EPISODE 1448

[INTRODUCTION]

[00:00:00] JM: Software engineering can be a surprisingly grueling career. It is both physically and mentally demanding to sit in front of a screen for hours on end producing code. During the pandemic, the strains of being an engineer became even more acute as we were secluded in our homes, in some cases alone. Gabe Greenberg and Michelle Bakels work on G2i, which is a company that manages a large number of developers. G2i has a focus on developer health, which they believe is an underappreciated topic. They're also helping to organize React Miami, a conference that takes place April 18, through 19th 2022.

[INTERVIEW]

[00:00:36] JM: Gabe and Michelle, welcome to the show.

[00:00:38] GG: Thanks for having us.

[00:00:38] MB: Hi.

[00:00:40] JM: So you run G2i, and we've obviously done some shows in the past, and the topic that I want to discuss, at least in the beginning, is health. This is obviously relevant to me. I had some pretty bad health issues over the last year, and I guess you could call it burnout, and I'm sure that you have seen that operating a company with a lot of developers involved. I guess, I'd like to start to understand health by getting a perspective on burnout and what defines burnout, what is the cause of burnout?

[00:01:28] GG: I mean, personally, I've seen burnout in my life, so I can speak to it from that context. It looks like an extreme lack of contentment with everything that I'm doing, and it looks like for me, a lot of overworking, doing too much over scheduling, not enough margin. My personal life, my health is pushed to the side and work is coming first, which led for me to extreme levels of burnout, losing touch with my kids and my wife. It wasn't an easy time, as well

as a chronic illness for me. I would sleep on the floor of my office, get up to work, go back to sleep, just because I was chronically ill as well.

So, I was living on adrenaline, pretty much even though it didn't seem like the same type of adrenaline you might get from bungee jumping, that was the reality, my life was over scheduled, and work was the priority.

[00:02:27] JM: In your case, I feel like you had a chronic health problem that was physical, and there was an element of burnout that was tied to that physical issue, and it was almost like you were using work to alleviate some of the physical pains. Is that right?

[00:02:45] GG: Yup, I was absolutely avoiding the physical suffering by kind of taking my focus off of the physical pain. In the same, there was a level of, I couldn't get to a place of health, because that was the pattern that I had been in for so long, where I wasn't able to prioritize the physical things that I was going through, that basically appeared overnight. In others in the industry I see happening differently. I see some people just switching jobs very often, not content, just tired, and putting in a ton hours at work, and just a general struggle and almost like malaise. I hear that a lot directly, one on one in talking with people. They're putting in 12 to 14-hour days. This has happened a lot in our recent hiring process for our company, and I'm also hearing that on Twitter.

[00:03:45] JM: So is it possible to detect burnout in a developer base, before the worst symptoms of it manifest and cause actual problems?

[00:04:01] MB: Yeah, I think that there are some signs of burnout that we can become a little bit more in tune to. Burnout really manifests itself differently with different people. Sometimes it can be a lot of fatigue or growing distance from loved ones, or even more immersion into your work than previously before. So there's different ways that it can show up. It's hard to say that there's like any one thing specifically, but there are a few common things that you could look for, one of them being a lack of energy and exhaustion. Again, feeling distant from your friends, family, coworkers, people that you have felt closer to in the past or have had good relationships in the past. Now, maybe you're starting to feel maybe even animosity towards them or discontent, pursue an expectation of perfection and all work so you become less forgiving of yourself. You

try and achieve some unattainable level of quality, and you don't ever give yourself much wiggle room, a lowered self-esteem, confidence, lowered productivity, loss of focus, even becoming more cynical or annoyed with everyday situations.

Another really common one is feelings of depression or absentees, difficulty sleeping and of course, prolonged anxiety.

[00:05:28] JM: At G2i, do you guys proactively try to monitor those kinds of symptoms?

[00:05:34] GG: Yes. I have developed like a new one on one process for my direct reports that I started piloting today and that's actually the opening ritual is for the team members to start rating themselves on how they're doing with their health via discussion. We are also working on something called a restful work operating system, Michelle and I are writing it. Essentially, it's a habit building around what we're calling restful work, and it starts out with diagnostics, self-surveys, where they're talking about where they're struggling curriculum and education. We're building around teaching other ways and solution oriented thinking, somehow to building and also building in further support, whether it be through community counseling, or 12 step programs.

[00:06:17] MB: I think also, we just talk about developer health almost on a daily basis, if not a daily basis at G2i because it's a cornerstone of our work moving forward, and we have a culture where we don't exactly like praise this overworking or overstuffing. We encourage ourselves, we encourage each other to take breaks, to take rest, and so we don't necessarily feel this artificial pressure to do this over achievement all the time, or to push ourselves beyond our boundaries.

[00:06:51] JM: Do you feel there's a tension between having that kind of sensitivity towards overwork and getting the kind of results that a company like Amazon would? Amazon, which is kind of famous for pushing its employees to outperform competition?

[00:07:12] MB: Yeah, I think it creates a cognitive dissonance. Because I think when do you actually look at where the best productivity happens, it happens when your employees are happy and well rested, and in the best state of mind. So when you think about really big companies like Amazon, they are always pushing the limits, and they have a very well-known

culture of, kind of stretching their employees. One example that I found really interesting of this, Microsoft Japan, experimented with a four-day work week, where they essentially eliminated 20% of their employees work week. And this was meant to be a mental health benefit to their employees. And what they found unexpectedly was actually a 40% increase in the amount of work that got done. That was not something that they expected to find. But it was a result of when their employees were there, and they were showing up, they were really showing up, and they were really focusing, and they had the mindset to do their best work and to be creative.

[00:08:15] JM: So when you talk to an employee, and you see that they're experiencing a health issue, or you suspect they're experiencing some kind of health issue, do you try to encourage them to go on leave? Or do you reduce their workload? Is there a best practice for adapting to that issue?

[00:08:38] GG: We don't have a best practice, per se. I mean, there's been a lot more people suffering with COVID in our org, and we're encouraging people to rest when that happens. What the primary focus for me leaving this company is to, when you're dealing with burnout, you're looking at both sides of the equation, you're looking at how the organization is either encouraging kind of the pressure, the artificial pressure, or they're not, as well as the individuals struggling with their own desire for perfection or to do well. And my goal is to set up a structure that encourages work life balance, whether it be through a four-day work week, which we've been experimenting with for 18 months now. We just went to a four-day work week, or it'd be through regularly checking in with engineers.

Engineers are a platform. We're starting to educate them around this topic, and we had the first one request a 32-hour work week with one of our customers, and we were able to make that happen. So, to start to see the small changes within our marketplace and on our team, to me is setting us up for the future. When you talk about like an Amazon, versus another company maybe focused a little bit more on work life balance, I believe that your bottom line does increase when you start to focus on these types of things, but it's a long term play. If I can recruit better team members, if I can recruit better engineers through focusing on health first, I believe that a four-day work week, for example, there's plenty of engineers that come join us with that being a focus. You can retain more engineers with that focus. They either have the same

productivity on a four-day work week, or potentially better. And because you're recruiting better engineers, you're retaining more of them, your bottom line should increase.

So, as we talk about going from a five-day work week to a four-day work week, I believe that bottom line is actually increased. But it's very hard to experiment with that, as a founder, very hard to believe that, very hard to see that, which is why we're focused on working with companies to experiment with the four-day work week, without having them have to just jump in wholesale, because it's really impossible to do that with them.

[00:10:59] JM: Right. Especially because four-day workweek for G2i means you're not just imposing the four-day work week on your own workforce. It extends to the companies you're partnering with, because G2i is kind of a contracting firm and you have contracts with companies. So, I assume there's questions around like, if the company works a five-day work week, how are you issuing contractors for a four-day work week?

[00:11:26] GG: We're not at this point. We're starting to educate the engineers on the opportunity for that to happen. We're starting to educate the companies out there that this is possible and offering free consulting on how to move towards a four-day work week. We do have a few companies that are okay with that. But our goal is to basically expand the market that we want to sell into, which is healthier companies and healthier developers. So, it's a process. We don't think that it's an overnight thing, and we're not naive to the fact that we're going against the grain in some aspects.

[00:12:00] JM: How else has the company changed as you've scaled? You're now in your – how long have you been around, like five years at this point?

[00:12:08] GG: We're coming to the sixth year.

[00:12:11] JM: So what's been the most acute scalability challenges recently?

[00:12:14] GG: I think when you want to grow a community, which is a focus of ours moving forward, figuring out how to grow a community that's healthy, of software engineers who have resources, like the ones that we're trying to build is not easy, and also offering, I don't know if it's

a scalability issue, per se, but we developed this vision over the past year. It came from my personal experience and my struggles, and also seeing so many of the struggles out there in the industry. It took us about six months to come to the vision of centering a marketplace around the physical, mental and emotional health of software engineers.

So the scalability issue for the next three, four years is how do we build that into the DNA of what we've already built? That for us, that looks like building up services that support the physical, mental, emotional health of software engineers, as well as training companies, on how to care for their engineers better. If Nike convinced the world, that everyone's an athlete, and Spotify convinced the world that everyone's an entrepreneur, it's our goal to convince the world that a healthier work life balance is possible, but not to force that on people to meet people where they're at, and that includes our own companies, our own engineers and ourselves.

[00:13:34] JM: How have you seen the usage of the product change? Meaning, do you find that companies are hiring developers for longer stretches of time, or expanding the number of developers that they're bringing on, that they're willing to bring on as contractors? Or do they keep the kind of width of their contracting force steady over time?

[00:14:02] GG: We have plenty of long term relationships with companies and they end up usually keeping on engineers for long periods of time. That's generally speaking, we see a lot of that with the engineer that wanted to move from 40-hour work week to a 32-hour work week. He wanted to do it because he had a little bit of really passion project, side project and wanted a day a week to focus on that, or did involve weekend time or after work. The company loved the engineer so much that they made it happen. So that's the sort of compromise that I think that we're going to see.

Most of the engineers out in the wild that I'm talking to that are on a four-day work week, are actually not necessarily at companies that do that wholesale. They're coming in, and they're negotiating that for themselves. So I think that's what we're going to see more and more of is engineers saying, I have the power, I have the skill set that's wanted, so not only can I get paid well, which engineers deserve, but hey, like, I actually want to work four days. I think I can turn out some great work in four days, as long as the product management is done well. That's what I hope that we can help ease in on the company side is that we can kind of bring some of the

benefits and the process and how to move over, when you saw the world moving from onsite work to remote work or hybrid, that's a process and a lot of things have to change in order to support that.

[00:15:35] JM: Given that you're still pretty laser focused on React, has the React ecosystem continued to evolve, or has it stabilized in terms of what you need to offer to clients?

[00:15:52] GG: I mean, the React Native role has definitely matured and stabilized, I'll say that much. The types of companies that are using it, are getting to be more and more on the enterprise side. It's not your 5 and 10-person startup anymore. So the companies and the engineering teams are using React Native are definitely more mature. React is, of course, here to stay. As an ecosystem, the growth has been amazing. And I think, for us, because we want to help more and more software engineers around developer health, we are starting to expand outside of JavaScript. So that'll happen this year, as well for us.

[00:16:36] JM: So on the React ecosystem, you are obviously a key organizer of the React Miami conference. And I think part of what is interesting about React Miami is that it is in Miami and the Miami ecosystem has been developing, and it's got its own flavor that seems distinctly different from the other locales, the other primary tech locales. I just want to know what's your perspective on what defines the Miami tech scene these days?

[00:17:15] MB: I think first and foremost, it's collaboration and community first. I think that is what makes Miami feel immediately so different than other places that you go and you visit when you're in tech communities. There's an initial response when you visit of how can I help? Or what are you looking for? So much so that it's basically the unofficial slogan of the city is, how can I help? So, I think that's what really makes it special is that it truly is a welcoming community, and everyone is there to share resources and help each other grow.

[00:17:54] JM: Anything you would add, Gabe, given that you moved to Miami, what, two years ago?

[00:17:57] GG: I've been north of Miami for like 17 years, actually. I mean, you can't understate the difference between like the northeast and some other areas when you're talking about

weather. I mean, like, that's a big deal. You get to spend more time outside, you don't have to deal with the snow and all of that stuff. I mean, that's a big boost for some people when they're talking about work life balance and quality of life and being a remote employee. I think that there's just excitement in general for a few areas. Miami being one of them, outside of the Bay Area. The Bay Area is not going anywhere. We don't know this. It's still going to be probably the main hub for many years to come.

But I think some more optionality for people that want something different. The culture down in – like, I'm married to an Argentinian. So my kids primarily speak Spanish. That's their first language. The food, the music, the vibe, the beach, the weather, that plays like a big role in engineers coming down here and companies wanting to build. You also have like the tax benefits that a lot of people are seeing here, as well as in Austin, and you have a government that's highly supportive. Mayor Suarez has gone out of his way to make sure that people feel included and supported. I mean, he's willing to meet with a large amount of people to make sure that happens. And then you have the crypto community, which is really pushed, really, really pushed in here. I mean, it's so obvious that they're making Miami home. So to me, that's one of the strongest pushes is the crypto community which is very strong and community naturally because of how the projects are on.

[00:19:51] JM: Any notable overlap between the crypto world and the frontend focused React World?

[00:20:01] MB: Well, yeah. So there's a lot of React developers finding an easy transition into Web 3.0, or the crypto world because a lot of the UIs are still going to be built in React. So they're finding a way to kind of strike the balance between both sides pretty easily.

[00:20:16] JM: Do you feel like the world of crypto has presented any significant opportunities for G2i to grow into? Do you see that as an area to expand developer expertise into?

[00:20:32] GG: Absolutely, that's definitely on the roadmap to consider. Web 3.0 and the various technologies this year. More and more of our developers are excited about it. More of them are getting jobs in Web 3.0, various NFT marketplaces and other startups are growing extremely fast. So yes, it's definitely going to be an opportunity for us as a marketplace. And

being in Miami, it's kind of our backyard as well down here. So a lot of the sponsors for React Miami come from that world already. And a G2i is invested in crypto on our balance sheet as of a couple of years ago.

So, I believe in the Web 3.0 world, again, it's hard to make a transition from a Web 2.0 company to a Web 3.0 company. The thinking is different. If you're looking at like a dowel versus a more traditional company sponsored community, there's just so much to figure out. Within dowels, Michelle's a part of quite a few different dowel, so there's lots of opportunity. With the React Web 3.0 connection, I think Nader Dabit, who is a speaker at React Miami is a friend of mine, and Michelle's, his transition into Web 3.0 into the crypto world has ushered in kind of a lot of his followers into seeing, okay, this is possible, and these are the benefits. So, he's very vocal, very helpful in that world, in that transition.

[00:22:08] JM: Do you have a sense of what the core skills of the Web 3.0 developer are, what the Web 3.0 stack is?

[00:22:19] MB: So, I think it depends a little bit on what the project is. I'm not super familiar with many of the different stacks. But one that I see really common is solidity for the smart contracts and React on the front end. And for whatever is happening on the back end, however, it's chosen to be built, I do often still see React on the front end.

[00:22:44] JM: So Gabe, you mentioned that you invested in crypto on the balance sheet of G2i. I guess it's becoming pretty popular among companies. Is that hard to do? Is there anything like controversial to that, when you're, I guess, talking to your investors or stakeholders?

[00:23:02] GG: Executing it, no. But yeah, stakeholders, yeah. Our CFO advisor is old school, and he's like, "What are you doing?" He doesn't understand where it's coming from, you know. We're not this massive, massive enterprise. So it's not like we're buying $100 million in crypto here. But even a little piece of it is hard to get understanding as to why you're doing that. Yeah, there's some blockers. I believe in it. I believed in the rationale behind cryptocurrency for a while. Honestly, like I personally invested it – I convinced my wife that we could invest in it back in 2017. But it was reading – the Winklevoss twins had a paper on the case for Bitcoin to 500k.

And for me, that started bringing some of the knowledge gaps, in terms of digital gold versus physical gold, and a one to one comparisons. I'm not saying everything that they write in that article is going to come true, but I believe it enough to invest some of the company's resources into that. I've been wanting to all the way back to 2016, when really the company restarted and it just wasn't possible at the time.

[00:24:17] JM: As you're putting together React Miami or working with the other organizers and talking to the emcees and assessing the potential areas that you could cover, how are you prioritizing the stories to tell at React Miami? How are you sorting through the potential conference talks?

[00:24:43] MB: So we finalized our speaker lineup last Friday, I believe, and it was definitely quite a process of a lot of different variables. So first of all, we really wanted to have a diverse set of topics, something for really everyone to be able to sink their teeth into and to have things that were maybe not even the most obvious, like topics. We have a talk on mental health and software engineering. We also have a talk on technical writing. We have another one that's called Design for Developers.

So, things that are a little bit outside of the typical full stack topics. We also have five Web 3.0 talks. It's around NFTs, there's another one on DPhi, one on just back end, another one full stack. So there's quite a range of just even Web 3.0 topics. Really tried to spread that out so that everyone could really have something that they really, really get excited for, along with a lot of other great things to discuss. And then, of course, we want to have a diverse speaker lineup. So I wanted to make sure that we had speakers from all different backgrounds and experiences. We even have speakers coming from a couple of different countries. And of course, we wanted to have local speakers as well.

I believe we have, yes, three speakers from South Florida. And that was because for this conference, there is a part of our vision where we want our attendees, and we want the people visiting, to be able to key into our tech community down here, where it's not the conference that you go to, and you sit in talks for a few days, and then leave and you don't really know what's in Vegas, or New York. You were just in a room the whole time. We've all really want to introduce our attendees to our community, to our local leaders, to the people that we work with here every

day, and have them experience the city. So we want to bring in a lot of what it really means to be a part of Miami tech or South Florida tech ecosystem to the conference as well.

[00:26:59] JM: The sponsorship of the conferences, led by Vercel, and the presence of Vercel in the front end community has just grown and grown over the years. Gabe, do you have any sense for why Vercel has pulled ahead as such a prominent hosting company?

[00:27:22] GG: I mean, the developer experience is amazing. Everyone loves using it, and what Guillermo has been able to do as an ambassador in the React community is amazing. I mean, it speaks wonders around how he's been able to hire, fundraise, steer that company. Personally, I'm in awe of him as a leader. I respect him greatly and the product they've been able to build. Michelle, what do you think about Vercel? You talked about people all the time.

[00:27:54] MB: Yeah. So just really quickly, our co-organizers are JSWORLD Conference. Vercel isn't a co-presenter for us. But they are a big supporter. And I think that they're big supporters of a lot of different people at a lot of different conferences, which obviously makes them very interfered in the tech community. Lee Robinson their head of DevRel is going to be speaking. They have this event template that I forked for the React Miami site and they're also sponsoring. So, they've been very supportive.

I think they bring an attitude that's very fresh and exciting to development that we haven't really seen in a long time. So, I'll just speak to the last couple of years that I've been in tech. It's been Fang companies, Apple, Google, this air of kind of tech dominance, elite performance, and also like high secrecy, kind of black box culture. What I think is so different about Vercel is that they positioned themselves as a company where you feel like you can still get that top performance that best of the best developer experience and product, all while being very open to the community, open source, welcome to feedback, available, accessible. They're online, Lee Robinson, Guillermo, Steven Tay, all of these different people, you can reach them on Twitter, you can ask them questions. And also they're bringing in some very exciting people to their team, which is definitely drawing a lot of attention. Yeah, I think there's quite a few things that they're doing right.

[00:29:40] JM: Is there something distinguishing about it in contrast to previous hosting platforms? Other than just developer experience, is there any like particular technology advancement that you find notable about Vercel? Or is it mostly like a design and streamlined user experience that really makes it different?

[00:30:07] MB: In my experience, I don't have maybe the full breadth of experience as others. I think developer experience is pretty big, when I compare to hosting on AWS, or even hosting with GCP, which is also pretty straightforward. I think, Vercel just makes things very, very simple to use. Also, if you decide to build with Next.js, you have some performance advantages there. But as far as hosting experiences go, I don't think that you can beat like three clicks, and you're up, and do like automatic builds and deployments. It just really simplifies a day in the life for sure. Also, there's a key advantage in like the resilience and the redundancies that you get by default. So, when AWS was down a couple of weeks ago, US East one, if you're using Vercel, they have automatic fail overs built into their products. So I checked my Vercel apps, and I'm still good to go. I thought that was pretty great, and gives you definitely a sense of security.

[00:31:17] JM: I want to come back to talking about health, a little bit more. I think there's probably a lot of people who have had or are having health issues related to the pandemic or not, and Gabe, you're somebody who I saw, have a lot of fortitude, through your own autoimmune issues. Personally, I've really struggled with my health issues in the last year or so, and I've kind of buckled in a lot of ways. I wonder if you had any pieces of advice or best practices for being resilient through the chronic health issues?

[00:32:01] GG: It's a really, really good question. I have struggled for most of my adult life with mental health issues, addictions, as well as physical health issues. And then therefore, the emotional stuff comes with that. The one thing that I found to be true over and over again is, I think that there is when you give up fighting, like the battling that is not productive, and you ask for help. That vulnerability, I've heard it being referred to as the gift of desperation, it's truly a gift. That's some of the time where you can build the best habits, because you're very malleable, you're open to suggestions, where before you were closed off. You're open to doing things that you weren't open to before. I've specifically seen that done best in community. There's lots of different opportunities for community in terms of healing together. There is the idea of counseling being a small community, that's helped me. Individual counseling, marriage

counseling, I'm currently in both areas, and it's honestly saved my relationship with my family. You're constantly kicking up stuff on purpose. And so it's painful, but it's worth it.

I think the most underutilized form of helping community out there is 12-step programs. There's many, many different 12-step programs out there that just are either thought to be a joke, or not even realized. Within our restful work operating system, we'll be talking about them and identifying them, and allowing people to take some diagnostic surveys to see if they might fit in a certain place. So, I think that's my thought is to be in community, and be vulnerable.

I think lastly, I've been able to find specific mentors, who I trust, and I call still on a weekly basis. Some are around my propensity to overwork, and they're extremely, extremely helpful to have that like, the thing I didn't have growing up. I didn't have a father who could offer me those types of helpful solution oriented thinking, and I have a couple men in my life who listen, understand, and then offer me a few suggestions and that's changed my life. I didn't give up when I was sick, but I want it too many times.

I think last say here, the tech community when you're vulnerable, especially through Twitter, or other communities that might be safe to be vulnerable about struggles, if you have a specific ask, I've seen them show up. The reason that we're launching a developer health fund of $22,450 through G2i, to give out to people who are struggling with any area of health, and they can apply for it, and there's no strings attached is because that's the exact amount that was raised for me in a GoFundMe in 2018 to help me with my chronic health issues, and it worked. I'm healthy today. I've been healthy for 504 days. Who's counting? But we want to literally give that exact amount of money that was raised for me back to the community. And that's the type of thing that I think is just that paying it forward approach. I've seen it happen over and over again. People like Michelle are living examples of that. She's been through the wringer in tech, and now she's dedicated her career to helping others, and building community around this health thing. So there's quite a few things in that, but the community and the vulnerability are important pieces for me.

[00:35:42] jM: Michelle, anything you want to add to that?

[00:35:45] MB: I think that was a really great answer, to be honest. I think that's totally right on, because I think even when I was dealing with my own health issues in tech, I couldn't get better until I admitted that there was something happening that needed to be changed, or that needed to be fixed or addressed. So I think, acknowledging, first and foremost that you can't just keep pushing through it. There's no amount of resilience, at some point. Maybe, it's not even about you, at a certain point. It's about just kind of separating yourself from whatever is causing you to be sick or causing you stress. And then once you're able to do that, and finding ways to be supported. For me that looked like therapy and several different forms, and also changing jobs.

[00:36:42] JM: What I'll say is, the immersion in technology has really graded away at my personal mental health. Just getting so saturated in technology and podcasts for years, I think, really degraded my mental health. And if I could go back, I think something I would do would be, I would probably have spent a lot more time in person trying to find some way to exist in person, which is obviously doubly hard right now. But it can be pretty addictive to just spend all day in the online ecosystem where you can just hang out with the coolest people. And yeah, it's probably like a necessary remedy to find some way to spend time in the real world to balance that with your online persona.

[00:37:33] MB: Yeah, I agree. I think there's like a huge perspective leveling to being out, I guess, in the real world. Alexis Ohanian has been posting recently about how this rejection of calling like outside reality, because sometimes like being online is also equal form of reality. So kind of trying to adopt that language a little bit myself. But I do see where you're going with that. I think, for me, when I get super bogged down, or when I was burning myself out or obsessing over work, I would spend, a Saturday, maybe for the first time in three months with my family, and it would just be like, all of a sudden, really emotional for me. I feel like I've been missing out for a huge chunk of the year, and I don't know why sitting around the dinner table is about to make me cry, and it's like, "Oh, wow, I have really been missing out on something". And the whole time, I thought I was achieving something and doing something more, and really, I was kind of losing touch with things that were also really important to me, and I wasn't even realizing it.

[00:38:42] JM: Well, it's been a real pleasure talking to you both. I guess on a closing note, are there any final recommendations for day to day practices? I think we've talked about some

macro practices. But if you have any day to day, minor things that are illustrative of how you maintain your mental health, and maybe organizationally, how you kind of encourage mental health within the company.

[00:39:14] MB: So for me, something that I found really effective is creating basically a timetable for the day, where I kind of break up the day into different hours and write down what I'll be working on for those. I think also, just releasing this expectation of perfection. So if I don't hit all of those things, it's okay, I still have another day to come back and do them. I think just under scheduling yourself. I don't think you have to try and get all of it in a single day or in one week. Just know that you're trying your best and thank yourself for what you can get done.

[00:39:53] GG: Yeah, the daily action plan that Michelle was referring to is super important for me, because we often have financial budget, but we don't often apply that to time. I think that looking at where we're spending our time on a daily basis is important, especially to go away from like vagueness to make it really crystal clear, because we start to see things like time stuffing. We're trying to jam too much into a certain area. I take that daily action plan, I expand it into what I call a two-week essentialism plan, which we'll be teaching formally, and we break that up into a couple areas. I've been putting my health as the top item, and then a few other areas in management, or at work. I only focus on my, "hell, yes". So, it has to be things that are super obvious to me getting done, that really, really matter and saying no to pretty much everything else.

Having this up on my screen at all times has really been effective for me. Surprisingly, it's a very simple process, but it's benefited the organization, it's benefited me. And lately, putting the health piece at the top allows me to realize like this is a glass ball, I can't just drop my health, because it's not going to bounce back to me. The work that I'm doing here at G2i for the most part, they're rubber balls. If I drop them, they'll bounce back, but the glass balls in my life can't be dropped.

So I think I'll end on, in the restful work curriculum that we're writing, the four foundational principles are slowing down is the foundation of restful work. Work, ideally, should be one part of our life, a very important part, still one slice of the pie, and not the most important part. Our physical and mental health is a glass ball that cannot be dropped. And lastly, artificial pressure

and adrenalizing should be avoided at all costs. So, those are the things that we're operating out of principally and from that comes certain behaviors are really habits that we're trying to develop. And that's what our restful work operating system is about. It's about developing habits with those foundations. It's changed my life and Michelle's been able to benefit from it too, and we hope to be able to beta test it with a small group of people and get some more feedback once we have finished.

[00:42:12] JM: Cool. Well, guys, thank you so much for coming on the show. It's been a real pleasure talking to you, and thanks for opening up.

[00:42:15] MB: Of course. Thanks for having us.

[00:42:17] GG: Thanks for having us, Jeff.

[END]