can actually do with my energy versus a Thursday where it's like, well, this is like the middle of the week.

You've had a lot going on.

And you're probably not the most energetic that you've ever felt on a Thursday.

And it kind of helps to temper anything that you might decide to bring in to your schedule and make sure it's going to be manageable, reasonable, and probably more sustainable in your schedule.

So here are just some things that might be relatively easy to launch on a Thursday, just so you can kind of get a sense of the kinds of things that I'm talking about with these new habits and routines.

So starting to take like a lunchtime walk, if that's something that you've been wanting to do, getting up earlier in the morning or even going to bed earlier at night might potentially be something you could start.

Adding in a morning or evening workout routine, trying something that you've been nervous about.

Now for me, this was like when I started strength training more because I just don't really enjoy it.

And I've gotten to a place where I enjoy it more than I did.

But this is something that if you've been kind of like building something up in your mind, you can start it on a Thursday.

You might try adding a new element into your diet, like adding in more veggies or protein smoothies, which is something I recently did.

I've been making protein smoothies in the morning, sometimes even for dinner.

And it's a really nice way to get more protein into my diet through protein powder.

You could also try carving out more time for reading or like another hobby that you enjoy that you've been trying to build back in your schedule.

Or you could maybe add in a new self care habit, like a weekly face mask or an at home manicure or something along those lines.

I know that when I tend to build up the starting point of a new habit or routine, I find that I can just really psych myself out of getting started.

And then it just builds up and builds up and builds up in my mind as something that feels really hard for me to do.

And I kind of talk myself out of it.

And so I think that this kind of accidentally starting something on a Thursday and seeing how it goes, the pressure lessens and you can just see what you think about the thing that you're starting.

So I would love to hear what you think of this theory and what you might try to begin on a Thursday.

You can always email me at hello@drkatylinder.com to share the latest habit or routine you're working on.

And if there are other tips and tricks you have to get started aside from the magic of a Thursday, I'd love to hear that as well.

Thanks so much for listening.

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