MAYO CLINIC

Human Optimization

Pod Club Discussion Questions



E72: No such thing as a stress-free life. Build resilience.

Guest: Jenny Evans

The three big questions explored in the podcast:

Question 1
What is stress, and how is our experience of stress connected to resiliency?

Question 2
What causes us to have low resiliency, and why do we struggle with traditional stress management?

Question 3
What steps can we take to increase our resiliency and minimize the impact of stress on our lives?

Discussion Questions:

1. What are your personal "canaries in the coal mine"—the subtle physical or emotional signs that tell you stress is sneaking up on you?
2. How has stress become normalized in your day-to-day life? Looking back over the past few years, what level of stress are you tolerating now that would have felt overwhelming in the past? Does that change feel like positive growth or a potential problem?
3. When you feel deeply overwhelmed, do you try to "think" your way out of it, or do you have physical ways to reset your system?
4. Sleep, movement, and nutrition are pillars of well-being, but they are often the first things we sacrifice under pressure. What does your "recovery portfolio" look like, and which of those three pillars needs the most attention right now?
5. Dr. Camp distinguishes between "surviving stress" and "intentionally growing through stress." Can you think of a past stressful period that you intentionally transformed into a learning experience? What made that mindset shift possible?
6. Clarity of values and purpose can be a major physiological and psychological source of resilience. During high-stress moments, what core value or purpose serves as your anchor?
7. How does your workplace or social circle view recovery? What can you do to help model healthy stress recovery for those around you?
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 and measure your success? (Be sure to keep it simple, start small, and make it very clear).