

Bonni: [00:00:00] In Episode 5 of Teaching in Higher Ed- what this Trader Joe's sign teaches us about professional development.

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Bonni: [00:00:20] Welcome to this episode of Teaching in Higher Ed. This is the space where we explore the art and science of being more effective at facilitating learning. We also share ways to increase our personal productivity approaches so we can have more peace in our lives and be even more present for our students.

Bonni: [00:00:44] This is Bonni Stachowiak. And once again I am joined by Dave Stachowiak.

Dave: [00:00:49] I'm glad to be back. Hello.

Bonni: [00:00:51] And for listeners - which we hope all of you our future listeners. I do plan on having some guests [besides Dave]. In fact I have my first guest semi-booked.

Bonni: [00:00:59] So Dave we have loved having you here and plan on continuing to regularly have you because you're good.

Dave: [00:01:05] I'm not kidding permanently booted?

Bonni: [00:01:07] No you're not getting permanently booted.

Dave: [00:01:09] So glad to hear that.

Bonni: [00:01:10] And if anyone listening has ideas for suggestions for guests or would like to be a guest yourself. Would love to hear from you. Today we are

talking about what this Trader Joe's sign teaches us about professional development.

Bonni: [00:01:24] And so we should start by talking about this sign. So Dave and I we don't normally grocery shop together usually Dave goes on his own with our son Luke and Hannah and I stay home and relax. But this time I was with you. I don't remember why but it's not important.

Dave: [00:01:40] We were all there together at Trader Joe's at the best place spot in Trader Joe's which is the sample station.

Bonni: [00:01:48] And at the samples station I noticed they have what appears to be a drink dispenser of some type although some type although I'm not entirely positive that's what it is but it looks like a drink... In fact I'm seeing in the picture - behind the drink dispenser - drink.

Bonni: [00:02:04] So I'm I'm starting to really feel a lot even more confident. This is a drink dispenser and the sign on it says please - And then this next part is all in caps. DO NOT USE. And then we go back to regular capitalization... "this Machine if you have not been trained see Mike H. Alexis, Todd or Carl for training" followed by the ever important exclamation mark.

Dave: [00:02:32] So our advice on this show is just go find Mike or Carl or one of those guys and Alexis or Alexis to they'll set you up.

Bonni: [00:02:42] Yes.

Dave: [00:02:43] That's it. End of the show.

Bonni: [00:02:44] So I was thinking about parenting and in teaching in higher ed is one of the few things that there really isn't a lot of training for. In fact most of the time there's no mandatory in most institutions there's not mandatory training for new faculty members. And if there is some type of an orientation or a first year program a lot of that doesn't really address teaching.

Dave: [00:03:12] There is an assumption in higher education that if you have an advanced degree that you can effectively teach what it is that you know and while that is sometimes true the two don't necessarily correlate. And so the I suspect you are listening to the show because you want to get better at that and recognize that.

Dave: [00:03:37] And so being able to focus on getting better at the skill of teaching is an important one that we don't tend to spend a lot of time on in higher ed.

Bonni: [00:03:47] Yeah kind of depends on your institution and where they decide to place their resources and so there also can be an element to where we can get on our own way on this. We can start to make all kinds of excuses as to why we don't pursue more professional development of our own.

Bonni: [00:04:05] It might be professional development related to our own teaching the craft of teaching. Or it might be something around our discipline. So Dave and I are going to go through some different excuses that we can all make in our lives.

Bonni: [00:04:17] Hey we don't have enough time and resources in order to pursue further professional development. We're going to overcome those together. And also open up the floor and invite you to make suggestions to each other as well.

Dave: [00:04:31] Cool let's get started.

Bonni: [00:04:33] So the first thing that people tend to use as an excuse really for anything is there's not enough time.

Dave: [00:04:41] Yeah and I think that I know for sure I don't have enough time. I don't know about you Bonni but we have a household where both of us work full time. We have two children under the age of three and we live pretty busy lives personally and professionally. And if I on the face of it if I look and say OK do I really have time in my week to enhance my professional development.

Dave: [00:05:05] A lot of times the answer is no and and I can't really figure out where I would necessarily find more space for something like that unless I really really am intentional about something else that wouldn't happen.

Bonni: [00:05:19] There's also kind of this in our society today a glorification of busy. So when we talk about there not being enough time that's that's the perfect thing I kind of did this experiment a couple of summers ago where actually we some people knew this about our lives and others didn't but we were actually trying to get pregnant. It took Dave and I by seven years and many medical adventures along the way until we did.

Bonni: [00:05:44] But during those those summers I would really try to cultivate a time that wasn't stressful. I teach at a traditional year college so it's a nine month contract typically that we're on. And I started in August and go until May and so I had those months where there wasn't a lot on the calendar necessary that feels like it at the time.

Bonni: [00:06:07] But I kind of would experiment with people say oh you're so busy and I should have really that much going on and it is funny how people just really want us all to be. We're supposed to be busy. We're supposed to have a lot going on it's not socially acceptable to say hey I'm taking this season for relaxing a bit.

Bonni: [00:06:24] So it was an interesting experiment. So when we don't have enough time for professional development here are a couple of suggestions because a lot of us do have a lot on their plate.

Bonni: [00:06:31] So one is take that time when you're in the car already driving. And so unless you walk to your institution which in fact even if you still walk to your institution you can use these resources.

Bonni: [00:06:44] And one is podcast's and Dave and I both love listening to podcasts. In fact I will link to in the show notes a link to my favorite podcasts that I like to listen to I have those up on the earlier blog post I linked to those.

Bonni: [00:06:57] What a wonderful thing to be able to be feeding your mind not just with content specific things I do listen to NPR's APM American Public Media's Marketplace is a great resource for people that teach in business or in marketing.

Bonni: [00:07:14] And it's I mean it's phenomenal but it isn't even to me necessarily about the subject matter but sometimes the way stories are tell told. I also love this American Life with Ira Glass And they it's just sometimes the way they'll craft a story will really inspire me something about my teaching.

Dave: [00:07:35] I think podcasts are really a great way to utilize some of that downtime that you might be commuting or even working out the kinds of things that are already part of our week and utilize that for some a little bit of professional development or even just some entertainment time because you know you and I are both podcast producers so we we probably listen to podcasts more often than the average person.

Dave: [00:08:01] But the great thing is is that podcasts are becoming more and more popular. There are so many choices out there now on iTunes and Stitcher and tons of great shows that you can really learn a lot from while you're doing other things in your life that you would all that would be kind of down time anyway.

Bonni: [00:08:20] And speaking of downtime and doing kind of the same thing as podcasts but a little bit different. Dave you've been doing some listening to audio books.

Dave: [00:08:28] I have and I've really gone back and forth with audio books on and you know this because I struggle with audio books and that I do really like to listen versus read. I find it easier to make time to listen but I also find it harder to take notes and I really like to have some record of what I'm listening to.

Dave: [00:08:47] But I've found that I was not doing any reading at all because with young kids at home and all that it just I just was having a really hard time making time to read. But it turns out that there's always launcher to be done in baby formula to be made and it has to be done after the kids go to bed.

Dave: [00:09:04] And that time is time that I'm kind of I see that as downtime like I'm doing other things that require my attention but I'm not in a surly mentally involved in them.

Dave: [00:09:15] So I've now use that time for listening to audio books and I got audible.com subscription and I get one book a month and I'm actually doing better than that I'm oftentimes purchasing a second book in the month because I'm getting through a book every two to three weeks.

Dave: [00:09:30] And I found that that has really helped me to generate new ideas writing a blog ideas that I've used in our business and consulting work has really really been helpful for the last few months since I've been doing that.

Dave: [00:09:44] And I just take notes like if there's something that I find of significance I've just disciplined myself to stop for a second and jot down a note on my iPhone and then later have to worry about the highlighting the things I would normally do if I was reading a book on paper or a digital version.

Bonni: [00:09:57] And in the last say six months or actually maybe ever. What's the when audio book that really has stood out to you. Or a an audio book that's really stood out to you as wow that was just a great thing to listen to.

Dave: [00:10:09] I really liked Adam Grant's book Give and Take. Adam is a professor at Wharton and it's a book about the three different types of people in the world giver's, the matchers and takers. Fascinating book on human behavior and how we all make choices on how we give to others and sometimes get taken advantage of in those choices and how people are successful based on the choices they make around that.

Dave: [00:10:34] And then I'm reading a book right now called Essentialism by Greg Mckeown I think is how to say his last name. Fascinating book too. Just what to focus on what's most important in your life and in your work.

Dave: [00:10:45] And I do think that there are really strong while they're not higher ed books per se. They're about people and success and focus. And so a tremendous application to faculty at both of those books and I think both them would be of real value to people.

Bonni: [00:11:03] And one last one around that not enough time excuse we might make is we always have time we're awaiting whether it's waiting for a doctor's appointment or a dentist appointment.

Bonni: [00:11:13] And there's a great service called Pocket which is among the many. Read it later services so when you're going through reading different articles and maybe you're on the web or you're on some kind of an app you can just send it to these services and what they do is they make it formatted to be much more readable.

Bonni: [00:11:34] So it looks cleaner and is more. Easy on the eyes to read and you can tag them if you want to categorize them in some ways. I tend to keep everything over and delicious which I've talked about in previous episodes but I have a lot of articles that are stored up there in pocket which if I'm around waiting somewhere is just like a reading list of really great interesting articles that aren't very time based.

Bonni: [00:12:01] Because I'm not great about always checking up on pocket. So it is I do tend to send stories there that aren't really relevant we just had a couple of Supreme Court cases come down this past week and I wouldn't send necessarily articles there about those two cases because I want to read those things more currently and it kind of goes out of my mind. But things that are good reads that will be good reads.

Bonni: [00:12:25] Even a year from now is a great use for Pocket.

Dave: [00:12:28] And insta papers. The other service that's kind of the big player in that space too so Pocket and Instapaper great for that kind of that kind of related consumption on the go.

Bonni: [00:12:39] So another excuse we can make is it's just too hard to keep up with it all. Dave talked about us having a couple of young children here and then there's also just the fact that things are happening so quickly in all of our or her fields.

Bonni: [00:12:52] How do you ever keep up with the doll and maybe you keep up with your field pretty well. But it makes it difficult then just to keep up with other stuff in life because you are so good about keeping up in your particular discipline.

Bonni: [00:13:04] And so a couple of things that we can do around this is to subscribe to different news sources that we do want to keep up with with a service called Feedly that's Feedly which will be in the show notes you can go check out that service and what it does is it lets us go to specific news sources.

Bonni: [00:13:27] For example I really got into that guy who is a famous statistician. The most famous statistician that I know of Nate Silver he was famous for being really good about predicting some sports outcomes and then to political outcomes. And now he's on a quest to find the nation's greatest burrito.

Bonni: [00:13:48] So he I mean he's got all kinds of research that's very important. I'm sure.

Dave: [00:13:52] Sports, politics, and burritos.

Bonni: [00:13:54] And so Nate Silver started his own blog and I don't have any interest in sports at all whatsoever so I didn't subscribe to that part of his feed. These are called by the way RSS feed's Really Simple Syndication. And so I didn't subscribe to that part on Feedly instead.

Bonni: [00:14:12] I subscribed to his political feed and then there's one that's kind of life in general I don't remember exactly what he calls it but Feedly lets us take these different news sources and subscribe to them so we can keep up on things. And then you mark things as read and they disappear.

Bonni: [00:14:28] And when news stuff comes out on those feeds it shows up as new and again you can go through that process. Now if it gets overwhelming and you go there one day and there's thousands of articles you can mark all as red and zero everything out and start fresh. But it's just a way to have a funnel into all these different news sources that you might be interested in.

Dave: [00:14:50] It's kind of thinking about having things show up in your physical inbox like a magazine subscription versus having to go out on the web and see what's new on a site.

Dave: [00:14:59] So if you're subscribed on something like Feedly every time they post something new that's in that category or that subscription you've posted it'll show right up in your reader on Feedly and there's lots of other services that connect with it. So it's a great way to keep up on things.

Dave: [00:15:13] And the one piece of advice I'd have for that Bonni is not to go crazy on subscribing to tons of things because you'll end up not reading that I try to keep my subscriptions pretty like down to 15 or 20 at the most. And that way I know all keep up with it and read the things that do come in.

Bonni: [00:15:28] And Twitter is kind of like that too except that it's a whole entire world is called a stream instead of a feed. It's called a stream. And so I think about that as if you were to go sit by a stream.

Bonni: [00:15:44] You know that water has already passed you by and it's gone and you are going to be able to see the same exact water but you can kind of dip your toe into the stream right then and see what's happening right now. So for me Twitter I follow a try to keep it under 200.

Bonni: [00:16:00] Ideally it would be even closer to something like 30 if I actually wanted to keep up. But the fact of the matter is you just know you can't keep up. So you go and see what's happening right now. And I have found it incredible for the people that I do follow on that service. Just the value that's out there.

Bonni: [00:16:19] I had I recently I mentioned this just finished off teaching a doctoral class and in a lot of these students were very resistant to technology and it was fascinating to see when we ended there was not a person in the cohort who didn't say they love Twitter.

Bonni: [00:16:37] So it's funny because what is what is Twitter while you're going to get out of Twitter.

Bonni: [00:16:43] How however good you are cultivating who it is you want to follow so if you've tried it before and you've thought Oh this just isn't for me it might be because you'd rather know what you've missed since the last time you came there.

Bonni: [00:16:56] And that's why Feedly might be a better service for you but it also might be that you just weren't following the right people because really there are tremendous professional development opportunities out there. Most of it has to do with who you have followed so you can see the kinds of links they're posting to their own blogs or different services.

Bonni: [00:17:15] But there also sometimes our live chats for educators as well and so you'll you'll have what's called the hash tag where you put a pound sign followed by some or a word or some letters at conferences a lot of times they'll do this too. That's called the back channel where there's a conversation with more ideas brimming around whatever's happening in that particular event.

Bonni: [00:17:36] So definitely check out Twitter for your professional development too.

Dave: [00:17:39] And one comment on Twitter and I've tried using Twitter a bunch of different ways over the years and I think that if you're going to use Twitter I would start with following some real people you respect in your field or people you're really interested in versus following a bunch of organizations.

Dave: [00:17:55] If you're gonna follow organizations I think RSS the Feedly kind of thing is a better way to do that or because you'll get articles and all that. But I find that Twitter I tend to follow people I find the people I met trusted in and I just curious of what they're talking about.

Dave: [00:18:11] Because if you follow just an organization they're just going to post everything that they post. People I find tend to talk more about what's really interesting that's going on on the internet what people are passing around as far as articles and blogs and all that. And I find that I enjoy Twitter a lot more than I used to be.

Bonni: [00:18:27] That and one of the things I'll do is I'll post some of the lists that I've created on Twitter. You can subscribe to other people's lists. And so I have a

list called teaching in higher ed and those are people who I consider to be experts about the field of teaching in higher ed or who do something around that topic that might be good for this show for example.

Bonni: [00:18:49] So you could subscribe to that list. I have writers from the Chronicle that I chronicle of higher education that I subscribe to and there's a few others that I'll post up there too that might be of interest to you if you just wanted a place to get started.

Bonni: [00:19:03] Now list to subscribe to and they're not going to show up if you subscribe to one of my lists. All those people aren't going to show up and those main lists of people are following.

Bonni: [00:19:12] But you can go just check it out and see what's going on just within that one realm. So it's kind of a nice way to dip your toe in somebody else's dream but not have to commit to it being showing up in your main center stage.

Bonni: [00:19:25] So the next excuse that some of us might make is that my discipline is so unique. A lot of the resources that we've talked about so far maybe their general actually think they're not. But if you're still not convinced and you still really are yearning for something specific to your discipline then you might be interested in some of the resources available in some open courseware fronts including Coursera.

Bonni: [00:19:48] Coursera is one that offers open courses There's that belief that we should be extending those educational opportunities out so you could check out courses there. And also Dave you mentioned EdEx as another place we might go and find resources.

Dave: [00:20:04] It's another one of the the clearing houses sets out that a clearinghouse may be the wrong word but for the massive massive open online courses is a the right might say no right. And so there are a number of these associations now Coursera and EdEx are probably the two biggest ones that I know of.

Dave: [00:20:23] And I think EdEx is associated with MIT should probably have looked that up before. There's a couple of schools that have gotten together to do that. But what it is essentially is it's access to these online open online courses and books that allow you to enroll and attend lectures from the top faculty at

some of the top institutions and attend courses and you could get as involved or uninvolved as you want to.

Dave: [00:20:48] But it opens up a lot of opportunities for knowledge. I think that's one of the great things about the Internet is that we all have access to knowledge and many of them if not most of them are free still.

Dave: [00:20:59] And because universities are doing research on using this online technology of course so it's it's a great resource if you're looking for something really specific around either your field or maybe a related field to just build your own skill set on.

Bonni: [00:21:16] Another excuse is nothing I've tried before has worked.

Bonni: [00:21:20] And you might be in that place where you think I am trying to get better at teaching. I'm still not quite where I want to be and I'm just frustrated with feeling like a plateau or some kind of a barrier there.

Bonni: [00:21:32] Consider filming or recording yourself teaching to me. Early early in my teaching long before teaching in higher ed but just teaching in general there was nothing as powerful as hearing me teach.

Bonni: [00:21:47] I used to teach early on in my career. I did computer training and their classrooms they had built in microphones. I laugh because this would certainly not be really looked upon favorably by most faculty today that would not fly.

Bonni: [00:22:00] But this was a privately held company that could do this and so they would record audio recorder classes and then give us the way back when. Give us the cassette tapes for us to take home and be able to listen to.

Bonni: [00:22:14] And it transformed my teaching completely to be able to hear some of the filler word phrases I would use and some of the patterns I had that just were not effective and also to reinforce that good too. It is miserable especially back then it was absolutely miserable listening to myself.

Bonni: [00:22:34] Oh it was so difficult to do but boy the learning that came from it priceless so I would say. And of course if you are going to record in a classroom out of respect for your students you do want to let them know that you're doing that you don't necessarily have to tell them why you're doing it in the sense of I don't think I'm good at teaching now.

Bonni: [00:22:54] So yeah probably not the way to go.

Bonni: [00:22:57] But for all of us to be modeling that for our students many of us ask our students to do the same for us so we would want to be setting that good example for them and tell them that it's being recorded. But it could be a wonderful learning experience too.

Dave: [00:23:11] One question you mentioned to transform your transformed your teaching. What's one thing that was different once you started listening to yourself on tape that you changed.

Bonni: [00:23:21] I could hear myself saying the same phrases repetitively and so at the time it was right now. Right now we're going to go ahead and do this. Let's go ahead right now and do this. And so it was miserable to hear that phrase being repeated.

Bonni: [00:23:33] Some people say the ums, ohs, OKs "so"s. So those filler words. But for me I had been trained to not to say "umm" but a lot of times were trained but then it can get replaced by something else until we learn to replace it.

Bonni: [00:23:49] By the way with silence is really that when you're truly cured because well where those are coming out are what to do with that silence and voice silence is golden. So just let the silence be there but I had to I had replaced the with something else. Interesting.

Bonni: [00:24:05] So the next excuse my university doesn't dedicate the resources for professional development and that's a reality for a lot of us of course and as there has been some financial difficulties with different institutions. Boy it really becomes a question in which research which institution do you know that has plenty of resources for everyone in every program that that's out there.

Bonni: [00:24:25] So as resources get tight or get prioritized sometimes professional development doesn't come at the top of the list. So in those cases there there are many resources out there including faculty development centers at other universities.

Bonni: [00:24:40] And I'll just mention one and I'll link to this in the show notes. USC has a fabulous I believe its Center for Teaching and Learning but I'll link to it. And so there's so much inspiration there broadly speaking and lots of resources but

they have a whole video series too they've had some phenomenal speakers come through their institution.

Bonni: [00:25:01] So I'll link to those and they would be great for people that are looking to improve their teaching. And hey if you don't have something at your institution formally speaking and maybe you're not finding what you're looking at other institutions start something up grassroots and at the institution where I teach we we didn't have really a lot of attention happening around educational technologies.

Bonni: [00:25:22] And as you can tell by listening to this show I'm really hungry for learning about that all the time and so we just started our own group and we actually were it was so popular that we started two groups.

Bonni: [00:25:34] And so twice are two different groups we're meeting once a month when we get together and we do a quick round robin and say what's one cool edtech tool that you're finding or what's a frustration or what's kind of a dream you wish you could do with that tech that you found a good tool for yet.

Bonni: [00:25:50] And then we'd have one extended demo every time worst or someone would share something they were doing around that so that's another great one to call. This is the time in the show where we each share some kind of an Ed Tech find. And so Dave why don't you go ahead and start with us.

Dave: [00:26:06] I would love to. I have been using. I have an iPad and I've been using a stylus called the Jot Pro stylus so before I tell you about it I should mention I tried a stylus back when iPads first came out on four or five years ago.

Dave: [00:26:22] And I really found that it at the time the technology just wasn't there for that that the stylus I tried at the time to really be useful. Things have really changed in the last few years especially the last year too and the styles I would that be the floor correct plural.

Bonni: [00:26:37] I have no idea.

Dave: [00:26:38] Someone who's an English professor can write it and tell us the stylize have gotten better much much better. And the job Pro's stylus well not inexpensive really does aid a lot. So you can use it on a whole bunch of apps. It really is.

Dave: [00:26:53] It's touch sensitive so you can make bigger stronger marks are less strong marks to to how you push on and it links with Bluetooth and it really also reduces or almost completely eliminates the marks you get if you're you know your wrist is on the the device and so there's a number of apps that work with it.

Dave: [00:27:09] And I have found when I do want to write or mark up a document I know you've used some of this for grading already. I haven't done it for grading yet but just when I want to hand write something but I need to send it digitally for whatever reason. It is fabulous for being able to do that. And so I'd encourage folks to check it out.

Dave: [00:27:27] Jot Pro stylus.

Bonni: [00:27:29] And if you do get a stylus and you would like an Ed Tech tool to go along with it iAnnotate is a great tool that will allow you to annotate PDF or word documents or lots of other kinds of files and you could open them up and write.

Bonni: [00:27:46] You can highlight on it all different kinds of highlighters you can write on it like you were writing on a page and the stylus is a great accompaniment to that.

Bonni: [00:27:55] And what I love is you can add audio notes too and it'll sync through different services. I sent it back to my Dropbox and then send the students the link to the file on the Dropbox and they're able to download it and see my feedback and hear my feedback too.

Dave: [00:28:13] Speaking of Ed Tech tools you have something that is hot off the presses that people could access for information on technology. As far as resources.

Bonni: [00:28:23] Yes I'm looking for people to sign up for the Teaching in Higher Ed weekly update. And if you go to our Web site teachinginhighered.com/subscribe. You can sign up for that weekly update. And by doing that you'll receive a free ed tech essentials guide.

Dave: [00:28:42] And it is fabulous as far as resources and tools. We've just. Scratched the surface on some of those tools but there are some 19 tools in there that will really get you started on your educational technology journey. So and you also get the shots for every episode over e-mail once a week.

Bonni: [00:29:00] Yeah. Which I think is handy. I do that with your show Dave and I loves getting that in my inbox and being able to follow up on the links without having to remember to go back and. Find the show notes. But if you want to go to the show notes and leave comments that's at teachinginhighered.com/5 for today's episode.

Dave: [00:29:18] And again if you want to get that guy teachinginhighered.com/subscribe. And I guess we'll be back again next week or you'll be back maybe with a different guess.

Bonni: [00:29:28] You'll be back again next.

Dave: [00:29:29] Oh I'm back. I'm back again next week. See you then.

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