

AI TRANSCRIPT FOR BRAAAINS PODCAST EPISODE 003 - BURNOUT (BRAAAINSPodcast.COM)

00:00:10 - Heather Taylor

Welcome to Braaaains, a podcast exploring the inner workings of our brains and how film and television portray them. Hosted by me, writer-director Heather Taylor.

00:00:19 - Sarah Taylor

And by me, film and television editor Sarah Taylor. Before we begin, we want to acknowledge that the lands for which we recorded this podcast are part of territories that have long served as a gathering place for diverse indigenous peoples. And we are thankful as guests on this land to be able to live, work, and gather here.

00:00:35 - Heather Taylor

So on today's episode, we'll be talking about burnout, I think, something that we've experienced.

00:00:41 - Sarah Taylor

Yeah.

00:00:44 - Heather Taylor

I remember being in bed for a week between jobs. Yes. So we've definitely experienced that. So we're going to talk about what it is, what we can do about it, and how we can recover from it when it happens to us. We're going to talk to Hamza Khan, a bestselling author and global keynote speaker whose TEDx talk, stop managing, start leading has been viewed nearly 2 million times. He is a top ranked university educator and respected thought leader whose insights have been featured by notable media outlets such as Vice, Business Insider, and the Globe and Mail. As the co founder of Skillscamp, a leading soft skills training company, Hamza is on a mission to empower organizations to thrive in the future of work.

00:01:23 - Sarah Taylor

Quick reminder to our listeners that this podcast should not be taken as medical advice and is for informational purposes only because everyone's brain is different. Please consult your healthcare professional if you have any questions. And now, Hamza. That's exactly how we say it. Yes. You got our vibe.

00:01:50 - Hamza Khan

I got it. Heather asked on Twitter, what do you want to learn? And I started preparing for this podcast with the intensity of studying for an exam. I have pages of answers written out. So. Anyway, sorry. I'm so excited.

00:02:03 - Sarah Taylor

Okay, well, we're going to learn lots today.

00:02:06 - Hamza Khan

I know, and I'm so excited for this opportunity. Thank you. It means a lot that this connection

happened, and it came through Kim. Kim Morrison, who recommended the book. I'm really grateful that Kim recommended the book and that you got so much from it, Heather, that you invited me on this podcast and thank you for creating the space, the platform to do this and for asking those questions to your followers. That was so cool to see how many. I mean, not cool to see them burning out, but cool to see them interested in learning about mean. It truly lit a fire in me.

00:02:37 - Heather Taylor

I feel like now more than ever, this is something that people are being impacted by. It's like, not that it wasn't happening before. It's just like when you're home and you're isolated and you realize, like, oh, this is really happening to me. I am really burning out. Plus, I don't know how you think about it, but I always think we have levels of stress in the world and our stress level is 70% always. And then you have everything else on top of it.

00:03:04 - Hamza Khan

So Heather, on that note, there's a diagnostic known as the Holmes and raw stress index. So for those listening, it's H-O-L-M-E-S space. Rahe. And it lists about 50 different transitions that a person might go through in their life and it assigns them a numeric value. So if you had to guess, Heather and Sarah, what is the most stressful life transition that we can experience as human beings? Wild guess.

00:03:26 - Sarah Taylor

Well, I'm going to cheat because I read your book, but isn't divorce high up there?

00:03:31 - Hamza Khan

Right on top of that, it's death of a love.

00:03:32 - Sarah Taylor

I was going to say death.

00:03:33 - Hamza Khan

Death of a spouse.

00:03:34 - Heather Taylor

Yeah.

00:03:34 - Hamza Khan

And that gives a score of 100 out of 300. And I'll explain the 300 in a second. And if you had to guess, what is the life transition or the life event that generates the lowest score on the Holmes and Ross stress index? Wild guess.

00:03:48 - Heather Taylor

Lowest, lowest.

00:03:50 - Hamza Khan

It generates a score of eleven out of 300.

00:03:52 - Heather Taylor

I was going to say like choosing your dinner because I find that very stressful, but I don't know.

00:03:58 - Hamza Khan

Hey, that can be quite stressful at times. Shout out to chef's plate and good food. They've eliminated that decision fatigue that comes from deciding what you're going to have for dinner. But no, it's actually minor violations of the law. So like a parking ticket or whatnot. And actually right on top of that, something that gives you twelve out of 300 is Christmas.

00:04:17 - Sarah Taylor

I think for some people it's higher than that.

00:04:20 - Hamza Khan

Yeah, certainly was for me this past Christmas, I must say, planning an event and then attending one, and then not to mention navigating all of the ever changing Covid restrictions, it was definitely more than twelve. But if in a calendar year you rack up a score of more than 300, then you are at severe risk of illness, injury or worse, death. And I think that if nothing else has changed in our lives other than the circumstances caused by the pandemic, so, changes in work style, changes in number of gathering, changes in finances and whatnot, the three of us on this podcast right now are all sitting somewhere at a 150 out of 300 if nothing else has changed. And then you layer in all the things that are individual to us. To your point, Heather, we're all stressed and I would take that a step further. I think we're all in the latter stages of burning out.

00:05:12 - Sarah Taylor

Yeah, we kind of jived right into some real juicy stuff. But I want to pause for a second and get, can you just tell us a little bit about yourself and why you started exploring the impacts of burnout?

00:05:23 - Hamza Khan

So the year was 2014, early two thousand and ten s. I was very much subscribed to the hustle culture, if you will, the toxic hustle culture popularized by the likes of, at the time, a very toxic Gary vee. I think about this one video he did a TED talk that he did where I look back at it now and I'm like, holy. I can't believe I thought that this was cool. I can't believe I thought that this was worthwhile. He was saying, the answer, if you want the bling and if you want to buy the jets, is to work, work nine to six, then go home, kiss your dog and work again. He was saying ridiculous shit like that. And he's like, the famous line from. It was like, stop. Everybody has time. Stop watching fucking loss. And I was like, yeah, Gary, I'm going to stop watching loss, and I'm going to work nine to six and then work six to the next day. And I did that for the entirety of 2014. And at the top of the year, I promised my myself this celebratory trip around the world. I was going to in December, go around the world. I booked the tickets, the hotels, Airbnbs, intercity travel, all of that. But for the eleven months that led up to December, I worked in the style of work known as the nine nine seven style of working. And this was popularized by Jack Mav Alibaba that's essentially working 09:00 a.m. To 09:00 p.m. Seven days a week. And, Heather, you actually know something about that. When you were in advertising in New York, work, I think you were putting in 16 hours work days some days, and then you said that your life

became a string of missed, canceled meetings. I think that was the phrase that you used. Yeah, that's what my 2014 was like. It was just work, work, work, and then work some more. And the day I was supposed to leave on that trip around the world suffered a panic attack. And this was like, hours before I was supposed to call Uber and go to the airport and take this trip that was supposedly supposed to replenish all of the lost energy that I had experienced during that year. And so I burned out, and I was so confused and so angry about what had happened. Because not only did I burn out, I became instantly sicker than I'd ever been before. For the next 30 days, I was bedridden, bewildered, talking to doctors, and they were all saying the same things. They said, hamza, you're burnt out. You've experienced chronic, unmanaged stress over the course of the year. You can no longer work at the levels of intensity that you were working at, or else next time it could be fatal. You're actually lucky. And it was during that time where I discovered a story of somebody around my age by the name of Morrence Earhart, who was an intern at the bank of America Merrill Lynch in the UK. And his story ended prematurely because his burnout led to an epileptic seizure that resulted in his untimely death. And I saw so much of myself in his story. And I was lucky in 2014 to emerge with my health and wellness intact, my life, and he wasn't. And so that made me look deeper into burnout. And what I found since then is that the research is so limited, and for whatever reason, we're not talking about it with the volume and intensity that we should be talking about it in the first half of my career, if you will, marketing, communications professional. But I've since transitioned into becoming a future of work researcher, speaker, author, and I've transitioned my focus of burnout and all the sort of journaling that was happening at the time that I was doing in the casual research into formalized research through my graduate studies and my work as a future of work expert, if you will.

00:08:39 - Heather Taylor

How could you tell you were burning out? And could you walk us through those stages of burnout that you were experiencing that you didn't clock?

00:08:48 - Hamza Khan

The twelve stages of Burnout model was very eye opening for me. When I had burned out, I was poring through the literature, and I found that, first of all, the term burnout, which up until that point, I thought was a video game. And speaking of video games, Heather, you actually voiced a character in a game that I played when I was younger on driver San Francisco. I did? I didn't even know that.

00:09:10 - Heather Taylor

Yeah, I did.

00:09:11 - Hamza Khan

What? I went through both of your IMDb pages. I've done as much homework as I can on both of you all.

00:09:17 - Sarah Taylor

You know more about my sister, who I've known my whole life, than I do. That's wild.

00:09:23 - Hamza Khan

Back to burnout, another video game that I was playing on Xbox 360. So the year is 2014. I don't have any concept of burnout. It's a throwaway term I'm using it casually, oh, folks, I'm burning out. I feel. Feel burnt out. But I didn't really know what that meant. I didn't know what that entailed until I actually burned out. And burnout, as is typically the case with burnout, by the time you realize you're burning out, it's far too late. And so I was wiped by the end of the year 2014, and at home alone, nothing really to do other than recover. I was just trying to understand what had happened to me. And so I read as many books as I could. And one of the only books written at the time about burnout was the book by Dr. Herbert Ford and Dr. Gail North. And they had coined the term in the time, which, by the way, isn't that long ago. And interesting fact, when they published their initial research about burnout, they were actually laughed at by their colleagues, and their work was rejected on the basis of appearing to be pseudoscience. But here we are now, living in a time, at least since 2019, when the World Health Organization has finally included burnout in its international classification of diseases, which is very vindicating, but also frustrating because it tends to individualize and medicalize treatment to burnout. And I'm sure we're going to go into solutions in a second. Burnout typically happens in sequence, at least occupationally speaking. It begins with the compulsion to prove oneself, which we all feel. Otherwise, we wouldn't have started this. The two of you wouldn't have started this podcast. I wouldn't be on this podcast unless we had the need to demonstrate that we can do something. It's part of the striving process, and I think it's very normal and even healthy. To a certain extent, we feel the compulsion to prove ourselves, which increases the level of challenge or difficulty that can elicit the necessary performance. But then that leads to working harder and then neglecting your needs. The first three stages, and from neglecting your needs onwards, it gets really slippery. And I started neglecting my needs, displacing conflicts, revising my values, so on and so forth. Skip all the way to the latter three stages. You have, oh, my goodness, I'm forgetting this, and I speak about this all the time. The last two, depression, and then full blown burnout syndrome. That's total mental, physical, and even emotional collapse, for that matter. And the signs that I was avoiding throughout that entire time, I would say there were three in particular. And for the listeners, it's helpful to think of, just imagine your well being like a car dashboard, if you will, and it has three gauges, the physical gauge, the mental gauge, and the emotional gauge. And with each of those, there's symptoms within those categories. So in the physical, for instance, you have fatigue and tiredness, aches and inability to sleep, lowered immunity, things like that. With mental, you have anxiety and inability to focus, exhaustion and emptiness. In the emotional, you have doubt in your ability to do your job, loneliness, wanting to give up those sort of things. And I was looking at these symptoms in isolation and not considering them as part of a grouping of symptoms that would constitute a syndrome. Burnout syndrome. That's what it is, essentially. And Burnout syndrome was very accurately named because at the time, there was no terminology to describe the suffering that people were experiencing in the least in the clinical setting where Dr. Herbert Ford and Berger worked. And so the burnout, burnout as a metaphor, has two components. It's humans as energy systems that either lose energy or gain energy, and then the syndrome part is the grouping of the symptoms. And so, again, I was just ignoring very clear indicators that I was burning out throughout the dissent that I was experiencing in 2014.

00:12:53 - Sarah Taylor

When I read the list of symptoms, I guess it was just almost, in culture, normal. It's like, oh, it's normal to feel this way for me back then. I was young. In my career. You got to work hard, you got to hustle to get it done right. You got to prove yourself so that you get the next job. And so we were almost taught to just ignore that, because that was just part of the culture to get, especially in film and television.

00:13:18 - Hamza Khan

Absolutely.

00:13:19 - Sarah Taylor

You mentioned in your book about millennials are being affected by burnout a lot more than past generations. Have you noticed that? Has there been a shift for the newer generations now that there's been more dialogue about burnout and burnout syndrome?

00:13:33 - Hamza Khan

That's an excellent question. And what you described as prevalent in the film and television industry, certainly alive and well in the marketing, communications. And, Heather, I'm sure you can confirm in the advertising industry as well. Yes, before I started to write the book *Burnout Gamble*, I had to answer that question that you just asked Sarah, which is, is this getting worse over know? Am I perceiving this differently because I'm a millennial or have levels of stress always been this high for previous generations, especially when you factor in things like world wars and the threat of nuclear Armageddon and the plague and whatnot? If you want to take it all the way back then, and very early in my research, I found that, yes, younger and younger generations are being disproportionately affected by burnout. And there's a couple of reasons why. So the first is younger generations experience, on average, more frequent stressors. And I think technology has a lot to do with that. We're also becoming more sophisticated in our understanding of trauma, mental health, oppression, inequality. And as a result, we're becoming more perceptive of the impact that stress has on our lives. We have the concepts, we have the language to understand what's happening to us. But the big one, the one that I wasn't looking for, that kept on presenting itself in the research, was loneliness. And I wish I published the *burnout Gamble* in 2017. And I think about it with mixed feelings. I'm very glad that I published it when I did. I think it was very impactful at the time, but I would love to rewrite it from scratch because it only addresses one side of the burnout solution. Actually, the small part of the burnout solution is what the individual can do. And I had just alluded to I had the right ideas, but they weren't fully fleshed out with the castle factors. And these are the exogenous factors, the factors from without that influence. Stress and burnout. Competition, alienation, society, technology, and the economy. But the I was loneliness. And at the time, the numbers were still startling. There was one that found that one out of every five Americans doesn't have a close friend. Sorry, one out of three Americans doesn't have a close friend. Here in Canada, one out of five young Canadians don't have any friends at all, according to a recent survey that I found by the CDC. Actually, loneliness, huge problem. Loneliness can be, studies show, as dangerous as smoking. Smoking 15 cigarettes a day can be as dangerous as obesity shaves years off your life. And I think that for millennials, and especially Gen Z social media, the fragmentation of the social experience and Covid-19 have worsened these feelings of loneliness

and isolation. People, granted, they may be connected online, but they're not necessarily connecting, if that makes sense.

00:16:13 - Heather Taylor

No, I'm just like, oh, there's a lot there for a little bit. Oh, my gosh. How do you reverse this path towards burnout? And how long can it last for people? I felt like my friend on Twitter was like, I think I've been in burnout for two years, and it just makes me, how do we take ourselves back from that place and go to a place that's more healthy?

00:16:37 - Hamza Khan

Let me start with the easy, sort of actionable answer and then go into my latest exploration. So how long can burnout last? It depends, because burnout exists on a gradient. At the start of the pandemic, I nearly burned out, and I was able to reverse course and get my life back on track within a matter of weeks. But when I burned out in catastrophic fashion in 2014, it took me three to four years to recover from that burnout because I was exploring solutions actively at the time, and the literature was so again, focused on individual and medical treatments, and I really wasn't addressing the systemic, the systems level reasons why I was burning out. So it really depends. But I think that a podcast like this is a necessary catalyst for quicker recovery in that hopefully by the end of this, if you're listening to this, you're going to have vocabulary, you're going to have concepts, you're going to have resources, solutions. All of the things that Heather and Sarah are hoping, you're hoping to get out of me, and I'm hoping to give you as much as I can and download everything from my brain and give it to the listeners. So that's going to be really important. The education is so important, and hopefully with every reflection that you have on experiencing adversity and God forbid, burnout, I hope that you will find, as has been the case with people that I've been coaching and organizations I've been working with, and even the literature shows this, that that act of reflection, that developing of self awareness is necessary to faster recovery. Not only that, but also inoculation, to use a oft used term, during the pandemic. Now, the first question though, that you asked was, how do you reverse the path to burnout? And this is the focus of my latest research and the stuff that gets me really fired up. And I remember seeing on Twitter, Heather, you asked the question, we have a specialist coming on, what would you like to learn? And boom, I think you got like 30 plus comments, 30 questions.

00:18:26 - Heather Taylor

I did.

00:18:27 - Hamza Khan

And so many of the questions were framed. They presupposed that there was nothing that the individuals could do to change their workplace. And that's the thing that really frustrates me. The burnout gamble, as I mentioned, was about the individual. What can each of us do to optimize our wellness and productivity as a sort of buttress against external stressors presenting as performance pressure? So because we can't deal as one person with competition, alienation, society, technology, loneliness in the economy, we internalize it as performance pressure. Any given day, the three of us, we don't feel like we're perfect enough, efficient enough, progressive enough or satisfied enough, we don't feel enough. But this new project, and it doesn't have a

name. I've been flirting with the idea. Like, beyond burnout or the Burnout paradox is about the leadership and organizational imperative. It's a project that goes into the heart of darkness quite literally at times, especially when we're exploring this model, known as the dark triad of leadership model, which we could talk about, it's essentially psychopathy, machiavellianism and narcissism. And I'm trying to make the case that a lasting solution to burnout requires a sort of pincer attack. It requires individuals to be optimized for productivity and wellness, but it especially requires leaders to create cultures that are conducive to well being at all levels. And Christina Maslak, who's the third sort of pioneer of burnout research, in addition to Herbert Freudenberger and Dr. Gail north, she has this fascinating quote about burnout. She says, and I'm going to paraphrase over here, because I don't remember the exact sequence in which these elements were presented, but she said, if you take a flower, if you take a plant, no matter how beautiful it was to begin with, if you place it in lousy soil, you don't give it enough sunshine or water. I don't care how beautiful it was to begin with, it simply isn't going to thrive. And I think about this, especially in the context of the high octane workplace cultures that I was in. Heather, you were in a mad Men ask ad agency, where I'm sure you've heard the know if you can't take the heat, get out of the. But what if the goddamn kitchen is on fire? And that's what we're dealing with over here. And Christina Maslak has six upstream correlates of burnout. When we experience burnout as employees, that's downstream. It's already too late. It's the result of upstream factors, and there's six in particular. There's unsustainable workload. And the research has shown time and again that the best predictor of whether or not you're going to burn out is how manageable your workload is. If you are working more than 50 hours a week consistently and not managing the stress that comes with that, your risk of burnout increases significantly and beyond 60 hours of work a week. In that style, it becomes a question of when you're going to burn out, not a matter of if you're going to burn out. So there's unsustainable workload number one. Number two is a lack of control. Number three is insufficient reward. Number four is a poor or toxic community. Number five is a lack of fairness, and number six is inconsistent or missing. You know, we're in Canada and here in Ontario, the collapse of the healthcare system over here, the impending collapse, is all six of these factors happening simultaneously. That's the best example that I can point people to. If you want to understand why nurses are burning out, just think about these six upstream factors and you will understand the leadership imperative that I wish we talked about more.

00:21:41 - Heather Taylor

So I used to work in that medmanesque world, and then when I basically realized that this is going to kill me eventually, when I worked my next job, I just realized if I seem like I'm working all the time, that I can protect myself. So I started just making sure that I would respond to my boss's emails.

00:22:00 - Hamza Khan

On the weekend, sure, but the optics.

00:22:02 - Heather Taylor

Yeah, the optics and no one else's. And I felt, because I was told by someone about another colleague of mine, that person, he works to live rather than lives to work. And I was like, this is not the life I want, and I want a different life. We'll talk about film. I'll ask some questions about

film and tv world, which is just as long hours, to be honest, but it's in the guise of like, but we're making art. But you're also working 17 hours a day. It's the same type of work. And I joked with someone, but at least I'm not crying in the bathroom. But I mean, it's not better.

00:22:42 - Hamza Khan

Jesus Christ, it's not better. Crying in the bathroom actually is quite a common thing that I'm finding in my graduate research. So what I'm looking at is I'm looking for evidence of these upstream factors across content analysis of anonymous reviews of companies, specifically the top 100 best companies to work at in Canada, as published by the Globe and Mail, a pro business publication that runs ads for the very businesses that it lists as the top 100 best places to work. And if you take a deep dive into these companies, and if you look at the reviews that present themselves on, indeed glassdoor and blind, that comes up way too much. People going to the bathroom to cry. There was one, and I'm not going to name the company. I have found at least 100 reviews where people have gone to the bathroom to cry on a daily basis and I'm like, wow, what is happening over here? Why are people being subjected to this? Why does this need to happen? And then in the extreme cases, why are people literally dying for a paycheck? And then I have to come back to the answer, oh, yeah. I was one of these people at one point, sometimes cry myself to sleep. I would sometimes take my laptop with me to the bathroom so that I wasn't missing anything. I would set alarms to wake up at, like, one in the morning, just to make sure that I was synchronized with the people who I was trying to impress. I would try to respond to every instant message and have notifications on at all times of the day. Again, my research right now is going into some really dark, unexplored territory, very uncomfortable territory. And at times I feel like I'm losing my mind. I think about the greek myth of Cassandra being burdened with this knowledge that nobody is listening to. And I'm so glad, again, that you've given me the opportunity to share this, because my hypothesis is that burnout at the level that we're experiencing, it is a consequence of the stage of capitalism that we're in right now, late stage capitalism. But I'm not ready to make that conclusion firmly as of yet. But I will say this. The things that can be measured, the things that are documented, are the dark triad of leadership, but specifically the type of environment in which they thrive. And there's something known as the toxic triangle of leadership. And I'm sure you've worked within these organizations or the toxic triangle. Not of leadership, just the toxic triangle. And it describes three factors that result in a workplace being quote unquote toxic. At the first vertex at the top, you have the dark triad leader. So this is subclinical levels of psychopathy, narcissism, machiavellianism. We've all had bosses like this. On the other vertex of the triangle, you have conformers and colluders. So these are people that are colluding to create a more favorable environment for themselves. And then you have conformers. These are people beaten into submission who will just do whatever the emperor wants. And then on the other side, you have the environmental factors. So this is instability. This is a lack of values, absence of government, and then perceived threat. Sometimes they create these fake external stressors to keep you on edge all the time. And if people want to understand what a toxic triangle looks like with a dark triad leader, just think about the United States under Donald Trump. Perfect example. That's a very vivid example, very easy example to point to of dark triad and toxic triangle working in concert. And unfortunately, the media has led us to believe that the solutions to burnout are individual and

medical, when in fact, the very cursory research I've done is pointing to the exact opposite your new research.

00:26:07 - Sarah Taylor

And what you're talking about right now is like coming from the places where you work. And I guess there's systems too, but gig economy for me, I've been freelancing for twelve or so for a while. I'm the one that's in control of what I take. But there's still a system there. I'm sure there's still a system at play, even though I feel like I'm in quote unquote, control of the work I get to do. So how does that come into play with this new way of working? I think that's way more common that there's way more people that are just freelancing or getting jumping from one gig to the next gig where there isn't even some of those stability things in place. Because when you have a full time job, you have benefits, like you get vacation day. There's certain things that are in place that are, I'm assuming, supposed to help you not burn out.

00:26:52 - Hamza Khan

Right?

00:26:53 - Sarah Taylor

But those things aren't incorporated into my world unless I incorporate them. And I don't always do that because I like editing, so I do a lot of editing.

00:27:02 - Heather Taylor

No, but it's feast or famine.

00:27:04 - Sarah Taylor

You're worried 100%, yeah.

00:27:07 - Heather Taylor

You're not going to get the work.

00:27:08 - Sarah Taylor

We say feast or famine, but I shouldn't say, I don't know, maybe, knock on wood, but I haven't experienced famine yet. As a freelancer, I've constantly been busy, but I still have this in the back of my head. Oh, I better take that job. I don't want to turn that client down because then I won't get to work with them again or whatever. But I haven't actually experienced the without yet. But yet I'm still terrified that I'm going to not have a. A contract.

00:27:30 - Hamza Khan

There's a lot to unpack over here. Let me try to work through this, because I too am a freelancer. I too identify as a creative. I have been freelancing for a number of years right now, and what you described, this persistent sense that I'm not doing enough, is very much alive and well with the type of work that I do right now. So for those of you who are listening right now and are thinking, oh yeah, the reason why I'm burning out is my boss. You're partially correct, and it's the work environment too. But there is also an individual onus that I want to place on you, which is you have to ultimately optimize your productivity and your self care. Like that responsibility ultimately rests with you. But especially for freelancers who are so exposed, who are outside of

systems where they can choose not to work with certain clients, it might help to reframe what your boss looks like, if you will. Your boss is now the director that you're working with. It could be the editor you're working with. It could be the agency that subcontracted. You essentially have many different bosses. But the beauty of this is that you are ultimately the layer on top of that at putting that aside. It helps to think about something known as the conservation of resources theory. And this is really important to understanding why we experience stress. There's three reasons why we experience stress when there's a threat of a loss of resources, when there is an actual net loss of resources, and when there's a lack of gained resources following the spending of resources. So let me try to break this down over here. Think about these resources as your time, your energy and your attention. As freelancers. You're constantly exchanging your time, energy and attention for money. Now, when there's a threat of a loss of resources, this could be, if I attend this networking party, I'm not going to have enough time to work on this project. So that's like the threat of a loss of resources and that generates stress when there's an actual net loss of resources. Let's say you're working on a project that goes out of scope and now you're losing money, you're experiencing stress. And then when there's a lack of gained resources following the spending of resources, this is you invest all of this time, sunk cost fallacy into, let's say, a course that you're doing. Let's say you're learning a new part of the adobe suite, but it's not producing the return that you're hoping for. That's also stressful. So I think there's a couple of things to do when it comes to the conservation of resources. First of all, establish clear boundaries with your new bosses, with your clients, and be very clear about that. To quote Kenny Rogers in the gambler, you've also got to know when to hold them, when to fold them, and when to walk away. And that is something that freelancers are in a unique position to do as compared to people who might be working in more precarious positions who know, Heather, you were in that position when you were in the states because in order to maintain your visa, you had to persist and put up with a situation that had clearly devolved over there. Yes. Versus now you are your own boss. You get to decide who you work with, what projects you work on, and you can exit them with more permission space than you would have in that previous iteration of your life.

00:30:35 - Heather Taylor

I will say yes and no because it's a little different for me. So as a writer and director, yes, I can create some of my own projects or be brought on for a project. But when you're working in something, so when I'm working in something like a feature film and it's something that's commissioned or whatever, a lot of times the writer, you write it and you're on your own. You're fulfilling your deadlines, but you are on your own. When you work in television, you are in a writer's room. You have a boss. There's a hierarchy when you're within the world of television. Let's say a friend of mine is an art director, or you have many layers ahead of you, above you. You have layers below you, and you're trying to manage the expectations. And every showrunner, so every boss is different and you don't have control. So you could work on a show and be like, here's your hours in the day, but we pay you for daytime work, and then you have to write your scripts at night. And then also you're writing stuff to get you your next job. So you're trying to balance more like speculative work with the actual work. And sometimes those days are going to be very long days that you don't have control over. So what do we, as the juniors

do? My friend posted, which is, and this is not, we know this from the stuff around latsi. If you haven't read any of it, you have all your research. You should put up five chapters in.

00:31:54 - Sarah Taylor

Your book about it, about Ayatsi.

00:31:55 - Heather Taylor

Oh, my goodness.

00:31:56 - Sarah Taylor

About film. Working in.

00:31:57 - Heather Taylor

Working in film. Yeah, but there's a huge thing around how many hours in a day? Because it costs the same amount of money to do a ten hour a day over, let's say, eight weeks for making a film as it is to do twelve hour days over six weeks. And guess what?

00:32:09 - Hamza Khan

They always pick the latter, the twelve.

00:32:12 - Heather Taylor

Hour days, because that means actors can do more shows and producers can make more things, more money, more money.

00:32:19 - Sarah Taylor

But then people die, and that's people.

00:32:21 - Heather Taylor

Die, but you're working those 17. She said, how do you handle a 17 hours day, 85 hours work weeks? How could you cope when you have know you have to do that for an x amount of time? And people are asking, what are the band aids? Until I can deal with the stress.

00:32:40 - Hamza Khan

Yeah, I saw that question. What are the bandaids?

00:32:43 - Heather Taylor

It made me, like, so many people liked it and said, yes, this. It made me want to cry.

00:32:47 - Hamza Khan

Wow. We need to strengthen democracy, transparency, economic reform, better taxation policy. I mean, there's like a whole other conversation that needs to happen with just get every organizational leader in one room and be like, guys, you know why people are burning out? Look to your left, look to your right. Hold up a mirror. Look at yourself like, this is why it's happening, right?

00:33:08 - Heather Taylor

Yeah.

00:33:08 - Hamza Khan

But the question of band Aids is very important, right? Because I also have friends, in addition to the two of you now, who work in the film industry, who've told me these things as well. I have a friend who's also my stylist. Shout out to Leah. Hopefully Leah is going to listen to this. I will share this with her. She worked on the boys, and she was describing her schedule of working on the boys. It was in a remote part of Ontario, long days. Started early, finished late, very intense over the course of three months. And I was like, wow, that is a recipe for burnout if you're not thinking about, again, those boundaries and how to optimize productivity and self care over there. So there's two things I want to say. What are the band aids? Excellent question. I think it was Cheryl Sandberg who gave me a puzzle that I've been trying to work out, and I haven't quite figured it out, which speaks to the efficacy of this model. She says, friends, family, fitness, work, and sleep. Five things, right? Friends, family, fitness, work, and sleep. You can only have three at any given time. And I was just like, no, man, I can have all five if I want to. And then I've reconceptualized that with the help of Sundar Pichai of Alphabet, who said, just think of those five elements, or four of them as glass balls that you're juggling, and one of them is a rubber ball, which is the one that you can afford to drop every now and then while you juggle the other four. And I think that's sort of what I'm arriving at. How can we just get into the habit of investing in each of those in a way that's necessary to support long term well being? But in those events where you have a very compressed amount of time, a finite amount of time in which you're expected to work intensely, put in those 17 hours work days, and I think you also have to be intentional about perhaps sacrificing two of those things. So work is non negotiable sleep, I would argue, is very important to replenishing your energy. And then the other one depends on your personality, depends on where you gain energy from. I would pick fitness personally, but then I'm also somebody who has very understanding and forgiving family and friends who are okay when I take long stretches of time away from them and don't check in for months on end. And that's not the case for everybody over here. So there's that one last thing I'll add over there. Guilt free energy replenishment. And I can't stress this enough. I would consider myself, just like the two of you, to be a very conscientious person, very self aware, emotionally intelligent, as much as I can be empathetic and whatnot. Unfortunately, that also comes with an industriousness that seeps into leisure. We feel guilty about taking time away and doing things like taking a bath and what, sitting down, not watching anything? Or are you in my brain having lunch? Hey, I'm actively struggling with this right now. I don't think I'm recovering as much as I need to. So I would tell everybody who's listening to this, who needs the permission, think about self care as part of your job. It's not a nice to have, it's not an augment. It is actually essential. So if you have to, in the middle of the day, if you can play an hour of video games, do it and don't explain it to anyone. Don't justify it. Just put a hold in your calendar that says meeting. Don't specify what that meeting is. It's a meeting with you, your soul, and play video games for an hour. Just do it. Sorry. I want to know.

00:36:13 - Sarah Taylor

I think that's so important. I think that guilt thing, you hit it because I've become more aware over the years, you say setting boundaries, and so now I know when I get an email from whatever

director, because everybody's got a different communication style at two in the morning. Not that I'm looking at my email at two in the morning anymore, but at one point in my career I did, and I felt like I needed to respond. And there's times I got out of bed and luckily I worked at home, went to my edit suite, and did changes. What am I doing?

00:36:42 - Hamza Khan
What am I doing?

00:36:42 - Sarah Taylor
It took me time. It took me also expertise in my field, knowing that and confidence in my skill level to know I know what I'm doing as an editor. I'm good now. I can set these boundaries. But when I was younger, I didn't feel like I had the permission to say no or to say, well, this is when I work, this is how my schedule is. And I think I wished that I had somebody tell me when I was young and up and coming that what you just said, taking care of yourself is part of your job too.

00:37:18 - Hamza Khan
Right? That took me all the way back to the very first time that I burned out, which was in the music industry. I was an intern working at Sony Music Entertainment, and I'm sure many of the creatives and those of you who are working even in the music industry, and I'm sure, Heather, you're quite familiar with this by proximity to your husband's work. You work during the day and at night you go to shows. And there was one stretch where for 72 hours, I might have gotten like a combined 3 hours of sleep because I was studying during the day, doing my internship midday into the evening, then doing shows, doing tear downs, and then also living 2 hours away from downtown Toronto. So the commute, I was catching little tidbits of naps here and there. There was a lot of red Bull, a lot of coffee, and a lot of just praying that I can stay up for 1 hour longer. 1 hour longer. At the end of that 72 hours cycle, I showed up to work first person in the morning because I had to be there impress my boss. Sat down in front of the computer and I started to, like, my vision became very cloudy and it started to become orange and red. I remember seeing like clouds. And I was like, what is going on over here? The fatigue, the blood pressure increasing. I stumbled, went all the way into the bathroom, locked the door behind me. I went into the handicap bathroom because that was a private bathroom. And I remember looking in the mirror being like, I'm burning up. What's going on? I took off my shirt and I blacked out. And I woke up 1412 to 14 hours later.

00:38:44 - Sarah Taylor
Oh my God.

00:38:45 - Hamza Khan
And I was like, what the hell happened to me? And my phone had blown up. People were texting, calling, and my first thought was, holy shit, I hope my boss didn't email me or call me. And thankfully I got nothing from my boss, which was great. And I'm like, he can never know about this because if he finds out that I can't hack it in the industry, he's going to let me go. That was 2007, in 2014, when I burned out working at an educational institution. I didn't have the luxury of this conversation. The way Sarah, you were describing, you wish you had somebody. I wish I too had somebody. At that time in my life. Tell me that the reason why you burned out has

very little to do with how optimized you are, because I would consider myself to be one of the most productive people that I know, who's also very intentional about self care. But unfortunately, at the time, I didn't know that I was in a. And I'm going to say it. Maybe this is the first time I'm saying it. And for those of you who worked with me at that time, this might be a surprise to hear it, but I'm just going to go for it. It was a toxic workplace by every measure, and I'm happy to qualify that on another podcast or another opportunity. I think I will write about it in my next book. But I internalized why I burned out, and I had to go on an apology tour and tell people, I'm so sorry I let you down. I dropped the ball over here and I'm like, what? This is adding insult to injury, but I think in 2022, I'm ready to share with people that it's actually easier than ever in most cases, to explain that you're going through burnout. And I think it's as simple as this. You go to your manager and you say, I think I'm burning out and I need your help. Manage up. Make it their responsibility, because it is their responsibility. 70% of the variance in whether or not an employee is engaged, according to Gallup. I think they studied like 200 or something different. Working relationships across the world has to do with your leader. It ultimately comes back to them. Make it their responsibility to help mitigate those upstream factors that are causing burnout. And what's amazing now is that we understand that burnout exists on a continuum, and it has multiple dimensions, physical, mental, and emotional. If you don't feel comfortable, or if your workplace hasn't caught up to the sophistication necessary to talk about taking mental health days, then you can pass off any of the physical symptoms. You can say that I'm experiencing fatigue and tiredness, headaches or aches in the body, lowered immunity, an inability to sleep, changes in appetite. These are things that you can get doctors notes for, and they're very easily understandable by your managers. And you can use that as an opportunity to take back your time, take back your energy, and take back your attention.

00:41:19 - Heather Taylor

We sent a question to you that was about how do managers of people recognize and prevent burnout? But I also think how do we, as seeing our friends and our family, our colleagues, how do we recognize that, and how do we help them.

00:41:37 - Hamza Khan

That's a great question. And the same things that you would look for in yourself, those twelve stages of burnout, looking at those mental, physical, emotional symptoms, that's very important. I would say specifically focus on three things, the three dimensions of burnout. According to Dr. Christina Maslach research inefficacy, exhaustion and cynicism. It's important that you don't dismiss any of these individual symptoms. Know, yeah, you're just tired or you're having a headache. If the headache is also happening in conjunction with they're not effective at work and they're also complaining excessively in the slack channel, there's a good chance that this is a clustering of symptoms. That is something else. Right. And it goes both ways. I'm starting to think about this more and more. Burnout is to stress what a runny nose is to a cold. It's a symptom, but sometimes it can be the other way around. And that's why I think it's really worthwhile to study burnout because it's such a powerful keyhole by which to examine what's wrong about modern workplaces. So to answer your question succinctly, pay attention to all of the different ways in which burnout presents. The twelve stages of burnout model is really important. Looking at the upstream factor is really important, but also just pay attention to the grouping of the symptoms that form a syndrome.

00:42:53 - Heather Taylor

That's fantastic advice. Thank you.

00:42:56 - Hamza Khan

And actually, Heather, you had a really interesting ending to that story. During the time you were burning out in New York. You had a friend that you said reached out to you and offered you a lifeline. And I think the phrase that you used is call up. Just ask for help. I mean, just put the call out to your network, talk to your friends, talk to your family. There's a good chance if you're listening to this podcast, that the three of us are resources to you as well. Talk to us, reach out to us, dm me, email me, whatever the case may be. And we're happy to, depending on what you're looking for, introduce you to other people that are networks, provide you with resources and support. People want to help. We're in this together. And I say that with such confidence now because there was a report that came out at the start of the pandemic that came and went, and I'm trying my best to bring it up as much as I can because I think it warrants further examination. Microsoft did a study of how organizations people are perceiving their time during the pandemic, and a very clear trend emerged, a very disturbing trend. Leaders and owners, they're thriving. They're doing well.

00:44:03 - Heather Taylor

Oh, yeah.

00:44:04 - Hamza Khan

But everybody else in the organization, the 99%, those who aren't in control of the means of production, those are the ones who are tired, cynical and exhausted, cynical and ineffective. Those are the people who are burning out. So I sometimes think about all of the false dichotomies that exist in society. Left, right, liberal, conservative. We're looking laterally, but I think we need to start looking vertically. That's where the imbalance occurs. Top down.

00:44:31 - Heather Taylor

Yeah. And I think there is an old, like, I I notice it with. There are people who have a very specific understanding of, like, this is how work happens. I need to have people in the office. I need to do this thing. I need to work in this fashion. And you can see, I'm hoping a new generation of people coming up that are like, no, this doesn't have to be the way. This is just the way that you are used to and are comfortable with. But let's stretch how comfortable we are and look at what are the other opportunities. And for me right now, a lot of writers rooms are on Zoom, for instance, which there's, some part of me loves it because it allows me to not have to travel somewhere and factor in time for things. And there's lots of reasons, but it creates access for people, people with disabilities who may not be able to come into a room. It creates access for people from different parts of the world to be part of something. Parents is a big one. There's all these layers of people who can be involved where they couldn't be. And I understand the value of being in person, too, but I'm like, how can we now look at this and say, there is some success here? Can we create more hybrid situations? Can we create more flexibility? Can we create more understanding and also give everyone space to have that space to create as part of their job, as you said, taking care of themselves. Because if you put that on your job description as also taking care of yourself is one of them, then you're like, okay, great. Then I need this time

in here because all those companies going, you get unlimited PTO. Do you know who wants to take that? No one, because they don't want to be seen. Like the person taking too much time.

00:46:13 - Hamza Khan

Oh, my goodness.

00:46:14 - Heather Taylor

It's not progressive yet. It's like, no, the icing is progressive, and the inside is like an old piece of wood from the 1950s. That's what we got.

00:46:25 - Hamza Khan

Heather, you got right, like, you're speaking to my soul, man. You don't know how many times I'm in meetings or on stage at a conference, and I want to say these exact words. I'm like, do you want people back in the office so that you as the prison master can see your prisoners? Yeah, this is what it feels like at times. Because the worst take I've seen during the pandemic was Bloomberg Business Week made a post about how one of the biggest drivers for return to the office is going to be FOMo.

00:46:56 - Heather Taylor

I know I quoting.

00:46:58 - Hamza Khan

You saw that one. They were quoting the head of one of the largest corporate office leasing companies in the world. I'm like, of course, man. This guy has a vested interest. Sunk cost fallacy. We have these buildings where we want people to come back into so that people can pay their leases and the landlords, the owners, the people who are benefiting from the production of labor. The production and labor can just sit back and continue to disproportionately increase their wealth. So I think the problem is so deep, and I wonder how far in time this has been traveling. And I'm doing this fellowship right now at Trent University, which is a really fascinating opportunity because of how much indigenous pedagogy is weaved into their business studies. Somebody said something to me that I haven't stopped thinking about. They said, maybe this greed that has pervaded society is as old as the founding of the country itself.

00:47:54 - Sarah Taylor

Yes, 100%.

00:47:56 - Heather Taylor

I've been reading that, too.

00:47:57 - Hamza Khan

Fur trade followed by slavery, indentured labor, the prison industrial complex. Maybe this is like hard coded into organizations and the prevailing ethos of business and work. And that's the frustrating part, too, because I think Malcolm X said it. He said, if you're not careful, they will teach you to hate the oppressed and love the oppressors. And I think that that's what I'm starting to see, especially with a lot of the dialogue about returning to the office and people

being too lazy because they want to work from home. And I'm like, you guys are missing the point. Stop looking left, stop looking right. Start looking up, and you might start getting the answers.

00:48:35 - Heather Taylor

We go to therapy because therapy is.

00:48:37 - Hamza Khan

Important for our brain, myself included. Very important. Very important.

00:48:40 - Heather Taylor

And today my therapist says something that I'm like, wrote down. She always says things. I'm like, I need to write that down. Just give me a second. Then she's like, I don't remember what I said, but okay. But she said, be radical in how you exist in the world. And I was like, beautiful. And I'm like, yes, because so many times we are in all these things that we're talking about and also a lot of things that Sarah and I will talk about over the life of our podcast, about how we try to fit ourselves into a mold of what others expect of us. And I kept saying, I've had someone say to me once, like, heather, once you find simplicity, you will never be stopped. You'll be on fire. But the way that my brain thinks is it thinks like a giant mind map. And she said to me, but why do you have to think simply be radical. Be radical, because that is who you are, who you are, and that's what you bring to the world. You don't bring that one thing that someone wanted you to be. You will never be that, because that is not who you are. So be radical in how you.

00:49:47 - Hamza Khan

By shutting yourself off from that life force that animates you. You're not just doing yourself a disservice, but people like myself, Sarah, and all the listeners who need that, who need you, Heather, to be radical so that you give us permission, you inspire us, you allow us to move through the world differently. I wholeheartedly agree with that sentiment. And I think for far too long, employees around the world, myself included, have been editing ourselves to fit in. But if you edit yourself enough, Sarah, you know, if you edit enough, you disappear.

00:50:18 - Sarah Taylor

You're gone. You're on the cutting room floor.

00:50:20 - Hamza Khan

You can keep on cutting away, and eventually there's no film left, right. And I think that is true for individuals. I have tried to fit in, and I think a lot of that was informed by my intersectionality. Growing up as the son of south asian immigrants to this country, not ever feeling like I belong. So I would change aspects of my personality to fit in. And that became reinforced when I was in the canadian armed forces. Talk about a work environment that necessitates that you fit in. Like, they go to the nth degree, they give you the same haircut, the same clothes, so on and so forth. But then as I became more creative in my work, I found that the opposite was required, that I had to become more radical in my ways of thinking and being. And maybe it seemed radical to everybody else, but to me, it just seemed like authentic expression.

00:51:05 - Heather Taylor

What are some resources that you could recommend for our listeners to engage with in terms of preventing and dealing with burnout? What should we be looking for?

00:51:13 - Hamza Khan

That's great. Thank you for the opportunity to plug the book. The burnout gamble is a book I wrote in 2017. And like I said, I have mixed feelings about it because my research now and the book I hope to produce, and I don't even know if it needs to be a book, I need to find another way to communicate the ideas in there, because reading a book is such a commitment, it's such an investment. And the last thing you want to do when you're burning out is read a book. So I need to find ways to do what you're doing. Maybe start like a burnout focused podcast, perhaps? Yeah, but so the burnout gamble is still really important to read because it really focuses on productivity and self care and what the individual can do. Another book that I would recommend that's very similar is calm within the storm by Dr. Robin Hanley Defoe, and then by one of my mentors called from burnout to breakthrough by Eileen McDarr. And then also on the burnoutgamble.com, the web companion to the book, I list a couple of resources over there. I need to update it, but headspace, very important. Calm ink blot therapy, betterhelp option b via character assessment. These are all things that support your individual well being. Those would be my burnout resources for now. I wish there was something more, something more comprehensive. And hopefully this will inspire people to perhaps build their own solution or share them with us.

00:52:27 - Sarah Taylor

Yeah, that'd be amazing. Yeah.

00:52:28 - Heather Taylor

What we often dissect next on the podcast is to talk a little bit about film and television. I know you love film and television because I know I was listening to one of your TED talks, and you're like, yeah. For like the last two weeks, when I said piece to my boss, I was watching movies. So I was like, I know you watch stuff.

00:52:45 - Hamza Khan

All I do for fun. I'm not even kidding.

00:52:47 - Sarah Taylor

That's also all we do for fun and work.

00:52:50 - Heather Taylor

Is there any film or television that deals burnout in an accurate way? But then also, what would you like to see represented more?

00:52:58 - Hamza Khan

Wow. Okay. I had some time to think about this. My expression of wow is like, how much we've covered in such a short period of time, and I didn't think we would get to this question. So I'm glad that you asked this question. This is unexplored territory for me. I do a lot of podcasts

about burnout, and some of the answers are very similar. Not in this one, for sure. I've given, like, I've only given new answers in this one, but this one in particular I've been so excited about because I think about this all the time, but nobody ever wants to seek these insights from you. So thank you. I feel so validated. The best depiction of burnout that I've seen committed to film is, where'd you go, Bernadette? Oh, my goodness. My WCW Clay. Cade Blanchett. Yeah. Biggest crush on her. So where'd you go, Bernadette is one of the best depictions of burnout that I've seen on film. Another one is the departed Leonardo DiCaprio's character. Specifically somebody who's experiencing chronic stress that has been unsuccessfully managed. Like, you see him actually go through the twelve stages of burnout and he goes to stage 13. Spoiler alert, if there is a stage 13. And then on television, I was very impressed with what Kate Winslet did with mayor of Easttown. Mayor of Easttown. The show starts off with her burned out, and I'm like, whoa, okay, this is. This is very interesting. She's lying in bed all the time, barely getting up. Just brain fog. She is exhausted, cynical and ineffective when the show starts. And that carries on throughout the show. To see her emerge from the burnout is really cool. A great one, especially the first three. If you're listening to this right now and you have kids, I wouldn't recommend showing any of those to your kids. Any words, you go, Bernadette is good, but inside out, what a great depiction of the inner workings that contribute to burnout. I've also been binging the sopranos over and over and over again. There's so many characters on that show who are so burned out. Tony Soprano being chief among them. And then in terms of books, Tokyo Vice is really interesting. I believe they're turning that into a tv show. And I had the chance to collaborate with a company out in Paris called Welcome to the Jungle. And they did a documentary on Burnout that I thought was really, really good, where they spoke to people like you and I who are burned out and they rehearse their experiences. So those are a couple of films, television shows and books that deal with burnout in an accurate way. But as far as what I'd like to see represented more, I think we're doing a really good job of showcasing what burnout looks like. But I would like to know the now.

00:55:29 - Heather Taylor
What do we do?

00:55:29 - Hamza Khan
Where do we go from here? Let's talk about solutions. And we see glimpses of that every now. And know. We saw glimpses of it in the big short. For instance, we saw glimpses of know in some of Michael Moore's documentaries. We saw glimpses of it in margin call, another movie on Netflix that sort of came and went, but we rarely engage with the system level conversation, and I'd love to see more of that represented on screen.

00:55:54 - Heather Taylor
I was thinking, like, scrubs. This is old school. Dr. Cox is a really great example of someone who is really, like, he's always grumpy. He's always. Doesn't want to be there. He seems to not care when he does, but he's so beaten down. And then I think in season five, when he loses three patients at once, I think the episode is called my lunch. He actually, finally, you could see him just snaps out of it, snap, and is like, I can't be here anymore. And then a lot of times, I think we see that stuff lead to addiction and lead to use of alcohol and drugs or things like, I think

someone said, like, nurse Jackie or things where people are burnt out and using sometimes stimulants to try to help them cope. And so I think we're seeing that.

00:56:42 - Sarah Taylor

And that was my example, or my thought was Wolf on Wall street, which it shows the work dynamic that you need more, you need more, you need more. And then it ultimately ended with addiction and losing your money, family, everything, right? So it is like, well, life or death. I feel like burnout needs to be.

00:57:02 - Heather Taylor

Taken seriously to kind of follow on what you said before. Hamza is like, but I want to see people like you said, it took me three to five months to three to five years. Not months, years. You said three to five years to deal with this. I mean, that's a long time on a film. But I think I saw someone posted on Twitter. We have to start talking about things, especially with women. We are not superhuman. We can't just bounce back the next day from something that's bad and hard. And I think that they've said, there's been a lot of research, which I have zero facts about at this moment in time, because it's coming off the top of my head about women taking greater burdens, women leaving their jobs because of the pandemic. They take the burden of the home as well as everything else during this time. We are not superhuman. We will burn out, but also, we can't bounce back the next day. And I'm not saying it's just women. It's men and women. But sure, I want to see not the immediate, like, look at how strong I am, and I can carry on, which I think is part of burnout, but rather, like you said, what is the next stage, and how do we get better, and how are we seeing characters, especially in television, we can see them change. So why can't we see that growth of seeing the burnout, but then also seeing what are the impacts of how we can fix it on the other side without instant therapy?

00:58:22 - Hamza Khan

Yeah, beautiful. I hope that we see that and maybe this conversation will spark somebody to write a character differently or to add another episode that rounds out a character arc. Like, that's so cool. I've never thought about it that way. But glaringly absent from literature and film.

00:58:39 - Sarah Taylor

And television and Heather, you mentioning women and family and children. Like, I have a young daughter, and I think it would be amazing in television to show, like, I had a conversation with my daughter the other day. I said I booked myself for three nights to go to a little lake hotel just to have three days because I haven't been able to go on vacation or do before. I used to go on work trips. Well, it was work, but it was also time for me to reset. And I said, I'm going to go. And she's like, well, why can't I come? I'm like, everybody needs to take time to just reconnect and reset. We don't see mums doing that on tv and we don't talk about it. It's not something that's, like, in some ways acceptable. Like, well, why would you leave your kid bad, mom, your kid?

00:59:24 - Hamza Khan

It probably doesn't pull well with the audiences they're showing it to. But I'm like, think bigger over here because I think that. Where'd you go, Bernadette? Great movie. But the solution at

the end, spoiler alert, is she just goes to the Antarctica and she's just taking this trip, just kayaking, seeing the whales. And I'm like, oh, fantastic. And her family doesn't understand why she's doing this, right? Her husband is like, where'd you go? Bernadette is the title. And she's like, I need to recover from burnout over there. But not everybody can do that. I mean, very few people can actually just quit the system, leave their families, and prioritize their well being the way that was depicted by Richard Linklater in that movie. So I would like to see, like, great intentions. Fantastic. We've opened up the possibility for this to do commercially and critically. Well, let's see. This represented more. Let's do more tv shows, more books like this, because we clearly see with this example it can be done at a high level. Why not?

01:00:15 - Heather Taylor

And also seeing people who are not of, like Sarah and I grew up, we're not of not. We could not just go away. But how do we also see that? How burnout manifests in that space, and how do you deal with it? Because I think we talk a lot about choice, and there's a lot of times that that choice is eliminated, because if you not eliminated, but sometimes it's difficulty, because that job means you eat and you pay your rent. So I think seeing more of that and how people can find that space to still be healthy with themselves when it seems barely impossible.

01:01:00 - Hamza Khan

Wow, Heather, you've zeroed in on it. Like, I'm telling you, I read a report earlier this week that said that majority of young Canadians no longer believe that working hard will allow them to achieve the level of success that they hope for. And I'm like, wow, this is never. For all intents and purposes, we knew it was dead. We knew it was probably alive. But the american dream doesn't exist with this new generation. So the answer. Sorry, Gary Vee. The answer is it more work? Because you do more work, and you will burn out, and then you will enter into this vicious cycle that keeps you and the generations that follow you perpetually underneath this power structure. So I think what's happening is really cool. Like, the fact that we're even having this conversation is so fulfilling. It's filling me with such optimism, even though we've traversed a lot of heavy, dark content. But I think for the first time, we're now starting to see, wow. Okay, so, real quick, when I was writing the leadership reinvented, I had to try to understand, what is a dark triad leader? What do they look like? And there were three that I zoned in on. Adam Newman of Wework, Elizabeth Holmes of theranos, and Travis Kalanick of Uber. And there were books written about them. There were podcasts about them. And I'm like, wow, this is perfect. Let me write about them, incorporate them, and now here we are at the time of this recording, 2022, and major motion pictures are being made about all three. And I'm giddy with excitement being like, wow, we have an opportunity here for the first time to show villains that look like people that were around every single single day. They're not Ursula with, like, tentacles. They're not Jafar turning into a not, you know, these. These warped ideas that have the right archetype for a villain and an oppressor. But now they're like, hey, this is, like, Steve that I work with behaves very similar to, or, you know, Sarah that I work with also creates this reality force field. The way that Elizabeth Holmes does. So I'm hoping that what this does for the population at large is give them insight into what an everyday villain could look like, and maybe that can create the necessary preconditions to accelerate this path that we're on. I believe that the end goal of this conversation and all of the movements that are coalescing together is macroeconomic reform.

01:03:16 - Sarah Taylor
100%.

01:03:17 - Heather Taylor
Yes.

01:03:18 - Sarah Taylor
I love it.

01:03:19 - Heather Taylor
Well, thank you for giving us so much of your time today.

01:03:22 - Sarah Taylor
Thank you.

01:03:23 - Hamza Khan
Oh, my God. Where did the time go?

01:03:25 - Heather Taylor
We really could have gone for much longer.

01:03:27 - Sarah Taylor
Much longer.

01:03:28 - Heather Taylor
All of this is so important. So I think we just really wanted to say thank you for coming on and sharing, not being really honest and sharing your own personal experiences, which I think is what makes, I think your book first, when you first read it and you were hearing, and I'm just like, I so understand this. And it brings you into a headspace of, like, this person has walked the road that I'm walking or that I have walked before. Thank you for sharing that with us in that capacity here, and we really appreciate everything you've given us.

01:03:58 - Sarah Taylor
Yes. And I look forward to all of your future research and the more information that you're going to. I feel like you're going to be one of the people that changes the way our society works, and I'm excited to see where it goes.

01:04:11 - Hamza Khan
That means the world to me. Thank you both so much for the time, for the trust, for asking the listeners what they want answered. I mean, this is such a rewarding experience. You've gifted me with the ability to just do what I do and reconnect with the why of what I do. So thank you. And I feel like in the time that we've recorded this, I've emptied my brain and there's still more. There's still more. So, episode two, episode three. Let's do it.

01:04:44 - Heather Taylor
Yeah, we'll come back for sure. So thank you.

01:04:46 - Sarah Taylor

Thank you.

01:04:47 - Hamza Khan

Thank you. Thank you both really, really appreciate this.

01:04:57 - Sarah Taylor

Hamza, thank you so much for all of this amazing information. The research you've done, the research you're doing currently. I can't wait to hear and learn more from you. Our conversation was just enlightening.

01:05:11 - Heather Taylor

Yeah. And I felt like the podcast, we could have gone for 5 hours. There's a lot that I realize that I have experienced in that realm that I never really thought that it was really related to burnout, but it was.

01:05:27 - Sarah Taylor

Yeah. What's your one awesome.

01:05:32 - Heather Taylor

Looking. So I think it came through to me last night or this morning. The BFI so the British Film Institute has introduced well being experts for all sets of all projects that they.

01:05:45 - Hamza Khan

No.

01:05:46 - Heather Taylor

Yes, because there's been cases that have come out around bullying, and I think that stress, it's like, stress, bullying, harassment, all of these things. And they basically have been starting to implement it in 2021. They're now officially implementing it and training more people into 2022. So I really hope that they're bringing in. I really hope they bring in, train specialists for this and then training them specifically to understand more about film and television. But I think it's a step forward, and I hope it's not just decoration, as I'd say, but actual, real change. So the fact that I saw that the BFI is doing this and they're continuing this process into 2022, I just am really excited that this could be like, to me, this is one awesome thing that will hopefully lead to many more awesome things.

01:06:36 - Sarah Taylor

Oh, that's so great. Well, mine is not. Well, my one awesome thing is a good form of taking care of yourself or giving you more work.

01:06:47 - Heather Taylor

I don't know yet.

01:06:48 - Sarah Taylor

We got a new puppy. Her name is Ziggy Stardust. She is what we think is a mini australian

shepherd, but she might just be a full Australian shepherd. She's adorable. We also have two other dogs, so our house is very full of furry animals. And unfortunately, Heather cannot visit our house anymore. I'm very allergic, and I'm sorry, but I love you, and I'm glad that we connect through Zoom.

01:07:12 - Heather Taylor

But I will say know, since this is an episode about burnout and stress, that I think we know animals are great stress relievers, and so having you get three times the stress relief. Right.

01:07:25 - Sarah Taylor

Well, and sometimes extra stress. But all in all, there is something special. So a couple of years ago, I got my dog, Penny. We didn't have. Obviously didn't have animals growing up because Heather was allergic, but that's okay. I didn't understand dog people. And then I met my husband, and he had a dog, and so I kind of started to get it. And then I met my dog, Penny. And as cheesy as it is, we imprinted on each other, and there's something special about having a connection with an animal, like a pup. And she does. She makes me feel more calm, and there's just something special about that. Extra love. Anyway, we were joking that we only have one child, but we will have many dogs.

01:08:09 - Heather Taylor

I have 20 plants, so they don't love you as much. But I do get super excited when they grow a new stem, so that's what I have.

01:08:18 - Sarah Taylor

I'm sure they love you, too. Well, that's it. That's it.

01:08:21 - Heather Taylor

I think we learned a lot.

01:08:22 - Sarah Taylor

These podcast episodes are like, my brain is getting bigger.

01:08:27 - Heather Taylor

I really am reevaluating my life. But, you know, I know, right?

01:08:31 - Sarah Taylor

As I was reading Hamza's book, I was like, why did we decide to start this podcast? But I wouldn't have read his book and started learning more about burnout and the signs of burnout if we weren't investigating our brains and doing this. So this is exactly where we need to be right now. And I hope you all listen and enjoy it and take it all in.

01:08:53 - Heather Taylor

Agreed. Well, and on that note, let's say goodbye.

01:08:57 - Sarah Taylor

Bye. Braaains is hosted and produced by Heather and Sarah Taylor. Theme music created by

our little brother, Deppisch, our lovely logo and design was created by perpetual notion. This episode was mixed and mastered by Tony Bao. If you want to follow us on social media, check us out at podcast on both Instagram and Twitter. And be sure to check out our website BraaainsPodcast.com, there you can find more resources. Check out our Patreon and merch shop. If you liked what you heard, please subscribe, rate, and review us wherever you get your podcasts, and tell your friends to tune in. Till next time. I'm your host, Sarah Taylor.

01:09:35 - Heather Taylor

And I'm your other host, Heather Taylor.

01:09:37 - Sarah Taylor

Goodbye. Bye.