

WorkWell

A Deloitte podcast series to empower your well-being



Improve your well-being with mindset shifts with Joey Hubbard

Jen Fisher: Hi WorkWell listeners. I'm really excited to share that my book *Work Better Together* is officially out. Conversations with WorkWell guests and feedback from listeners like you inspired this book. It's all about how to create a more human centered workplace and as we return to the office, for many of us, this book can help you move forward into post pandemic life with strategies and tools to strengthen your relationships and focus on your well-being. It's available now from your favorite book retailer.

Well-being has moved to the center of our conversation, which as a chief well-being officer, I can only say that it's a good thing, but knowing we're stressed or burned out is different from being able to do something about it. So where do we start? How do we take action to improve our well-being? As my guest today says, the place to start is in our mindset and how we think about ourselves and how we define success. And by changing our mindsets, we can literally rewire our brains to help set us up for greater well-being and for true success.

This is the WorkWell podcast series. Hi, I'm Jen Fisher, Chief Well-being Officer for Deloitte. And I'm so pleased to be with you today to talk about all things well-being. I'm here with Joey Hubbard. Joey is the Chief Training Officer at Thrive Global. For over 30 years, he's been coaching and facilitating motivational seminars to help both employees and organizations improve their lives, their careers, and their businesses all over the world.

Joey, welcome to the show.

Joey Hubbard: It's a pleasure to be with you, Jen.

Jen: I feel like this was a long time coming, so I'm excited to have this conversation with you. And I want to start, you're someone who's been all over the world working with top corporations, with leaders, with employees across the board. So how would you describe this state of well-being generally over the past two and half years and in the pandemic and what are the biggest points of pain that you're now hearing?

Joey: Well, I think there's a few. We know from research that looking at screens shuts down the prefrontal cortex, right? The smart decision-making element of our brain. And what have we had to do over the last two and half years, look at screens. Now, thank goodness, right, we were able to continue to function as a society, but it really pulled away our ability to focus, to be able to have sustained attention and we're seeing that a lot of people also have this experience of feeling like they weren't connected. A lot of people want to say the great resignation was more around the idea that I want to go

do the work I want to do and where I want to do it, and I think there's some value there. But, I think it was more the lack of interaction and connection that we had diversity of connection that we had with each other. And that with people as we get the boost of oxytocin, serotonin, dopamine, endorphins. That being pulled out of the way we operated and then having to operate through a screen for the last two and half years, I think caused people to feel disconnected, walk away from the jobs they did. Now we're seeing what I think is now more the great regret. And in this experience of mental health challenges because their brains weren't being energized, revived, sustained by connection. So, I think it has, it's had some significant effect and probably more so on young people than people who were in their adulthood, but still effect on all of us.

Jen: Yeah, it's interesting and what it makes me think of I read an article recently actually about how the amount of time that we have spent on screens the past two and half so or years has actually affected our ability to have meaningful relationships even when we are in person, right? Because we've become so accustomed to our screens that actually being in person feels uncomfortable. So can you talk a little bit about that because it feels like, I mean it's this these screens have made us feel disconnected. But then when we have the ability now and the opportunity to be in person, it's very uncomfortable for us.

Joey: It is. And some of that is what I call muscle building, right? So we, especially if you were an introvert, you lost the skill that you had developed of being uncomfortable and yet still reaching out and saying what you needed to say or starting a conversation or any of those things. You'd learned just through the course of your life how to do that, even though it wasn't your natural sort of style. During the pandemic, not having to do that for two and half years, you really see people who are more introverted struggle with now getting back into, "how do I engage with people in ways that are comfortable again?" And so, there's a piece there and then there's another piece, which is just addiction that comes from looking at devices. They're designed to do that. That's the intentionality behind them. Unfortunately, that addiction is not easy to put away and so if I've spent again two and half years looking at devices because it wasn't just the amount of time I was looking at my screen, it was also then spending an equal or even a greater amount of time in social media and my phone and tablets etc., that built in our brain just is addicted to it. And they're gauging 150 times a day we look at our phone whether we need to or not. So, there's that boost that little endorphin boost that comes from it.

Jen: And so which kind of endorphin boost is more powerful, the one that comes from our screens or the ones that comes from being in person with other people?

Joey: Well, actually I think the in person one is much greater. They can see a live interaction that gives us the sense of connection and we get those boosts. They can see the effect of that three and half months later in the brain. So, while we get the small boosts from the screen, we get the longer more effective boosts from being with people. But as you said, that requires, again creating a comfort zone around that. And so, for many clients I've been telling them strategies around how do you get your people to show up at work, have a fun event that is not necessarily work related. Have everybody show up. Give them a couple weeks' notice. They will have so much fun that they'll remember why they like being in person. That's what you really want to do right now is create the memory or recreate the experience so they can remember why being together has value.

Jen: Yeah, absolutely. We keep talking about how you know going, when you go back to the office, on those days that you do it should be about the experience and not necessarily about sitting at a desk and getting work done per say.

Joey: That's right. That's it.

Jen: So, let's kind of move to this topic of life work integration versus work life balance, which I see the language of work life balance still gets used quite a bit and as you as you know, Arianna Huffington and I wrote about this and why we need to kind of move away from this idea of balance to integration. So, I guess from your perspective, talk to me about the idea of balance and what's wrong with it, but why are we or we're so kind of still wedded to that language or that idea of balance?

Joey: Well, first of all, I loved your piece. I loved your personal reframe from work life to life work. Because I think that is really the key that we are really conditioned as humans to prioritize work, right? When you think about how we were conditioned for hundreds of years, it's been work first, then family right in that list of hierarchy. And one of the things that happened over the last few years is people got the chance to reverse that and see that they were around family more. And so, they started to realize, wow, this is actually more important to me than my work. But I was spending more time at work because I wanted to make sure my life was good. And then they started, well, do I have to spend this much time at work, etc. What I'm realizing is life is all of it, and there isn't a differentiation between what I'm doing at home, when I do at work, in relationship to my life. It's all part of my life. And they have different values. And they have different purposes and intentions. And if I could just see myself as having a good life, how do I live a life that I feel fulfilled by. They will have all kinds of elements in it. It'll have friendship, it'll have relationship, it'll have work, it'll have family, it'll have lots of elements that I consider valuable. And I think the key for people now is to start to say and then it started. What is most valuable to me for my fulfillment? And then creating a life that matches that. We've talked a lot internally at Thrive about we think part one of the things that misses that's been missing is the inner wisdom element, right. The personal time to get to know myself to whether it's spiritual, whether it's religious, whether it's just my own meditative contemplative experience of knowing myself. That piece has been greatly missing for in the last at least 20-30 years in our society because we've downplayed that to prioritize the idea of making money. So how do we get all those things into the circle of my life. And while I will never have balance, because all those things are going to have different priorities, they're going to have different amount of time that I can spend with them. They'll have different value set for me in terms of what I think is the most important part of my life. But I look at it from if I got to the end of my life and I look back, I'd say what are the things that I would have liked to make sure that I did? And in what capacity and in what quantity. As long as you can say I'm mapping to that, that's all that matters.

Jen: Yeah, I think we've heard that, at the end of your life are you going to wish that you spent more time at work or you're going to wish you spent more time with family or doing the things that really brought you a sense of joy and fulfillment. Not that work doesn't or shouldn't, but it shouldn't consume our life. But I think for me, I guess I'm getting older now, perhaps we all are. Because that's the way it goes. But I feel like when I was younger, and I would hear something like that. Well, at the end of your life, what are you going to wish you spent more time doing? It always just felt like it was so far away. Well, I don't have to worry about that now, I'm not at the end of my life isn't coming anytime soon. But then of course for me, I got diagnosed with breast cancer at age 40, and that created a totally different perspective, but I do think that there's something to the framing of that. And maybe if it's not at the end of your life, but what is it that you wish you spent more time doing right now? Like what is it that really lights you up and kind of brings you that sense of joy? And I want to dig into what you talked about kind of around spirituality and values, but one kind of myth that I want to get your thoughts on before we go

there, is this tradeoff between high performance and taking care of ourselves that those two things are kind of mutually exclusive. But now with the pandemic, we've seen well-being kind of moved to the top of the agenda, not just for the workforce but for business leaders alike. But do you still see this myth hanging on, because I see a lot of talk about it. But are we really making progress towards this notion of high performance? In order to have sustained high performance, you really need to take care of yourself and have a workforce that feels empowered to take care of themselves as well.

Joey: Yeah, you've been a leader in this idea. And I think we could say the positive effect for Thrive during this time period is probably a 10X in our business because more and more organizations have realized that. There are people I call it need to be well to lead well. We've seen that when people are not well. It will lead to bad behavior, will lead to attrition, absenteeism and lead to all the things that organizations have found cause great disruption. And if you want to have an organization that is performing at its best. And my background in athletics has shown this over and over and over again. When you have people who are performing at their best. They are doing the things to make sure foundationally they are well. And it doesn't matter what field you're in, what job you do, if you're not well, it will affect your ability to show up and be at your best. So now I think organizations who used to think that was a soft skill or a soft idea, have now pivoted to seeing the data, the research, the reality that if their people aren't well, then there's a deficit that will occur.

Jen: Yeah, absolutely. Do you feel like, they are taking action or meaningful action towards supporting that or changing that within their organizations or within their cultures, and their, I guess, leadership behaviors?

Joey: I do. And I see it actually starting at the top quite a bit, where organizations are realizing that the issue is, yes, their people are struggling, but that leadership has not created a culture where people can prioritize their well-being. And so, we're seeing leaders now committing in many of our organizations. It has become a top-down process where they're saying come in, help our leadership understand how they need to prioritize themselves and then how do they scale it within their teams. So, there's been a significant uptick for us in terms of seeing organizations to make that shift.

Jen: That's awesome. I believe I'm seeing the same thing too. So, I think it's a really positive shift and I think this kind of leads me into where I want to go with the conversation around mindset, because I do think that what we're seeing, and experiencing isn't shift in mindset. Some of the things that we've been talking about at Deloitte is this shift that well-being be it a set of habits and activities and actions that we take. Yes, they improve our physical and mental health, but the historical mindset, if you will, is that it happened largely outside of work or outside of working hours, right? That organizations might provide you with the tools and resources and benefits to support these activities, but they aren't actually things that we do during the workday. So, to a shift of like, no, actually they need to be done in certain ways during the workday because that's what allows us to have this sustained high performance, right. And that doing meaningful work is actually an input to our well-being, right? Good well-being is an outcome of doing a job that feels good to us, right? So, I guess, I said a lot there, but what is our mindset and kind of this shift in mindset have to do with our well-being?

Joey: Well, there's a lot you said there that I loved, and I want to put a pin in purpose, which I think was the last thing you said, which I think is important. But when we look at mindset, I mean the thing we know about the brain is that there's a part of the brain, kind of the base of the skull, called the reticular activating system. And it regulates a lot of things, including sleep. But one of the things it does is, it

filters what we see, feel, and hear in the world based on what we believe. And so, from Carol Dweck's book on Mindsets, lots of research and studies on how the brain works, neurology of the brain, what they're understanding is that it doesn't matter what the truth is, it doesn't matter what he says, what matters is what you believe, because what you believe will then be the filter with which you see the world. And as we've seen over the last several years here in the country, we've seen completely opposite polarizing perspectives that are using the same data to have different kind of beliefs. And so, what that means is, it doesn't matter what the truth is, it matters what people believe, because that's how they're going to again see, feel, and hear the data. So, it becomes critical what you believe and so from all the work I've done in this field, what I've learned is that challenging your beliefs to really ask yourself is this true? Having an open developmental mindset that says, is there more for me to learn? Is there more for me to do to grow? How can I continue to get better? Can be one of the more critical elements for you to continue to improve as you age. And so, the challenge I think that most people are experiencing is that they have this, "There's no human being I've met that goes I want to be wrong about what I believe right?" So, we want to be right about what we believe, but if what we believe in is taking us in the direction we want to go in, now we've got a challenge. And that's the challenge that we address in terms of mindset is, is making sure where we want to go, aligns with the belief system that we have because without it you will not get there. You will go in the direction of your belief, not the direction of where you say you want to go.

Jen: So in particular, I want to hone in on kind of one particular belief that our worth is tied to what we do, our jobs, and so. And I think that's true for many of us, I know it was for me and I never really challenged that belief, and I think in challenging that belief, I would have gone down the path of defining what success meant for myself. But it wasn't until I burned out. That I gave myself the opportunity to do that. So beyond, burning out, "why is this a dangerous mindset to have and what are some ways in which we can measure our success instead or in addition to?" Because again, you and I have both talked about how it is important to have a meaningful career is an overall part of your life, but it's not the only thing.

Joey: No, very important. So, this is what I would call the human condition. We have this idea that gets really pushed from pretty young age and depends upon our culture. There are a few cultures maybe that are left that aren't doing this. But for most cultures at a pretty young age, you start getting conditioned in the idea that what I have and what I do determines my value. There are some cultures still that will tell you who you are is your value. But most cultures are driving the idea what you have and what you do is your value. So, if you look at TV, you're going to see everything saying the most important valuable people are the people that have something or better doing something. And so, we get conditioned to say I have to equate my value to those things. We lose as we talk back to the spirituality or the inner connection around recognizing that the kind of human I am, is really where my value is. And if I am the kind of human that I want to be, I will naturally go out and do and have the things that align with my values. But most people reverse it. So instead of who I am determines what I do, which determines what I have. They approach it from what I have determines what I do, which determines who I am. And therefore, if what I have or what I do goes away, my identity is greatly shaken. Because it's defining who I am versus if I understand who I am is my value. Then what I do can change and what I have can change, but my value doesn't change.

Jen: Who I am doesn't change.

Joey: Yes. So that's where the biggest challenge is for most human beings. Because we do want to have and do. And there is tremendous value in making a difference through doing things and in creating the kind of things that make your life, your kids' life, your partner's, spouse's lives, your communities lives better, right? When you create a lot, you can impact a lot. But you just have to remember that if your values tied up in that, then what will happen is you won't prioritize self. You won't take time for yourself or for your family because you're going to say, "no I've got to keep stay up late and keep doing this project, because if I do it right, they're going to like me, they're going to give me a promotion, I'm going to make more money and then I'm going to be more valuable." And that's how people lose track of how they can actually take good care of themselves. They think it's "if I have and if I do," versus remembering that "who they are is where their true value is."

Jen: Yeah, Joey, where were you 10 years ago in my life when I really, really needed you? (laughs) not that I don't need you now. (laughter)

Joey: It's a human condition and everybody goes through that cycle.

Jen: Yeah, yeah. So, let's talk about and you know, I think you're alluding to this a little bit, or it's aligned to this, but one of the things I hear you talk about a lot is limiting beliefs. So, what are they and can you give us a few examples of maybe some of the more common ones?

Joey: Sure, sure. So, this has been literally a 30-year journey for me, 32-year journey of understanding this whole dynamic I call paradigms. And I started by really uncovering my own process around this, and then having worked with thousands and thousands of people in different environments, I was able to see, how no matter where I was, what culture, what country, what language, I was seeing the same patterns over and over again. And they were these 7, 8, pretty consistent belief systems that again regards to culture were showing up.

So, idea number one was no matter what I do, it's never enough, right? Limiting belief.

Number two was I am not enough, just a general belief of not enough. And there became a whole book written around this, around the impostor syndrome and how and why that work. It's got great data in that, then ideas like, "I'm not valuable, I'm not worthy. I'm unlovable. I'm not safe". Those were the big ones that I found, regardless of who you were, that you were going to have some experience in your life that was going to trigger that belief, and that belief is going to keep operating in your head. And what I found was that no matter who I worked with, and "I" doesn't matter from billionaires to even working in prisons, I found those belief systems were common. Now the difference was how much impact they had created in a person's life. So, for example, worked with a billionaire who had a belief about not being good enough, but they had created so much in their life, wealth in particular and experiences, that it didn't dominate their life. It showed up very specifically in relationship to partners. And so, we didn't stop their work, but it did affect their ability to really have the partner they wanted, and we work with that. Whereas if in a prison, the idea that I'm not good enough was dominating this person's belief system in such a way that they went out into the world and that's how they were interacting with the world "I'm not good enough." So not being good enough matched where they were. Of course, I'm in a prison because that's who I am. So, it's very subtle, but the impact it can have depends on like how the person's life begins to roll itself out. So, again, I've never met a person who didn't have one of those weren't working. And yet, the depth of it, the breadth of it, the impact depended on the person. So that's why I would have I'd get calls from sports teams. They'd say this person who had tremendous

success, million-dollar contracts, had gone out and done something really stupid. And when I would sit with him, it would always come up or this belief that I'm not worthy or I'm not valuable, or whatever it was, was going on while they were doing this stupid behavior versus the other belief that they had carried most of their life about being the best in this particular sport had gotten them there. They didn't change the belief that was pulling them down. So, it's like a potential anchor; is the anchor small? is it large? it depends on the person.

Jen: Yeah, I guess, why is it so hard to kind of move from these negative beliefs to something that serves us so much better?

Joey: So, it depends on, different people are able to move faster than others, but what I found is that everyone can move. That's the beauty of neuroplasticity, that every brain, regardless of who you are, every brain has the capacity to go from a more limiting belief-based mindset to a more positive belief-based mindset. Every brain has that capacity. And so that's the great news. But if you ask about why the conditioning that occurs just growing up, regardless of who, you can have perfect parents and go to school and have somebody be mean to you, and you start to wonder if you're good enough. And that that can stick, and you can have moments over and over again where that happens. So, no one's immune to the effects of life, and unfortunately there's lots of negative things that occur in life. They're not necessarily all, life threatening or emotionally shaking things, but they're enough to give us pause and to start questioning who we are and consequently we end up with those belief systems and then depending upon how aggressive we are about addressing it, we either keep them or we start to build a new mindset around, "I'm going to think differently about myself."

Jen: Is it true with neuroplasticity, or the way that our brain works...like do we...and this what I was reflecting on or thinking about...is, you know, do we scan the environment or our world or words that people say to reinforce either a negative or a positive belief about ourselves? Right? And that kind of reinforces the wiring in our brains and so it doesn't actually need to be a major event that happens every single time. But somebody, Joey, you could make a comment, especially, in a virtual world, right? and via e-mail or that I receive in a way that you didn't mean, but it reconfirms a negative belief that I have about myself.

Joey: Yes. So that's why I said earlier, our brains going to see, feel, and hear the world based on our belief.

Jen: Yeah, Yeah.

Joey: Right, so if I believe, you don't like me, and you send an e-mail and you mentioned a couple people in the e-mail about what they did that you liked. You didn't mention me, I'm going to see that as, "Oh! See, Jen doesn't like me." Now, it may not have any intentionality in that direction at all. There may be several people you didn't mention, but that's how I'm going to see the world. And unfortunately, we often see when people are struggling, especially with bosses, they create those kind of belief systems and the boss may not have any knowledge of it. Not be seeing it that way at all, but that's how they start to see it, and then consequently their world will constantly reinforce it.

Jen: Yeah, so how do we use that same neuroplasticity? How do we use it to change our habits and our beliefs? Because I assume that as much as it works for us in the negative, it works also in the positive if we if we allow it to. (laughs)

Joey: No, absolutely. And that's the thing. It's not as complicated as people would have you believe. So, when we were looking at this from the perspective of psychology or psychiatry, it can feel daunting, you know, like, "oh! Wow! to get someone to change that perspective may take lots of counseling and lots of therapy, etc." When we look at it from the perspective of neuroplasticity, it's different. Because we know neuroscientists will tell you, anywhere from 14 days to 254 days, is what most of the research will tell you it can take to change a neural pathway, right? All beliefs are neural pathways that we've developed in our brain. So if I'm willing...

Jen: So why 14 to 254? (laughter)

Joey: That's the number, those are the research studies that you've seen. Some will tell you that short and all through that there are several research, 21 days, 32 days, there are several studies. The longest one I've seen is 254 days.

Jen: OK, got it. Got.

Joey: Got it? So somewhere in there, depending on who's right, your brain will change in neural pathway if you consistently create a new pathway and what that means in essence is something as simple as "I'm not good enough." And you want to change it to, "I am good enough." Like that's the simple shift, your brain's going to go. "No, you're not, as soon as you say it." But you just keep saying it, and what you're doing in essence is you're building a new pathway brick by brick. And you are reducing the efficacy of the old pathway brick by brick. You're taking one out of here and you're putting in here and you're doing that daily and you're doing it every time you notice that you have the sense of "I'm not being, I'm not good enough" And you just do that and you do it consistently and over time, someday that road is going to be thicker, stronger, more effective and you're going to wake up and go. Actually know what, "I feel like? I am good enough." It's not ego. It's not a flag you wave. You just redirected that neural pathway into a new direction. That's it. And that's the beauty of neuroscience, you can do it by just practicing that. You don't even have to worry about the emotions catching up, the past experience of the why it's there in the first place. You don't have to do any of that. If you do this new process, eventually, you're going to wake up and go. "OK, I am good enough!" and that's the shift.

Jen: And so this is what you're describing, kind of, the foundational science behind micro steps and why micro steps work, which I think sometimes people are like, "I have this huge problem to solve and you're telling me to solve it by starting small? That doesn't make a lot of sense, but it actually does. So, can you talk about micro steps, what they are? and why they're so? I mean, I think you've just described why they're so effective, but let's talk about it.

Joey: Yeah, yeah. Well, I read a book years ago, 1978, I'm 18 years old, by a guy named Stewart Emery, it's called, *Actualizations*. He said something that stuck with me, he said small steps done consistently create major impact. And that really landed in my head and fast forward to when we started with 'Thrive' and looking at how we wanted to help people make behavior change, we called it micro-steps, right? And we started working with a guy named BJ Fogg who has a book called, *Tiny Habits*, and he has a model called 'B = MAP' and behavior equals motivation, ability, and prompt. And we, BJ and I've had a lot of fun in this whole concept of doing small things, but he said something that I really love, which was, it doesn't matter how small it is, so you want to start exercising. And you've tried a lot, and it seems to always fail after a period of time, he said, start with one pushup. And your brain is going to go one push up. That's not enough. He said "no, just do one. If you do more, great. But get down and do one." And

what I've learned is there's two elements, two, when we're trying to create a new habit. One is to go down and do the one pushup. But the other is what happens when you do. Because most of our brains have learned and adapted to the idea that we say we're going to do something and then we don't. And when we don't, we actually stop believing in ourselves; our confidence to do it, our self-esteem in terms of doing it goes down. And so, if you can have this idea of motivation, this is something I want to do. So, I do want to exercise. Yes, why? Well, because I want to be around for my grandkids. Something like that. And now, I really have motivation. Ability, can I do one pushup? Yes. Is there opportunity for me to do it? There is. Great. And then what's the prompt? What's going to get me to do it? And you have to decide what that is. Whether it's an alarm that goes off, whatever it is. But as long as you do the one pushup, he said, you start to build the field in your brain, this field of fertile, I can do change, I can make this happen. And we start to believe in ourselves again. If I do my one pushup every day, I'm going to believe that I'm a person that does my exercise. And that's what you're building. Forget about building a new body. Build a new brain where your brain believes in yourself, you trust yourself, you are keeping your work with yourself. So, your confidence is going up. Now, most days you do the 1 pushup, you're going to do 3, you're going to do 5, maybe do 10. But do the one that's the baseline. And that's how you actually start to create this new neural pathway that says, one day I am an exerciser. Once you've connected the neural pathway, then adding more exercise becomes easy because you've already now built the habit. So, goal is build the habit first, then put all of the things you want to do on top of the habit.

Jen: And so, what do you say to the people that say, well, if it isn't big or disruptive or painful then it then is it worth doing?

Joey: Yeah, because you got to say I'm doing the one push up for the big game. I'm doing the one pushup for the...but that's the motivation. So, the motivation is I'm doing one pushup because I want to be, you know, healthy for my grandkids. That's the motivation. You got to have that. If you don't have motivation, and if it's a should, then it's not going to work. So that's the key element, is why do you want to do this? And that's why people go, I want to do it because I want to have a great body for summer. So, they get the body at summer, then as soon as summer's over there off, body goes back. So, you got to have longer term motivation if you want it to sustain.

Jen: So, can you give us some favorite micro steps, especially ones around kind of changing our mindset?

Joey: Yeah, I'll give you a couple that work really well. One is journaling, you know, end of night. And the reason why journaling works is that you do a reflection on your day and the reflection may go, you may go back in your day, and you go, you know what, at my meeting with Jen, I wasn't feeling good enough. I wasn't feeling value. I wasn't feeling like I could share my point of view that she doubts, you know, whatever it was I was going to say. I felt a little bit at the time, but in my reflection, I'm going to have more awareness of that. And in that reflection, that's a moment where I say, okay, the mindset I want to have there is that I am valuable. And next time I go into that situation, I'm going to go in with the mindset that I'm valuable. But if I start to, you know, feel that old mindset kicks in, that I'm not valuable. I'm going to reframe it in the moment. And it won't work every time, but at some point, it will start to stick. So, journaling in the evening gives you that reflection of the day where you can start to insert, hey, here's what I'd like to do different. Then when you go into it next time, your brain is going to have that awareness. Simple awareness is often curative. And so, if you can just pay attention, you'll get better. So, journaling has a great effect there.

And the other piece that can really work from a micro step perspective is to really call out what is the limiting belief I have. I'm not good enough. I'm not worthy. I'm not smart. Whatever you decide it is, what's the opposite? The opposite is very literal. If it's I'm not good enough, the literal translation to that is I am good enough. And so, you start to create a practice where every time you experience that I'm not good enough, you shift it in your head. Will you do it every time? Maybe not, but you you're saying that that's the way you want to be, and every time you do that, it starts to again redirect the brain. And then you might even do a list of what are the negative paradigms you say to yourself? So, you can just kind of call them out, and once we name these things, we often can become much more, we could take much more ownership over them when we name them. And then write your opposites, so you have them already there. What's the opposite paradigm I'd like to be focused on? Those three things can be effective in terms of just starting to shift the whole process.

Jen: I wrote all three of them down. And then I want to talk about some of your personal favorite micro steps, because obviously well-being is so interconnected, it's not just about mindset but sleep, movement, and then one personally for me, because it's one of my challenges, what's what are some good micro steps around like stress and anxiety reduction?

Joey: Sleep, I am a good sleeper. I flipped from my old mindset of I'll sleep when I'm dead, you know, which was when I was coaching in the NFL. I had to change that. So, I'm in bed at 9:00 o'clock a lot of nights. I mean, I'm in bed that early, but I do get up early. So, it's important and that means for me and during the pandemic in particular I got off social media. I literally stopped all of that, because I was on screen for sometimes 10 hours in a day doing a lot of webinars. But be careful about your evening screen time.

Jen: And that includes televisions, any type of screen.

Joey: TV far away from you doesn't have the same blue light impact as other devices, but the thing with TV is you have to make sure you're reducing stress at night too. So, if you're watching, you know the news, and something like that, no, no, not a good use of your time. So that part's important. I tell people, if you look at Stanford Medicine's research, if you move three times a week for 20 minutes each, not only is it great for the body, but it's even better for the brain. The brain stays more resilient when it gets that level of movement, and that means like a brisk walk. You can do a lot more than that, but at least get a brisk walk and it makes a big difference in your brain. So, I bike ride. That's my thing. So, I get that going more than three times a week, but at least three, which is critical. And then stress reduction, I'll tell you #1 stress reduction tool comes from the Navy SEALs. They call it box breathing. And it's a technique where you actually, breathe in a very specific way. It takes your brain out of the sympathetic nervous system where stress is into the parasympathetic nervous system where relaxation is in about 1 minute. So, when you find yourself stressing, what Stanford discovered is a deep exhale. It's actually the most ideal thing to slow the brain down when it starts to go into the amygdala response or that stress response. So, you just blow out through your mouth, completely empty your lungs, you just...until your lungs are empty. Then you breathe in, which now becomes a box breathing technique, counting to four. You hold it for four, you exhale for four, and then Navy SEALs will hold it again for four. So, it's like you're imagining this box and then you start over again. And you do that just one minute, so it's like 3 cycles and you completely shift your brain. You'll reduce the stress. So, we know stress is part of life. You can't get rid of stress, but cumulative stress is where the danger is. And that's our goal.

Jen: Yeah, I mean, for me it is in those moments, especially of kind of acute stress or anxiety, when I actually remember to do some deep breathing. It's amazing, the impact that it has, but the key for me is to actually remember. Oh wait, this actually works. So, Joey, thank you for your time today and for sharing your wisdom with us. I always learn something from you and take so much away to reflect on. And try in my own life. So, I really appreciate your time today.

Joey: Such a pleasure, Jen. Anytime.

I'm so grateful Joey could be with us today to talk about this important topic.

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