

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Hello, and welcome to You Got This!, a podcast about teaching, learning, and pivoting to digital for the whole TRU community. I'm your host, Brenna Clarke Gray, coordinator of educational technologies. This podcast is a project of your friends over at Learning Technology and Innovation. We're housed within Open Learning, but we support the whole campus community. I record this podcast in Tk'emlups te Secwepemc, within the unceded, traditional lands of Secwepemcúl'ecw, where I hope to learn and grow in community with all of you.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

And today's episode is... hm. It's about, oh, it's about looking for pleasure. I feel like I haven't done a very good job of that in the last little while. And oh it's starting to get me down. So I want to talk a little bit for some strategies to find something joyful in your teaching right now in this week, 11, this most November of Novembers and see if you can find it for yourself and for your students. So let's get into it.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Friends. I am bummed out. Can we, can we just say it? I'm super bummed out. I'm not going to be visiting my family for Christmas this year. And I'm in a new city where I don't know very many people. I certainly don't know people closely enough to, you know, bubble with, especially as we watch the numbers rise. I miss my family. I miss the kinds of Christmas traditions that have always really been important to me. I'm -- I don't know. I'm sad. I just am. I know I'm not alone. But I'm thinking about it a lot right now because I woke up the other morning and I was honestly like really glad I'm not teaching right now. I've been finding it exhausting to perform my okayness in lots of different professional circumstances. And I can, I can only think about what emotional and affective load teaching is adding to that for many of you right now. So you're in my heart deeply, those of you who are in the classroom right now.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

A colleague, a dear colleague from my last institution sent me the greatest thread on Twitter today. I'm going to link to it in the show notes and it made me laugh out loud, really hard for what feels like the first time in ages. And it was a thread where an instructor who teaches, I guess, presidential politics in the US -- which wow, right now must be a lot. And he had asked his students to submit memes as part of their final assessment. I think in response to their final exam questions, which I love. Now we've done some workshops on gifs and memes and I'll, I'll post a link to the resources. I'd done a workshop here with Brian. He and I gave one last gosh, when even was that? Last spring, I think just before everything shut down. And I did a version of it at SFU as well. Anyway, I'll share those links in the show notes, but I've, it's been a while since I've seen it in the wild and it's so pleasurable to see students take complex course material and turn it into something really, really genuinely funny -- what a pleasurable thing to see. And particularly in the context of a final assessment. I was really struck by how vital that sense of joy seems to be right now. And I wonder if that's something we can all spend a little more time looking for these days because wow. Does it ever feel necessary. I've been thinking about how to interject more joy into what I'm doing day to day and seeing this I'm just laughing at them still. They're very funny. Again, I will link to it in the show notes so you can see them, but this idea of like very traditional presidential political concepts being re-articulated as a Sponge Bob Square Pants meme is just deeply delightful. And, you know, actually like really cognitively complex, right? Students are taking higher order concepts and expressing them in extremely visual ways in keeping with their own vernacular and

discourse. Like it's kind of a brilliant assignment too, which is, I think part of why I'm taking so much pleasure in it at the moment.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

I guess what I'm saying is even in despair, there is space for joy. And I think that if we can find that for our students, if we can help them to get to that space I mean, it'll be good for them just because obviously it's good to feel joy and not despair, sometimes -- it's shocking news, I know -- but also because I think it can help them to really solidify their learning, to find something pleasurable about it in a space that doesn't feel, I don't think, wildly pleasurable these days. I'm curious about how you're doing and whether or not you're able to find moments of joy.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

On the show today. I have a chat with Chris Adam, our Dean of Students. And one thing that strikes me every time I talk to Chris -- and as you'll hear in our interview, Chris, and I go way back -- I'm always struck by how she can be very clear eyed about a problem that we're all facing, but also managed to be extremely hopeful. And something that comes out in our interview is the sense of hopefulness in our ability to find and represent our humanity in difficult circumstances. And I'm increasingly realizing the value in humour as part of that. Anyway, Chris says it all more and better and has some really thoughtful ideas about what students need right now, including some meaningful opportunities to solidify their learning in your classes because this learning has been different for them and figuring out a way forward for them is really important. So I'm going to let Chris say it and let's listen.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

So for today's chat, I am joined by Chris Adam. Chris, would you introduce yourself to folks and let them know if as if they don't know what you do on campus and where they might have run into you?

Chris Adam:

My name's Chris Adam, and I'm the Dean of Students at TRU. You might run into me in the coffee line at Starbucks or sitting in the bleachers at Wolf Pack games or various events, at least in the before times. Nowadays you see me online in a couple of different social media platforms.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Yeah, yeah. Remember when we used to see other human beings in person --good times.

Chris Adam:

I've really been reflecting on this the last couple of days, how much I miss seeing students. Oh yeah. It's, it's these are, these are hard jobs that many of my colleagues have. All of my colleagues have around campus. And sometimes just getting out into the hallways and running into students that you've seen struggle before, or those particular bright lights that are always smiling. It just sort of reminds you why you're doing this and who you're doing for, and man, I miss that.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Yeah, I agree completely. We used to have lots of students drop into workshops, you know, for whatever reason, they were also interested in podcasting, an instructor suggested they come along. That kind of happenstance connection with students doesn't really happen with the online workshops.

And I, I didn't realize how much I missed it until I was in a little meeting with some folks from the student union the other day. And I was like, oh right. You're why I'm here. And I haven't seen you in several months.

Chris Adam:

Yeah, yeah. In three dimensions.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

In three dimensions. Yes. Yeah. But even so like, I I'm, I mean, your contact with students I'm sure is, is no lower, like in that kind of way, but for us, it's really changed. We pretty much only interact with students by email now, which is not my favourite. So Chris, you and I go way back.

Chris Adam:

Aha. Sure do.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

I've known you longer than anybody else at TRU. Chris and I met at Carleton University and Chris is a big part of my origin story of why I went into teaching and, and my passion for, for students and for care-centred pedagogy and all that kind of stuff. So I'm delighted to have you here for that reason. In your role right now of Dean, as Dean of Students -- and I'm certainly not asking you to speak in the specific, but if you can speak in the general or the aggregate, how do you think students are doing right now?

Chris Adam:

Well, it's been really interesting, Brenna, cause I've actually only been back in the Dean of Students role for about three weeks.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Yeah. You're freshly back as of the beginning of November, right?

Chris Adam:

Yeah. So I had this four month gig as, as interim Dean of Law, which was particularly interesting for me. And I did actually get to interact with students quite a bit during that period through various meetings where students sit on particular committees and in other meetings that they invited us to, or we invited them to. And law students have particular challenges that they have to meet. Many of them aren't in Kamloops. Only about 10% of the students right now are living in the region. So they're dealing with, yeah. So they're dealing with different time zones and, and life circumstances and trying to connect with their classmates perhaps in downtown Toronto or Calgary or Vancouver. So that connectedness, I think when you ask how students are doing, I think particularly students who are into their second or third degree, they have certain expectations for what connectedness looks like in their program or on their campuses. And they're missing that. They may have been, I suspect many of them have grown up connected online with their friends and others. This is a different way of doing that. For other students, I haven't really had the opportunity to get a good sense of that last week. I went to the Consent Tea online, which was the first time that's ever happened. Yeah. And this week I'll go to Long Night Against Procrastination, which like required attendance for me every year, twice a year. I love going to it. So I'm really curious about that. What I appreciated about how Chelsea and Sarah ran the Consent Tea last

week was that they did have some breakout rooms and those rooms, I gather -- they didn't have us sort of administrative types go into those rooms -- but the peers, the peers that led those rooms reported that there was actually quite a bit of engagement in that around topics that were quite challenging, right consent. And they were dealing particularly with consent online consent, so consent in various dating apps and all the other sorts of things that, you know, 53 year old me cannot wrap her head around consent to send photos, all of that sort of thing. But the, they were willing to do that. So that's, I'm sort of not answering your question directly. I'm just really commenting on the things that have I've noticed and things that have kind of surprised me, delighted me a little bit to see that there's a willingness to extend oneself and be a little bit vulnerable in these environments for students to tell us what they need. We've had lots of examples, even in the three weeks I've been back in Student Development of students being very good at advocating for what they need, but those for the students we hear from and those students we see. And boy, I really I, I don't know what I don't know. Right. And I worry about the students who are lost or who are perhaps not safe in their homes, maybe not physically safe, but intellectually safe. I'm, I'm sitting in my bedroom right now. I have an office next door I could be sitting in. I'm not having to encounter really interesting, but challenging and perhaps transformative content sitting at my dining room table while my little brother runs around and my dad comes in the door, you know, those sorts of things. I don't, I wonder what that experience is like, and I hope we have some good ways along the way to learn more about that. I was listening to your interview with Nathan earlier today of whom I'm a big fan and, and really enjoy partnering with him and, and other colleagues at TRUSU. And I really I really heard his recommendation that we ask and then we ask again, and then we check back and ask again. And so I'm looking forward to doing more of that now that I'm back in the place. I feel like I belong.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Yeah. I've been thinking about you in that role and how much must be coming through Office of Student Development and, and all of those different spaces where students go when they, they know they need help. And also where they kind of end up when they're not so sure they need help, but somebody else thinks that they do, right. We've talked on the show to Pamela Fry and to Stephanie Tate about that end of things. I'm interested in what you were saying about particularly the law students or any students who are in a second or a third degree or credential and, and the way they bring expectations to the classroom space. And to the educational experience, because, you know, it's not really something I've thought about a lot. We think a lot about how to support the first year students who have this very strange first year experience where they're not really having the same kinds of social connections that they would have. And we've thought a lot about how to structure the online course space to encourage more of that. But I hadn't really thought about the cognitive task of sort of even just thinking that you knew how to learn and having some established, you know, competency in learning and then turning around and having to learn how to learn in this entirely new way. And the, and the added complexities of that.

Chris Adam:

Yeah. I spoke to the law students about that during their orientation, because I wanted, I wanted to work from a strength-based approach. And in fact, we've all been figuring out how to learn ever since, you know, we set ourselves onto this earth. We have figured out how to learn in kindergarten and how to share and all those things and then how to move into a high school or a middle school environment and adjust the ways that we sit in classrooms and move from room to room. Maybe for the first time. Many students did this as their families moved around the country or around the globe learning second languages and balancing, or third or fourth languages, balancing work and athletics, like we've

constantly been recalibrating our learning -- moving into university for sure, whether it involves moving out of your your home or continuing to negotiate a different relationship with your parents -- which is what's going on in my house right now. And so I actually think that there's, there's a good opportunity to remind students that they've got this to to use a phrase you're familiar with -- because, because they've had it before and and rather than seeing it as a loss or some yeah, something to grieve, as an opportunity because I don't that we'll go back to operating in the same way, not necessarily in terms of the academic environment that we'll go back in some ways and not in others, but workplaces will look different in the future too. And so being reflective and, and aware of the ways in which you're figuring things out and you're adjusting may serve students really well.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

It's a bit of a crash course in being flexible and managing expectations, right. Which is a good lifelong skill. And one of the things we've been talking about a lot on the show lately, particularly last week, talking about interteaching with Catherine Ortner and with Crystal Huscroft is this idea of letting students have enough information about their education to really make conscious decisions about preferences and to learn in the best way. So, you know, we were just talking about how students sometimes resist, say, a flipped classroom approach, but presenting them with some information about why you're making that choice and what it might offer them is really empowering. Some of the situations students are in, depending on their classroom situation may feel a bit less intentional than that. But I do think there is this larger opportunity to yeah. To, to practice that flexibility that we all need and will continue to need going forward.

Chris Adam:

Yeah. I don't think we've really had a really good idea of what, how flexible we really were. We really are. Until all of this for -- you know, others might know I was on leave when all of this happened. And so my adjustment in March was really like, instead of reading in one place, I'm reading in another place and and doing my, the online courses that I was doing anyway from a different location, but I'd had a conversation with my colleague Shawn Reed, who's the chair of Career and Experiential Learning last... Almost exactly right now, last November, we were at a conference on the future of the workforce, but there was a great panel at the very end talking about all these future possibilities for how we'll do work. And we kind of looked at each other and said, like, do you think your office, which is in, in normal circumstances, very crowded, not enough office spaces for co-op coordinators and other professionals to have private spaces to work with students. And that sort of thing. I said, do you think of possible to like, look at a hoteling arrangement where people are working at home sometimes, and we couldn't really figure out how it would work. We were using a different mindset, I think, you know, in terms of what we thought work looked like and how we thought interactions with students had to take place and just couldn't do it. And then all of a sudden -- you know, well, not me, I wasn't there in March, but you know, within a week or two, all of those people were doing exactly that. They were figuring out how to work from home. They had adjusted their expectations for how they would interact with students and actually realized that they could still accomplish many of the same aims and that they had opportunities that hadn't even anticipated before.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Yeah, for me, the big surprise has been -- and it sounds, it sounds completely foolish to say it out loud now, but I'm genuinely surprised at how well virtual workshops have worked, which is silly because they're workshops primarily about technology. And it's really nice to be able to demonstrate the technology and know that people can be in a different browser tab playing around with it themselves.

But previously, you know, we would run workshops and we'd, we try to stream in, for example, folks from Williams Lake. And it was never a very satisfying experience for those folks because it was -- we were trying to do both at the same time, as I understand some universities are using in the States that model. And I just can't imagine it because that split focus is really hard to do. And, you know, I've said to Brian on more than one occasion, like, I, it will be rare that I will think we need to go back to a face-to-face workshop after this. There are some things, you know, reading circles and things are nice to do in-person maybe in ESTR's market or at Common Ground or something where you, we can be a little bit more kind of casual and at ease, but when it comes to the work that we do, it's a lot easier often to do in this format. And I would never have imagined it as a possibility -- like workshops are just things we do in person. Right. So that aspect of it has been really interesting for me to see how even in a unit that is obviously so technologically-forward as ours we didn't realize what the possibilities necessarily were for our work to move into this space.

Chris Adam:

Yeah. I mean, all in terms of the openness and that sort of thing, it's really interesting because all of a sudden we're actually able to attend workshops and lectures at other institutions too. You know, I see things come up in Twitter and I'm going to, I'm going to a lecture on racism in the workplace at UBCO tonight. And I don't have to drive to Kelowna for it. Right. You know, I registered as a member of the community. It's, it's a, you know, a wide circle, but I think I count. And so the ability to bring people into -- expertise into your, your teams and to work with your colleagues is really quite different too, but it's, you know, back to maybe undergraduate learning. And I you know, you referred to our interactions back in what wasn't really the mullet age, but back in --

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Well, it's the Ottawa Valley. It's always a little bit the mullet age..

Chris Adam:

It's always a bit of mullet going on. Well, I'm from the Cariboo. So it's similar. And and no thinking about the time that I spent actually on a research project, observing you leading PASS sessions, I guess they were, supplemental learning sessions in a psychology course, and that ability to work with students on deepening their understanding of material, thinking more about how they learn and how they can study together. I'm really curious about how that's going -- again, having only been back shortly, I briefly, I haven't had an opportunity to check in with Elizabeth Templeman about what supplemental learning is looking like. I know they've moved it all online and into Moodle shells and that's fantastic. I, I'm curious about the constraints and the opportunities that have come out of that.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Supporting them has been a real joy for me, because for obvious reasons it's been bit of a flashback. Yeah. So it's been super fun. And, and Elizabeth is someone who you know, I often talk on the show about folks on campus who I find really inspiring, and Elizabeth is someone who will tell you straight up that she doesn't like technology. She doesn't want to be involved with the technology. She doesn't enjoy it. But she's really jumped in with both feet in order to support her, her leaders. And it's really interesting to hear, not everything is perfect, but you know, she'll often come to office hours or something and say like, this is the activity that we used to do. How do we do it now? And we can't always figure out an analog, but often we can. And that's been a really fun puzzle and challenge for me. I don't get to see what the workshops are actually looking like on the ground. I'm really curious to hear

what her sort of synopsis of the whole term has been. But it's, it is very interesting to see how the leaders and Elizabeth have really embraced, just like trying to make it work and, and trying to adapt those activities to this new context. I know they use, they use Big Blue Button extensively, but some of them are learning how to use H5P to make little interactives for students that they can then go through together in sessions and stuff. And it's been really nice.

Chris Adam:

That's fantastic. You know, so I've, I'm, I've just finished Stretch by Scott Sonenshein and I encountered him through episode of Brené Brown's podcast. And it's, for me, such a good way of describing what I see people doing right now, which is he, he contrasts stretchers with chasers and stretchers are people who work within constraints, limited resources, perhaps limitations in terms of personnel or time or money. And it drives them to creativity. And it actually becomes this you know, like you say, a puzzle for them to work out where chasers don't. They are continually stretched, not stretching, they're chasing: more dollars, more people, comparing themselves to other units at other institutions, say, that are better funded and so conclude that they can't do anything. And when you were, and I totally thought of that book, as you were describing what Elizabeth has been doing, you know, here's the situation we have, let's sort of brainstorm around it, come up with some possibilities. That's, what's really exciting to me about being back in Student Development right now, because I know that I work with a team of stretchers. Everybody is doing that right now, and they sort of seem to get off on it a bit. Right. Like they it's, it's, it's kind of, you know, gives you a bit of a jolt to know that you figured out how to do it. I think, I don't know if it's maybe I should ask you, I don't know if this is a personality trait, if it's around openness to new experience or what, but even, you know, you've, you started by talking about here, we are talking about Elizabeth in public, but you know, talking about how she was very clear that she was not super keen on the whole techno movement to, for supplemental learning, but she has that stretcher's mindset that has allowed that program to continue to thrive and grow.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Yes. And I'm seeing it all over campus. I, you know, there's such a range of comfort with the tools themselves, and it's always fun to explore new ground with folks who are really comfortable with the tools and look for new, new adaptations. But I am consistently most inspired by the folks who they start off their emails with: I'm really frustrated. And I don't like doing this and I'm stuck, but I want to accomplish this. Help. Right. Because those are the folks who are exactly it's exactly that it's, they're really out of their comfort zone. But the thing that connects all these people together is this desire to serve our students as best we can in this very strange circumstance. That's not ideal for anyone. Or no. I mean, it's ideal for some people, but that's not what we're used to. Right. And, and seeing that and seeing how the desire to serve students effectively really drives the vast majority of folks on this campus. It's, it's really nice. It's a really good feeling to see.

Chris Adam:

For sure. It is. I think what I've also noticed that's really interesting is I was just looking at a report on activity for our Accessibility Services office for the month of October. And we're serving almost the same number of students, but not in the same way, because so much of what is happening now already builds some of those accommodations in -- students that are in the private rooms, many times. They have a chair that works for them, or they're able to stand, or they're able to go to the washroom in the middle of class, like all these different types of accommodations. That's really interesting to see.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Yeah. I think for some folks, the ability to be in a space where you can set the structures that you need in place yourself, and you're not beholden to the university to provide the, the accommodations that you need, that can be like empowering in its own way, right. Because it's, it's your space. And oftentimes when it comes to accessibility, we don't, as, I mean, as a society, I don't mean us personally, but like as a society, we don't do a good job of empowering folks who need accommodations to feel like the space belongs to them. So when the space really does belong to them, my hope is that it's, it makes all the other stuff easier, even as, you know, the larger structure of the pandemic isn't of course, easy on anyone.

Chris Adam:

Yeah. And yeah, I think there's some really interesting ways in which we'll learn more about universal design for learning. I think the danger in some of what I already said about accommodations kind of being easier is that with the accommodation around exams and more time, when we think of a universal UDL approach towards exams, we often think of it in terms of the amount of time. And we don't really think about the actual design of the exam itself and the ways in which the questions are asked and how much time it actually takes to get what you need for a student to have demonstrated that they've met the learning outcomes.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Yes. Yeah. Just turning a three hour exam into a four and a half hour exam isn't necessarily helping. And also there's a massive, that's a massive ask. Like I think one thing that I think is happening is that folks are developing a certain amount of empathy around things like being asked to stare at a screen for hours on end now that we're all having to do it right. And whether or not that's a) ideal or b) even possible depending on the circumstances.

Chris Adam:

Yeah, exactly. But my husband teaches five sections of first year business. And so it's kind of interesting watching him respond to all of this as well. And a lot of you know, he pre-records his lecture. He launches them at the time scheduled for the course, but then students can go back in and get them when they need them, but he's open captioned them. And at one point the captioning wasn't synced properly with his speaking and he didn't think it was a big deal, I guess, I'm not sure, but the students, the students who commented on it and told him how much they use it. It was really interesting for him to see that the the number of students who relied on that, whether it's, you know, turning their speakers off cause they've had enough of things or to support their own language learning, in some cases, if they're using English as an additional language or they have an auditory limitation that is a barrier for their learning. So there's lots of different people using it that I don't think he even really realized until that little glitch came in his recording one day.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Yeah. Captions are something that really -- the importance of them got driven home to me when I had an infant at home, suddenly I watched everything with captions and if something didn't have captions, I was like, well, I guess I'm not watching it because I'm not waking up the baby for your show.

Chris Adam:

And sometimes you don't have headphones and you're on the bus and you can catch like a 10 minute clip of a, of a lecture and read it as you're going along. Yeah, yeah.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

We're getting to the end of time, we'll actually, we're over the time I told you we would use, but but it's always fun talking to you, Chris, and I miss seeing you on campus and meeting for coffee and stuff.

Chris Adam:

I miss seeing you too.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

I wonder if I told you we were going to talk about student care and we've kind of done that, but kind of talked about a bunch of other things too. I wonder if you have anything you'd like to leave listeners with when it comes to serving or accommodating or just helping students through this difficult time, particularly as we look towards final exams and we know stress levels are going to go way up for students.

Chris Adam:

I think it's important to think about what you need to accomplish with students over the next few weeks and that helping them to find some meaning in their learning at this point in the semester is really useful rather than it being more and more content covering more and more content, but for them to begin to make some connections to it, it's, it's not just the end of the semester in fall 2020, it's the ramping up of increasing infection rates. And so the degree of angst that we ourselves are feeling is certainly being experienced by our students as well. And particularly when we consider how disconnected many of them are from their friends and their family, or don't feel like if they have traveled here to go to school, that they can go home over the holidays. There's such an opportunity to check in with them and ask how they're doing and ask what they need, but also to see if, if there's something in your course content, I know that that'll vary from discipline to discipline, that provides some meaning for them during this period as well, that it's not just a time for them to tick off the box and be done the exam and done with the course, but to feel a real sense of accomplishment of having finished this particular course in this particular semester. I mean, my end, what I hope and anticipate as next semester as we hit April exams, that things are getting better, but this semester, as the semester went on, things got worse. And I think we really need to keep that in mind with our colleagues. And and, and the committee rooms that we sit in online and with our students in the classrooms that we sit in online and the services that we provide them and the, the sort of breaking point that some of us might, may find ourselves getting to. It's a real time for empathy and for compassion with ourselves and with our students.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Oh, that's a perfect place to, to end things. Chris, thank you so much. I'm really grateful for your time today. I know you're super busy but I'm, it's always just nice to talk about teaching and learning with you back where it all began. But also just, just great to hear your thoughts and particularly that last focus on giving students a real sense of accomplishment in what they've managed to achieve this semester. We've been talking a lot about introducing some reflective practice into final assessments this semester in particular not just for student benefit, but because we could all use some feedback on how we've done this semester. Right. And useful way to, to collect that as well. But yeah, and just compassion with ourselves and each other is really important. We're none of us, our best selves right now. So I'm trying to remember that all the time is, it's hard, it's hard to remember that all the time, but we have to. Yeah.

Chris Adam:

Yeah. It was the first time any of us have figured out how to teach and serve students in a pandemic. So we'll do it. We'll do it the best we can.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

Exactly. Even if you were a Moodle power user before, you've never been a Moodle power user in a pandemic, right. It's all a different context. And that, that makes a huge difference. So, so I appreciate you coming to chat with me today in our different contexts, but it was lovely to catch up.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

That's it for episode 12. Thank you to those of you who wrote in to point out that last week's episode was not in fact episode 10, but episode 11. I'm just glad you're listening. You can correct me all day long if it means that you're listening -- of You Got This! Sorry, episode 12 of You Got This! As always, if you want to write to us, you can email me bgray@tru.ca. And I'm also on Twitter [@brennacgray](https://twitter.com/brennacgray). In both cases, that's gray with an A. All of our show notes and transcripts are posted at yougotthis.trubox.ca. And of course you can always comment on individual episodes there.

Brenna Clarke Gray:

I'm going to leave you today with a tiny teaching tip. And it comes back to this idea of joy. Is there a way for you to interject a little more joy into your class this week, this week of all weeks, it's been grey and it's been damp and it's been cold and it's been November. And I can't really articulate how much I feel like this is the most Novembery November of my existence on this planet. So whether it's asking students to create memes or gifs, and we've got the tools you need to do that in the show notes or posting a funny video that's course-related, or I know there's a couple of instructors who are posting a weekly joke. I love that. Is there something you can do to give students a spark of joy and connect it to the subject matter in a way that helps them realize why you fell in love with your discipline in the first place? I think right now, we all need to remember why we do what we do and how it can be part of the pleasures of life and not just part of the burdens. We wouldn't have devoted our lives to our subject areas if they felt exclusively burdensome. Let's try to lift that burden off our students a little bit this week by giving them something to smile about. Because Lord knows I need it. I can't tell you -- when I saw the SpongeBob Squarepants memes about like the US constitution. I just, oh my goodness. What a joy. I hope you find something like that to share with your students this week. And until next time I'll look forward to chatting. I'll be looking for moments of joy. I hope you are too. Feel free to share them with me when you find it. I could use it. Take care and we'll talk soon. Bye-Bye.