Introduction and Tara's Sleep Journey

All right, everyone, we are back for another amazing talk. I'm actually joining everyone from a hotel lobby in Austin, which is not where I'm supposed to be.

So if you don't recognize the background is because it's not my background. This is downtown Austin. My room is not ready, but here we go. We are troopers, road warriors.

We're going to make it happen. And we have Tara joining us today. Tara Youngblood, thank you for joining. Oh, thanks for having me. We're going to talk about probably the most important topic, which, you know, kind of solves everything if you do it properly, which is sleep.

And my understanding is that you have a pretty personal story like that drove you towards what you do. We're going to talk a lot about the work you do and how people can help themselves through that.

But how did this sort of come to the forefront for you? Yeah. So, you know, sleep has been a part of Todd and I together developed a product called the Chili Pad in 2007.

And so we started talking about sleep even even early on. But for me, the problem was it worked, you know, pretty well. But I hadn't figured out sleep yet.

And then, in 2008, we lost our youngest son, Benjamin. And, the grief depression, really put me into a spin, and I really didn't sleep at all. In my TEDx talk, I'll actually talk about the fact that it's basically was the equivalent of being drunk.

And even the CDC has benchmarked that kind of loss of sleep as the equivalent to driving drunk. They benchmark when you're exhausted. Your crash rating is very similar to drunk drivers.

You know, it's it's horrible. You literally have memory fog. You can't figure out what you're doing. You go show up in the grocery store and you're like, what was I here for?

What am I supposed to do? And, you know, you wander around like that and, at night, I would not be able to sleep. It's very lonely. It only added to the depression.

And once I started to learn about sleep, I really realized that comorbidity with mental health is is that way for a lot of people. But for me, it was a pivot moment.

We were at a trade show and we were selling the chili sleep. And I'm like, I'm exhausted. I'm not sleeping, how am I? Here I am trying to sell a product and I don't understand sleep well enough myself.

And my background is in physics and really research in general. And so really deep dive, how do we solve for sleep? There's all sorts of different information about sleep.

Sleep had been studied for a long time, but not really in terms of how do you get optimal sleep. What is the definition of success when it comes to sleep?

And it turns out sleep is really different for different people. It's different around the world. It's different. Today than it was 100 years ago. It's different when you define it through neuroscience and what is defined as a sleep mechanism.

It's different when you look at the psychological approach and they talk about CBT and cognitive behavioral therapy

for insomnia. And and how do you manage mindset behaviors and thoughts around sleep.

It's different for Chinese medicine. It's different for Arabic medicine. It's different for all these different approaches have a slightly different take on what it is.

But once you start breaking down and look for patterns within the conversation about sleep, what emerges is actually pillars of sleep. And what are the influencers and what are the key languages of sleep?

What are the ways to talk to your brain, in your body, to to get sleep to happen? And so you sort of fast forward of 15 years of of studying and deep diving on sleep, and you end up with a spot that sleep isn't about eight hours.

It's not about some magical time when you need to go to sleep. Those are triggers and levers that you can use, but it doesn't mean you have to have them.

Humans sleep in multiple segments of sleep, physics, sleep or first sleep. And second sleep is what Dickens called it. Over the years and through evolution, we have slept at all different times.

We have siestas words for those naps in the afternoon. We have done all different types of sleep, and humans can actually survive on all different kinds of sleep.

But we do know is we can't survive without sleep. So you can go longer without food than you can without sleep. And it's so important to that on off mechanism of how we heal, how we recover, and then how we live our lives.

We can't live our lives unless we have the off time, and that interval on us is so much a part of how do we live, because there's so much there.

Why Sleep Matters for Brain and Body Health

I feel like we need to talk for three hours. You know what? Hours long enough. Because every single thing is out there. I feel like we need to dive deep of all the interviews that we've been doing, one thing that people keep coming back to like, hey, tell us your top three tips.

Tell us we do. It's always sleep. It's one of the key. And it's first of all, because it's so important. Second, because we're not doing it properly. So what do you call it culturally, societally.

Like whatever we're doing today, it's not happening for most people. So going back to the very first thing you said, and I have experiences too, when I don't sleep properly, it's like I can't dry properly the brain fog.

Why do we need sleep? What's going on there? That if we don't get it, that's how you feel. Yeah. So the the mechanism of sleep is really derived to, to file memories to heal when you're asleep, not when you're awake.

So whenever you do during the day, not that different than the cache in your computer or that sort of, short term memory, things live in your short term memory until they're determined how to be filed in your long term memory, which is why, you know, over a two week period, you kind of file memories.

You may remember what you had yesterday for lunch, but three weeks ago on a Tuesday? Probably not, unless there was some specific event that sort of ties to future outcomes.

So, you know, you broke up with your girlfriend or boyfriend that last Tuesday that might stick what you had for lunch that day, but otherwise it's probably lost to the sort of don't really need that information.

But the cycle of doing that happens during deep sleep and sleep, in particular, the emotional flesh of what you go through or don't go through all of those decisions or flesh through during sleep.

That's part of the dreaming process. And then you look at the healing of your cardiovascular system, your immune

system, your lymphatic system. Your brain actually doesn't get washed at all or cleansed unless you're in sleep.

So when you go into deep sleep, you actually your spinal fluid comes up and goes over your brain and washes the toxins out. So they're now tying that lack of deep sleep, or not washing your brain to the buildup of toxins that lead to all timers and cognitive loss and dementia.

So we're actually, you know, brain health is so tied to sleep, traumatic brain injury, PTSD, all of those sort of brain problems will have a harder time sleeping because it's just so tied to sleep.

So that what you said about the brainwashing is such a easy to understand and eloquent way to put it, and I don't think anyone realizes that that's happening.

Right? That this is the one time we would literally or default detoxifying your brain. You think about everything else. But when does that happen? You know.

So going back to another thing you said, it's different for different people, right? I remember there was a CEO I used to talk to as a sort of a mentor of a very important Canadian company, and he would sleep three hours a night, and he said that.

Why would I want to do more than that? I'll sleep, but I'm dead. And we've all heard that before. Right? But he seemed healthy. Like he didn't seem so either.

Is it is it because of that? That's what he needed? Or is it because he was slowly killing himself and he just didn't feel it, that there's there's maybe a combination of both.

So just like we all know, people, I have an aunt that, I think was pickled and smoked. She drank vodka like water and smoked till she was 98. You know, it's always easy to pull out the exceptions.

You know, my husband, you know, caffeine is bad for sleep. I hear that all the time. 5 to 10% of the population, they're caffeine receptors in their brain.

Just don't work the same as the rest of us. And so you can have a big black pot of coffee and go right to sleep. So it's really important that we understand that we're part of a spectrum all sorts of ways.

And again, from a DNA perspective, we know we're a lot alike. But there's those nuances that puts us in a spectrum and that bell curve that we're all pretty familiar with.

You know, whether it's chronotype and morning person and night person, there's extreme versions of that. There are people that just don't need as much sleep as other people.

And we need to make sure we separate that. Now, there's a lot of people that basically when you're on, you've amped up that sort of stress response. You're kind of in adrenaline mode, and if you don't go out of it, you just keep yourself in stress.

You can kind of forget that you need to have sleep, and you just keep going and you're you're kind of pushing through it. Generally, what happens in those scenarios if you're not getting enough sleep?

The perfect storm, call it, of lack of sleep and stress is what delivers every autoimmune disease, every disease of the elderly, cardiovascular disease, all of your disease states, almost all cancer.

Everything. All comes from a combination of lack of sleep and stress and then because we have cancer in our bodies today, how we decide to use them or not use them.

If your body is busy surviving, it's not healing. It's not repairing, it's not removing those cells. It's not moving forward. It's not healing. Lack of sleep and stress will, depending on your genetic predisposition to disposition, will

deliver whatever are genetically predisposed to you.

But it will deliver a disease 100% of the time. That's over and over the hill. When we're dealing with people at the genetic level. Meaning let's find those genetic holes that need to be plugged right there.

They're complaining about a symptom. We're looking for a system failure. When we plug that system failure, sleep is typically one of the first things they say.

It got better, right? Whether it was stress, food, environmental response, toxins, you know, whatever it is, relieve that load and sleep. That's better than everything else.

Because what are we seeing this over and over again? I remember the first time we actually spoke, I met your husband, Todd, first. Then we got on the phone.

I was eventually allowed to speak to the boss one day, and, I think Adam Murray was also there. And I had mentioned that we found genetically that there was sort of three categories of I can't sleep, can't fall asleep, can't stay asleep, sleep to the right, but don't feel so restful when I wake up.

Is that the same machine? Yeah. It is. It is 100%, you know, that's how it it presents. And really, to your point of plugging the holes on symptoms, often fixes sleep.

It's a circle. It's a cycle. Like most things that are attached. So whenever you can fix something and get better sleep, then that better sleep is going to present with less symptoms.

So we see that in our menopause studies or whatever your symptoms are, if you can get better sleep, it'll improve your symptoms. And if you can mitigate the symptoms that are keeping you awake, you'll also get better sleep.

And the whole cycle comes together. But sleep is an important part of that cycle on on both sides. And for most people it is. It's a either you can't fall asleep or you wake up in the middle of the night, or that not feeling rested, and all of them are tied to sort of a predisposition.

So with a few questions like, you know, you can kind of get to, okay, that's, that's what's the problem. And generally the fixes back to those pillars of sleep, what are the levers that fix those different things?

There's a fair amount of consistency now, how far you push that lever all the way on or halfway or just barely on? Those are the changes that we find person to person.

But generally the same levers will improve. Falling asleep or the same types of levers will improve waking up in the middle of the night. The same types of levers are going to improve.

Waking rested. It's just about how far into each of those variables you end up getting. On an individual level. It's amazing because when I listen to you, it's like you're talking about sleep therapeutically, right?

Like the you're dropping big words like menopause and cancer and heart disease and people don't associate these things in general. I mean, some know they're more knowledgeable.

And then the word is out there more than ever has been before. But in general, that's not a correlation people make.

Sleep Types, Stress, and Symptom Cycles

In fact, can. Focusing on sleep is almost considered a weakness in our culture, right? Like, oh, you're weak. What do you what you need to sleep for. Let's stay up and party or whatever it may be.

Let's work hard and then struggle. Right? So outcome wise, I know that you're talking about therapeutic and all of it.

I'm sure people are wondering. Well, I do sound like that person that can fall asleep.

I do is only that person that can't stay asleep. What do I do? I was like, what are the different types? So everything about sleep, I believe, fits into the three pillars of sleep how you influence sleep.

Number one is mindset. So and that one is a bigger part of that falling asleep. Obviously when you're asleep it's harder to influence your mindset. So that but it still plays a role in staying asleep.

It just has a smaller role. But mindset, you know, this is where it influencing, your stress level. Whether you're meditating or journaling or just playing gratitude, getting hugs, reducing anxiety, all of those pieces fit into that mindset lever of how do I make sure I've optimized that for sleep?

The next one is behaviors, and that's kind of like diet and fitness and all the things we put into our day. Whatever is in our day that's going to influence our sleep outcomes.

Those are labeled as behaviors or habits. And how do we influence those to sort of turn on sleep at the right time and in the right way and, and really in conjunction with our life.

So if you're a shift worker, I get that all the time. Or we coach a lot of professional athletes and like, why travel all the time? I play a baseball game and I'm done at 1030 and I'm I'm amped up.

How can I have regular sleep? All of those behaviors are manageable. You just have to be able to know what to how to counteract them. So it doesn't mean, you know, I hate the word sleep hygiene because it turns people off really fast and they're like, well, if the sleep hygiene thing is good, but if it's going to become why you don't respect it or why you don't want to do it, then, then don't think about that way.

Think about levers and ways you can influence sleep, or even a ritual is better than hygiene for a lot of people. Certainly young athletes that I coach.

And then the last one, which I actually think is one of the most important one. So sleep is really old when I mean that old, I mean, down to the smallest organisms have an on off interval that is basically sleep.

So your computer has to go on and off when you when it doesn't work well, you have to reset it and start it. We as organisms need to turn on and off on a regular cycle.

Otherwise we start to break down. And so because it's really old, when you think of a small amoeba kind of organism, there is no input of what did I eat today?

Or those kind of things that are going to influence their sleep. Their environment is the cue for when it's the right time to go to sleep. So your temperature, light and sound even smell, all influence that and even when you get into feel and weighted blankets, those influences of what do you feel like in your environment are extremely powerful because they talk to your unconscious brain that gets past all the stuff we think and don't think about sleep, and it hijacks your brain and says it's time to go to sleep.

So when you have PTSD or mental health issues and your brain up here is not getting you into deep sleep because you're so busy, and that other state and your brain waves literally will not slow down, or your heart rate or blood pressure won't go down, or your resting heart rate go down.

The one way to tell you that is using environmental triggers and back to that spectrum. Depending on what those environmental triggers are, usually you can get to a recipe or ritual that will work best for falling asleep, staying asleep, and waking rested.

Using all of those various levers of mindset, behaviors and environment. First of all, you just entered the age old question of do fish sleep? Because I've heard that debate over and over.

So yes, they do. First of all, a second. Yeah. This is it's clear that and that points me towards something I want to talk to you about. You know, you talked about the weighted blanket and you talked about you know, feel sensorial type thing.

Why did you focus on temperature? Why would you I mean, you said it was mentioned, you know, the fact that. Yeah, it just was almost pure accident. Somewhat.

Todd's uncle, my co-founder and husband invented the water bed. And if you've ever slept on a water bed without a heater and froze your tail off, it's a great way to manage temperature.

When we came up with this product, starting about 2005 to 2007, you know, this was when microclimate control in suits was coming out. So driver and passenger could have different temperatures.

Select comfort and Tempurpedic. We're talking about temperature and having, you know, a temper. Pedic had that commercial. If you remember, putting a wine glass on the corner of the bed and people would jump around and have the ability to have different things happen in the bed at the same time.

And that really evolved into what I want my own remote on my side of the bed to have my own temperature. Todd is a very hot sleeper, like dripping sweat hot.

And so it would make my side of the bed hot. So I'd insulate and with pillows. And we had this. We called it the pillow boom. That went up so that his heat would stay on his side so I wouldn't get too hot.

And so it wasn't it wasn't a great sleep experience. We like there's numerous studies. It doesn't matter who you marry, it almost always ends up with different temperatures.

So if you're in bed with someone, you're going to be at a different temperature, like 98% of the time. Like it. Very few people are going to both love the same temperature in bed at night.

So having two sides of the bed at different temperatures and actually nothing to do with science, which again, I wasn't even using it, right? I like to be warm, to fall asleep, and then once I would fall asleep, I would wake up hot and sweaty and not be able to get back to sleep.

It was because I had had it at warm. The feeling I wanted to have on that nesting and falling asleep was important for my psychological brain, but terrible for my unconscious brain and delivering great sleep.

So even though we invented it, I was doing it wrong for a long time. You know, you just reminded me that I actually know a couple, a prominent Canadian couple that actually got divorced because of the sleep temperature.

They that the complete opposite spectrum. And there's years and years of weather like this. This is not going to work. Yes. Lots of people are sleeping in separate rooms now for for that reason, I know a lot of people have, you know, once the woman reaches menopause or if there's underlying conditions, whatever that is, that puts it in extreme, they're like, we're not to sleep in separate rooms because we can't get it right.

And the problem about that is, and if there's a reason and it works great, because again, I don't really care how you sleep. Well, you can get it, whoever it is, to sleep.

But when you sleep together, it actually does. From a psychological perspective, you actually have better outcomes for your sense of well-being, your happiness scores, making sure you have connection time with whoever your partner is is really important.

So when you start sleeping in separate bedrooms, it's a little it's really easy to fall into different patterns and you kind of lose the cuddle time. And we need that as humans.

We need that oxytocin. We need that cuddle time. It's it's part of active part of our DNA is is a requirement for that

for sure.

The Three Pillars of Sleep

I remember hearing you say once. So the very basics of health, let's call it general conventional wisdom. You know, you got to start exercise, you got to start eating right.

You know, let's let's get certain biomarkers down. I once heard you say that, before even diet and exercise, you have to start with sleep. So how do you what is the logic there.

That's the exact opposite of whatever. Every day I would say the opposite, but is in contradiction with what a lot of clinicians say. Like it's diet and exercise first, then work on everything else.

Well, I would say most of us have had pulled an all nighter and ended up at like waffle House or Tim Hortons, or looking for all the worst fatty, nasty carbohydrates.

And that's my biggest sort of anecdotal argument, but there is lots of evidence, the number of calories and what that calorie make up. It depends on the study is what it delivers, but all of them deliver.

If you don't sleep, you eat like crap and you eat a lot more. And that's from a diet perspective. You definitely want to be in a good mindset. It requires willpower.

It requires thoughtfulness and good decision making skills, which beyond just the diet perspective, there's they've they followed financial traders. We've got information from our baseball players on their cognitive ability and decision making skills.

If you're tired back to them being drunk, being drunk, you're more likely to eat fast food than you are healthy snack. There's you know, you don't go out to a bar and have carrots.

You go out to a bar and eat French fries and junk and not chips and stuff because you're out and you're you're drunk. So that's the fix for both diet and fitness, because you have to show up to achieve it.

And if you need to show up for something, sleep is your absolutely your way to have superpowers. And you show up and you're ready to go. Your mindsets ready, and you can deliver on whatever you've just promised yourself with your diet or fitness.

If you can't deliver on the promise, it's a waste of money. It's a waste of time, and you get depressed because, like, I tried it and it didn't work. How many diets or because of the food you eat versus I was really tired and I was trying to create a new habit.

Arguably a lot of the psychological part that goes into creating new habits for diet and fitness is is not centered right to begin with. But then you add tired to it and you're not going to be successful.

Yeah, and you're not going to recover. You're not going to see the benefit of the work you're doing. So you go to the gym, you don't sleep, when do you rebuild and you don't have energy to go the next day.

Mitochondria suffering. So it's all this foundational. Let's build on the right foundation. Right. Yeah. Injuries increase significantly. They've got it for high school athletes. Professional athletes.

It doesn't matter who you are, weekend warrior. If you're tired, you're more likely to have an accident. Everyone's felt again and and totally felt that clumsiness you feel when you didn't get your full night's sleep or you're feeling tired, you stub your toe, you do that. All of that to increase.

So definitely working out hard on your body when it's already tired isn't going to deliver a good result. It often delivers injury, which then once you're on the injury bench, you're out.

You've lost track of your fitness goals for sure. I heard you mentioned, coaching, which is not something that I'd ever correlated in my mind to sleep.

So that's something that you're doing. What does that look like? Or like? How do you even start when it comes to coaching someone? Sleep? Yeah, actually, you know, it's been a really fun evolution.

We've worked with professional teams of all different kinds for a long time. And, you know, one of the things they struggle with and one of their biggest complaints is, you know, they get on the road and, they have some sort of performance or game and they're like, well, my excuse was I didn't sleep well. I'm on the road.

I'm in a hotel. Hotel, arguably, and you're in one. So you probably know are some of the worst places for sleep on the planet. They there are two hot lights creeping in.

They're noisy. They're not a great place to sleep. And so for athletes, it's it's not a good on the road experience. And when you're paid to perform, that's not a good win.

A lot of the teams had been bringing in sort of academics and back to that sleep hygiene. Well, if you're a 20 something year old athlete and you're have a schedule where you have jet lag, you're flying across the country, you've got a crazy schedule, you've got workouts and games and and you still like to go out and party and have fun because you're making good money and you want to do that.

The last thing you want to hear is, well, if you don't go to bed at ten and wake up at six and do the following things in the right order, you won't achieve sleep.

In fact, one of the the quotes I heard recently that was kind of sad is that sleep is like a bus. If you miss your bus, you may have to wait for the next bus and you're kind of out of luck.

I wouldn't wait for the next bus if I had to get somewhere. So if I need to get sleep, I'm not. I'm waiting for another bus to. Come on. I'm going to make something happen.

I'll get on a scooter. I'll walk. I'll do whatever I need to do. And so that's our approach to sleep is no matter where you are or what's going on or what's your schedule, there is a way to get you to sleep.

There is a ritual that will end up in sleep, and creating sleep easy and consistently is really what we do for our athletes. So we'll actually tell them depending on when and where they're flying, if they should nap on the plane or not nap on the plane, what are some things they can do and their off time so their workouts, they don't get to the side.

But how do we match what other activities go with that? How do we manage temperature and other influences during the day? When they come off a game, what is the ritual to make sure they have the right hydration and they're in the right mindset and they start to settle down.

What are all the things they need to do in their hotel room? We have kits for them, that give them all the tools they need to sleep wherever and whenever they need to.

So I'm obviously not important to have a kit shipped to me for my hotel safety. I'm not. I mean, you can have one. I'm just saying that the the, the busiest, most like if you picture your fit, if you're a sports follower, you picture if favorite athlete.

They love lavender spray. So we like in the kit. Lavender spray is by far back to your senses and your scent. Lavender spray is by far the biggest hit.

So what else would you recommend? I'm here tonight. I'm going to go into a room that sucks. That's too cold and too hot and too noisy. What should I do to get good sleep tonight?

So you know their inner kit? We do include little clips because again, I don't understand how expensive hotel rooms cannot get their blinds closed properly, but it feels like nine out of ten times there's that little crack that will hit you right in the eye and you're like, what? How?

How do they design that? Where's where's the designer that's sitting there? Like, can the crack hit them in the eye perfectly at 5 a.m. they're going to get a different time designed to get you to check out on time.

That's the whole point. I think there's something. And then we, you know, we actually have little stickers to put over because I, I hate the alarm clocks that they put in that are always flashing and weird things and earplugs.

And we have blue light blocking glasses because a lot of our athletes like to game late. So we're trying to manage blue light after their game to get them to settle down.

But you know, one of the the there's simple tricks also of like tonight use a cold washcloth if you want to fully do a cold shower. It's up to you. But even just a cold washcloth on your forehead on the back of your neck really try to cool that.

Your head. Your grandma had it right when she said, well, keep a cool head and it'll it'll serve you right. Cooling your head will also help you unwind in a strange place and, create a better sense of yourself.

If you can pile ten hours on top of you and take a minute to almost like a weighted blanket to feel relaxed, do whatever rituals. And when I travel, I now have a soundtrack that I listen to because my brain is trained just like athletes.

Listen to an up song and listen to a down song. We do it with our kids. We play lullabies. But cueing your brain of when you hear this, when you smell this, when you turn out the lights, when you decompress, you're going to deliver sleep.

Putting all those levers together can deliver sleep.

Temperature, Environment, and Better Sleep

And if you're sleeping consistently well in your circadian rhythm is an off. So we work with them at home to make sure their circadian rhythm is functioning properly.

But once you have that, your brain really just wants to go to sleep. So if you give it all the right, cuz it generally wants to deliver, it wants to turn off to.

Yeah, I think, with the way I'm listening to you, I'm hearing like all these tiny sort of steps and habits that you keep building and stacking on top of each other.

And once you become cognizant of sleep. So the challenge is to first even understand that it's a it's a thing that you need to focus on. And as soon as you do that, you'll start to notice.

And this I went through this myself, where you just think bad sleep is a thing. Just certain days you don't sleep as well. Then you start to think about what is.

This is the day where I was on my laptop filtered until midnight, or this was the day that I was so stressed out that I got knocked out earlier. This was the day that I ate, you know something?

The wrong thing, whatever that may be too late. That metabolically set me off. And that's when when you unwind these habits and you plug one of them back in, you instantly feel horrible, right?

You have that delta value between great sleep and you can pull these levers and you start to realize that's what all that was, was all these bad habits of bad habits and bad habits piled up atop each other.

Yeah, of course I can't sleep. So I would also say that the solution isn't always flipping a switch, and it just works. You know, these are habits. They're they're deeply rooted to scrolling on TikTok until you're knocked out at three in the morning is a habit, right?

You just have it. Yeah. So it's it's working on them one at a time. Slowly unpacking them, getting rid of them. So I understand with an athlete, you know, they're highly motivated and they're in a very different mindset where they're wanting to do more.

How do you even get someone to understand that this is a problem they need to work on? How do you get them to even believe? Some people wouldn't believe you when you tell them that? Get off!

You're the TikTok. It's the screen. The blue light is affecting you. You know, I think it's all about what motivates us. And, you know, that gets into all sorts of different nuances.

You know, one of the things I talk about with sleep and I mentioned it's it's in every disease of the elderly, lack of sleep has a role. But when, you know, we talk about investments and, you know, we all have seen Charles Schwab or whatever, you know, commercial for retirement, if you say if you can be grandparents pushing your kids on the swing and have financial freedom and, and live this amazing life as a retired person, but at the same time, if you save all that money and you don't take care of yourself and you end up in a nursing home, that's not a great experience because you don't recognize, maybe don't recognize those kids that you were pushing on the swing and the happy commercial and the happy past.

But if we think about retirement in terms of yes, you still need to be that financially responsible. I'm not out there saying don't save, but we also need to save in terms of banking, health banking, wellness.

How do we ensure health span instead of just life span? Living a long time if it's not a beautiful outcome of like happy life, being mobile, being fit most both mentally and physically isn't a great outcome.

I want to play with my grandkids. I don't want to not know them in a nursing home, sleep is a way to insulate back to the stress and lack of sleep over time doesn't deliver amazing experience.

Unfortunately, it delivers all diseases of the elderly. So how do we insulate ourselves? It's investing now, and for those athletes, a big part of the conversation is and LeBron James actually sums it up better than anybody else.

For every he and he sleeps like a ridiculous amount. But he does because like I make $1 million a year for every year I stay in my sport, I make an extra million dollars.

If my career is two years versus eight years, that's a sizable difference. And if I invest in taking care of myself instead of partying, I will have more time in my sport, which I love.

I'll have a better life. I'll have a longer career. And for so many people in professional sports, their career is is tied to a big outcome from income wise.

So taking one year off, two years off of the end of that is pretty significant. And for the rest of us, taking one year or two years off of the ability to play versus sit and be stagnant, I'd rather have more time to play in my life.

Do do you feel like because I know this journey is sort of not since day one, it's the last kind of decade ish for you, right? Do you feel younger now than you did before this all started?

Well, for me, I really that peak stress that I talked about, I ended up with Hashimoto's. I was I was really falling apart like I didn't feel well, not very healthy at all, you know.

And I think it's kind of like smoking, and quitting smoking, you know, for people that quit smoking, yes, they can get back to being healthy again. There's a benefit to to changing your lifestyle at any point.

Is it probably better to invest when you're 20 and make sure you're healthy all along? But if you want to sleep and you're 60, there's still a way to do it.

And you know, one of the things we work on hard is to make sure you can get the same sleep at 60 as you can at 20. It just may take a little longer to dig out and create more sleep resilience.

Because you're not in a habit, you're going to have to reset those habits that maybe have been ingrained for the last 30 years. But if you can reset your habits, you can feel better relatively quickly.

Within two weeks of great sleep, you're going to notice a sizable difference in who you are, what you're wanting to do. You want to cuddle more, have better relationships.

You want to play you're back to. You don't want to play. If you're in survival mode, you do want to play when you're rested. I certainly felt that like it's.

And now that you're in that zone, when you come out of it, you feel you remember what it used to be like, I don't want to go back there. Right? So you definitely feel it.

You mentioned napping, and this is something that I've personally been curious about for some time. I, you know, as our business, we deal with a lot of NHL players.

We're in Toronto, which is kind of the Mecca for NHL training. And so we deal with a lot of the trainers for the players and one of the things I often found is that they had a scheduled nap, which was typically sometime in the afternoon, which seemed like it was built around recovery from their workout.

I know that myself personally, I could nap every day at around 4:00 if I was given the chance. I don't, but I very easily could. So a couple of things there.

First of all, is that needed? Like, why is that happening? And second, the nap is like the short power nap, as it's often called when we talk about sleep and these cycles that are like an hour and a half or three hours long.

So how are you getting a benefit from this quick hit? What? It's a different and you know, why do we need it or do we need it. So it really depends on the person.

And there is sort of a genetic predisposition. So morning people will be less able to nap than someone that's more on the spectrum of a night person. And part of that has to do with just how your circadian rhythm works and and what's happening in your body.

And a train to your body clock or what's going on. Naps can be really, really powerful. And to your point, a power nap can really work for people. I think what happens and there's a there's been some studies, even just about how older people kind of fall into this, this light sleep that isn't isn't helpful.

And it can disrupt deep sleep. And napping can be disruptive. It isn't if it isn't short and with purpose. But to that extent, if you're a health care worker and you need a nap, then you just need to do it with deliberate of balance.

So ideally in a 24 hour recycle, we want about two hours of deep sleep and two hours of REM. And so when you take a power nap, you're actually getting more REM sleep.

And you're you're balancing that. But then you need to make sure that you're getting really great deep sleep on the other end at night. And that's definitely something we work with with our athletes as well.

But what is really destructive is the people that kind of fall into these almost micro naps where they're kind of half falling asleep.

Sleep Coaching for Athletes and Travelers

Maybe you're on the couch on a Saturday and you fall in and out of sleep watching TV. That's extremely destructive. So not napping is not really all created the same.

There's originally in Dickens, you'll hear it in references. Even Spain today has sort of a nap around that 4:00 time when they come home from work, and then oftentimes they'll have dinner at 930 at night.

So right around that Mediterranean time, probably because a heat a day and, and how that evolved, though, they have a very different sort of sleeping patterns and that's just fine.

But if you're from that area, you may be very predisposed to that 4:00 nap. Other people, wherever that genetic profile is maybe more ingrained to a rate after lunchtime.

And that's when a lot of us get a afternoon snooze. But there's a predisposition to our genetic clock that's saying if you needed to nap, now would be a good time.

And it really does. And train back to our genetics of where we came from and what we got used to, how we evolved to sleep. Now, a lot of it goes back to pre-industrial age, when we were farmers and hunters and gatherers and and how do we manage our lives then is a lot about what's driving behind our sleep that we've kind of lost track of.

Yeah. It's interesting when you talk about a genetically, because we do see, if you look at things culturally, you know, if something goes on for thousands of years, you can imagine what that does to your body's dependency on that things.

And, you know, you look at the cultural gaps and differences, like, for example, in the Middle East, they actually it's not even just a nap. They literally sleep twice.

Like there's sleeps first and second sleep. Yeah, first there's like 3 or 4 hours per time and it just split in half. There's and it has a lot to do with, like you said, temperature and heat and the shops closed during the day from noon to 4 or 5:00 is just too hot.

Right. And there's these night markets because that's what everyone wants to go inside. So they're not sleeping until 2 a.m. because they're out shopping.

Right. And and then they need to be up for work and then they're sleeping in the afternoon. So but culturally but but they thrive right. Yeah. And and perfect.

Which is again the I hate when people say well it has to be eight hours. Nothing has to be you know, is that in our society, is that one of the ways that some people can find it?

Absolutely. And it's been an easy way for researchers to measure sleeping or not sleeping. But all over the planet, humans sleep very differently. And of sleep, it is about two hours of deep sleep and two hours of REM.

The quality metrics of getting good sleep, however you get it in whatever forms you get, it is just fine. And I think finding that out, being a scientist in your own self of what feels good for you.

So if you're predisposed to want to nap at 4:00, I listen to it. Learning to listen to our bodies as our own human self scientist is really important, and we don't do that enough either.

Yeah, I think people understand this when it comes to something like calories, for example. Like, what did I do in the day? What did I use and what what's my total caloric intake?

People are using apps and things to track all that, but they're not understanding when it comes to sleep what the need is of the sleep. They know a number of hours, but they don't know, like you just said so perfectly. You need two hours of room, two hours a day.

Maybe it takes you four hours to get that, maybe takes you eight hours to get that right. So, if you understand the outcome, what is desired and why you're doing this and again.

Yeah. Splitting in half, split it into thirds or, you know, whatever you want to do. So, yeah, that's that's really cool that I now feel less guilty about, going to crash on the couch at 4:00 every day.

Yeah. And, you know, that's a big part of the psychological sort of what you have to fix in sleep. But we have so many guilt things about sleep that are it's just ridiculous.

Back to, you know, as an entrepreneur, like, if I'm sleeping too much and I'm too well rested, does it mean I'm lazy? I'm I'm not doing my job. You know, there's so many things that are attached to this sleep thing.

It's it's really a big part of what we have to break down first is taking care of yourself. And self-care is become a thing. But it really is true. If you take care of yourself, generally, you'll be better at taking care of those around you and your business or whatever you're trying to accomplish.

Self-care is is obviously the first step, and sleep is just a way to make that easier all around. Another question that we've had from several people, in our own business in the clinical setting, is that they've heard that sleep affects libido in a big way.

Have you think that's the case? Yeah, actually, this is this is the part that, I was just actually giving a talk at a military base earlier this week.

And so one of the things that happens are hormones in general, get really thrown off when we don't sleep because the mechanisms that manage hormones are all in that same location that sleeps managed.

And so what happens is if you don't get sleep, your hormones get wonky. For young men, that's a loss of testosterone. And what happens with that when we, when we see it in military is there's, there's a lot of consequences that go with that reduction in testosterone.

That often comes from lack of sleep. Their light is all messed up. There's ways in which you can fix that, but it's becoming whenever you have a population that is chronically sleep deprived, their hormones aren't going to work.

The female version of that is cycles are off. They're not functioning properly. And it's, it's a really a health crisis in our military. I do believe it's less talked about.

But even in our health care workers, anyone that's working shift work, their their whole mechanisms that the chemicals that run their body aren't, aren't flowing. Right.

Yeah. That makes a lot of sense because your hormones are produced in your sleep. Sleeping. You're not getting to work and producing them. So of course, especially for men.

So when I say men that swing, that shift is a lot bigger because you produce your hormones daily and there's a monthly circadian cycle. So different days will have a different outcome in terms of good or bad sleep.

But for men it's literally day to day. You can feel like a different person day to day, because it's like that last part of the sleep is when you produce all your testosterone, and then you produce a little bit more in the evening, right?

But if you're missing that first, like 80%, you're done for the day. It is. Yeah. And it just won't happen. And so if you're in a chronic state of that, as you can imagine over time that that creates, a lot of problems.

But it's there truly study after study is showing that in the military in particular, right now, there's some studies outside of the military as well.

But it's a it's a documented unfortunate fact. Yeah. I'm not sure if I can put you on the spot about this or not, but I

will anyways, which is. So I use the ruler, which is one of your products.

Right. So there's and now there's a new, sort of advanced version that you put out. It's a new product. Right. But I've heard you're working on some really cool stuff that goes beyond just temperature in terms of tracking, in terms of, you know, even beyond tracking, I've heard you're integrating with some other partners and doing some really cool things.

So are we allowed to talk about that sort? I think so the, the tracker will come out in September. So what we've done differently with our sleep tracker, and if you track your sleep, one of the things to know about everyone and I love Aura and Loop.

Napping, Hormones, and Recovery

We work with all sorts of different types of sleep trackers. But their sleep states that deep sleep and REM sleep that I was talking about are actually not their most accurate measurements for something called a sleep tracker.

It's kind of a misnomer. They are most accurate at heavy resting heart rate, those kind of metrics. And when it comes to actual sleep states and in particular deep sleep, they're not very accurate.

They're probably between 40 and 60% depending on the user. Their accuracy for sleep states, which again, if I want to adjust your sleep in real time at night, turns out is not ideal.

You combine that with the fact that it's a battery, so they can't do the calculations for sleep, which are arguably really big calculations. There's a lot of data that goes into measuring sleep.

They just can't measure it and calculate it in real time. So it's measuring it's collecting all the data. And then if you use a tracker, you'll see in the morning you'll pull it up and it'll take a minute.

Or it goes across the screen or whatever it's flipping or doing. It's doing the calculation of, look back of what your night look like. It's calculating your sleep in the morning, not while you're sleeping.

And so to do that, you actually have to have a plugged in version, which we do. Ours goes in the bed so that basically we can do the calculations in real time.

And what that means is while you're asleep, we're going to adjust your temperature based on whatever sleep state you're in. When paired with the Doc Pro.

So the magic of that, and this is a patented machine learning algorithm. It's really phenomenal. And we're actually going through an AWS machine learning.

They've come in to like evaluate because they're going to write a a blog about it because it's really cool. I know it's kind of cool to be, oh, that's why those guys, yeah.

So what really what that does is it means that right now with your cooler, it's like a smart thermostat. You set it like nest. But if your house was, you would your house know what temperature it's supposed to be at?

You have to tell it what to do to set that program. Not a problem, because we do coach you through that in the app. But the ideal state is you show up in bed.

That to my passion is about sleep should be delivered. There's enough other things going on in your life that if you can just show up and get great sleep, that's pretty amazing.

And so the goal is you can show up in bed with the Doc Pro and insight combined, and it knows what sleep state you're in. So if you're getting into deep sleep and it really does look like sort of as your brainwaves slow down and your heart rate slows down into deep sleep, we're basically going to emphasize that slow your heart rate a little bit

more, slow your brainwaves a little bit more, and we're going to extend the time that you're in deep sleep.

So if you can achieve two hours, great. But if we can emphasize that, make it bigger and better and longer and deeper. Then that's a win. And you didn't have to do anything for it. You just had to go to bed.

Same for REM. Sleep will do the opposite of being able to adjust the temperature. Talk to your unconscious brain using those environmental cues in order to get great sleep.

Back to what I said originally, temperature is one way to do that. The future state is obviously more modalities. Pairing with that sleep tracker to be able to create what we call the maestro effect of a conductor in an orchestra, basically managing your sleep for you while you fall asleep.

But that's that is the vision of climb into bed and get amazing sleep. That sounds so cool. I literally even so disappointed in where I am right now, because I want to go back to my old, you know, I it's almost exciting every night to prepare because I literally the quality of sleep.

I'm having these vivid, intense dreams that I didn't used to have. Right. And I'm waking up completely refreshed and it's just so obvious the outcome has changed, right?

Like what's going on there? So first of all, thank you for what you've provided the world and the impact you're having. I'm sure everyone's curious. How do they actually find you if they want to, you know, dive into this themselves?

Yeah. So Chile sleep.com. You'll find all the products there. We also have lots of blogs. So if you're curious about anything I've talked about, if you search our blogs, almost all the topics I've talked about I think are all covered in the blogs.

And so you should be able to get information if you needed our products, if you want to explore that. But, you know, again, even into Canada, we have, sort of that trial period.

And I do encourage people to, to try it out. It doesn't hurt anything to try, temperature for sleep. It's really powerful. I'm from Canada as well. And so we get those like, well, what about a fan?

Can I just open a window? Is that the same? And it's kind of I, I sort of tie it to. Yes.

Sleep Technology and the Future of Tracking

Except for would you drive your Ferrari without a radiator and temperature management system. You probably would not. Or you wouldn't drive it for very long or your, your Ferrari engine would say, heck no, I'm not going to do that.

So you are a Ferrari engine. And that temperature management at night really makes that engine sing. And your ambient temperature can help with that. But if you think about your mattress, it's insulating you and all of those little bubbles that make pressure feel amazing and your mattress feel amazing, they're absorbing heat and reflecting it back.

They're taking your temperature of 37 degrees, and they're amplifying it in this little oven that you're baking yourself in with your covers on top. And that's not really entrained to the ambient temperature.

It's really your core body temperature, and your core body temperature has to drop those two degrees at night in order to facilitate deep sleep. So once you're in your little cocoon, you are not.

The window open is only going to help a little bit. Whatever heat can escape from your head is what's going to be influence. That's why people stick their leg out or flip their cell, their blankets off to cool off.

Your body's trying to get to that ambient temperature, but air is never going to get you there like water. And it's not going to get your Ferrari tuned up like it needs to for the next morning.

Yeah, that makes a lot of sense. And then you remind me of my cocoon and the ability to then have the weight of the blankets that I couldn't before because they would overheat me.

So now I can have sort of it's coming from both ends and being far from two fronts, and all of a sudden you get this ideal perfect sleep environment and the quality is unspoken of you just it's it's something that I hadn't experienced for 40 years of life.

And in the last two I've been sleeping. Incredible. It's been amazing. So, Tara, I want to thank you because this is incredible. You know who thought that?

A topic like sleep. I feel like we can go another hour, you know, and we just scratched the surface. I would encourage people to go to the site. I've been using it for a while.

It's completely changed how I feel. I would also urge people to go listen to your Ted talk and learn a little bit more what you're doing, and read some of the blogs.

The the great work you do is you're educating the far beyond, you know, your business, what you're selling, you're spreading the message teaching. And there's so much people need to know that they don't even know.

They need to know, and they can learn it from you. And thank you. Yeah, yeah. No, I do believe that is the most important step. Most people don't know why their sleep is broken.

And back to the questions you presented of falling asleep, staying asleep and waking rested. There are lots of solutions and lots of levers. Temperature is one and it's extremely powerful.

But there are lots of ways to get good sleep. But the most important message, as you mentioned, is sleep is critical. And don't don't sell yourself short.

You absolutely are that for our engine and you, you need great sleep and you need to be taken care of and serviced. And sleep is a way to do that. Amazing.

Thank you to the pleasure. Thanks for joining us. Yeah. Enjoy, Austin. All right.