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RORY CALLAGHAN



# SELF ~~HEALTH~~ CARE

Lifestyle Medicine for the People



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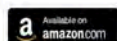


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# EVERY TIME SOMEONE BUYS THIS BOOK WE PLANT A TREE!

*“The one who plants trees, knowing that he will never sit in their shade, has at least started to understand the meaning of life.”*

— Rabindranath Tagore —



Trees clean the air we breathe and serve as an important carbon sink for our emissions. A fully grown tree can absorb up to 21kg of carbon dioxide per year. Your support through this project help to plant tree saplings throughout the world which will eventually become fully-grown at a success rate of up to 85%, and in some cases also provide income for the local community.



## 2X YOUR IMPACT! AND HELP US REACH MORE PEOPLE

If you would like to create another impact and plant another tree. Take a lifestyle photo with the *SelfCare* book so we can see the shores we reach! Share a lesson and tag **selfcare.global** on socials. Each month we will choose the most creative photo and send that person a special gift.

**Selfcare.global**

**This is more than just a book!**

Rory has created an online SelfCare ecosystem and community that you can engage and interact with as you read this book.

He envisioned everyone, anywhere with Wi-Fi, having access to empowering SelfCare education, tools, resources, mentors and a real community with real people on a similar journey together.

Behind the scenes: [deanpublishing.com/selfcare](http://deanpublishing.com/selfcare)



## 5 AGREEMENTS & 7 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS BEFORE WE BEGIN

This book is a conversation, a framework, an adaptable matrix that will evolve over time just as we do. It's something set to challenge our underlying belief systems, reinforce thoughts and inspire embodied daily action. It is designed to show you where to look, to curate ancient wisdom and modern science, simply—but never tell you what to see or do; that is up to you.

**On Reality:** *“fundamental conclusion of the new physics also acknowledges that the observer creates the reality. As observers, we are personally involved with the creation of our own reality. Physicists are being forced to admit that the universe is a ‘mental’ construction.”* — R.C. Henry, Professor at Johns Hopkins University

**On Evidence and unknowns:** *“The absence of evidence is not evidence of absence, or vice versa.”* — Donald Rumsfeld

**On Shared wisdom:** *“All truly wise thoughts have been thought already thousands of times; but to make them truly ours, we must think them over again honestly, until they take root in our personal experience.”* — Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

**On Collaboration:** *“We are like dwarfs sitting on the shoulders of giants. We see more, and things that are more distant than they did, not because our sight is superior or because we are taller than they, but because they raise us up, and by their great stature add to ours.”* — *Metalogicon* by John of Salisbury, 1159

**On Collective impact:** *“We live by each other and for each other. Alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much.”* — Helen Keller

## DEDICATION

*This is for all of us.*

*This curation of consciousness is for all the people who:  
...are sick and tired of being sick and tired,  
...are seeking simplicity in a sea of complexity,  
...know that deep down they do not need to be fixed,  
    simply nourished,  
...want to ignite their human potential through their  
    bodies' innate wisdom,  
...want to live in their highest vibration so that they can  
    serve from abundant overflow,  
...are driven to optimize their performance in this once-in-  
    a-lifetime human experience,  
...are inspired to live their legacy, not just leave one,  
...are empathetic and compassionate souls serving from  
    an empty cup,  
...want to help everyone else, before helping themselves.*

*This is for you and everyone you care about.*

*Initially, I wrote this for my patients and my mum. But, then I realized that I was writing it for me. My imperfect perfect, self. I needed to learn and embody this message and vision before sharing it with you. **Which means, we are all doing this together.***

*This is for my family, friends, my local community and our global family. Mum, this is for you. You are the hero of this story. To my dad, and my extended family that goes beyond blood, thank you for your support, challenging questions and guidance in the darkest of times.*

*This is a dedication to all the lightworkers, working behind the scenes, illuminating the darkness.  
You too are the heroes of this story. I see you.*

***This book is simply a reminder of what you already know and feel to be true.***

*The keys are in your hands. The universe is conspiring in your favor.*

***It's time to trust your innate wisdom and tune into the source of it all. From my heart to yours.  
Big love and thank you.***

## ONE SIMPLE REMINDER

If you take away just ONE thing, may you remember this: You have never needed to be fixed, simply nourished, supported and empowered by enabling environments.

## THE SELF CARE SEVENTEEN

1. Nature is our primary life support system
2. Connection and community is the elixir to longevity
3. Self-care is not selfish; learn to take care of yourself so that others may never have to

Be courageous to go first. You will learn how to:

4. Ignite your untapped human potential
5. Optimize your human performance for any desired vision
6. Live a life by your own design, believing that anything is possible from here!
7. Make the most of this once-in-a-lifetime human experience; without comparison.
8. Live a meaningful life full of fulfillment, driven by your own unique standards
9. Live a life with no regrets, knowing tomorrow is not guaranteed for any of us
10. Thrive, not just survive. So that you can build longer tables, not just higher fences
11. Be a high-impact human and serve from abundant overflow
12. Live a legacy in real time, planting seeds today for trees that we may never sit under
13. Create ripple effects of positive change in this generation for the next
15. Understand that true purpose is human, connected innately with nature and the cosmos
16. Treat others (animals and nature too) in the same way that you would like to be treated
17. Feel more, knowing that empathy and compassion are the solutions we all seek

Lastly, remember that none of us are meant to go this journey alone; seek mentors who show you where to look, not gurus who tell you what to see. Trust your inner guru, you are your best SelfCare Doctor.

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## **WARNING:**

### **READING THIS COULD RISK YOUR CURRENT HEALTH**

This book is a book of choices. If you make a positive lifestyle choice or change—your life will also change. If you are suffering with fatigue, burnout, poor health and vitality, I warn you that reading this could risk your current state of poor health. If you are seeking the secrets hidden in plain sight to ignite your human potential, optimize your performance and live your ultimate experience, then you will find that here too, within the fields of ancient wisdom and evidence-based science.

Live fast and die young; enjoy healthy moderation; or live to longevity—the choice is yours! This is a supportive and non-judgmental community of people simply doing their best!

I intend for this book to be a positive disruption in your life and in the lives of those you care about. Naturally, like many new changes, it may seem strange at first, or even a little uncomfortable or inconvenient—but one thing I can assure you is that your life will change for the better!

It's time to live as an empowered driver in your life, not the passive passenger.

We do not need to be fixed, we simply need to make better daily choices and aim to create happy and healthy communities that enable us all to thrive.

So, I repeat—if you make a positive lifestyle change—your life will change; don't say I didn't warn you.

You may even do more of this 😊



# FOREWORD

Sometimes, you meet people who “hit” you right away. Not a “hit” in a slap-your-face or punch kind of way, but “hit” as in impact. Pow!

Rory Callaghan does that. From the first moment you meet him it’s clear; that he is a person with purpose, on purpose and committed to making something great happen. And you also get that, in the words of Imagine Dragon’s 2018 hit song, he will do “whatever it takes” to make it happen.

He is positive, hopeful and a born optimist, determined to show that we can all thrive in harmony together. He lives what he believes in, which is, that one person can make a difference and together we can make the world work for all of us, not just for some of us.

He perseveres. He checks and double-checks. When others (like me, for example) would tend to say, “Okay...Let’s get it out,” Rory would go back and ensure that all the pieces are in place first, as if he energetically knows when the time is right to give this to the world.

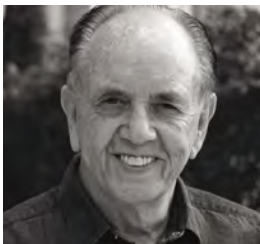
Rory wants to ensure that no reader is left up in the air not knowing what to do next or where to go to in order to be empowered to follow their ideal path. And as you’ll discover, he’s done that magnificently.

We’re surrounded by increasing levels of disease—almost 100% of it caused by the lifestyle choices we make individually and collectively. Rory gives us new paths to follow; paths grounded in the wonder of wisdom. As he’ll show you, our bodies can do amazing things when we give them precisely the right building blocks and environments in which to thrive.

*SelfCare* shows everyone the path to better living, but it’s also clear that it depends on...you...on self.

This book is a critical reminder, it gives you back the keys and empowers you to be the driver of your own human experience.

Go for it! Just take one simple step, then another. Rory’s done some great work to show you the way. And you’ll be doing some great and important work when you follow it too.



**Paul Dunn, Chairman of B1G1.com**

*Creating a world full of giving—220 million impacts and counting—“for us, for us, for us.”*

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# THE MEANING AND THE MISSION

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A number of great minds, from Albert Einstein to Dikran Marsupial and even Richard Feynman said a similar thing—"If you can't explain it simply enough to a six-year-old, then the truth is that you don't yet know it well enough yourself." So, here's our six-year-old version of truth.

## OUR INTENTION—"EMPOWER & ENABLE"

Our intention is to empower you on your own personal journey, merging ancient wisdom with a modern existence so that you too can be happy, healthy, connected and living towards a unified and sustainable existence for all. Together as one global community on this fragile blue planet.

## OUR VISION—"THE RISING BILLIONS"

We believe that good health and wellbeing is a human right for all people, of all ages, regardless of geography, race, religion or luck of birthright. It is a human right for all of us, not just for some of us.

## OUR MISSION—"1 IN 8 PEOPLE"

To empower good health and wellbeing by enabling personalized, integrated and holistic approaches to health, happiness and connection in a unified and sustainable world. All while reducing the burden of chronic preventable disease in this generation and future generations. If we influence 1 in every 8 people, we will create a ripple effect of positive change: one person, family and community at a time.

*My personal mission is to promote health happiness and connection in a unified and sustainable world. SelfCare is about empowering each of us (me included) to look after ourselves so that others may never need to. It is a human-centric, natural, energetic and spiritual approach that unlocks our human potential and empowers each of us to optimize our human experience in our own unique way. This enables each individual to have an impact and create an intergenerational ripple effect of positive change. This is a natural outcome when we each learn to fill our own cup daily and serve from overflow. The future is abundant. There is enough for all of us. Let's learn to thrive together as one, sharing and circulating life's abundance so that we create a world that is a win for all.*



— Rory Callaghan

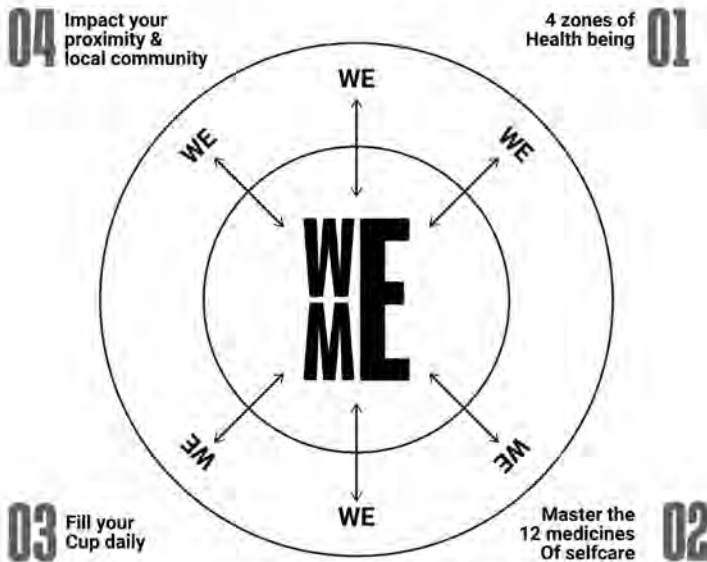
[rorycallaghan.com](http://rorycallaghan.com)



## OUR SHARED GOAL—"THE RISING BILLIONS"

It all starts by having the courage to go first. Without comparison, judgment and the limiting beliefs that may have got you here in the first place. We share the same goal: to ignite our own human potential and take radical responsibility for our own health and wellbeing. Why this is important and meaningful to you right now, might be different to what it represents for me, or anyone else. But that is okay. This is a personal journey. We use an "inside-out approach," helping you master what is within your control, so that you can manifest and consciously engineer anything into your external reality. Living with a belief that "anything is possible from here!" Learn to trust your innate wisdom, connect to the universal source, knowing that the universe has your back. One person, just like you can make a difference. It is the only thing that ever has. If you can't yet do this for yourself, do it for others, or do it in the service of something greater!

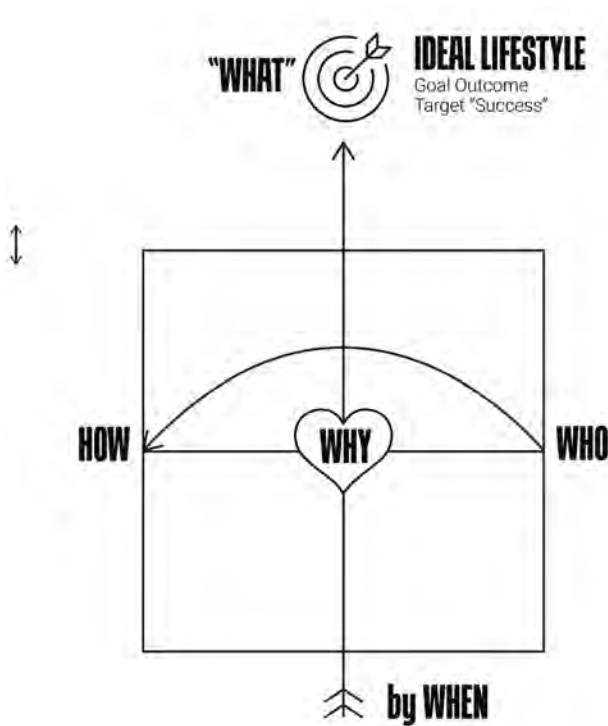
## HOW TO POSITIVELY IMPACT THE WORLD IN 4 STEPS



## 5 CURIOUS QUESTIONS TO SELF

“Start with a heart-centered WHY. Create a meaningful WHAT by WHEN, and find the WHO that knows the HOW.”

Throughout this book we will address 5 core areas and questions: WHY are you here, and why is this important for you right now and into the future? WHAT is a meaningful goal in the context of your unique life right now? WHEN would you like to embody, achieve and live these meaningful goals? WHO do you know right now that could help support you on this part of the journey? Mentors that show you where to look but not what to see. And communities that support you over the duration of this courageous journey. HOW do you take the first step and every step thereafter? How do you remain persistent, and grow consistently by 1% each day?



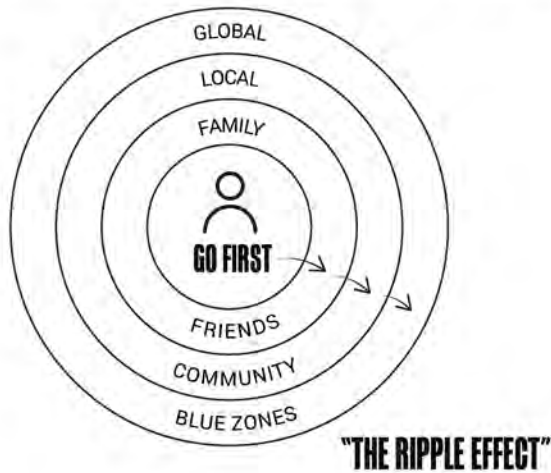
I hope this book serves as a daily reminder that “you have never needed to be fixed, simply nourished and supported.” And that your human nature has an innate wisdom and untapped potential that can enable you to achieve anything your heart desires; especially when connected with nature and

others. If we can travel into outer space in a metal object, then anything is truly possible. You can achieve anything that you believe, especially with a focused mind and embodied daily actions.

Enjoy this conscious creation and the SelfCare Matrix, I hope it helps you ignite your own SelfCare revolution. Together, we can create a ripple effect of positive global change that starts at our front doorstep. Let's unite in creating global Blue Zone communities where every person has the ability to live in good health, as well-beings on this beautiful and fragile blue planet. Let's live this shared message, mission and vision today.

One last message: before trying to save the world, put your own oxygen mask on first, fill your own cup each day so you can serve from abundant overflow.

## ONE PERSON CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Former director of Yale University's Yale-Griffin Prevention Research Center and President and Founder of the non-profit True Health Initiative, David Katz, MD and his coalition of world experts declare that, "In today's society, a multitude of competing agendas and motivations obscure the fundamental, simple truths of healthy living. If we don't create enduring, sustainable change, we submit to a world where chronic disease and premature death are the norm, not the exception. There's a better way."<sup>1</sup>

**DO IT YOURSELF (LEARN ~ ASSESS)**

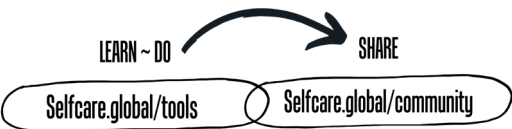
Our hope is to sift through all the noise, misinformation, misdiagnoses, BS, fake news, and hidden agendas so that you can embody healthy lifestyle choices today, with a deep sense of trust to share it with the people you care about. We hope to share multiple perspectives and truths so that you can come to your own realizations in your own time, from mentors who show you where to look but never tell you what to see. We simply want to remind you that you have never needed to be fixed, simply nourished, supported, and connected on your own unique path.



**DO IT WITH US (DO ~ SHARE)**

Dr. David Katz draws upon the latest scientific evidence and decades of clinical experience to explain how we can slash our risk of every major chronic disease—heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, dementia, and obesity—by an astounding 80%.<sup>2</sup> By simply making better daily lifestyle choices, living in nourishing natural environments and being part of empowering communities. Share any tools that help you too and we will share them.

If you live a busy lifestyle and love simplicity, we have created simple courses and a structure to support and guide your journey. All the energy exchanged here will help us have a bigger impact.



**DO IT TOGETHER (EMBODY ~ BE)**

Throughout this book I will often reference “the ripple effect.” As some of you may know, this quote has been attributed to Mother Teresa: “I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples.” Although no one really knows if she did say it (there is a divide in the research)—what we do know is that this specific quote has had many ripples itself. The quote has impacted many just by its existence. This book recognizes ripples—and you’re one of them.





## INTRODUCTION

---

# WE AS ONE

*“We are here to awaken from our illusion of separateness. True self is non-self, the awareness that the self is made only of non-self elements.*

*There’s no separation between self and other, and everything is interconnected. Once you are aware of that you are no longer caught in the idea that you are a separate entity.”*

— *Thich Nhat Hanh* —

## “ME” ARE YOU PART OF THE UPPER 8 PERCENT?

Simply by having access to this book to read, you belong to a minority group. In fact, if you can read you are luckier than over one-billion people who cannot read at all.

If you woke up this morning with more health than illness, then you are luckier than the million who will not survive this week. Luckier than the 4 billion people living with a chronic preventable non-communicable disease, and even luckier because you have a provincial healthcare card that guarantees you will have care in case of illness.

If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation...then you are ahead of 500 million people in the world.



If you can attend any meeting you want—political, religious, social...then you are luckier than 3 billion people in the world.

If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof over your head and a place to sleep...then you are more abundant than 75 percent of this world.

If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish some place...then you are among the top eight percent of the world's abundant population.<sup>1</sup> With this in mind, let's begin with a grateful heart.

## YOU HAVE ALREADY HAD AN IMPACT!

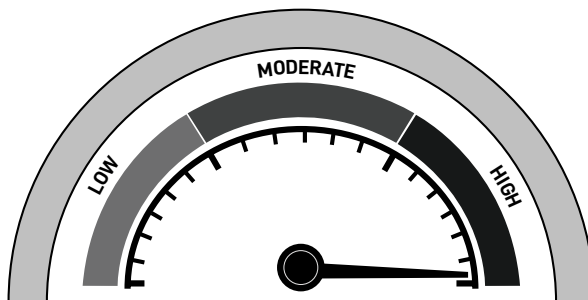
By purchasing this book, you are part of the top 8 percent of the world. I personally thank you. I believe that it is our duty to go first, to take advantage of the abundant opportunities in front of us so that we can reach out and support the 92% who may never have access to this same opportunity.

I believe in circular and shared economies, and as a result of you purchasing this book, you have already created a ripple effect of change for people in the world who do not share this luxury.

We have created a giving impact on your behalf. To see our collective **IMPACT METER** and help us stay accountable to our *why*. Go to:

[Selfcare.global/Impact](https://Selfcare.global/Impact)

HELP US IMPACT 1 BILLION LIVES!



You made a choice to purchase this book and here is the ripple effect you created. 11% of the gross profits from each book go to:

- 5%—Local community projects
- 6%— National & Global community projects

The other 89% will help us continue to build the lifestyle Medicine Revolution, reminding people that SelfCare is not selfish. All whilst co-creating global Blue Zone communities, starting where we each stand. We can all start local and impact global, together!



## FILL YOUR OWN CUP FIRST

Although the royalties of this book are essentially for others, it's important to state before reading this that **self-care** is *not* **selfish**. Filling your own cup, putting your oxygen mask on first is necessary in order to create lasting global change. You'll see this "Fill Your Own Cup" theme pop up throughout the book as a pleasant reminder that you matter. It's only if you take care of yourself first that you can take care of others.

Now, I know this can be a big pivot for some people, many mothers for example. But if you keep pouring and pouring—eventually you end up empty, with no vitality. As the saying goes, "You can't pour from an empty cup."

Let's use the simple diagram of a cup to get the picture (you being the cup of course).



## SERVE FROM ABUNDANT OVERFLOW

Our aim in this book is to get you here!

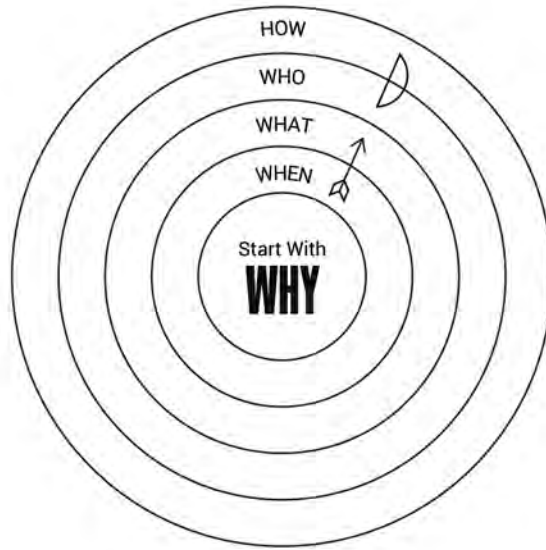
Full but with overflow. If you're full of life and vitality and joy, then this naturally brims over and allows you to serve others from your overflow. Make sense? Good!

## GLOBAL IMPACT REQUIRES MORE CUPS IN OVERFLOW

This SelfCare Revolution will continue to focus on YOU and filling your cup, and also using the overflow in three key areas; the ones we believe will solve many future challenges. These are: **Education, Women and Children.**

The Clinton Global Initiative (CGI), along with the United Nations shows that around the world, girls and women continue to suffer from a lack of economic opportunity, inadequate healthcare and education, early marriage, sexual violence, and discrimination. But the great news is that empowering girls and women yields life-affirming returns for everyone. Educating young women increases a country's gross national product—and the benefits are shared by boys and men. CGI reports that, "when women work, they invest 90 percent of their income back into their families, compared with 35 percent for men."<sup>2</sup> We know that by taking care of women, they'll take care of many others.

We aim to help more women, girls and children have an overflowing cup. Imagine the world then. It's time to move from a masculine energy to a more inclusive feminine energy, one that empowers more nurturers to co-create nourishing communities and protect Mother Earth.



## THIS IS OUR WHY

This is WHY we are truly here. Simon Sinek shares that “true purpose is human” and inspires every human being and conscious enterprise to “start with why,” not the what and the how. Helping you go first and helping the people you care about is our why. Imagine a world where everyone lives in abundant overflow, looking after their families, friends and communities. If we all did just this ONE thing, together we can positively impact the narrative for future generations through our actions, not just through words and policies. Imagine a world where we all thrive together co-creating nourishing environments, supported by communities of high-vibing humans with one common goal. One person can make a difference!

If we ever meet in person one day, you can ask me why this work is important to me, and I will openly share what led me to this point. Let’s uncover your why and maybe you can share that with me one day too! And if by chance, we share a similar mission, let’s work together!

[Selfcare.global/about](https://Selfcare.global/about)

**WHAT IS YOUR WHY?**

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**6 STEPS TO HELP YOU UNCOVER YOUR UNIQUE WHY**

Before we go deeper, let us remember that true purpose is human; bliss moments are our greatest guide, happiness is the purpose of life and you will know you have found your why when it ignites an emotion. You will probably cry. That’s when you know your why.

- 1. Why do you get out of bed each morning?
- 2. Why should people care, why do you care?
- 3. What moments made time stand still? Why were you doing them?
- 4. What past experiences created a feeling of bliss and inner peace? Why were those moments important to you?
- 5. What past experiences created pain, trauma and challenged your shadows? Why do you want to share these lessons with others? Why is this a driver for you?
- 6. What are people naturally attracted to you for? And why do they feel that you are the go-to person to solve that problem?

If you find an answer, try this:

Go deeper and ask yourself—“Why is that important to me?” Do this 12 times and keep digging deeper. If you get stuck, try adding “so that” to keep the thoughts and feelings flowing. Once the answer creates an emotion (e.g. you cry), you will know your why. Once you have found it, use that to guide your decisions and expressions.



## CALL TO COURAGE



## JOIN THE MOVEMENT

### ***Want to Join Us?***

Join Your Global Community Now @

[Selfcare.global/community](https://Selfcare.global/community)

As you read this book and take inspired action:  
share learnings, share stories, tools and resources to help others.

**LEARN – DO – EMBODY – SHARE**



## HELP US:

- ✓ Go first and create ripple effects that positively empower over 1 billion+ people together.
- ✓ Co-create global Blue Zone communities, where the burden of chronic preventable disease is a thing of the past, and living towards longevity is the new normal.
- ✓ Unlock the human potential available in ALL of us and live your ultimate human experience and life.
- ✓ Learn to feel happy, be healthy and connected right now, not tomorrow. Filling cups all over the world!





## CHAPTER 1

---

# PAIN TO PURPOSE

*“The journey of the hero is about the courage to seek the depths;  
the image of creative rebirth; the eternal cycle of change within us;  
the uncanny discovery that the seeker is the mystery which the  
seeker seeks to know. The hero journey is a symbol that binds,  
in the original sense of the word, two distant ideas, the spiritual  
quest of the ancients with the modern search for identity,  
always the one, shape-shifting yet marvelously  
constant story that we find.”<sup>1</sup>*

— Joseph Campbell, *The Hero’s Journey* —

## HEALTH PROFESSIONAL WHO LOST HIS HEALTH

One day, at 26 years of age, I woke up as health professional who had lost his health.

All the accolades, continued learning, bachelors and master’s degree couldn’t save me from how I felt in this moment. My knowledge had failed me, and I had failed to listen to my body’s innate wisdom. I had failed to acknowledge its natural intelligence hidden in the depth of my genetic blueprint. I had failed to see the impact of my lifestyle choices. My ego had led me to be in a state of disharmony. Quite simply, I had pushed myself too far. I was stressed, tired, depleted, dysfunctional and depressed.

I thought I knew what to do. I was a health professional and leader in my industry and community. People looked to me for advice and support. Yet, in this moment I felt incongruent and lost. How could I help others if I couldn't even help myself? All my dreams and passions came crashing to an abrupt halt.

This was crisis point.

As I woke up on this dreary winter's morning in my home town of Fremantle, Perth, I was already an hour late for work. I had slept through six consecutive wake-up reminder alarms, but I didn't even try to get up. I couldn't. I had no choice but to surrender to my body and soul's need to rest. I was physically, mentally, emotionally and biologically stuck. Exhausted. Depleted. I had hit rock bottom and was helpless to change it.

I felt as though nothing mattered anymore. How could I move forward if I didn't have my health and a sense of wellbeing to move forward with? I was forced to realize the true value of my health; which was linked to every dream, aspiration, business, relationship and lifestyle I had envisioned. Without my health, nothing else was possible. Dreams were useless in the graveyard. I imagined all the dreams that were never lived and all the innovations never shared.

As I imagined being restricted from everything I loved doing, my heart sank. I was scared. A strong man on the outside, but a scared fearful child on the inside. I didn't get how precious this gift of health was, until I was on the brink of losing it.

Through my work, I had access to modern technology, scans and an impressive network of experts with whom I worked, but no one could help me in this moment. It was up to me, something had to change. I had to change.

As I lay there, I remember asking myself three questions:



## THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL

*“The first revolution is when you change your mind and beliefs about how you look at things, and see there might be another way to look at it that you have not been shown.”*

— *Gil Scott Heron* —

Before answering, I took a breath and sunk deeply into these questions. My brain desperately tried to take charge and formulate clever answers, but the truth was too confronting for any mental gymnastics.

I answered a somber NO to all three questions.

I was a witness to my own situation. In my mind's eye, I could see the dark circles under my eyes, the muscle loss, the poor posture, the loss of energy and severe brain fog, the lack of mental clarity. All those signals and symptoms from my body were suddenly evident. Those aches, those pains, that digestive reflux, those intolerances to foods I once loved. All signs! But I was looking away.

It was as if I had simply existed in a state of dullness over the past 12-months, or perhaps more. Everything was finally clear in this moment. *I had chosen all of this.*

But how had I ended up here? Was I a passenger to my own human experience, erroneously thinking that I was in the driver's seat? Or had I consciously driven down this path, making my own choices every step of the way?

Something big had to change. But how was I meant to communicate this to my boss, to my long list of patients booked in to see me that day, my partner, my family and my friends? What about all the demands I had to meet, and my endless to-do list?

I felt like I had failed all of them. I felt like I was falling further behind. But, who was I racing against?

A deep sense of shame and guilt encompassed me as I lay there, unable to help myself, let alone anyone else. I replied to the 10 missed calls from my manager and said that I was sick and unable to come in. She replied with a worried but empathetic voice and said that she would move all of my patients across and clear my schedule for as long as I needed to recover. It was as if she had been waiting months for this moment, watching me ready to crash and burn, without saying anything.

My mom warned me that I had been “burning the wick at both ends for nearly five years.”

In that moment, I finally received that message, albeit five years too late.

How could I have been so goal-orientated and narcissistic, yet oddly combined with an equal blend of selfless empathy, prioritizing other people's needs before my own? I knew that my heart wasn't selfish, but I had lacked in prioritizing

my own self-care. My desire to serve others was driven from an unconscious desire to find my own self-worth and obtain self-value in helping others, at the expense of myself.

I knew what to say and do, but had no time, and had not prioritized myself into my own schedule. I was not walking my talk. I had never felt so incongruent. Whilst being at the peak of my career, I was at the bottom of my life. A bizarre paradox that shocked me to the core.

This had been a long time coming. I had been blinded by cultural and societal expectations of who I should be in the world and how I should serve. I had been working 100 hours per week in the healthcare system. It all of a sudden seemed odd that the healthcare system was set-up in a way where the leaders, healers, coaches and experts were forced to live as part of the very statistics they were inspired to change.

I had to step back and see the bigger picture.

## **THE CRISIS, THE CATALYST AND THE COMEBACK**

I reflected on what had led me to this point. Growing up in one of the most isolated cities in the world, I had a warped view of reality. Was I always a candidate for a burnout? Or was this an environmental factor? Surely there was a better way.

I remembered my dad, a 27-year-old man who had met my 44-year-old mother. An amazing painter with his whole life ahead of him, who not long after my birth succumbed to mental health challenges that led him to seek mind-altering substances as a way of numbing the pain created in his mind.

I remember walking through the streets of my hometown in Fremantle with my two best friends, and seeing a homeless guy rolled up in the corner of a shopfront with a bottle of beer next to him. We started laughing and joking at the situation, until I realized that it was my dad.

I remembered my mother. A strong, powerful and independent woman with an unlimited work ethic. She had sacrificed so much for my brother and me and always showed up with a sense of unconditional love and an unwavering belief in anything we put our minds to. For most of my upbringing, we lived pay check to pay check. She had invested in our home and I soon learned that her being born just after the Great Depression meant she had a strong belief to not owe anyone anything. She showed me the transformative power of unconditional love and served from an empty cup, going without, so we had every opportunity in life. She was relentless in ensuring we owned our home and had our basic human needs met, even if it meant that she sacrificed her own.

I remembered the day we were debt-free as a family. My mother came home with three round-the-world tickets, saying, "You know what boys, life is for living!" She'd gone back into debt, inspired to show us the world she had seen as a young

air-hostess traveling to all the corners of the globe. She said that we weren't meant to simply pay bills and die.

I watched as my brother had to make a hard decision: come on the world trip with us, or take the apprenticeship that paid less than \$5 an hour so that he could secure a future for himself and his family. He chose his future career over this experience. I remember feeling as if this was a turning point in both of our lives. I imagined what would have happened if he had gone and I had stayed.

As I ventured on my first trip outside of the city I was born, I felt things changing inside me as mom and I boarded our first plane from Perth to Bali. The first thing I remember on this trip was meeting a man called Wayan. I learned he was living and supporting his family on \$150 a month; the same amount I had in my pocket for spending money. I was confused, he had more happiness than anyone I had seen in my young life and yet he was so generous and giving. I felt a desire to give him everything I had. This experience also evoked a sense of guilt within me as I questioned my own happiness and it challenged everything I thought I knew about happiness.

We traveled to Thailand and I remember seeing a young girl dying of malaria in a small hut with no access to an ambulance or healthcare. Something I had always taken for granted. My mother and I had to walk away. I remember feeling something deep in my heart, a sense of helplessness and despair in knowing that she would not last the night. Things started to change within me. I was beginning to learn profound things on this global journey.

I remember walking along the Champs-Élysées in Paris and hearing a woman's excitement over her latest "bargain"—she had just purchased a pair of shoes for €1000. My young mind reflected deeply after hearing that the malaria medication for the young girl in Thailand would have only cost ~6 cents if she had the means to access it. I felt my worldview shift rapidly in that moment as I came to understand that we weren't born equal. I wondered how many lives could have been saved for the same cost of those shoes?

I remember seeing an old man in New Orleans playing a saxophone that looked older than he was. He had no hat out for money and seemed like he was just doing it out of passion, that his heart simply felt the need to share his music with the world. As he played, I watched bystanders start dancing and other musicians sat down to join in. I felt what passion really was, but resisted dancing with everyone else through fear of being judged.

I remembered all the knowledge I had accumulated studying when no one was watching. I remember feeling those chemical reactions spark and fire as my brain connected pieces of life's mysterious puzzle. This unique feeling inspired me to be the first person in my family to graduate from higher level education at university. I went on to attend university straight out of school, dissecting human bodies that had been donated to science. I saw cancerous tumors in real-time that had taken over a man's body. I knew it wasn't a normal part of aging. I

saw what lay beneath each layer of our amazing human bodies. I extracted DNA, the evolutionary blueprint of life onto a stick to see it live. I worked with elite athletes and studied how the human body could perform at its highest level. This curiosity led me to further study as I grappled with my own injuries that inevitably derailed my young sporting desires. But in hindsight, this led me to explore how the body not only performed, but how it could repair.

I worked in hospitals with patients who were in intensive care (ICU), teetering on the border of life and death. I remember a doctor describing it as “angels gates”—a place many people never left.

I remember seeing a Buddhist monk have his life support switched off after being a victim of an unexpected assault on his morning run for the \$20 he had left in his wallet.

I remember working in the children’s ward with kids who had cancer, trying to morally understand how they had been dealt this card in life. I watched them laugh and make the best of their situation as their parents cried in the background, too afraid to show their child the reality of the situation.

I remember working in the respiratory ward, walking a middle-aged woman 10-meters down the hallway before her oxygen saturation dropped to a level where she could go no further. Coming to terms with her lifestyle choices and smoking from an era that promoted.

I remember working with a father who had a heart attack on the way to work, even though he looked fit on the outside. I watched as his three young children lay by his bed all day, waiting for their hero to wake up from life-saving surgery. It made me appreciate the wonders of modern medicine but I felt that we could have prevented it from happening at all.

I remember working in the neurological ward helping a young man walk again after he had sustained a head injury in a car accident he had caused. Only to find out that the person he had collided with had not survived the crash. I questioned why he had survived but the innocent mother had not.

I watched a lady get her leg amputated because her foot became gangrenous from a metabolic issue associated with Type 2 diabetes. Her lifestyle choices were deplorable, and I wondered what circumstances or emotions had led her to making those choices. It seemed like she was destined to remain ingrained in the system, supported and funded by tax-paying individuals who had made different life choices. I questioned whether she was at fault, or whether the wider community and health system had not really helped her. I wondered what past traumas she had experienced, or whether her poor lifestyle choices were conscious or a result of deeper troubles.

All of this became a personal driving force. It lit a fire within my soul to be part of the solution, part of the change.



## TO KNOW AND NOT DO, IS TO NOT YET KNOW

The Japanese have a proverb that says, “Knowledge without wisdom is a load of books on the back of an ass.”

Like most, I came out of 18 years of study gaining knowledge, minus the wisdom of experience. A sobering reality that made me feel like the Japanese proverb. I came fresh from college with a desire to change the world, feeling like I knew it all and was ready to show the world. I worked and worked, determined to do my part in changing the world.

It didn't seem right that there was a large proportion of the world that was not living in a state of good health and wellbeing. I was not yet sure of the extent, but I just knew it wasn't right. I had to try and fix it.

When I woke up at 26—unhappy, unhealthy and disconnected, I realized that I had become a statistic of the very system I was inspired to pivot and change. As I reflected on this moment, still laying in bed, the words of leaders and giants who had come before me echoed in my mind.

W. Edwards Deming suggested that “a bad system will beat a good person every time.” I knew in my heart that I was a good person and this social and cultural environment and “system” had definitely beaten me. For now.

Albert Einstein shared, “We cannot solve our problems with the same level of thinking that created them.” I knew that all of this health knowledge I had accumulated did not translate into living and serving from a place of good health and wellbeing.

I felt like I had spent years banging my head against a wall, learning and being forced to apply “health” concepts that didn't add up in the real world. But I had trusted the system. I felt like my \$100,000 in student loans had been a total waste of time if this “knowledge” was the ultimate and final outcome. I felt cheated by the education system, by society and by the social constructs that had molded me to think this way. Trading time for money and working at the expense of my own health and wellbeing.

As I stepped in deeper reflection, I remembered the words of Buckminster Fuller, “You can never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.”

It became clear; I was both the problem and solution. I had to step outside the system in order to heal and make a real difference. I dreamed of co-creating a system that empowered people in their own self-care. A model that would one day make the existing model obsolete. I was sick of fighting within an inefficient system that had the best intentions but was flawed in its very foundation of passive care, disconnected from the essence of humanity and disconnected from nature, our true source of healing and regeneration.

SelfCare and self-governed communities seemed to be an appropriate way forward. If we all simply looked after ourselves, each other and our

communities, we'd thrive. My gut feeling was that we could slowly create a global change. We could change the current system and ignite a more human-centric approach founded in nature and in our innate connectedness as tribes and communities.

In essence, I wanted to remind people that they are their best SelfCare doctor. Not a doctor in the technical sense of an administering health professional, but a Dr in the sense of administering healthy daily rituals and lifestyle choices.

In hindsight, I can now see that my past and present experiences were necessary in order to come to this realization. As I reflect, it all adds up. Choices add up! Author and entrepreneur James Clear shares that if you can get 1 percent better each day for one year, you'll end up thirty-seven times better by the time you're done. Compound your health! In the same way you dream of compounding your wealth. Health is wealth.

Seeing my dad homeless on the streets did leave me with a choice, walk on by and ignore his very existence or stop to acknowledge him as the man who brought me into this world. After all, I was a 1 in 4 trillion chance of being born and he made that miracle possible.

I stopped and went over to my dad, kneeling down as I pressed on his shoulder. He woke up in a daze, smiling as he saw his son in front of him. I later found out that I am the one reason he is still alive today. That one simple caring gesture inspired him to keep going that day when he had no reason or want to exist.

He wasn't a deadbeat, he was my dad. An amazing painter and creative soul. He suffered mental health issues not long after I was born in 1987, which led to addictive escapism. Society would call him an alcoholic and homeless. But to me, he always has and always will be, my father.

His journey taught me a valuable lesson in empathy, compassion and how resilient the human body can be to self-harm. He is still alive, even after succumbing to a head injury in his 40s. Without access to our amazing healthcare system and the allied health professional team he would not be here. I am grateful for everyone that is part of the integrated support system that means that my dad still lives on today.

Did you know that over a billion people do not have access to healthcare? This means that children are losing their parents globally. But that doesn't need to be the case.

My father's recovery from a severe brain injury also taught me how amazing neuroplasticity is. A year after his injury he could not even throw a ball, today he still paints and lives relatively independently. Something miraculous happened as well. After his head injury, he lost his long-term memory. He no longer remembers the demons that once ruled his mind and led him to seek mind-altering substances to silence them.

His paintings used to be of natural environments with solitary characters who were intimately connected with the land. It was almost as if he found peace within

his paintings. After his injury, his paintings became more colorful and vibrant as if his mind was seeing the world differently. He even started to sign his name at bottom of his paintings, something that a man who lacked self-love, self-worth and value could never once do.

He helped me realize the true damage of suppressed emotions. I grew up without a father because of them. Even at the bottom of a bottle, he didn't find what he was emotionally searching for. It helped me understand that at the deepest level, we all need emotional connection. Emotions are unique and contextually relevant to the events and experiences of our life. They weave our memories and envelope our feelings of unity or aloneness.

My mother taught me my most valuable lessons. The way she spoke of my father in such a positive way, when she had every reason not to. She showed me a level of compassion and empathy that would change the way I see and treat people forever. She showed what could be done by serving from an empty cup (in the material sense) but an overflowing cup in her sense of unconditional love for her children and the world around her. She inspires me every day to serve from overflow. I always wondered what she would have been capable of, if she was ever able to receive the love she gave so freely and willingly.

## **THE ARRIVAL AND RETURN TO HARMONY**

As I lay there, that fateful day in bed. I became inspired to create a different future and reality for myself and others. I wanted desperately to one day sit in the depths of happiness, with a sense of inner peace, connected to myself, my partner, my friends, my family, my community and the world. A healthy and unrestricted human being.

The good news is: I made it. I am happy, healthy and connected beyond my wildest dreams. Yet it could never have happened if I had stayed dwelling in a system that didn't have the deeper resources or understanding to spark my self-healing capabilities.

Now, I want everyone to wake up feeling happy, healthy and connected in a sustainable and unified world. We were never meant to survive alone, we are here to learn how we can thrive together. And yes, it wasn't just an overnight epiphany—I had to make a giant leap and make new and consistent choices to come back from the brink of ill-health. I had to move from a broken system in order to fix myself. I had to move from Healthcare to SelfCare. It was up to me. Self-acceptance and ownership was just the beginning.

This is the inner revolution many people are now taking. It doesn't mean that they're dismissing traditional medicine, it simply means that they are making self-care choices toward wellbeing and happiness.

Many people are disappointed that they don't get better, that all solutions aren't found inside our current healthcare system. Though as a health practitioner, I'm not

suggesting you walk away from any healthcare providers, I am simply suggesting you begin to make empowered choices in your own life. A choice to not solely rely on others to fix you but begin to look at fixing yourself. Move from being over-reliant on HEALTHCARE and start to realize that SELF CARE holds many answers you may have never investigated (or been advised to look at).

This is the inner revolution. This is the new step forward.

Seek mentors that remind you that you don't need to be fixed. Mentors who show you where to look, without telling you what to see. Mentors who help you focus on the solution and work together with other mentors in their fields of expertise, being truly human-centric in their approach.

SELF CARE is the foundation, the 80–95% within our control. HEALTHCARE is the intervention, for the 5–20% outside our control.

**CALL TO COURAGE (C2C):**

WHAT is one painful event that taught you a valuable life lesson?

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