

Thought Leaders
BUSINESS LAB

EPISODE 238

Discover Your Wellness Why

WITH SAMANTHA RILEY & HEATHER DENNISTON

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A journey can lead to different destinations

▽ Heather Denniston had been a chiropractor for 25 years.

Two years before leaving the practice, she started to get the “itch” to do something different. Having worked with many people who were interested in wellness but kept failing to achieve their goals, she realised there was a way to set foundational principles for wellness. These principles would help bridge the connection between personal wellbeing and professional success.

She developed those principles.

Now she works with corporations and high performers to build the bridge to being more efficient, more productive and happier.

▽ Heather acknowledges that her journey didn't go from point A to point B in a linear line. Her journey had many unexpected twists and turns.

She started as a blogger. She realised, though, that she was writing so much without making the impact she wanted. So, she started one-on-one consulting. Then, she began presenting to companies. After this, she created her current business.

She realised she needed to learn how to write, how to put a presentation together and find the key factors that people resonate with regarding their own wellbeing. She considers the years spent doing those tasks as valuable steps to get to where she is now.

Take deep dives, get quiet

▽ Early on during her practice as a chiropractor, Heather developed the habit of taking mini personal retreats. She would take a day or two for “deep dives” or moments of quiet.

▽ People often spend so much time among the pressure and noise of daily life, so their inner voice goes unheard. Until Heather started her deep dives she could not hear or register what her inner voice was saying. There are opportunities for all of us to have these moments of quiet and stillness.

▽ She gives this piece of advice: honour stillness and quiet in a way that allows your inner voice the freedom to say things that might not normally percolate in your mind. In the quiet, you can find the courage to know that it's important and do something with it, instead of pushing it down.

▽ 2020 has made people take a moment from their busy lives to reflect and decide what's really important for them.

This gives 2021 a unique opportunity to be a blank canvas where you can pursue what you are passionate about, what brings you joy and what your dreams are. It's a great time to shift and take that big step forward.



You are your own priority project



Heather shares that her wellness journey began in a shower in her college dorm room, bawling her eyes out at 20 because she was arthritic, had thyroid and gut issues, was overweight, and did not know what to do.

She started studying everything on wellness. This led to her being a chiropractor and a personal trainer in an area surrounded by big-name companies like Microsoft, Expedia, Amazon, and T-mobile. Her client base from these large companies was huge.

However, her private practice didn't allow Heather to sit down, have a long conversation with her patients and really dig into their wellness concerns and drivers. This was one of the reasons why she decided to make the shift towards consulting.

The importance of your health to your business



As entrepreneurs, health and wellness are vital to what we can produce in business. We have to understand that there's a deep connection between how you move your body, how you fuel yourself and how mindful you are.



The first thing Heather does with a client is a foundational principle called discovering your wellness "why." Until you dig down deep and understand truly why you want to be well, it's difficult to commit and stick to changes that you want to make.



Getting people to know their "why" makes it easier to incorporate wellness into their lives in a sustainable, practical and completely doable way. Heather shared an example of how a person discovered her wellness "why":



While working with a corporate group, Heather noticed that one employee was not writing. She walked over and saw that the lady had written "to be healthy" on her answer sheet.

Heather asked if that was the lady's wellness "why." The person said yes.

So, Heather asked, "Why?" The lady answered, "I want to be active." Heather kept asking why until the lady's face changed and she answered, "I never want to tell my two grandsons no you can't do that." And that was the most important "why" of that person.

Energy Leakage Liability



When you know your "why," the next step is to find out where your energy leakage liabilities are. Essentially, you look at where your energy is going for your whole day.



Imagine a bucket with holes that spill out whatever is inside the bucket. That's what you do if you don't use your energy wisely.



▽ Examples of unnecessary usage of energy are:

- ▽ multitasking
- ▽ worrying
- ▽ not paying attention
- ▽ overfocusing
- ▽ toxic relationships

These are tasks or behaviour that cause us to spill energy in ways that we don't need to. When that happens, it makes it hard to have the resources and mindshare to move forward with wellness.

▽ You might have a big goal like losing weight or starting your wellness program, but if you're pepping your energy all over the place then you won't have the energy to work towards your goal.

▽ To find your energy leakage liabilities, ask yourself these questions:

- ▽ Where can you shore up energy as you go through your day?
- ▽ Where can you lessen your decision fatigue?
- ▽ Where can you create processes and procedures in your day that make it smoother?
- ▽ How can you create a fueling system where you eat healthily but it's not a burden to you?

Decision Fatigue

▽ One specific consequence of an energy leakage liability is decision fatigue.

▽ Your brain has a certain amount of glucose for the day. When you wake up, you have full bars like a mobile phone battery. Everything that you do throughout the day pulls from those bars. One of the biggest brain "suckers" is making decisions.

As a business owner, you make a lot of decisions. If you use your energy for minutiae decisions then you won't have enough energy for the big decisions.

▽ An example of a person who seems to use his energy only for big decisions is Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg. If you search for pictures of Mark, you will always see him wearing the same type of outfit. A dark-coloured shirt and black jeans. He decided a long time ago that this outfit would be the one he would wear to work every day. With this tactic, he doesn't have to decide what to wear every morning.

▽ Heather's personal example is putting her keys in the same place. She doesn't have to go running all over the house trying to remember where she put them.

▽ So, evaluate your days and find out where you can streamline and create a system where you don't have to redecide every morning.

Time management is an obvious example. Look for the less obvious like things where you allot over-attention or if you do the wrong things at the wrong time of the day.

For example, you can decide to have the same type of dinner from Monday to Friday and go crazy only during the weekends. You won't have to worry about what to cook, you can prep the ingredients on Sunday and your grocery shopping can go fast.

You can change the menu each month for variety. But the fewer decisions you make, the more energy you'll have to jump on your telethon bike or your favoured wellness habit.



Activate your Wellness Amplifier Program

- ▽ Heather's Pillars of the Wellness Amplifier Program are Activate, Adapt and Ascend.
- ▽ Activate has 3 important components:
 - ▽ Discover your wellness "why."
 - ▽ Identify energy leakage.
 - ▽ Discover and curate your wellness pit crew. This is the group of people who support and care about the wellness direction movement you want to go. This pit crew is different for everyone.
 - ▽ You don't have to know everyone in your pit crew.
 - ▽ Heather has Brene Brown on her pit crew. Heather listens to Brene every day and thus helps her feel positive.
 - ▽ Your pit crew typically does not include your partner/spouse and your best friend because they love you exactly as you are. They may not realise it, but they're not invested in you changing even though they say they support you.
 - ▽ Look beyond your inner circle to get objectivity and non-emotional input. Choose a trainer, acupuncture, physiotherapist, psychologist, or co-worker.
 - ▽ Heather advises to include one person who doesn't know you but you follow consistently at least for one year.
 - ▽ The key here is longevity. You need to dig deep into that person's work, learn and absorb what they have to give.
 - ▽ Don't expert hop. Rather than learning one or two little things then moving on to the next expert, you need to stay with one or two experts for a long time to have a richer experience.

Create a consistent pattern

- ▽ Self-compassion is important because it is a given that you will fall off the bandwagon several times during your journey. Don't be too hard on yourself. What matters most is how to get back on the bandwagon.

How long does it take you to get back up when you...

- ▽ fall off the bandwagon?
- ▽ miss a workout?
- ▽ overeat?
- ▽ forget your meditation?
- ▽ do not attend to relationships the way you should be?



▽ You need to develop the skills and tools to snap out of your slump quicker.

The importance of your wellness “why” comes to play during this time. If you connect back to this, you shorten the amount of time you are off the wagon and motivate yourself to pop back up more quickly.

Ideally, you should be 80% on task, 20% in your wriggle room. That’s a healthy and realistic ratio to pursue. You can’t always be at 100% at anything. Be compassionate and allow that 20% to happen naturally.

Everyone fails, it happens and it’s okay.

Benefits of staying healthy to move forward with your business

▽ It’s easy to say “I have to finish this today” or “I’m going to do my wellness routine tomorrow.” You need to remember that being healthy benefits you and your business as well.

▽ Brain function relies on body movement. Humans are perpetual motion machines. Our brains would not solve problems, create ideas or move forward with a business in a way that you could if you moved your body every day.

▽ Food changes your brain chemistry. Eating the right food changes how we see the world and how long we can stay focused.

The power of habits

▽ Habits are consistent processes that are “no-brainers.” Develop them by:

- ▽ linking them to things you’re already doing,
- ▽ making them realistic,
- ▽ celebrating wins when you achieve goals.

▽ Acknowledge your good and bad habits. Make the necessary changes but forgive yourself when you go back to your bad habit. Then analyse in a non-judgmental, non-emotional way how you can handle things differently. You could set an alarm or put into place an external trigger like gym clothes nearby. Keep learning and making adjustments.

Listening to your body’s flow

▽ Gurus and successful people talk about the importance of a morning routine. Morning movement like a hike after waking up is one of the easiest ways to get your body moving. However, it is equally important to know your body’s flow.



Sam used to do her workout in the mornings because she has more energy during that period. But she realised that she's more productive in the morning so she decided to change her routine. Now, she goes to the gym in afternoons and doesn't have to worry about doing work when she gets home.

Sometimes she will have calls or work with her team but she doesn't do deep work. No planning, reports or writing content.

Listening to her body rather than listening to someone else's idea of what she should be doing has been a game-changer for her.

Focusing on health and wellness has to work for you. Pay attention to your own body, understand its needs, do your tasks and exercises in a way that works for you. Even if you love structure, you still need to flow within that structure for your wellness practices to be effective.

Dr Michael Breus has a book titled "The Power of When" that divides people into four chronotypes. Each type has different times of the day that works best for them—everything from exercise to work to anything.

There's also the concept of "head down" and "head up" time. Head down involves creative thinking, problem-solving or getting through a special project. This time is best in the morning when the brain batteries are full. Head up time is all about emails and phone calls, which are better done in the late afternoons.

As it wakes up, your brain goes into a creative, introspection, processing mode. The minute you turn on your phone and look at it, your brain focuses outward. It starts to judge, make decisions and solve problems even if you're just looking at Facebook.

You want to allow at least a little bit of time for that inward processing to slowly shift from sleep to full wakefulness. To do this, have your coffee without turning on your phone for 30 minutes after waking up. Then go and follow your body flow state and customise it for yourself.

The more you work on your wellness, the more you listen to what your body is asking. It wants what's best for you. It wants you to succeed at work. The more you can value and treat it the way it deserves by fueling it properly and by moving it as it's asking for, it will give back rewards.

Set up a fabulous 2021

Coming out of the holidays, it's important to stop and reflect on what's important. As business owners, we have goals that we want to set this year. Understanding how wellness will attribute to that is an important piece of the puzzle.

As a guide, Heather has a free gift to help you find out your wellness "why."

We never know what will happen. We think we have control but life is always shifting, always moving. So, some people want to just wait and see what happens. But Heather highly encourages you to set the goals. You can shift them later on. But you need to get out there and fight over the fear of not knowing. Having some goals is better than having no goals.



▽ As a final reminder, Heather advises being kind to yourself.

People are always so hard on themselves. Instead, allow yourself to be empathetic and compassionate towards yourself. Show yourself some compassion during this tricky time. Allow your body to rest when it needs rest. Get more sleep. Pulling inward is okay if you need some time to process what's happening. Lean into the relationships within your core group.

RESOURCES

- ▽ "Discover Your Wellness Why" Free Gift
- ▽ Junk You Should Know
- ▽ Get Your A.C.T Together: Wellness Planning Event
- ▽ The Power of When

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