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Tamara: Good morning, handsome. What are three things you're grateful for today?

Joel: Good morning Beautiful. Thank you for asking me first, because I think yet again we've got the

same gratitude.

Tamara: Have you been looking at my notes?

Joel: No, I've just got a feeling. So, this morning I am grateful for going to the gym because as you

know I was pretty tired late yesterday and this morning I thought I would listen to my body and give myself a rest day. But we did go to the gym, but I didn't do super heavy weights, so it was just, it was really good to do a little bit of weights, but not too much and effectively just to keep my body moving. So, I'm grateful that I did do the gym and didn't have a rest day.

The second thing I'm grateful for is that we're recording today because originally we were going to record tomorrow, but with the weather in Sydney, it's really blowy today. And just with a few changes in schedule we were able move things around so that we are recording today, and we're going to spend the whole day tomorrow and just chilling out, and going for a long walk and get outside. So, I'm really grateful that we were able to, and go for a walk tomorrow. And the third thing is, and I'm super, super grateful for the beautiful food that you cooked last night because I was out in the afternoon, pick my son up and spent the afternoon out. Well, not exactly out with him, he was at the skate park for most of it, but when I came home there was a massive bowl or plate of sweet potato fries with guacamole. It was just like, it was awesome. So, I'm really grateful that you went to all that effort and made that beautiful, beautiful food.

What are three things that you're grateful for?

Tamara: I think he did look at my notes. The first thing, I'll try and be a little bit different then, was that

we actually go to the gym together. We have been living together for how long now?

Joel: Ten months.

Tamara: Ten months, yes. So initially I was going to the gym and Joel would be staying in bed. And over

winter I got into a really bad habit of just wanting to stay in bed with you. It's really great that we go to the gym together now. And on the days that I don't feel like going, you motivate me to go. And on the days like today, you didn't really feel like going, I motivated you to come with me. Or maybe it was FOMO, I'm not sure which one. The second thing is, yes, the food. And to clarify it was sweet potato fries, but it was all handmade. I didn't buy a packet from the grocery



Episode 9: Benefits of Self-Care and

How it Helps Accelerate Your Career

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store or anything. So really grateful for the delicious loaded fries, we had. And you forgot the vegan brownies!

Joel: Oh yeah.

Tamara: I'm really grateful for the delicious vegan brownies that we made last night. I say we, but I

actually made everything. I'm really grateful that I have access to the internet to provide me with amazing and delicious vegan recipes. And the third thing that I'm really grateful for is that we're taking the whole day off tomorrow to really tune in with nature. I'm really excited to go

on a long walk with you and try a cafe that I've been wanting to try for a while now in

Paddington. We rarely go out for dinner, so this is an extra special treat.

Joel: It is. And I should, before we jump into today's episode, we should just explain that we are

sharing a microphone again, so we're practically standing over the top of each other trying to

record into this mic. It's pretty funny, I wish we had someone recording this.

Tamara: Yeah, it's a bit awkward and I keep nudging Joel to move out of the way.

Joel: All right, so what are we talking about today?

Tamara: Today we are talking about, well it's quite relevant given our gratitude. But the benefits of self-

care and how it will help accelerate your career.

Joel: Awesome.

Tamara: Okay. Should we get started then?

Joel: Yeah, fire away.

Tamara: I guess to kick things off, to back track, I originally thought that self-care or self-love was really

self-obsessed, selfish, indulgent and egotistic. I didn't understand why people would practice self-care. And to be honest I didn't think that I had time to practice self-care. I didn't know

what the value was.

Joel: Yeah, I think generally there's a misconception that self-care is selfish, and it's a luxury, when I

think as we go through today's show, hopefully people will see there is actually a need and

many, many benefits in actually doing it.



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Tamara:

Yeah, exactly. And I hope that throughout this podcast you can learn what I've learnt over the last three years in practicing self-care. And what I eventually learned was that self-care is really about honoring yourself wholeheartedly. It's about the way that you feel about yourself. And this is so important because it impacts every single aspect of your life. And this includes your health, your career, and your relationships.

I like to think of self-care like your car. With your car you need to put fuel in it for it to run, and you drive kilometers and kilometers and kilometers, and then you put in some extra fuel to keep going. And then sometimes you might get a dint here and there, and then every year it needs a proper service for it to continue running. And this is exactly like self-care.

Self-care is about giving the world the best of you instead, of what's left of you. Each time you practice self-care, you're filling up that self-care bucket. And once it's overflowing, that's when you're at a point when you're ready to start giving to others, which is why I'm such a big advocate for it now. I am a living and breathing example of how much it can transform your life and help accelerate your career.

Joel:

Absolutely. I mean there's a piece which is you can't serve from an empty vessel. And that is true. I mean, when you are full within yourself and you achieve that through self-care, then you are much better placed to be able to serve others. You can be the best version of yourself. And that leads into being more productive. And when you're more productive and more effective then that's also going to improve your career. You're also more aligned with what's true for you as an individual.

Tamara:

Mmm. I love that. And the important thing to remember that it's not just for women. Men need it just as much as women, which is why I'm so excited that you're here with me today to be able to talk from a male's perspective. I'm sure that you would agree men typically charge on with life acting like they have everything together and that they're invincible. And this has really created this stigma, which I personally believe has resulted into men not being able to raise their hand and say that they're not okay.

Joel:

Yeah, absolutely agree, 100%. I'm definitely guilty of that myself. I think it is really important, and something I'm trying to change and improve within myself, and I've got a long way to go. But it is something that you're fantastic at, and I think seeing the benefits that you get also, I'll have moments when I realised that I needed some time out and we'll talk a bit about that as I go through.



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Tamara:

So as much as the female in tech show is for women, this episode is equally as important for men. If you have a partner and he's a male, share it with him or listen to it together on a drive or something like that because it's just as important for both men and women to do it.

Joel:

Yes. I might just share a little story there, which is I think just to debunk the misconception that self-care is selfish. I was reading through some articles and there was one in particular from NuSci, which is from North Eastern University, a student run science magazine and in the UK, and they're talking about the fact that self-care goes back in the ages. Ancient traditions really, around communities looking after themselves. Doctors in that time, I suppose you had the witch doctors and healers, the doctor's job really was around sharing knowledge and information with the community around the benefits. Their role really was an emphasis on prevention. They didn't have access to all the information that we have today.

It was sharing and having that knowledge with the tribe and empowering them, and being focused on prevention. Whereas in the 19th and 20th century, healthcare institutions and pharmacies and all the rest of it, they're primarily focused on the cure. I think it really highlights the importance of self-care being about prevention.

And there was a quote from that article, which I love, which is, "No one can know a person's body and mind better than they do. And no one can address a person's needs as immediately as they can themselves."

Tamara:

Well that's super interesting and really fascinating about, self-care being such a vital role, particularly back in the ages.

Joel:

I think it just highlights the importance of know thyself. That was actually my school motto from high school. That's something I'm very passionate about in my direction moving forward but in terms of this, as far as your health, your own health, your personal health, it reinforces the importance of knowing yourself and having that self awareness.

And that also comes back to Episode Two where we talked about **How to Achieve a Work Life Balance**. And that was all around understanding your purpose but also understanding your personal values and what's important to you. So that all gets wrapped up together, which is really around how to improve your health.

Tamara:

I love that. Know thyself. That's excellent that was a motto at your school. I can't even remember what mine was. I think it was just something about sacred heart, I'm not sure.



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It's funny that you mentioned those articles because just this morning I was forwarded an article from one of my colleagues, Layla, and she shared with me that doctors in Scotland are now prescribing nature to their patients. It's fascinating that we are turning back, or not being as reliant on medication to solve things like anxiety and depression. What the doctors in Scotland are doing is they are prescribing 90 minutes of activity outside to decrease a part of your brain that typically associates with depression. And this helps reduce anxiety, reduces aggression, and increases happiness. I mean if we just reduce those aspects and then increase our happiness, think of how much more focused you're going to be at work.

Joel: Yeah, absolutely, 100%.

Tamara:

I might just start with a personal story, and how self-care transformed my life. And this journey started when Joel and I started dating, when he said that behind my Instagram photos he could see a girl who was putting on a front and acting like she was okay. Initially I thought, how dare he, he has known me for five minutes and feels like he sees me and thinks I'm broken, and he can tell that through some Instagram photos. Then after reading numerous amounts of self-care books, I realised he was right and I was that sad girl.

My perception of my own self-worth was at an all-time low, and after reading these books, I soon realised that everything started to make sense. I now understood why I had previously chosen men that weren't right for me, or why I was escaping reality and turning to alcohol and party drugs. Why I would binge eat, why I was constantly comparing myself to other girls and constantly feeling so low on energy and unmotivated with life. I understood why I wasn't achieving the goals that I had set for myself, or why I was settling for a career that didn't see the value in me. And I would lose my patience very quickly. And I had also been to hospital multiple times for things like glandular fever, shingles and immune disorder, which all related to stress.

What I then realised is that you cannot fully give to others when you are not full within yourself. And in order to be overflowing with love, you have to fill-up yourself first. I was at a point where I was so sick of being the moody Tamara who was overreacting to the really small things in life and wanted to learn how I could be the best version of myself and share that with the world.

I didn't want people to be intimidated or scared by me. I was really on that mission of self discovery and wanted to start my self-care journey. The first thing I did was I put together a self-care menu. And this consisted of all the things that made me feel really beautiful and springing with energy. Things like going to the gym and getting my sweat on. Eating really



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healthy and nutritious, plant-based meals. Relaxing home facials and hair treatments. It could even be reading an inspiring book or listening to interesting podcasts. Meditating was a really big one. And practicing gratitude. I did this every single day and had a journal, and I did that for over two years. Womb massages. This is something that I've recently introduced into my life and I absolutely love doing. Sitting in the sun and being present. That is one thing that I just cannot get enough of. And then hiking in the mountains.

Since starting my self-care practice, I honestly feel like a different person. I am so much calmer, I am a lot more empathetic and loving to my friends and family. And I literally feel so much love inside of me. I now have capacity to nourish, teach, listen and hold space to inspire others. And I can look in the mirror for the first time and actually see parts of my body that I truly love.

I am now a lot more respected in the workplace because I'm not losing my patience, and I'm able to work in really high stress, time constrained projects. I can also work with customers who need extra hand holding and may need me to explain the same feature of a platform five plus times. I can also work with different personality types and different cultures. I can notice now if I'm running low on fuel and when I need to spend extra time practicing self-care so I can reboot my system and return back to love. A big sign for me personally when I need to practice self-care is when I'm feeling really insecure in my body, and I know at that moment that I need to spend some extra time practicing self-care and doing those things. I love my self-love menu.

Joel:

I think that also comes back to one of the episodes, I can't remember which one it was, but when we were just talking about the power of the menstrual cycle and understanding what season you're in at the time, because that also affects how you're feeling during the month and recognizing that and putting more emphasis on your self-care during their time.

Tamara:

Absolutely. And then scheduling in different parts of your self-care menu during those different phases. That sounds like a good episode. But really if it wasn't for self-care, I truly believe that The Females in Tech Show would not exist. FIIT Collective would not exist and I would not know my purpose in life.

Joel:

I would agree with that. You've been on an amazing journey over that time and I can see, I've seen, witnessed, and benefited firsthand from all of those positives, as well as inspiring other people, including myself, to do the same thing. You are fantastic as far as practicing what you preach around that. And also quick to recognise the times when you are running low and need to invest a bit more time in that.



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So just to reinforce, once again, that this whole idea around self-care is not selfish. There's actually a global foundation called The International Self-Care Foundation.

Tamara:

Wow.

Joel:

It's not just something that we've made up, or some sort of woo-woo thing. The foundation was established because of this whole thing around prevention, the importance of prevention rather than cure, and people getting sick and illness and then having to go to doctors and pharmaceuticals and all the rest of it.

It's really focused on what are the positive things we can do to prevent those health issues, and the health issues being a combination of physical, mental, emotional, that spans a big area. The International Self-Care Foundation have what they call Seven Pillars to Self-Care. And if I just share those with you quickly.

The first one is around knowledge and health literacy. The idea around educating yourself on the importance of it, and that covers those different areas around mental aspects, the physical aspects, your food and other things. The importance of educating yourself, which in today's day and age is a lot easier than it was 10 years ago, or you know, 50 years ago, or obviously 200 years ago.

The second pillar is around mental wellbeing and self-awareness. That covers self-awareness - physical, emotional, social, spiritual - and also your professional and career side of things as well. And as I said earlier, know thyself. Self-awareness, that's where that really comes into knowing what's right for you because what's right for Tamara is not right for me. You need to be aware of what's the right sort of self-care for you.

The third pillar is around physical activity. It's well known that exercising and physical activity boosts positive brain chemistry and improves your physical and also your emotional health. Decrease stress, reduces risk of disease and other things. There's lots of benefits around that. So that's the third pillar.

The fourth pillar is around healthy eating, which, we're pretty good with our food, but obviously as we talked in a couple of episodes ago, we've recently gone plant-based after watching the movie Game Changers. I know, we both know, we're very aware on the occasional meal for whatever reason it's not as healthy, how our body feels after. In fact, just a few nights ago and we both felt icky afterwards and actually affected us for about 24 hours.



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Tamara:

And that ultimately affects your productivity levels at work. So yeah, we went out for dinner with your son and we could just tell that the food wasn't organic, and the sauce had a lot of sugar in it and our bodies just reacted really negatively to it. It's about tuning in and listening to what food groups give you the most amount of energy and give you the most amount of productivity throughout the day.

Joel:

I think you may not always recognise it when you are eating those healthy foods but you certainly do recognise when you don't. So that's the fourth pillar is healthy eating.

The fifth pillar is around risk avoidance and that comes back to that idea around knowledge and research and information. A good example would be just around smoking. So not doing things such as smoking that are actually bad for your health. And there's lots of science around the side effects of smoking as an example.

The sixth pillar is around good hygiene. Probably don't need to explain that one too much.

And then the seventh one is around having responsible use of self-care products and services, which is really talking about you having supplements, or vitamins and minerals to supplement your diet. The flip side is, for argument's sake, you might need medicine occasionally but don't abuse the medicine because that also has a negative side effect.

They're the seven pillars from the International Self-Care Foundation, which I found really interesting. A that the foundation exists, and B that they've got that information, to reinforce that it's not some, woo woo thing. It is actually a serious part of anyone's life really.

Tamara:

I just want to touch base on that medicine aspect. When we say don't use and abuse, is things like Panadol. I rarely ever have Panadol unless it's something really, really serious and is just getting your body to do what it's built to do and that's recover itself and fight off the bacteria. I mean two weeks ago I got the flu, and I took one cold and flu tablet and it just made me feel so out of my true self and I decided, you know what, I actually want my body to fight off this flu naturally. It's just being a little bit more conscious about what medicines you are taking, and understanding when you actually really need it.

Joel:

To round off the importance of self-care, one of the things when I was doing the research was that self-care actually is compounding. It's a bit like investing. The more frequently you invest money for instance, that compounds over time. Self-care is the same, so if you've got a regular practice of self-care that compounds over time.



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If you go back to your example before, if you're not putting petrol in your car and you're not looking after yourself, you get to a point where it's empty and if it hasn't been serviced in five years, all of a sudden you've got all this preventative medicine that you've got to do to get the car fixed. Whereas if you're doing it on a regular basis, it compounds and it actually is much better for your health.

Tamara:

I couldn't agree more. I've spoken a lot about my personal journey and some of the things that I like to do for self-care. What are some of the things that you as a male like to do, Joel?

Joel:

Thank you. I think probably the first thing is to talk a bit, as I mentioned earlier, I haven't been the best person around this. And I know when I'm being more self-aware, I know I'm not my best self when I haven't been practicing. For instance, I may not have as much patience with my kids, or when I'm working. Like you said, grumpier and stressed. The benefits for me around having some sort of self-care practices, I'm much calmer. And I've got greater confidence, which from a career point of view is really important. And these things come from, the various aspects of self-care, and also having much more clarity around what it is I need to do and the direction. And that also then makes me a lot more productive.

The things for me, and this is what works for me. Meditation, which I definitely could do more often but I know when I have regular meditation practice that it absolutely helps me. Time with my coach. I have an executive coach that I work with, Sam Norton from Fluid Intelligence, and one of the things he does, we've talked before around Doctor John Demartini, he's a facilitator with Doctor Demartini. It's very much around dissolving emotional charges. So, the time that I spend with Sam, in a way is really self-care, because that helps me dissolve any sort of mental or emotional charges that I have, which is a massive relief for me. And that is really good for my mental, physical and emotional health.

Exercise. Whether that's going to the gym or going for a walk. For me, also being outside is a really big one for me. So, we're combining the two, or combining three things. We're going to be combining exercise, going for a long walk, and we're going to be outside and in the sun. It's like a triple whammy for that one. I used to do a lot of running. I don't do much running anymore, and so going to the gym, actually doing weights. That also pushes me out of my comfort zone because it's not something I normally do, and that in itself also gives me more confidence and helps me in a lot of other areas as well.

Yoga, which I was doing really at the start of the year but I switched that out for the gym. But yoga is great because it helps, it's just a different form of exercise. It's more gentle but it also is great for sort of stretching and breathing. I've recently introduced a specific breathing



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exercises and regime, which I'm just starting on and learning about. But I noticed that in itself, just the breathing exercises, brings myself into my body and makes me more present. And even though it's only for around four to six breaths and that's, 30 seconds, if I'm doing that several times a day. It's amazing what that's like.

And then healthy eating, we talked about that. So recently going to plant based and noticing the times when I haven't eaten well and what that does to my body. That just reinforces why I do eat healthy. And just having time to myself. Occasionally when I get in a real bad spot just spending some time on the beach, going for a swim and spending some time in the sun really helps me, which is awesome.

What we're talking about here is that the regular stuff, but the other thing is also making sure that you're scheduling in the medium and long term things. We try and have our quarterly weekend away, which might sometimes slip to three or four or five months. But yeah, we're going camping in a month, which we are really looking forward to. Also making sure you're scheduling the bigger holidays as well. We're planning stuff for next year and that's all about being tech-free.

Having a self-care practice actually requires discipline and a lot of planning. It's really important to be thinking about that and making sure you're including it in your schedule.

Tamara:

That's a really, really good point. One thing to note is a lot of people who talk about self-care often talk about it being something that you do by yourself. And I strongly believe yes, there's a lot of things that you need to do by yourself, like some of the examples that Joel and I gave. But there are definitely things like the tech-free holiday, and going for walks together that can be part of your self-care routine. I honestly don't believe that self-care is just by yourself all of the time. A lot of the time, yes but you can do it with someone else as well.

Joel:

Absolutely. I know how much you enjoy catching up with your girlfriends for instance. So that's definitely a part of self-care.

Tamara:

Oh absolutely. Like you said, self-care does require a lot of planning but often the biggest excuses that people are too busy to fit self-care in. And I honestly believe the busier you are, the more self care you need. I am so busy. I work 45 plus hours every single week with my full-time role at Salesforce. I have my side hustle. I've got time with my girlfriends, and my exercise routine. I've got Joel, and my Mum, I've got so many things I need to do every single day. Plus Joel's son, we have him here as well. The more busy you are, the more self-care you need



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because you are running out of fuel like we mentioned before, a lot quicker and you need to fill up your self-care bucket even more, so you are overflowing to be able to give to others.

Like we said before, if you're not full within yourself, you cannot give to others and you will ultimately be a crankier version of you. Don't use the excuse that you're too busy. I am here to help you, and I'll give you some few tips on how I fit it in to my daily routine. The first thing is write a self-care menu and then put in the time that it takes to complete each one of those tasks. For example, meditating can be 5 minutes if you want or it could be 20 minutes. If you've only got 5 minutes, meditate for 5 minutes because that's ultimately going to be one extra little bit of fuel that you're putting into your body to be able to reboot and energize yourself for the day. Schedule it in your calendar. I schedule meditation in my calendar at 11:30am every single day so nobody can book in that time. And I take that time to meditate during work hours.

Get up earlier. If you've got kids get up half an hour earlier to what they generally get up and practice your self-care then. Add it into your morning routine. Is it having a cup of tea on the couch to yourself? It doesn't have to be something that's so complex that takes hours and hours and hours, but you can get up earlier to make sure that you can fit it in.

In terms of work, delegate tasks to your colleagues to help you complete whatever project that you're working on. If you are at full capacity, find ways that you can get your colleagues to help you. In terms of being at home, delegate chores to your kids. This is a big one! Honestly, you do not have to do everything.

Try and make that space for you to be able to have self-care in your daily routine. At work, ask for help. If you are billable 70 hours a week, make sure you put your hand up so you don't burn out and ask your manager for help. And then we've got the last one. Goals, you and I do this every single quarter, week and day is set the three big weekly goals, and the three tasks that you need to do every single day to help you achieve those weekly and quarterly and annual goals. You do not have to have this massive extensive To Do list to fit everything in within 24 hours. Stick to the top three that is going to make the biggest impact. And then allow yourself to have time for yourself and practice self-care.

Joel:

In our weekly planning that we do, there's actually a piece which is identifying and recognizing how are you going to rejuvenate and fill yourself up, so you're being intentional, having some discipline and planning around what you're going to do, and when you're going to do it.



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Tamara:

I completely agree. And sometimes my big three for the week is to exercise four times within the week. I'm actually scheduling in that time to make sure I am rebooting my system to be able to be the most productive and efficient at work.

Joel:

Just to reinforce that, and something you mentioned before, which is when you are busier, when you've got those extra busy weeks or seasons, like if you've got a launch or a big campaign happening and you might be busy for four weeks or eight weeks or whatever it might be, they are the times when you actually need to be more diligent in actually planning in those things. As Tamara said, even if it's only for five minutes, just all those little things do add up.

Tamara:

I agree. So, Joel, what are your top three takeaways for this podcast episode,

Joel:

The first is around mindset. Let's collectively banish this idea that self-care is lazy or selfish. This idea that you can't serve from an empty vessel. I think that's quite negative. I'd like to spin it the other way and say from a positive point of view, you can best serve others when you are full within yourself. So that's my first one.

My second one is to reinforce the compounding benefits to self-care. The more you do it, the better your health. Make sure you're including it in your weekly and your monthly schedule, and obviously that's going to drive forward and help you with your career through all those things we talked around productivity and clarity and all the rest of it. So that'd be number two.

And number three is know thyself. Do what's right for you. Where we are providing some examples of things that work for us individually, you don't have to copy those. Work out what's right for you. That all comes back to having that self-awareness. They'd be my three.

Tamara:

They're great. My top three is if you don't take time out for yourself, you're going to be doing yourself and everyone around you a disservice. No one likes the cranky, impatient and distracted version of you.

Joel:

No, we don't.

Tamara:

Hey. But if I flip it to be positive like you did, when you do take the time out for yourself and take the time to fill up your self-love bucket, you're going to act, or be from a place of love, and you're going to be a whole lot more productive. You're going to be a whole lot more patient, and you're going to be the best version of you. People are going to enjoy being around you.



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The second one being the more busy you are, the more self-care you need. If you're going to take anything away from today, take that one away because... learn from me. I have burnt out so many times from just being in go, go, go mode and I don't want that for you. When I do burn out, I end up taking out so much more time to recover than I would have if I just put in self-care practices in my daily schedule.

And the third one is self-care plays a huge role in your career development to have the energy, focus and productivity to achieve your goals. You need to take the time out to fill up your self-care bucket.

Joel: I think they're great. They're excellent. Everybody make sure after you listen to this podcast,

get out there and start doing some self-care.

Tamara: Yeah, I'd absolutely love to know what everyone gets up to. So direct message me, tag me in

your posts on Instagram. I'd love to see you all practicing self-care.