

MENTAL HEALTH FOR PERFORMANCE

PRESENTED BY PINNACLE

OGO OKWUMABUA

Create environments where people thrive, achieve and want to stay.

The pursuit of continuous leading, achieving, and progressing requires tremendous energy. Add in a global pandemic – during which leaders faced constant change and adaptation – and it's no wonder that many leaders and workers are exhausted right now! If you feel this way, you are not alone!

The question is: how can we make a high achieving professional life enjoyable and sustainable over the long term? How can we get through the toughest times?

Ogo Okwumabua, co-owner of Zueike Inc, is building a business where he intentionally does things differently and keeps the focus squarely on company values and personal wellness.

BE TRUE TO YOURSELF

An athlete since childhood, the former university level basketball player is accustomed to a life in constant pursuit of excellence. Yet when he looks back on his athletic career, the memories he cherishes the most center around the simple moments: hanging out after games on the bus and in the locker room, appreciating the vibe of the team and cultivating lifelong relationships.

Drawing on these memories, as well as the joint Nigerian heritage of co-owners Ogo and Bryan Salvador, they named their new company "Zueike" (zu-we-kay), which means "to relax".

When things are in balance in your life you start to perform better, you start to feel better, you can visualize better.

The secret to sustainable high performance is recovery. In sports, high performance athletes and coaches know that recovery is an integral component of the pursuit of excellence. No one can perform at their highest level if they are depleted physically or mentally.

It sounds simple, but that doesn't mean it is easy! In business, recovery has often been neglected, even stigmatized. It can be tough to go against the grain to set a new standard. Leaders are challenged with finding a balance between doing what's best for the business and doing what's best for themselves and the people they lead. On top of that, for many people, the best way to go about things might be shifting; it may not be what you thought was right before the pandemic. There is so much to consider!

It can be tough to give ourselves permission to rest, especially coming out of the pandemic, as many of us feel the need to make up for lost time. We are called in so many directions, and for many leaders, this means our own needs end up coming in last. But what happens when the tank runs out? How effective are you when your energy and attention stores are low? How deliberate are you about rest? There are so many ways in which we need to rest! Check out "The 7 types of rest that every person needs" in the resource section below. What types of rest have the most positive impact on you?

Coming out of the pandemic many of us are facing intense decision-making fatigue, and it's possible that we all need more recovery right now than ever before.

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TAKING CHANCES

Ogo credits his upbringing in sports with teaching him how to quickly assess a problem and figure things out on the fly to be successful. His view that “there’s so many ways to do a job”, has translated into an ability to make quick pivots in business, and to be willing to take risks.

In early 2020, his current job wasn’t what he needed anymore. “At a certain point, it wasn’t fulfilling my soul”. As the world entered a global pandemic, he had to make some big choices. With a young family to support, there was a lot of risk in leaving stability behind to start from scratch, but Ogo knew he had to make a change.

| *If I don’t do it now, I will be filled with regret.*

And thus, Zueike was born with a goal to do things differently. At Zueike, every decision made is deliberately based on specific values: building community, valuing all people, and slowing down.

To Ogo, staying true to himself means “we want to grow, we want to expand, but we want to grow organically without stepping on our values just for the sake of growing” and remembering that “rest is the most important piece in order for you to perform.”

EVOLVE

How often do you ask yourself how much gas is in your tank? What do you do when you realize your energy is low? What fills your joy bucket and renews your vitality?

Do you enjoy a consistently manageable overall life/workload? Or do you find yourself looking forward to vacation just for the sake of recovery?

Well rested people are more creative and better communicators. How does recovery fit into the cadence of your work? How do you honour both what you need as well as the context in which you work?

EXPLORE

[“REST – Why you get more done when you work less”](#)
by Alex Soojung-Kim Pang
Deliberate rest is the true key to productivity.

[The 7 types of rest that every person needs](#)

Legendary performance psychologist Cal Botterill explains how [“looking after yourself may be the most unselfish thing you ever do”](#)

[“How to do Nothing – Resisting the attention economy”](#)
by Jenny Odell
Your attention is the most precious resource you have.