161 - Self-Care Tips From TV Host Brooke Burke

Amy Morin:
Welcome to The Verywell Mind Podcast! I’m Amy Morin, the editor-in-chief of Verywell Mind. I'm also a psychotherapist and a best-selling author of four books on mental strength. Every Monday, I introduce you to a mentally strong person whose story and mental strength tips can inspire you to think, feel, and do your best in life. And the fun part is we record the show from a sailboat in the Florida Keys. Don’t forget to subscribe to the show on your favorite platform so that you can get mental strength tips delivered to you every single week. Now, let's dive into today's episode!

Do you struggle to find time to take care of yourself? Does time for yourself always fall down your list of priorities? Do you have a hard time being alone with your thoughts? If you answered yes to any of those questions, today's episode is for you!

I'm talking to Brooke Burke. She's a television personality, author, fitness trainer, actress, and entrepreneur. Over the years, she's appeared on many TV shows. For a while, she was the host of Wild On!, a travel show that appeared on the E! network. She also won the seventh season of Dancing with the Stars and then became co-host of the show. She's the host of the Intimate Knowledge podcast. And over the years she's appeared on the cover of many fitness lifestyle and fashion magazines. She also has a fitness app that focuses on both physical and mental health. Some of the things she talks about today are how she makes herself a top priority despite being a busy mom with so many things to do, how she takes care of herself, and the steps she takes to improve her wellbeing.

Make sure to stick around until the end of the episode for The Therapist’s Take. It's the part of the show where I'll break down Brooke's mental strength-building strategies and talk about how you can apply them to your own life. So here's Brooke Burke on how creating time to take care of yourself can help you grow mentally stronger!
Brooke Burke:
Thanks for having me!

Amy Morin:
So I'm excited to talk to you. You have had this huge career where you've done all of these interesting things over the years. You've been a TV host, you won Dancing with the Stars, you went on to become a judge, you were on Celebrity Apprentice, you do all these fitness videos and website things. What are you up to these days?

Brooke Burke:
Well, I never thought I'd be fully immersed in the wellness business, in the wellness space. I started my career in television and God, you mentioned so many things that it's all a blur. I can't believe that I've been working in this business for three decades. It's mind blowing. But most of my time and energy right now is spent choreographing, and running, and developing Brooke Burke body and listening to the community and choreographing content for them. And I love being in this space. I'm really, really enjoying it. And I feel like we need it now more than ever, such a bigger picture than fitness. If we look at the long play and the mindful part of it, and we consider it to be a wellness possibility, it's much greater than I ever thought that it would be.

Amy Morin:
A lot of people will see you and say, well, you're into physical fitness, but you go beyond that. It's not just about the physical appearance or about working out for the sake of getting your body in shape.

Brooke Burke:
I feel like I could teach people how to get physically fit and toned. And we hear this hot girl bikini summer concept all the time. That's the easy part of it. I'm certified in breathwork. I believe in mindful meditations. I do sound balls. I do so many things in the fitness wellness space that are, I want to say more importantly for the mind and the spirit than the body. And I really believe in connecting those dots. It's the marriage and the union of the mind, body and the spirit for me. And I think the better we feel, the more ability we have to take care of ourselves. The more we take care of ourselves, the better we feel, it goes hand in hand. But the mindset and getting your head in the game is such a big part of it. Body confidence, combating stress, managing the chaos of the world that we live in. I honestly exercised to create energy. I do it for mobility. I do it to reset my mindset, if that makes sense.

Amy Morin:
It does. Do you think most of us get it in the wrong order though? We think I'm going to get fit and then I'll feel better rather than I'm going to work on my mind and then also work out my body.

Brooke Burke:
I think so. I mean, it's such a union for me. We just incorporated in one of our recent programs, the value of five minutes in the morning where you're in bed and it's just a slow down, and do whatever kind of mindful meditation is important so that you can set yourself up for success. You can get your head in the game, so you can go out then and crush your big picture wellness goals. But yeah, it starts here for me, it starts in the head. It lives here. The body part of it, that's the easy stuff. And that's not easy, you know what I mean.

Amy Morin:
Let's talk about breathwork for a minute. For our listeners who don't know what that means or what it is, can you explain a little bit about it?

Brooke Burke:
Yeah. It's hard to explain. You definitely have to experience it. The best way, I think to describe it is breathwork is a circular pattern of breath/. But in addition to the technique, it's really a moment to be still, it's a moment to go inward and it's not even about learning, sometimes it's about remembering. I often say in my programs, it's in stillness that we discover, it's in stillness that we can really listen to the language of our soul. You're distracted with the pattern of breath, but it allows you to just shut off your big brain, your thinking brain, and to go inward and do a little personal inventory. And it was life changing for me. I want to say it's equivalent to hundreds of hours of therapy.

You learn, you listen, you listen to your heartbeat. Things come up. I feel like we're just grinding and moving so fast that we don't slow down often enough, long enough to just listen. If nothing else, I take people on a journey through music. You lay down, you chill out, you listen to music, doesn't have to be perfect and you discover something. It really changed my life. That's why I became certified so that I could incorporate that into my programs. I think everyone should do it. It's like therapy. And I don't love therapy, but I love breathwork.

Amy Morin:
I happen to be a therapist. And I say, absolutely the inability to sit with our own thoughts, is the root of a lot of problems in life. People say, I just am not comfortable being alone. I'm not comfortable being by myself. We distract ourselves with so many things, whether we're always listening to music, or we're texting all the time, because we just don't like the noise in our own
heads. So to be able to get comfortable with that, and I know breathwork is like huge piece of that, is really good for our mental health. How did you get turned onto it in the first place?

Brooke Burke:

I actually went to a breathwork session with some girlfriends thinking it was some type of a yoga class. I really wasn't experienced in that space. And I had no idea what I was... I was going to say what I was processing, but in all honesty, what I wasn’t processing in my life, I was really struggling through a time with one of my daughters. And it was such a time of self discovery. And so I buried myself in it. I cried a lot. Not that's the goal ever, but it was a very honest moment to feel a lot of things. And I want to add to what you said, because it's so true. People aren't excited about getting uncomfortable, same goes with fitness.

People want to avoid that. It's really scary to slow down, go inward and start looking at what's really going on. So we put things away. You're a therapist so you know. It's way easier to just box them up until they open themselves up and there you go. So I don't know, part of my mindfulness and in the journey that I'm on with Brooke Burke Body is to teach people to get uncomfortable, to give people a courage, and to teach them to get out of their comfort zone and discover and change far beyond the body work. And breathwork really, really changed my life. And I feel like it's a gift. It's deep.

Amy Morin:

Yeah. There's this strange phenomenon that our fear of being uncomfortable puts us in really uncomfortable situations. And then we're afraid of putting ourselves out there and then it creates more suffering in life for a lot of us. What are some of the other things you do to take care of your mind and your soul?

Brooke Burke:

Well, I feel like this most recent time has, I used to say time slows for no one and I feel like then it did during this pandemic. So I've given myself the gift of more time in the morning. We also homeschooled here for two years. I'm in Malibu. So LA took it really hard. And so we shifted into a little bit more of a slower pace. I really liked that. That was the beautiful part of the challenge of the pandemic, I'm not going to lie. But I try to give myself time to just slow down a little bit in the morning. I was that person that I think I made a cup of coffee and probably heated it up three times and maybe took it on the road to go. And maybe I finished it, maybe I didn't. So that's the value of slowing down and really taking care of me.

I really love teaching classes that I do on property outside and weather, nature, Vitamin D, guiding people to create energy, mobility, to take care of themselves, to breathe, to notice things that we've been moving so fast that we forgot about in the last few years. So that's been
super valuable. We designed a lot of family fitness programs, which was awesome for all the kids that were at home and doing PE like we're doing this interview on a screen, very difficult for our children. Partner workouts, ways to connect through our body, ways to take care of ourselves through fitness and wellness. And I feel like I've just become, strange way to describe it, but an encourager if you will, an advocate for women's health. I've shared my journey and struggles that I've had and just sharing information and things that I've discovered that help me feel good. And it's an easy conversation to have, because I think we all need a little bit of that right about now.

Amy Morin:
Definitely.

Brooke Burke:
We need a lot of that.

Amy Morin:
Right. And one of the things that I often run into is people who say, "I don't have time. I don't have time to work out. I don't have time to care for myself. I don't have time to do anything." What do you say to people who struggle to find time or to feel like they're worthy of creating time for themselves?

Brooke Burke:
It's been the greatest excuse that I hear in my business. I don't have time. And I'm like, "You know what? You don't have time for us to not take care of yourself." And that's a little tough love. We don't have time to not take care of our body. At every age, I tell that to my children, we make time. We have to allow ourselves to be worthy. We have to allow ourselves to be a priority. Mothers, women, business women, we do it all for our kids, we do everything our family needs. And for some reason we neglect our sense of self. And I didn't know that in my 30s and 40s, my early 40s. I knew it in my later 40s, now I'm 50.

We have to make time. We have to be worthy of time. And it's the best thing that we can do because if we carve that out, it changes our sense of self. It changes our inner confidence. It changes our energy, changes our ability to guide, to lead, to work. All of those things that I know you understand and your audience does, but the mindful part of it, it's invaluable. And time is a gift. It's not free, but it might be the most important thing that we have and that we waste and that we don't take enough of.

Amy Morin:
What do you do on a daily basis to take care of yourself?
Brooke Burke:

I find moments to do things that I love. A big part of my life and time is spent choreographing content and connecting with the community at Brooke Burke Body and also teaching and guiding classes and working with women. I really enjoy that. And this work is an act of service for me, but it's extremely fulfilling. So my me time is shared with people, sort of a contradiction, but you know what I mean. I also try to have moments of alone time and me time for myself. And I create those boundaries and I teach that to my children as well. So I have no shame and no guilt in doing that. I need it. And my kids know I need it. And I want them to have ability to define those boundaries as well.

And less of a social life because I have such a big family. We enjoy a lot of time in the kitchen. So I love cooking in that creative space. That's my conference room, the nucleus of my family is in the kitchen. And I love that. I love being a mom. It's hard. It teaches me. Even the challenging parts, I think my children are my greatest teachers. So it's a busy life, but we're managing the madness.

Amy Morin:

And I understand 10 years ago though, you made time to go to just a routine doctor's appointment and discovered that you had thyroid cancer.

Brooke Burke:

Yeah. I mean, going back to being an advocate for women's health, I'm amazed at how many people don't make time for that long, expensive physical. And I say expensive because some people get it covered, some people don't. But we don't have the freedom to not take care of ourselves in that way. I went to a regular physical. My doctor felt a little nodule here. I've had Hashimoto's and some autoimmune challenges, irregular thyroid. So he said, "I want you to get that looked at." He wasn't even an endocrinologist. I did. Had a biopsy. It was indecisive and I wasn't okay with that. Not just as a mother with responsibilities, but just in my mind space. So I opted to go get several more biopsies and sure enough, it was thyroid cancer. So I had a thyroidectomy about 12 years ago.

I'm sorry, not 12 years ago. It seems like it, in 2012. And removed the thyroid. And I'm good now. I mean, I really fought that. I was a great patient, developed a comprehensive team of doctors. I tell people, "Get educated. Put together a team of doctors that you can communicate with, that you can trust." And I did a lot of positive thinking, visualizing and did all the things that you're supposed to do. And it's the same thing with mammograms, and your yearly physical, and getting your blood work. And we have access to so much information and knowledge and science that will really help us create this level of self care that we can never become too busy to do that.
Amy Morin:

Yeah. And you're a prime example of how just making time for a doctor's appointment. I suspect that was a busy time in your life when isn't busy, but you made it happen. I hear so many people say, "Well, I'll do that later." Whether it's a routine doctor's appointment or following up with a specialist, just because they have a busy life, but we take that for granted that we'll be able to do that later. But life usually doesn't get less busy or less hectic over time.

Brooke Burke:

So true. And we do it for everyone else, especially as women, we're like we're givers. It's our bittersweet curse. We do it for everybody else. And part of my program when I'm working in retreats and guiding other women, is that we have to learn to treat ourselves the same way we treat our friends, our daughters, our mothers. We have to be a better friend to ourself and part of that is self-care awareness, self-awareness. Just what you said, slowing down to listen. It's just much easier. At least I was a professional at just grinding, going. Going so fast that I wasn't noticing most things as a younger woman. So self-awareness, self-care, it's got to happen.

Amy Morin:

All right. So for somebody listening, who says, "Well, that sounds great, but I have a busy life." Convince them. What are the benefits of when you actually put self first and you take care of yourself? What do you notice?

Brooke Burke:

I think self-worth. I think we're allowed to be a priority. I think there should be no guilt in it. A cheeky little saying that I've used a lot, it's like putting ourself on top of the to-do list. It's a real thing. And we do deserve it. And in a digital space where we have access. Like you and I right now can have a conversation and we didn't have to travel far or get in the car. You can connect via Zoom. You can connect on FaceTime. You can take a digital class. You can sign up for my app or something else, it's basically free. It's a nickel a day. You can get free content on YouTube. You can connect around the world with people and be efficient with your time.

We have a saying at Brooke Burke Body that, sweat smart. What does that mean? It's about how we spend our money, how we spend our time. I can work out in the kitchen while dinner's in the oven, using the kitchen counter as a bar. I can teach people in their office, how to stand up and sit down and stretch their legs and use a water bottle if you don't have a weight, Take a walk, take 10 minutes just to reset, all of those things. I think these last few years have taught us how to do things differently. You either partnered up with it, adjusted swiftly, I did. It was an interesting time at Brooke Burke Body, because in this digital world, we
were able to connect and develop an online community and figure out ways to work out at home.

And maybe you're in an apartment and you have a yoga mat, well, that's all you need. In this new time, you can peel up your tablet and I can meet you in your living room. And we can get a total body stretch. Maybe it's a recovery. Maybe it's a body sculpting, toning class. Maybe you just want to set some goals that are body specific. It's all available now on our phone. It's amazing. So it's an amazing time to figure out how to care for your body in a better way.

Amy Morin:
It is. And I think we almost take that for granted, or we forget about it, or we think that-

Brooke Burke:
Yeah, it's true.

Amy Morin:
... a workout doesn't count unless we went to the gym. But hopefully the pandemic taught us, oh, okay. We can do so much from home if we want to now, that we don't have to spend three hours commuting to the gym and back. Yeah.

Brooke Burke:
And money. I mean, I used to go to a class with my daughters. I mean honest to God, you go to a cycle class, I don't know where you are in the world, but you're 20, 25, 30 bucks in times three or four, do the math. So it's been a real joy for me to be able to create digital content and offer a free week and connect with women and understand what they like, what they don't like, to choreograph bodies of work for them and to do it together. And just to understand as a woman and mother nature, what do we do on days when we don't feel good, when our hormones are raging, when we're tired, when we're fatigued, when we're stressed, when life took a shift, when our kids kept us up all night, when you're financial, economic... I mean, we factor all these things in. It's a stressful time in the world. So we have to find ways to really combat that I think.

Amy Morin:
And how do you combat stress in general in your life?

Brooke Burke:
Sweating, moving, music, things that I put in my body, fueling my body with positive things, healthy ingredients. There's lots of things that I do in the biohacking world. You should see my garage. It looks like a science lab. So I do all these weird things. But I'm also really mindful of
things that I take. And in your own time, whenever you want to talk about it, I've been taking this supplement for five years organically, before we were even working together. It's called Tru Niagen. It improves your NAD levels, which we produce less and less of after the age of 40. And it's like a cellular supplement, if you will. And they just launched a new one that is Tru Niagen Immune and it's the first ever immune supplement with NAD booster.

So I don't know what your listeners are into in the immunity world. But I take Vitamin D, I take Z, I take C, I take all these things. During the pandemic, we all became super aware of the need for immunity. So now Tru Niagen Immune has a form of tumeric Vitamin D3, C, a really high quality ingredient Zinc. And so it's giving your body everything that it needs to feel good. And it's a supplement for the cells, and they've got all kinds of studies and 200 research bodies of work to really support it. I take it every day. I double up. I take the old Tru Niagen blue label, and I take the new one as well Tru Niagen Immune and I feel good. And I know that I'm doing good things for my body. And that's the kind of stuff that I like to share organically and authentically.

Amy Morin:
So how do you do your homework? There's so many biohacking tips, and supplements, and things out there. And for everybody who says, "This is good for," it's really easy to find somebody who says, "No, that's a bad idea." How do you make that decision about what's actually healthy for you?

Brooke Burke:
It's such a great point. In an advertising marketing world, there's so much coming at us. And I really want to be honest and say, I don't believe in a magical pill. I think it's all about experimenting, but I also think it's about listening to your body. And when you do your research and you find a product where you can really study the ingredients and you know that you have high quality ingredients. And you can really understand what kind of research studies are available, I think it's worth taking some time and really understanding what you're doing, and experimenting and seeing how you feel. And less is more, is one of the reasons why I like the Tru Niagen Immune, because it skips me from my handful of usual things that I take, in addition to my autoimmune medications that I'm required to do to take care of my body.

And there's other things too, it's like getting enough sleep, hydrating, drinking enough water, making sure that you're doing something in the wellness space. Maybe it's not fitness, maybe you're walking. Maybe you're doing something that's just about mindfulness. Whether it's reading, or listening to something beautiful, or doing something to recharge, recharge your batteries, to reset. Maybe it's a homemade up salt bath in a free spot in your bathroom. I'm like...
the queen of that. I do that all the time. I light a candle. I take a handful of my rose petals, I'll throw it in there with some natural oils, coconut oil.

    All these things that are available to us, Vitamin D outside, friendship, community. All of the things that you know to be true that we underestimate. Breath, fresh air, friendship, movement. So I'm a big believer in that. And I guess back in the day, it was all like hippy dippy and silly. And now we know that there's a lot of things that are available to us that change our mindset, help us feel good. The more we feel good, the more energy we create, the more energy we have to deal with life, stress, family, struggle and work. So I connect those dots all the time. It's really important.

    Amy Morin:
    And then it sounds like you look at the overall picture, you've got this big picture of wellness in mind, but then these little things that you experiment with to figure out what works for you, what doesn't, what to do more of, what to incorporate into your life more often? And as a therapist, I'm always encouraging people to experiment. Try that. Go for a walk in the morning or try something else after work if what you're doing right now isn't working. But a lot of people, they're very quick to say, "Well, that's not going to work and here's why," before they even try it. What do you say to people who are like, "Oh, that's not going to work for me."

    Brooke Burke:
    I'm glad you said that because there's so much fear. There's so much standing in our way. One of the things that comes up a lot for me as women are like, "I'm not strong enough. I've come so far from who I was before. I don't know how to get back in the game. I've put on so much weight. I'm not coordinated enough. I don't have confidence." I'm like, "Whoa, hold on. Start small. Do something. Maybe you're not ready for that class. Maybe you don't want to take a yoga class with me online. Maybe you just want to walk. Maybe you want to do the five minutes in the morning with me. Maybe you want to just download my playlist and just listen to the music."

    There's so many things that we can do to experiment and a lot of fitness apps out there, I'm not bagging on any of them, but you're spending a half hour just filling in all this information so someone can design a program for you. What I've done on my app is just offer a variety of programs so you can decide how much time you have, what you like, what you don't like, what you want to work on. And I tell everybody, fitness isn't perfect. You're going to screw it up. You're going to fall down, fall out, fall down your balance. I don't care. When I'm choreographing my videos and I fall out of place, I tell my videographer, "Just leave it in there. It's not perfect." And it's okay. Maybe you're not strong enough today, you hit the pause
button. Maybe you got through 15 seconds of a 30 second pod, just hit the pause button and come back tomorrow.

So I really encourage people to be kind, to meet themselves with love and compassion, to have reasonable expectations, to screw it up, to be weird, to get it wrong. We're going to get it wrong and I like that freedom. So for people who are afraid to try, you just try it, do it. Just do it, just do it. And I think when you commit, or you sign up for something, or get an accountability buddy, commit with your friend, grab your sister, grab your mom, make a commitment, write it down on a piece of paper. I work out in the morning because that's when I have energy. If I wait until the end of the day and I think I'm going to do it, I'm too tired. I know my body. So shift it. Didn't have time in the morning, do it in the afternoon, do it at night. There's so much we can do if we just push ourselves to feel better, up our wellness game.

Amy Morin:
And I like that idea of not expecting perfection from ourselves. I think that's one of the biggest obstacles I see is people will say, "Well, I need to reach this goal." And then they mess up one day and they're like, "Well, I blew it." And our temptation is to just give up, throw in the towel or think, I'm not that kind of person who can be fit or I'm not the type of person who's going to follow through with a goal. So why bother to try? How do you help people deal with that?

Brooke Burke:
You're right. You're so right. I tell people just set daily goals. And I organize my schedule weekly. So they back up for a second, not everybody can live day by day. What I mean by that is daily accomplishment. So it doesn't have to be the big picture. It doesn't have to be the four month plan. I'm not going to drink for a month or I'm not going to eat sugar for the next season. I feel like if you can give yourself grace, and if you can give yourself daily accomplishments that feels good. And I feel like that creates more confidence and more of a willingness to repeat. You sleep and repeat the next day. So I like small goals. I really do. I like daily, weekly goals. We do a lot of programs that are like, 30 day programs and seasonal programs. That's just to simplify and help people get really organized.

But start small. Today, I'm going to do this. Today, I might try this. Maybe I give up one thing today, or maybe I just find one thing that I love today. One of the things that I've been doing in some of my class meditations is just giving people an opportunity to come up with three things they're grateful for. And I really feel like that gratitude creates these feel good hormones. I mean, you could probably speak more professionally about that than I could, like what you appreciate. So having those moments of gratitude for me, it just feels so good. I remember to slow down and I feel a sense of accomplishment when I reach my daily goals, it's a
big deal. Feeling accomplished gives you that power to get up and do it again. So I like that. I like small goals.

Amy Morin:
I do too. That's why New Year's resolutions fail. You're like, "Oh, the next 12 months, this is what I'm going to accomplish." It goes out the window so fast.

Brooke Burke:
Yeah. Or let me just wait and keep this bad habit and then in January, I'm going to kick it. Yeah. It's the same thing with summer. People wait until summer to get in shape. I like a sustainable year plan and that's what we do. It's an opportunity. It's a tool set. It's a lifestyle to design to feel good.

Amy Morin:
What's your most popular program that you offer?

Brooke Burke:
Believe it or not, people like little quickies. So we have five minute abs, and I used to laugh at that. People are like, "What?" Honestly, if you're doing it right and you're working hard, 5, 6, 7 minutes, you really can't do more than that. So we have four-week ab programs, four-week booty challenges. And then we have really total body programs that come with a PDF of recipes and inspiration, little tips and guidelines. So if you're a reader and you like, those are free, some people just want to get right to it and they don't want to spend anymore time. But we're trying to really empower people with everything they need in the home, in the kitchen, with your family, on your own, stretch and recovery, yoga, cardio partner programs.

It's different. It's very subjective. But the five minute abs and 10 minute booty challenges are fun and poppy. And most of them are outdoors in the backyard. So you get the visual escapism. And then we have a lot of home workouts on the couch, in the kitchen, in your office, in your office chair, just to remove the element of excuse when you are there.

Amy Morin:
Makes sense that, back to what you just said, we all like small goals, things that are easy, things we can do right now.

Brooke Burke:
Totally, totally.

Amy Morin:
Where can people go to learn more about you and the services and programs that you offer?

Brooke Burke:
I think the easiest face is brookeburke.com and then that'll guide you through the website. We're in the App Store. We're also on all the smart TVs. So if you're a smart TV user, it's really easy to get that life size experience, but brookeburke.com, recipes, blogs, inspiration, live events. I'm easier to find, Instagram, Facebook, all of it.

Amy Morin:
Awesome. A link to all of that in our show notes.

Brooke Burke:
Thank you.

Amy Morin:
Brooke Burke, thank you so much for being on the Verywell Mind Podcast.

Brooke Burke:
Thank you for having me That was a really nice interview!

Amy Morin:
Welcome to The Therapist’s Take! This is the part of the show where I'll break down Brooke's mental strength-building strategies and share how you can apply them to your own life. Here are three of Brooke's strategies that I highly recommend.

**Number one: make time for stillness.** Brooke talks a lot about the importance of taking time out of her busy day to just be still. She also talks about breathwork, something that several of our podcast guests like LeAnn Rimes also talked about. There's something really powerful in learning how to pay attention to your breathing. There are breathwork strategies that are often prescribed in the therapy office to help people cope with uncomfortable feelings like anxiety. But you don't necessarily have to be well versed in breathwork to appreciate stillness. Just being alone with your thoughts can be a powerful way to build mental strength. Whether you meditate, write in a journal, or just sit and think every day for a few minutes without any distractions or background noise, it's important to get comfortable with yourself.

**Number two: make your physical health a top priority.** We all know how tempting it is to put off doctor's appointments. We sometimes convince ourselves that we'll take care of our health issue or get a checkup once things slow down or once we have more time. But life rarely slows down, and neglecting your health isn't a good way to get more time on your calendar. Brooke
learned firsthand the importance of making her health a top priority. During a busy time in her life, a doctor discovered that she had thyroid cancer at a routine checkup. She caught it in time to get it addressed. But our health is often the first thing that we neglect when life gets busy. When you think about it though, what’s actually more important than seeing your doctor, taking your medicine, or getting lab work done? Of course, it's hard sometimes to take time off from work or to follow up with one more appointment when you still don't have any clear answers. But taking care of your body is key to taking care of your mind. And when you feel better, you can do better.

**And number three: push yourself to up your wellness game.** It's easy to get comfortable with your current wellness routine (like walking three times a week). Sticking to your usual diet and taking some vitamins are good, but it might not challenge you enough. So I like that Brooke encourages people to up their wellness game. Keep in mind that there are lots of aspects to wellness (physical, emotional, intellectual, occupational, social, and spiritual). Upping your wellness game might include a variety of things like joining a Bible study, learning yoga, taking a mental health day from work, planning a weekly coffee date with your friends, and lifting weights. But it's important to keep challenging yourself. Now, I don't mean that you need to constantly do more. Most people feel overscheduled as it is. Sometimes wellness means taking a break from certain things or reorganizing your schedule to make wellness a higher priority. Consider wellness as an investment. When you put your time and energy into it now, you reap the benefits for a long time down the road.

So those are three of Brooke's mental strength-building strategies that I highly recommend. Make time for stillness, make wellness a priority and push yourself to up your wellness game. To learn more about Brooke's work or to check out her fitness app, go to her website brookeburke.com.

If you know someone who could benefit from hearing this message, share it with them. Simply sharing a link to this episode could help someone feel better and grow stronger. Do you want free access to my online course? It's called “10 Mental Strength Exercises That Will Help You Reach Your Greatest Potential.” To get your free pass, all you have to do is leave us a review on Apple Podcasts. Then, send us a screenshot of your review. Our email address is podcast@verywell.com. We'll reply with your all-access pass to the course.

Thank you for hanging out with me today and for listening to The Verywell Mind Podcast! And as always, a big thanking to my show's producer (who used to watch Brooke Burke when she hosted Wild On!), Nick Valentin.