

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:01,134

Hello, hi and welcome to

2

00:00:01,134 --> 00:00:03,102

Skipping the Small

Talk with Empower Autism, a

3

00:00:03,102 --> 00:00:06,371

podcast where we discuss everyday
experiences, Autism-affirming advice

4

00:00:06,504 --> 00:00:07,572

and more.

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00:00:07,572 --> 00:00:10,274

My name is Riley and I'm here again
with Maddy.

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00:00:10,274 --> 00:00:13,976

Hi - I'm back.

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00:00:13,976 --> 00:00:14,810

Again. - Back again.

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00:00:14,810 --> 00:00:17,979

- (laughs) - Maddy,
what are we talking about today?

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00:00:17,979 --> 00:00:20,214

- Today we're talking about Wellbeing.

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00:00:20,214 --> 00:00:22,983

Yeah, we're
talking about kind of mental health.

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00:00:22,983 --> 00:00:25,918

But not

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00:00:25,918 --> 00:00:28,187

in the clinical sense. - Yeah.

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00:00:28,187 --> 00:00:29,487

Not therapist, disclaimer early on.

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00:00:29,487 --> 00:00:30,755

- We're not talking about

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00:00:30,755 --> 00:00:35,125

like specific things to do with anxiety
and depression or stuff like that.

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00:00:35,358 --> 00:00:38,227

We're just talking
generally just like having a good time.

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00:00:38,227 --> 00:00:41,196

- Yeah. (laughs) Exactly. - Yeah. - Yeah.

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00:00:41,196 --> 00:00:42,897

Couldn't have said it better myself.

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00:00:42,897 --> 00:00:45,532

- Yeah, because I think a lot
of people go through the day,

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00:00:46,500 --> 00:00:48,601

being like, "yeah, I feel ok.

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00:00:48,601 --> 00:00:49,502

I'm fine." - Yeah.

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00:00:49,502 --> 00:00:51,537

- But do you feel good? - Yeah.

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00:00:51,537 --> 00:00:53,071

Important distinction. -

Because you're allowed to feel good.

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00:00:53,071 --> 00:00:54,139

- Yeah, yeah.

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00:00:54,139 --> 00:00:57,274

And so I guess this module is kind
of like helping increase that

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00:00:57,274 --> 00:01:00,543

feeling of actually being good
and not just kind of baseline.

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00:01:00,943 --> 00:01:03,979

Yeah, or like “I pushing through it,
and I’ll get through it.” - Yeah.

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00:01:03,979 --> 00:01:06,981

“I’m coping.” - Yeah, “I’m coping.” But

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00:01:08,115 --> 00:01:11,418

just coping is not like something
that anyone can live in forever.

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00:01:11,418 --> 00:01:13,953

It's not good for you

and it's not really enjoyable.

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00:01:13,953 --> 00:01:15,020

- No, no.

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00:01:15,020 --> 00:01:20,524

You want to like, I guess we all probably

want to experience life, in a way

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00:01:20,524 --> 00:01:24,494

that is fulfilling for us and brings

us joy and, gives us meaning to a

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00:01:25,928 --> 00:01:27,896

to degree, but yeah.

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00:01:27,896 --> 00:01:28,263

- Yeah.

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00:01:28,263 --> 00:01:33,133

So Wellbeing is something that, like,
everyone can benefit from.

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00:01:33,334 --> 00:01:36,436

But we're talking about it
today, sort of in an Autistic context.

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00:01:37,503 --> 00:01:39,972

Why are we talking about it
within an Autistic context?

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00:01:39,972 --> 00:01:40,705

Why is that so important?

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00:01:40,705 --> 00:01:44,542

- Yeah, I guess because living in a world
that is kind of designed

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00:01:44,542 --> 00:01:48,378

for neurotypical people, it often means
that people who are neurodiverse

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00:01:48,378 --> 00:01:52,814

and I guess Autistic specifically
in the context of this discussion,

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00:01:54,382 --> 00:01:56,717

there's more of a cognitive load
of you having to mask

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00:01:56,717 --> 00:02:01,320

or adjust yourself
or kind of learn to manage,

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00:02:02,188 --> 00:02:05,490

and engage with a world
that is not kind of designed for you.

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00:02:05,824 --> 00:02:07,892

It's a lot harder. - Yeah.

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00:02:07,892 --> 00:02:10,894

You know, it's a lot of extra

little things just putting stress on.

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00:02:11,061 --> 00:02:14,030

my brain, all the time. - Yeah, yeah.

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00:02:14,030 --> 00:02:14,897

- And it's hard to like

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00:02:16,765 --> 00:02:18,700

take a moment to breath and recover

from that.

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00:02:18,700 --> 00:02:21,035

And it's good to take a moment. - Yeah.

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00:02:21,035 --> 00:02:23,503

And it's often things that people don't

even maybe necessarily think about,

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00:02:23,503 --> 00:02:25,671

like people who are neurotypical don't
think about, things

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00:02:25,671 --> 00:02:27,106

that can have such a huge impact.

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00:02:27,106 --> 00:02:27,906

Even things like down

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00:02:27,906 --> 00:02:31,809

lighting, for example, like can make
people feel like quite overwhelmed

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00:02:31,809 --> 00:02:34,644

or maybe struggle to think as well
as, like someone who's neurotypical.

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00:02:34,644 --> 00:02:36,412

Yeah, yeah.

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00:02:36,412 --> 00:02:39,915

And we are going to be talking
a little bit from our personal experience

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00:02:39,915 --> 00:02:43,851

today, as well as just like the general
tips for Life Skills module,

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00:02:43,884 --> 00:02:47,754

did you want to talk a little bit
about your personal experience

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00:02:47,754 --> 00:02:50,222

with mental health and neurodiversity
and stuff like that?

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00:02:50,222 --> 00:02:54,359

- Well I'm talking from an ADHD lens

a bit more, but

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00:02:54,892 --> 00:02:57,494

I guess something that has been
good for me I guess, well

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00:02:58,462 --> 00:02:59,829

when I got

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00:02:59,829 --> 00:03:02,531

like diagnosed with ADHD,
I think that was really helpful for me.

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00:03:02,531 --> 00:03:06,601

I think, diagnosis can, be obviously
there are pros and cons of diagnosis,

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00:03:06,601 --> 00:03:09,670

of course, but I think it can be useful
in that it allows for self-compassion,

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00:03:10,237 --> 00:03:12,605

and like it allows you
to understand yourself better.

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00:03:12,605 --> 00:03:13,973

So for example, for me,

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00:03:13,973 --> 00:03:17,108

I think I would often be very hard
on myself about like, “oh my god,

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00:03:17,108 --> 00:03:20,844

why can't I just sit down and focus
on this thing like everyone else and like,

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00:03:21,145 --> 00:03:22,712

maybe I'm dumb. I think I'm stupid.

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00:03:22,712 --> 00:03:25,748

Maybe that's why I can't do it.”

So when you kind of get diagnosed, you're

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00:03:25,748 --> 00:03:26,749

kind of like, "oh, okay,

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00:03:26,749 --> 00:03:28,517

this makes sense,"

and "what are some strategies

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00:03:28,517 --> 00:03:31,552

that I can impliment to make things easier

for myself, maybe I need to take,

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00:03:32,052 --> 00:03:35,822

more regular breaks or things like that."

And so I think

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00:03:35,822 --> 00:03:39,124

prior to that, I think there was a lot

more anxiety and kind of like self-doubt.

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00:03:40,659 --> 00:03:41,860

Because, there'd

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00:03:41,860 --> 00:03:45,529

be lectures where you're expected
to sit through a two hour lecture at uni.

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00:03:46,063 --> 00:03:47,097

And that's very hard.

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00:03:47,097 --> 00:03:49,665

I find that really hard. -

It's really hard. - Yeah.

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00:03:49,665 --> 00:03:52,667

I think like for anyone,

I think especially

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00:03:53,034 --> 00:03:55,436

neurodiverse people, it's

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00:03:55,436 --> 00:03:57,838

extra hard,

and so when you're not able to do that,

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00:03:57,838 --> 00:03:59,906

you feel like you're

kind of like a failure.

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00:03:59,906 --> 00:04:01,240

Or like “why can I do this?” - Yeah.

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00:04:01,240 --> 00:04:04,809

- But then having that self-compassion

and recognising that

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00:04:07,478 --> 00:04:08,979

the world is designed

for people who are neurotypical.

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00:04:08,979 --> 00:04:09,513

- Yeah.

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00:04:09,513 --> 00:04:12,682

- So that's why they are able to do that
and it makes it a bit harder for us.

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00:04:12,682 --> 00:04:14,049

But that doesn't mean that we can't
still achieve.

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00:04:14,049 --> 00:04:16,418

- No. Yeah, for sure.

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00:04:16,418 --> 00:04:16,551

- What about you, do you want to talk
about your experiences? -

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00:04:17,986 --> 00:04:19,687

Well, yeah.

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00:04:19,687 --> 00:04:23,790

I'm AuDHD, so Autistic

and I also have ADHD.

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00:04:23,790 --> 00:04:26,292

I had

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00:04:26,292 --> 00:04:29,461

like, kind of a rough experience

making friends as a kid,

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00:04:29,461 --> 00:04:33,764

and that was always put down to me

being diagnosed with anxiety early on.

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00:04:34,264 --> 00:04:37,266

And then I went through high school,

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00:04:37,767 --> 00:04:39,468

being like, "oh, it's just social anxiety.

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00:04:39,468 --> 00:04:41,269

I'm just like anxious.

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00:04:41,269 --> 00:04:44,138

But also there's all these other things
sort of in the background

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00:04:44,138 --> 00:04:45,505

that we're just ignoring." - Yeah.

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00:04:45,505 --> 00:04:48,708

(laughs) - And then I got to uni,
which was sort of the tipping point,

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00:04:48,708 --> 00:04:51,043

- Right, ok. - "Oh,
I don't have the same structure.

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00:04:51,043 --> 00:04:55,012

I'm not, like, just automatically
succeeding through everything.

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00:04:55,012 --> 00:04:58,115

And I have to get myself around
and things like that,”

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00:04:58,115 --> 00:05:01,517

which was really, really stressful
and still kind of stressful, but

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00:05:02,718 --> 00:05:05,253

now that I understand my

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00:05:05,253 --> 00:05:09,022

Autistic identity and my ADHD and stuff,
I have

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00:05:10,323 --> 00:05:12,025

not just the skillset to navigate that,

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00:05:12,025 --> 00:05:17,028

but also the ability

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00:05:17,028 --> 00:05:21,531

to reflect on that and step back
and be a bit kinder to myself.

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00:05:21,531 --> 00:05:22,632

- Yeah, yeah.

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00:05:22,632 --> 00:05:23,266

Which is so important.

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00:05:23,266 --> 00:05:26,101

I think that's,

I think that kind of experience

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00:05:26,101 --> 00:05:28,537

that you're talking about,

I think that's a super common as well.

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00:05:28,537 --> 00:05:33,840

I think, not exactly misdiagnosis,
but kind of like why we often see,

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00:05:34,007 --> 00:05:37,043

a lot of co-occurring diagnosis alongside

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00:05:37,376 --> 00:05:41,346

like a diagnosis of Autism, for example,
or ADHD for example.

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00:05:41,346 --> 00:05:43,080

- Yeah. Well,

I definitely was an anxious child.

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00:05:43,080 --> 00:05:43,981

- Oh yeah.

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00:05:43,981 --> 00:05:45,482

- But like that wasn't
the only thing going on.

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00:05:45,482 --> 00:05:47,183

- No no no.

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00:05:47,183 --> 00:05:51,119

There's a lot of overlap in those two
things can co-exists but often maybe

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00:05:51,386 --> 00:05:54,122

one will mask the other
or that kind of thing.

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00:05:54,122 --> 00:05:55,022

- Yeah.

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00:05:55,022 --> 00:05:57,824

- Or they can compound
to make the other worse.

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00:05:57,824 --> 00:06:00,893

Like for example

my anxiety makes my ADHD way worse.

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00:06:00,893 --> 00:06:04,963

And then my ADHD makes my anxiety worse,
because I'm doing crazy stuff

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00:06:04,963 --> 00:06:07,798

and I'm not helping my anxiety or whatever
it is. That's.

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00:06:07,798 --> 00:06:09,599

Yeah, - Yeah,
a lot of the times it's just you're

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00:06:09,599 --> 00:06:11,101

not taking care of the little things.

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00:06:11,101 --> 00:06:14,103

- Yeah, hundred percent, and that's
super important for wellbeing as well.

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00:06:14,303 --> 00:06:14,536

- Yeah.

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00:06:14,536 --> 00:06:16,471

- And I think another important thing

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00:06:16,471 --> 00:06:19,540

is talking about how wellbeing as well
it looks different for everybody.

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00:06:19,540 --> 00:06:20,507

So like I think

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00:06:20,507 --> 00:06:23,510

sometimes it can be harmful even
with social media and stuff like that,

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00:06:24,043 --> 00:06:26,779

with this kind of “wellness culture,”
and all that kind of stuff

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00:06:26,779 --> 00:06:27,546

where it's like,

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00:06:27,546 --> 00:06:30,815

“yeah you need to be going to pilates
and you need to be waking up at 6 am

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00:06:30,815 --> 00:06:31,615

and doing this, that

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00:06:31,615 --> 00:06:32,916

and the other.” That is fantastic

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00:06:32,916 --> 00:06:35,818

for some people, of course,
and for some people that is really

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00:06:35,818 --> 00:06:39,054

useful for them and really is great
and things like pilates,

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00:06:39,154 --> 00:06:40,855

that is really fantastic
for some people's mental health.

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00:06:40,855 --> 00:06:44,925

- Yeah -But I think when we try and
adopt a “one size fits all”

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00:06:47,093 --> 00:06:49,829

approach to wellness,
then that's just going to end in disaster,

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00:06:49,829 --> 00:06:53,198

because it just it looks so different
for every single person.

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00:06:53,198 --> 00:06:55,399

And so it's important
that we really try to explore

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00:06:55,399 --> 00:06:58,735

what works for us
and what our energy drain is.

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00:06:58,735 --> 00:07:00,770

And what recharges us, is super important.

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00:07:00,770 --> 00:07:01,404

- Yeah.

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00:07:01,404 --> 00:07:06,340

I think the trend of turning

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00:07:08,375 --> 00:07:11,077

mental health
and wellbeing into a social media trend.

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00:07:11,077 --> 00:07:11,778

- Yeah, crazy.

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00:07:11,778 --> 00:07:13,946

- It's

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00:07:13,946 --> 00:07:17,148

not helpful for for a lot of people

because, yeah that might works for that

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00:07:17,148 --> 00:07:20,150

one person, but that doesn't mean it's

what's best for you.

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00:07:20,284 --> 00:07:24,520

And like, you shouldn't take advice

from one random person on the internet.

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00:07:24,520 --> 00:07:26,322

- Yeah, we say that as we give advice.

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00:07:26,322 --> 00:07:26,822

- Yes.

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00:07:26,822 --> 00:07:30,758

- Oh, "you should listen to us
though, we're really reliable." - But

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00:07:30,758 --> 00:07:31,992

they're also usually selling a program.

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00:07:31,992 --> 00:07:32,226

- Yeah, we're not selling a program,
if they're

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00:07:32,226 --> 00:07:32,593

selling a program (gestures
to slit neck) bin it.

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00:07:32,593 --> 00:07:34,561

- We're kind of selling a program. -

Yeah, we're kind of (laughs, slaps head).

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00:07:34,561 --> 00:07:35,461

Disregard everything.

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00:07:38,964 --> 00:07:39,031

Delete the podcast.

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00:07:39,031 --> 00:07:41,966

But you know like

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00:07:41,966 --> 00:07:45,202

the Carnivore diet or - Yeah, -

you know, the looksmaxxing people.

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00:07:45,202 --> 00:07:47,503

- Looksmaxxing (laughs). -

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00:07:47,503 --> 00:07:49,772

Don't take health advice from Clavicular.

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00:07:49,772 --> 00:07:51,006

- Yeah.

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00:07:51,006 --> 00:07:53,575

Is that the person, who are they again?

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00:07:53,575 --> 00:07:55,876

- He was just arrested

so you might have heard of him recently.

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00:07:55,876 --> 00:07:57,677

- Oh.

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00:07:57,677 --> 00:07:59,545

No, I haven't heard of him actually. -

I don't remember what he was arrested for.

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00:07:59,545 --> 00:08:00,646

- I deleted TikTok so I don't know.

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00:08:00,646 --> 00:08:04,249

- He was like, he's the jaw guy.

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00:08:05,183 --> 00:08:08,719

He was microdosing meth
to improve his looks

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00:08:08,719 --> 00:08:12,822

and also breaking his jaw with a
mallet to like, give it a better shape.

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00:08:12,822 --> 00:08:15,223

-That's wild. - (both) Don't do that.

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00:08:15,223 --> 00:08:18,392

- Just to be really clear
for a second, don't do that.

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00:08:18,392 --> 00:08:18,826

- Yeah.

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00:08:18,826 --> 00:08:21,962

If your wellness activities

- involves a mallet (done deal gesture).

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00:08:21,962 --> 00:08:22,395

Enough of that.

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00:08:22,395 --> 00:08:22,562

Or meth.

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00:08:22,562 --> 00:08:26,798

- If you're dedicating your entire day
to doing the wellness stuff

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00:08:26,798 --> 00:08:31,202

and you're not actually having any time
to relax for yourself it's not wellness.

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00:08:31,235 --> 00:08:33,537

- Is it wellness?

And do you feel well after?

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00:08:33,537 --> 00:08:36,739

No. - Yeah. Are you thinking “oh I’ll feel

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00:08:36,739 --> 00:08:40,008

well eventually,”

and working towards some sort of

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00:08:41,542 --> 00:08:45,145

like physique

goal that isn't really attainable.

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00:08:45,145 --> 00:08:47,080

- Yeah. Yeah.

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00:08:47,080 --> 00:08:50,649

If you're not feeling well or there's

no plan to feel well at some point.

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00:08:50,682 --> 00:08:53,551

It's in the name, like "wellness."

Like it's like wellbeing.

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00:08:53,551 --> 00:08:55,619

Like we're trying to feel well. Good. -

Yeah.

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00:08:55,619 --> 00:08:57,754

It's not about any like, material goal.

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00:08:57,754 --> 00:08:59,856

It's just about feeling good in yourself.

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00:08:59,856 --> 00:09:02,925

- Yeah, no mallets,

no meth, is what we're trying to tell you.

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00:09:02,925 --> 00:09:03,392

- Yeah.

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00:09:03,392 --> 00:09:05,660

This is our list of things.

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00:09:05,660 --> 00:09:07,661

- We did want to give a disclaimer.

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00:09:07,661 --> 00:09:08,429

We're not therapists.

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00:09:08,429 --> 00:09:09,563

- Yeah, yeah.

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00:09:09,563 --> 00:09:12,665

- But we're also not that person.

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00:09:12,832 --> 00:09:13,065

- Yeah (laughs).

212

00:09:13,065 --> 00:09:16,768

- Yeah - Wellness is never about trying
to meet someone else's

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00:09:16,768 --> 00:09:19,903

goals - Exactly

- For what they think you should be.

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00:09:19,903 --> 00:09:20,437

- Yeah.

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00:09:20,437 --> 00:09:23,606

- Which is kind of a similar idea to like,

216

00:09:24,173 --> 00:09:26,775

an Autistic perspective
of masking and things.

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00:09:26,775 --> 00:09:27,709

- Yeah.

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00:09:27,709 --> 00:09:29,744

Yeah, maybe you're a better person
to talk about this.

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00:09:29,744 --> 00:09:33,513

I don't have much experience,
like I know about it and like, obviously

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00:09:33,713 --> 00:09:36,182

I know how to teach about it but
I feel like I don't have lived experience,

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00:09:36,182 --> 00:09:37,550

so maybe if you want to talk
more about it.

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00:09:37,550 --> 00:09:40,819

- Because for everyone
its a little bit different, right?

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00:09:41,019 --> 00:09:44,821

Which is kind of the same thing of my
advice might not necessarily work for you,

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00:09:44,821 --> 00:09:46,956

but this is like my experience.

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00:09:48,791 --> 00:09:49,091

Yeah.

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00:09:49,091 --> 00:09:52,127

I go through primary school
and high school, not really

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00:09:52,127 --> 00:09:58,298

making friends, but I was still achieving
well in school and stuff.

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00:09:58,298 --> 00:10:03,101

I was just the quiet kid, and,
I didn't realise that I was masking.

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00:10:03,101 --> 00:10:04,836

- Yeah.

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00:10:04,836 --> 00:10:07,338

In my head,
I think I talked about this recently,

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00:10:07,338 --> 00:10:12,375

but I was just like, "yeah, everyone just
has a character version of themselves

232

00:10:12,375 --> 00:10:15,911

that they put on to talk to people."

It's like when you have

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00:10:17,211 --> 00:10:18,846

like a customer service voice.

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00:10:18,846 --> 00:10:20,948

- Oh yeah, where it's like five octaves
higher. a lot of time.

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00:10:20,948 --> 00:10:21,915

- Yeah, - (high pitch voice) Hi,
how can I hep!

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00:10:21,915 --> 00:10:26,451

- Like it's still me, I'm just sort of,
ramped up all the time, and really aware

237

00:10:26,485 --> 00:10:29,787

of where I'm looking at people's faces,
like the eye contact.

238

00:10:29,787 --> 00:10:30,254

- Eye contact.

239

00:10:30,254 --> 00:10:30,454

- Yeah.

240

00:10:30,454 --> 00:10:31,388

- As soon as I start to think about it

241

00:10:31,388 --> 00:10:34,324

I get in my head like “they think
I'm staring at them.”

242

00:10:34,324 --> 00:10:35,224

- Yeah, I'm like “which eye do I look at?”
- “Which eye do I,” Yeah! (laughs).

243

00:10:35,224 --> 00:10:35,525

I just stare at their forehead
and they're really uncomfortable -

244

00:10:35,525 --> 00:10:42,463

And that sort of thing is useful for like

245

00:10:43,497 --> 00:10:46,499

job interviews and like, yeah,
if you work in customer service,

246

00:10:47,000 --> 00:10:49,635

it's kind of
just something that you start doing.

247

00:10:49,635 --> 00:10:51,570

But it's exhausting. - Yeah.

248

00:10:51,570 --> 00:10:54,739

- And even like talking to friends
and stuff, like I didn't

249

00:10:54,739 --> 00:10:57,941

really feel
any deep personal connections with people

250

00:10:58,274 --> 00:11:01,410

because I just felt like

I was like putting on a mask all the time.

251

00:11:01,410 --> 00:11:03,111

- Right so it wasn't like, authentically
you. - Yeah.

252

00:11:03,111 --> 00:11:06,647

Just like, "well, people know me,
but they don't know the REAL ME." -

253

00:11:06,914 --> 00:11:09,883

Yeah, under the mask.

254

00:11:10,050 --> 00:11:11,384

- But yeah.

255

00:11:11,384 --> 00:11:13,118

- Yeah, that's very interesting
I just I had

256

00:11:13,118 --> 00:11:16,754

I think like,

I think masking can suddenly appear

257

00:11:16,754 --> 00:11:19,790

with like ADHD too, but I think it's
maybe not as prevalent I would say.

258

00:11:20,824 --> 00:11:22,725

Maybe it is but it's a different type?

259

00:11:22,725 --> 00:11:24,193

Maybe it's just different. - Yeah.

260

00:11:24,193 --> 00:11:27,195

Well there's different kind of masking,
but the one we usually talk about

261

00:11:27,395 --> 00:11:28,363

is Autistic masking. - Yeah.

262

00:11:28,363 --> 00:11:31,632

Because I think that's
a little more involved, and

263

00:11:32,566 --> 00:11:34,701

yeah.

264

00:11:34,701 --> 00:11:37,703

For me,
it's like it, it's useful sometimes,

265

00:11:38,303 --> 00:11:42,506

but then also sometimes I'm doing it, I'm
not even realising it.

266

00:11:42,506 --> 00:11:45,575

And it's like taking up
so much of my mental capacity.

267

00:11:45,575 --> 00:11:46,076

- Yeah, right.

268

00:11:46,076 --> 00:11:50,145

- And then I don't have the time
to relax.

269

00:11:50,545 --> 00:11:54,015

I'm just hyperaware of this thing
all the time in the back of my brain.

270

00:11:54,015 --> 00:11:54,982

- Right, ok.

271

00:11:54,982 --> 00:11:57,817

Yeah, and I guess something
that we talk about in the module

272

00:11:57,817 --> 00:12:02,421

as well is how masking for a really long
time can lead to fatigue, kind of like

273

00:12:02,421 --> 00:12:06,223

you were saying, and then long term
like having to mask all the time.

274

00:12:07,558 --> 00:12:11,160

and manage your reactions to things
and how you engaging with others

275

00:12:11,427 --> 00:12:13,462

can eventually lead
to Autistic burnout and stuff like that.

276

00:12:13,462 --> 00:12:13,796

- Yeah.

277

00:12:13,796 --> 00:12:17,432

- And it's just not ideal,
we don't really want that to happen, so.

278

00:12:17,432 --> 00:12:21,268

- Yeah, it's one of those things
that's kind of easy to ignore

279

00:12:21,268 --> 00:12:22,635

if you're doing it all the time.

280

00:12:22,635 --> 00:12:25,804

But then you get to a point and you're
like, "I'm so tired

281

00:12:25,804 --> 00:12:28,806

and I don't want have motivation
to do anything and I feel terrible.

282

00:12:29,440 --> 00:12:32,176

Why could this possibly be?" - Yeah!

283

00:12:32,176 --> 00:12:34,210

(laughs) "Oh I've
been masking for so many years!" Yeah.

284

00:12:34,210 --> 00:12:34,711

- But

285

00:12:34,711 --> 00:12:38,513

yeah, it's hard to recognize if you, like,
haven't really thought about it before

286

00:12:38,513 --> 00:12:41,816

or you don't have the tools to understand
what it is.

287

00:12:41,816 --> 00:12:42,116

- Yeah.

288

00:12:42,116 --> 00:12:45,619

From my understanding,
from what I've heard from Autistic people,

289

00:12:45,619 --> 00:12:49,188

it can be things like maybe

like managing your facial expressions

290

00:12:49,221 --> 00:12:50,622

or what you were saying, like eye contact

291

00:12:50,622 --> 00:12:53,724

or trying to stop yourself from stimming

or all that kind of stuff.

292

00:12:53,791 --> 00:12:55,492

I'm not sure if there's any I missed.

293

00:12:55,492 --> 00:12:57,827

- Yeah,

those are kind of like the main things,

294

00:12:59,495 --> 00:12:59,829

yeah.

295

00:12:59,829 --> 00:13:02,231

It's tone of voice for me as well.

296

00:13:02,231 --> 00:13:02,831

- Ok, yeah.

297

00:13:02,831 --> 00:13:05,833

- Like how I speak to people and stuff
like that.

298

00:13:07,001 --> 00:13:12,605

Like within a formal context,
like vocal stims and stuff like that.

299

00:13:12,605 --> 00:13:13,272

- Yeah. Right.

300

00:13:13,272 --> 00:13:16,274

Okay I see. Yeah, I think,

301

00:13:16,574 --> 00:13:18,075

it's mostly like - It's
a lot of scripting too

302

00:13:18,075 --> 00:13:21,077

like, "this is how I behaves
when I'm meeting a new person at uni" and

303

00:13:22,011 --> 00:13:24,680

like "I need to ask them questions
about themselves to get to know them

304

00:13:24,680 --> 00:13:29,350

to..." - Mm

I see - It's just like really overthought.

305

00:13:29,350 --> 00:13:30,151

-Yeah, yeah,

306

00:13:30,151 --> 00:13:34,587

yeah, yeah, I see, - Sort of like, it's
a protective thing for a lot of people.

307

00:13:34,587 --> 00:13:37,589

And a lot of people do it for feeling safe

308

00:13:37,589 --> 00:13:40,258

kind of reasons,

as well as fitting in and stuff like that.

309

00:13:40,258 --> 00:13:43,827

But putting it down is so hard

because I have to be vulnerable.

310

00:13:43,827 --> 00:13:47,497

Like I have to, share

my true self with the world.

311

00:13:47,497 --> 00:13:48,330

And that's scary.

312

00:13:48,330 --> 00:13:49,131

- Yeah.

313

00:13:49,131 --> 00:13:52,400

- So it is good

reaching out to people with “hey,

314

00:13:52,400 --> 00:13:55,402

I’m trying to, like more,

because I'm tired.” - Yeah.

315

00:13:55,402 --> 00:14:00,006

- “Can you just, like, remind me

that it's okay for me to not do this

316

00:14:00,006 --> 00:14:04,008

sometimes, if you see me, doing this

all the time?” - Yeah, exactly.

317

00:14:04,475 --> 00:14:07,311

And maybe that's why if you do it

with people you trust so eventually -Yeah.

318

00:14:07,311 --> 00:14:10,647

- that can maybe help you do it
like in more generally

319

00:14:10,647 --> 00:14:14,049

in your day to day life, so you don't
feel like you have to mask because yeah.

320

00:14:14,149 --> 00:14:16,684

Like it should be ban,
banned as well actually.

321

00:14:16,684 --> 00:14:18,185

Bare minimum that

322

00:14:19,353 --> 00:14:21,721

everyone is able to show up as they are.

323

00:14:21,721 --> 00:14:24,356

- Yeah. - And be their authentic selves.

324

00:14:24,356 --> 00:14:26,191

And it sucks that maybe people feel like
they have to mask. - Yeah.

325

00:14:26,191 --> 00:14:27,726

- Like they have to protect themselves.

326

00:14:27,726 --> 00:14:33,396

I guess it's just a reality, but it's
important that I guess maybe we try to.

327

00:14:33,396 --> 00:14:37,332

- Yeah, because sometimes
I just don't have the energy for it.

328

00:14:37,332 --> 00:14:37,699

- Yeah.

329

00:14:37,699 --> 00:14:40,435

- and I started realising

maybe that's okay?

330

00:14:40,435 --> 00:14:42,436

- Yeah. - It's kind of a slow realisation.

331

00:14:42,436 --> 00:14:44,137

You know, like people tell you stuff

and you're like "yeah, ok," -Yeah, sure.

332

00:14:44,137 --> 00:14:46,406

-But you don't really absorb it.

333

00:14:46,406 --> 00:14:47,640

It's sort of a long process.

334

00:14:47,640 --> 00:14:48,440

- Yeah,

I feel like with those kind of things

335

00:14:48,440 --> 00:14:50,208

you have to come to the realisation
yourself.

336

00:14:50,208 --> 00:14:54,345

- It's like, I just want to come work
some days and just sit at the computer

337

00:14:54,345 --> 00:14:54,445

and not talk to anyone.

338

00:14:55,712 --> 00:14:56,880

I just don't have the energy for it.

339

00:14:56,880 --> 00:15:00,783

- Yeah, I think Empower, actually,
obviously where we work is,

340

00:15:00,783 --> 00:15:02,584

really good for that

because I think they used to have like,

341

00:15:02,584 --> 00:15:03,585

I don't know if you guys still have them

342

00:15:03,585 --> 00:15:04,385

because I have not been in the office
for a really long time.

343

00:15:04,385 --> 00:15:04,719

- Yeah.

344

00:15:04,719 --> 00:15:07,788

- But there used to be these
little placecards at everyone's desks

345

00:15:07,788 --> 00:15:10,790

that was like,

346

00:15:11,224 --> 00:15:14,226

you could almost like, -

The ones I remember were like

347

00:15:14,693 --> 00:15:17,595

“I’m wearing noise canceling headphones

348

00:15:17,595 --> 00:15:19,963

I can’t hear you right now,
but you can still talk to me,

349

00:15:19,963 --> 00:15:20,297

just tap me on the shoulder
or something.” -

350

00:15:20,297 --> 00:15:21,731

Yeah,
it was kind of like (mimes square card).

351

00:15:21,731 --> 00:15:24,300

- Or like, “I’m locked in right now.

352

00:15:24,300 --> 00:15:27,135

Don't disturb

me." - Don't mess with me at all.

353

00:15:27,135 --> 00:15:29,370

But I feel like that was really good.

354

00:15:29,370 --> 00:15:30,838

I've never seen that a workplace before.

355

00:15:30,838 --> 00:15:33,606

And I thought that was wonderful. Like

I thought it was really good.

356

00:15:33,606 --> 00:15:37,109

And just so everyone could opt in

for their specific,

357

00:15:37,376 --> 00:15:39,377

like how they wanted to engage

for that day.

358

00:15:39,377 --> 00:15:41,879

I think it's so good

because if you have a day where you're

359

00:15:41,879 --> 00:15:42,813

just like exhausted

360

00:15:42,813 --> 00:15:44,214

socially, like, yeah, maybe you feel like

361

00:15:44,214 --> 00:15:46,916

you don't want to have to mask by playing

pretend in a social conversation.

362

00:15:46,916 --> 00:15:48,951

- I'm not trying to be rude.

I'm not trying to ignore you.

363

00:15:48,951 --> 00:15:49,918

- Yeah, it's not rude.

364

00:15:49,918 --> 00:15:51,186

'Cause you're allowed to have days
like that.

365

00:15:51,186 --> 00:15:52,987

- Or I'm mad at you
or I don't like you or whatever.

366

00:15:52,987 --> 00:15:53,354

- No.

367

00:15:53,354 --> 00:15:54,888

- This is a personal thing for me.

368

00:15:54,888 --> 00:15:57,891

- Yeah I think it was a wonderful idea.

369

00:15:58,224 --> 00:16:00,459

- Yeah obviously there's a lot of stigmas
about

370

00:16:00,459 --> 00:16:03,728

this sort of stuff, which is why it's,
so hard to just be vulnerable.

371

00:16:03,728 --> 00:16:04,595

- Yeah.

372

00:16:04,595 --> 00:16:05,263

- And admit,

373

00:16:05,263 --> 00:16:08,798

like when you are tired or what
your boundaries are and stuff like that.

374

00:16:08,932 --> 00:16:09,299

- Yeah.

375

00:16:09,299 --> 00:16:11,934

- Even if it's not necessarily present,

376

00:16:12,901 --> 00:16:14,069

in the moment.

377

00:16:14,069 --> 00:16:17,705

No one at Empower

Autism is telling me that I need to mask.

378

00:16:17,705 --> 00:16:19,173

They're

kind of telling me the opposite, actually.

379

00:16:19,173 --> 00:16:19,540

- Yeah.

380

00:16:19,540 --> 00:16:20,607

- But I still feel this

381

00:16:20,607 --> 00:16:23,609

because it's like a societal (gestures
broadly) thing that I've

382

00:16:23,843 --> 00:16:25,577

been taught over the entirety of my life.
- You need to identify it yourself.

383

00:16:25,577 --> 00:16:26,545

Yeah, yeah.

384

00:16:26,545 --> 00:16:28,980

- Yes and like that,
there's a lot of stigmas around

385

00:16:28,980 --> 00:16:31,215

all sorts of mental health things.
All sorts of wellness things.

386

00:16:31,215 --> 00:16:31,782

-Yeah.

387

00:16:31,782 --> 00:16:34,117

- It is hard to break down
those stigmas around like,

388

00:16:34,117 --> 00:16:36,819

also just being like, “hey,
I’m really anxious today,” you know.

389

00:16:36,819 --> 00:16:38,853

- Yeah, or like, “I’m
sorry if I’m being a bit antsy or whatever

390

00:16:38,853 --> 00:16:39,187

it is.”

Actually you don’t even need to say sorry.

391

00:16:39,187 --> 00:16:39,220

- Don’t even need to apologise.

392

00:16:39,220 --> 00:16:42,223

- Don't need to apologise either.

393

00:16:42,256 --> 00:16:46,592

- Yeah, like yesterday my friends
were talking about going out to Timezone.

394

00:16:47,260 --> 00:16:48,360

And I did some thinking about it

395

00:16:48,360 --> 00:16:51,529

and was like "hey I know I said
I was down to do whatever today,

396

00:16:52,096 --> 00:16:55,099

but the idea of going to a super busy
shopping center

397

00:16:55,099 --> 00:16:59,568

with loud noises and stuff right now

just sounds not enjoyable to me.

398

00:16:59,568 --> 00:17:01,070

That sounds really overwhelming.

399

00:17:02,537 --> 00:17:05,573

If you guys want to do that, that's fine,
but I would prefer not to." - Yeah.

400

00:17:05,573 --> 00:17:06,173

That's fine!

401

00:17:06,173 --> 00:17:08,808

You're allowed to say no to things
sometimes, of course.

402

00:17:08,808 --> 00:17:11,711

I think, going back to the second point
you're saying before.

403

00:17:11,711 --> 00:17:13,812

That's kind of the reason,

404

00:17:13,812 --> 00:17:15,513

why we're saying it's

so important to talk about this stuff.

405

00:17:15,513 --> 00:17:15,613

- Yeah.

406

00:17:15,613 --> 00:17:20,250

- Because there is a certain
level of stigma, talking about it is

407

00:17:20,250 --> 00:17:21,084

what breaks that down.

408

00:17:21,084 --> 00:17:24,420

Like that awareness and like normalising
it is what helps.

409

00:17:24,420 --> 00:17:27,689

It actually helps us eliminate that. -

Yeah.

410

00:17:27,722 --> 00:17:30,824

Because if you're ignoring this stuff
or not telling people about it

411

00:17:30,824 --> 00:17:35,061

and also just letting it build up yeah,
you can sort of push through and cope

412

00:17:35,061 --> 00:17:38,196

with it for a while,
but eventually you're going to crash.

413

00:17:38,196 --> 00:17:39,431

- It'll come back to bite you.

414

00:17:39,431 --> 00:17:40,731

- And it's not going to feel good.

415

00:17:40,731 --> 00:17:43,400

- No. -

And you should be able to talk about

416

00:17:44,968 --> 00:17:45,802

what you're going through

417

00:17:45,802 --> 00:17:49,638

without it having to be a level

one emergency sort of situation.

418

00:17:49,638 --> 00:17:51,206

- Yeah, yeah.

419

00:17:51,206 --> 00:17:53,607

- It's

ok to just not be having a great day.

420

00:17:53,607 --> 00:17:54,275

- Yeah, yeah.

421

00:17:54,275 --> 00:17:56,676

- It's okay to talk about that
rather than just being like, "yeah, I'm

422

00:17:56,676 --> 00:17:59,612

ok." - And sometimes that's
why it's important talking about it early

423

00:17:59,612 --> 00:18:03,881

and recognising early warning signs for
when things may be starting to get worse.

424

00:18:03,881 --> 00:18:07,884

And so that's why it's important to
talk about it early so we can prevent it.

425

00:18:07,884 --> 00:18:08,118

- Yeah.

426

00:18:08,118 --> 00:18:09,886

- So for example,

427

00:18:09,886 --> 00:18:12,888

if you're starting to get more irritable,

if you're noticing yourself

428

00:18:13,955 --> 00:18:16,357

struggling to get out of bed

or if you have appetite

429

00:18:16,357 --> 00:18:18,359

is kind of reduced. Those things

430

00:18:18,359 --> 00:18:21,694

in isolation are not necessarily like you

said, level one emergency.

431

00:18:21,928 --> 00:18:24,930

But if they're all kind of co-occurring.

432

00:18:25,297 --> 00:18:28,433

And maybe getting worse,
then it's like maybe it's time

433

00:18:28,433 --> 00:18:32,035

that you start talking to people about it
or seeing a professional

434

00:18:32,035 --> 00:18:35,404

maybe like, psychologists,
psychiatrists, whatever it is, a GP.

435

00:18:36,605 --> 00:18:37,172

Who can help with that

436

00:18:37,172 --> 00:18:38,840

stuff instead of kind of letting it fester

437

00:18:38,840 --> 00:18:41,642

and not talking to anyone
until it is like a level one emergency.

438

00:18:41,642 --> 00:18:45,311

And then you're kind of like,
it's a lot harder to kind of, - Yeah,

439

00:18:45,311 --> 00:18:47,413

and you don't
want to be suffering in silence,

440

00:18:47,413 --> 00:18:49,881

even if it's a minor thing
and you can deal with it or whatever.

441

00:18:49,881 --> 00:18:50,448

- Yeah, yeah.

442

00:18:50,448 --> 00:18:51,883

- I feel like that's a mindset

443

00:18:51,883 --> 00:18:55,652

a lot of my friends have like, “oh,
it's fine.” - Yeah.

444

00:18:55,686 --> 00:18:59,555

Like, “ yeah, I am not having a good time,
but it's not the worst ever so I'll

445

00:18:59,555 --> 00:19:01,923

just suck it up and deal with it.” -
And people actually want to help you.

446

00:19:01,923 --> 00:19:02,824

- Yeah.

447

00:19:02,824 --> 00:19:04,725

- Like your friends?

448

00:19:04,725 --> 00:19:07,661

They want to help you - People don't
want you to be miserable all the time.

449

00:19:07,661 --> 00:19:08,228

- No.

450

00:19:08,228 --> 00:19:10,463

Like one of my friends,
I love her to pieces

451

00:19:10,463 --> 00:19:13,765

and we have this little group
and we all love her to pieces.

452

00:19:14,966 --> 00:19:15,967

And she knows who she is.

453

00:19:15,967 --> 00:19:18,168

If she sees this, she's so bad
at accepting help. - Yeah.

454

00:19:18,168 --> 00:19:22,005

- We are crawling to help her.

455

00:19:22,238 --> 00:19:23,973

We want to help her,
she just won't let us know.

456

00:19:23,973 --> 00:19:26,708

- Part of it is the self talk.

457

00:19:26,708 --> 00:19:27,609

- This makes us happy too.

458

00:19:27,609 --> 00:19:29,844

- Yeah, yeah, yeah. - Like,
we want to help you please.

459

00:19:29,844 --> 00:19:31,945

- We care about you. -

We care about you and we love you.

460

00:19:31,945 --> 00:19:34,547

That's why we're here, you know? - Yeah.

461

00:19:34,547 --> 00:19:36,582

If you know who you are. - Yeah.

462

00:19:36,582 --> 00:19:38,150

I'm not gonna say their name, but yeah,
you know who it is.

463

00:19:38,150 --> 00:19:38,917

- No, I also have a friend like that.

464

00:19:38,917 --> 00:19:40,785

Most of my friends are like this
to be honest,

465

00:19:40,785 --> 00:19:42,186

but in particular, (stares

with raised eyebrow).

466

00:19:42,186 --> 00:19:44,187

You know who you are.

467

00:19:44,187 --> 00:19:45,255

- (laughs)

You know who you are as well (points).

468

00:19:45,255 --> 00:19:47,156

You would never admit it

but you know who you are. - Yeah.

469

00:19:48,857 --> 00:19:49,658

Calling

people out on this podcast as well.

470

00:19:49,658 --> 00:19:51,192

Who else should we call out? - Yeah.

471

00:19:51,192 --> 00:19:54,194

I don't know if they watch it or not.

472

00:19:55,796 --> 00:19:55,996

Yeah.

473

00:19:55,996 --> 00:20:00,332

- The other side of that is self care
and reflection because it's one thing to

474

00:20:01,867 --> 00:20:04,502

be dealing with that internally
and not there to other people

475

00:20:04,502 --> 00:20:05,836

not seeking help from other people.

476

00:20:05,836 --> 00:20:09,806

But before that, you have to like
to recognise it within yourself.

477

00:20:09,806 --> 00:20:11,674

- Yeah, recognise it. - And

478

00:20:11,674 --> 00:20:14,609

be kind enough to yourself to

479

00:20:14,609 --> 00:20:18,112

not just put yourself down before other
people even have a chance to do that.

480

00:20:18,112 --> 00:20:19,913

- Yeah, exactly (laughs).

481

00:20:19,913 --> 00:20:23,082

I guess the last thing I would just say
is, like I was saying before,

482

00:20:23,416 --> 00:20:26,151

we're very good at encouraging others
to ask for help but not so good ourselves.

483

00:20:26,151 --> 00:20:32,555

But it really is such a testament to you
and the courage

484

00:20:32,656 --> 00:20:35,858

you show, when you ask for help,
because it's so hard.

485

00:20:36,125 --> 00:20:39,093

Like people are not going to see that
as a sign of weakness, asking for help.

486

00:20:39,093 --> 00:20:39,327

- No.

487

00:20:39,327 --> 00:20:41,162

- They're actually
going to see it as a strength, like

488

00:20:41,162 --> 00:20:44,397

when someone asks me for help,
I'm like, "wow, good on you.

489

00:20:44,397 --> 00:20:44,564

Like,

490

00:20:45,732 --> 00:20:46,666

I'm really proud." And

491

00:20:46,666 --> 00:20:48,634

people are grateful when you ask for help
because people want to help.

492

00:20:48,634 --> 00:20:49,234

Your friends.

493

00:20:49,234 --> 00:20:52,136

Like we were saying before, people care
about you, people actually want to help.

494

00:20:52,136 --> 00:20:53,771

When you ask them for help, it's like, "oh
hell yeah,

495

00:20:53,771 --> 00:20:55,539

I've got something to do, great." - Yeah.

496

00:20:55,539 --> 00:20:58,107

- It's so important, be proud of yourself
for asking for help.

497

00:20:58,107 --> 00:21:01,576

And like we were saying,
we're not therapists.

498

00:21:01,576 --> 00:21:03,978

- No. - Seek professional help.

499

00:21:03,978 --> 00:21:06,080

This is just kind of like guidance. -

Yeah.

500

00:21:06,080 --> 00:21:06,647

- Just general advice.

501

00:21:06,647 --> 00:21:09,649

- Getting through everyday life. -

502

00:21:10,349 --> 00:21:11,283

Yeah. - Not level one emergencies. - Yeah.

503

00:21:11,283 --> 00:21:13,518

Sometimes you need professional help
and that's okay.

504

00:21:13,518 --> 00:21:15,586

- Yeah. - That is normal.

That's completely fine.

505

00:21:15,586 --> 00:21:20,857

Yeah, sometimes if things are getting
too much for you to handle by yourself.

506

00:21:20,857 --> 00:21:23,325

Reach out to people in your life.

507

00:21:24,393 --> 00:21:26,928

You can reach out to community
groups, there's plenty of community groups

508

00:21:26,928 --> 00:21:30,564

out there, who share your interests
and live experience

509

00:21:30,564 --> 00:21:33,933

and things like that,
or you can seek professional help.

510

00:21:34,133 --> 00:21:34,734

- Yeah.

511

00:21:34,734 --> 00:21:36,168

Community groups is great as well.

That's a great idea as well.

512

00:21:36,168 --> 00:21:38,336

Community Groups is really good. - Yeah.

513

00:21:38,336 --> 00:21:38,903

Just having people to lean on.

514

00:21:38,903 --> 00:21:42,006

- Yeah, people who might go through
something similar, who can like.

515

00:21:42,006 --> 00:21:43,673

- Yeah. - They'll always be something.

516

00:21:43,673 --> 00:21:44,841

There's something for everyone.

517

00:21:44,841 --> 00:21:45,742

- Okay.

518

00:21:45,742 --> 00:21:48,377

- We'll see you around, see you next time.

- See you around. Goodbye everyone.

519

00:21:48,377 --> 00:21:50,378

- (both) Thank you. Bye.