



Human Optimization

Pod Club Discussion Questions



E45 How to Improve Performance and Increase Well-Being Simultaneously

Guest: Graeme Rosenberg, MD., Assistant Professor of Clinical Surgery | Director of Performance & Wellness for the Department of Surgery | Keck School of Medicine of USC, Los Angeles, CA

The three big questions explored in the podcast:

Question 1

How do we define performance and well-being, and what is their relationship with one another?

Question 2

Why does it seem like our performance and our well-being are in competition with one another?

Question 3

What practical steps can we take right now to allow us to achieve more, while simultaneously improving well-being?

Discussion Questions:

1. Dr. Rosenberg defines performance as an equation involving individual abilities, internal factors, and external environmental factors, all aimed at an "outcome of interest." How do you currently define "performance" in your own life or work? How might broadening this definition to include these components change your perspective?
2. The podcast emphasizes that "more" (in human optimization) is individualized and rooted in personal values and priorities. What does more mean to you? What steps could you take to better align your performance objectives with your core values?
3. Dr. Rosenberg argues that performance and well-being are intrinsically linked and synergistic, rather than being in competition. Can you recall a time when improving your well-being (e.g., better sleep, less stress) directly led to improved performance, or vice versa?
4. The discussion differentiates between "enduring" (suffering for suffering's sake) and "performing" (suffering linked to purpose). How often do you find yourself "enduring" rather than "performing?"
5. Dr. Rosenberg distinguishes "rest" from "recovery," defining wellness as a verb (actions taken to build well-being). What specific "wellness actions" do you intentionally incorporate into your routine? Or: Identify one or two to incorporate this week and record/ journal what you notice about your performance.
6. The episode suggests that well-being can serve as a "barometer" for whether you need to reassess your approach to performance. How attuned are you to your own well-being as an indicator? What changes might it be signaling for you right now?

7. The call to action encourages listeners to define their values, vision, mission, and purpose. If you were to start this process today, what's one core value or purpose that you believe would significantly impact both your performance and well-being?
8. Based on this episode, what is one small change you are going to make to help improve in this area. How are you going to keep yourself accountable to that and measure your success? (Be sure to keep it simple, start small, and make it very clear).