Why Self-Care is Good for Business

Matt Black

- Dad, Husband, Son
- B.A. – Psychology
- M.A. – Professional Counseling
- Currently serving as a Product Manager for TimeFront – Consulting Management Platform
- Varied Professional Experiences
  - Former Substance Abuse Counselor
  - Everything from sweeping hair to managing teams to owning a business
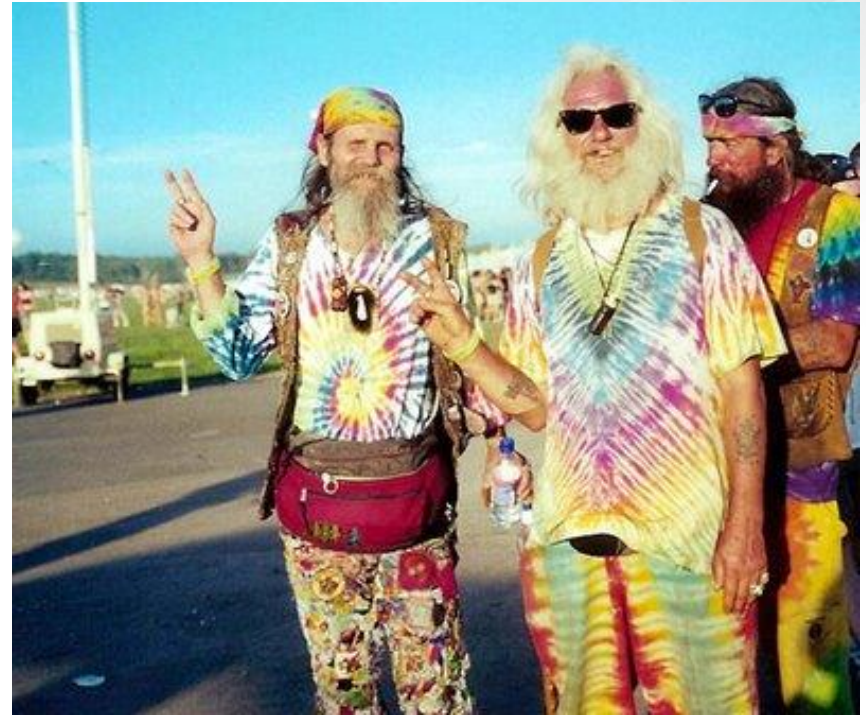
Why Do We Care About Self-Care?

Optimization

How much time do we spend optimizing our workflows? (Gantt Charts)

VS

Working 60 hours a week on 5 hours of sleep and 4 cans of Monster Energy drinks

Let's Set the Table

Establishing a Common Language

Self-Care...Jargon Free

- Defining "Self-Care
  - **Physical Health**
    - The Body
  - **Mental Health**
    - The Data of the World
  - **Emotional Health**
    - How I Interpret that Data
  - **Spiritual Health**
    - My Place in the World

> "The effort one takes to ensure their own physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health."
>
> – Matt Black

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Self-Care is Not…

Indulgent

Selfish

Self-Centered

Let's Dig In!

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Best Version of Ourselves vs Clock Puncher

- Work/Life Balance
- Does your job impact your personal life?
  - Vice versa?
- Can our work life behavior improve our personal life?
  - Job as part of identity

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Physical Health

TREAT YO SELF

- Physical health is relatively easy to control
  - Manipulating weight, sleep, etc
- Socially acceptable to talk about…
  - New diets, Peloton, gym selfies
- Better physical health = better cognitive performance
  - Best ideas while walking
    - Also, EMDR
- Examples
  - Nutrition, sleep patterns, exercise habits and physical medical conditions (i.e., blood pressure, cholesterol, etc.

Physical Health Concrete Actions

- Move. Even 15 min/day. Project management is often a sedentary job. WFH opens more options.

- Drink water. It's hard to drink too much water. Thirst is often confused for hunger.

- Sunlight. Sunlight provides us with Vitamin D, which may help strengthen bones, your immunity and provide anti-depression benefits.

- Good sleep hygiene – sleep times should be consistent, and your sleep environment should be cool, dark, and quiet.

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Mental Health

> "IT IS THE MARK OF AN EDUCATED MIND TO ENTERTAIN A THOUGHT WITHOUT ACCEPTING IT"
>
> – ARISTOTLE

- Think of it more as "Brain Health" or "I/O Health"
- Different than emotional health
- Brain is like a computer – mental health is how we process data
- How do we filter that data?
  - Our jobs are ultimately about judgement.
- What is within our direct control?
  - Serenity Prayer

Mental Health Concrete Actions

- Practice mindfulness. Take stock at various points of your day to identify what you're thinking about.

- Take a break. Try doing nothing – close your eyes or lie down and relax.

- Second opinion. Calibrate your "filter" every so often. "Am I off-base, here?"

- Consider the Fundamental Attribution Error
  - My successes are because I'm awesome, your failures are because you're bad
  - My failures are due to factors beyond my control, your successes are due to factors beyond your control

Emotional Health

- Coping with the inputs of the world
- Not always welcome at work
- Self-Talk
  - Challenge self-defeating self talk
- Psychological Safety
  - How safe do you feel?
  - How safe do you make others feel?

I'M GOOD ENOUGH, I'M SMART ENOUGH, AND DOGGONE IT PEOPLE LIKE ME

Emotional Health Concrete Actions

- Journal about the emotions you experienced that day.
  - Few times a day, take inventory.
  - Look for patterns (i.e., more on edge right before lunch)
- Give yourself permission to feel your feelings.
  - "There is no pain" story.
- Explore potential medication for persistent/on-going negative emotions.
  - You can't journal or medicate your way out of a chemical imbalance.

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Spiritual Health

- Not necessarily religious
- What is our place in the world
  - Job as identity
- How does this manifest?
  - Trust/Micro-Management
  - Controlling others

Bob Vance, Vance Refrigeration.

Spiritual Health Concrete Actions

- Pray
  - You don't have to pray "to" something. Prayer is ultimately identifying and articulating our thoughts, desires, and problems. It's mindfulness.
- Meditate.
  - No mantras required. It's more about focusing without judgement.
- Call/text a friend.
  - WFH can be very isolating

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Bonus: Financial Health

- Can be a touchy subject

- Consider if you're spending your way to happiness

  – Amazon, Instagram, etc

- Tracking expenses

  – Mint

  – You Need a Budget

  – Expensify

Employer's Responsibility

- Research on productivity factors
  - MH, PH, job, support
- Employers provide health insurance and EAPs.

  - Access vs Action
- How can you take control?

EAPs

- Employee Assistance Program
  - Will usually provide 3-5 free sessions of counseling for non-severe issues
  - Can also be used as a referral service to see if you'd benefit from longer term counseling
  - Typically offers resources for other work/life areas:
    - Budgeting
    - Child Care
    - Elder Care
    - Academics

You can make it, but it's easier if you don't have to do it alone.

Betty Ford

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References

Study #1

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Study #2

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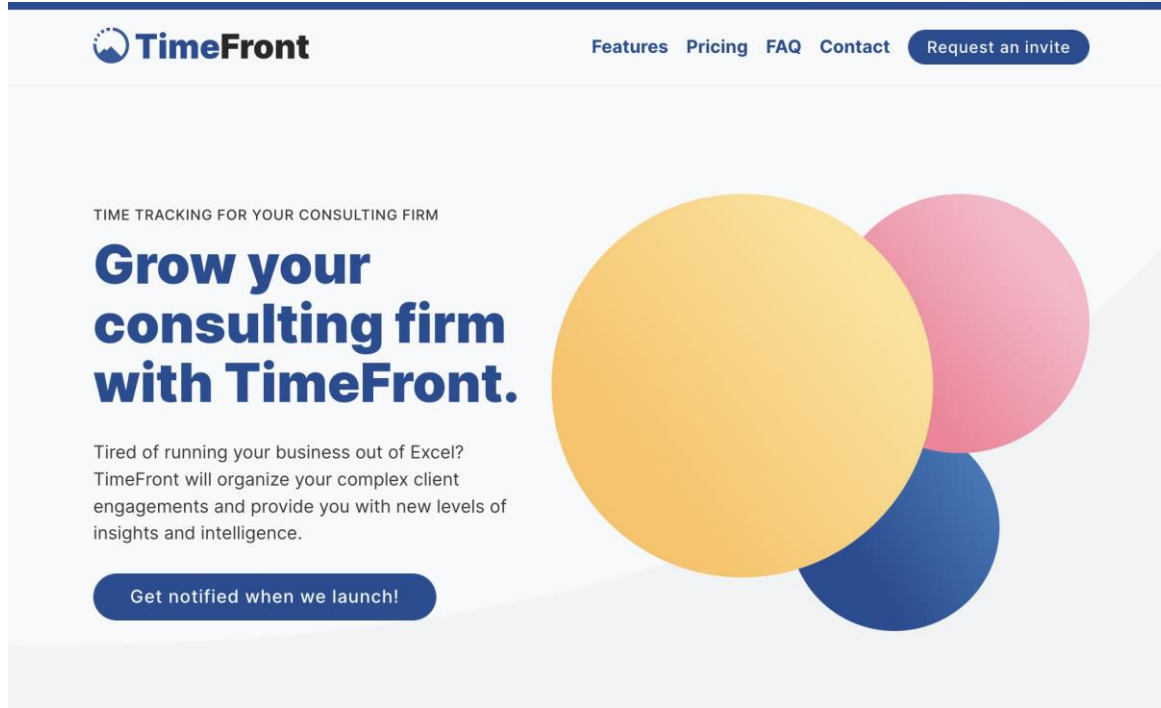
Study #3

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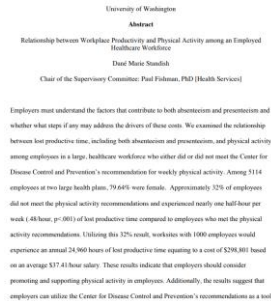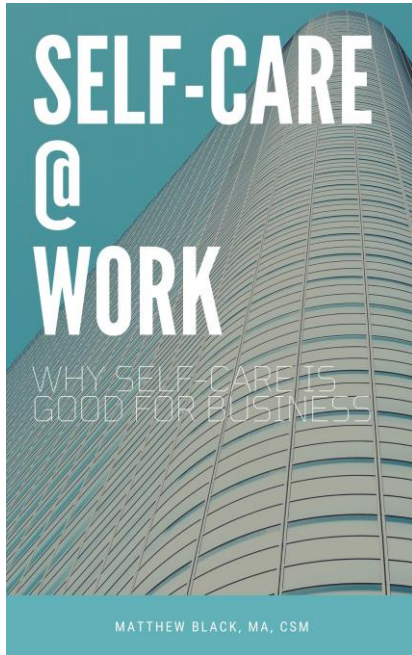
"Self Care at Work"
by
Matt Black

Product Manager, Certified SAFe Scrum Master, Agile Coach and former Substance Abuse Counselor, Matthew Black, M.A. condenses his 15+ years of experience in those fields to provide you with the necessary tools to improve your career.

"Self-Care at Work: Why Self-Care is Good for Business" outlines how executives, managers and individual contributors can improve their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health to be happier, healthier and more productive.

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Questions?

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