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## Context to the conversation

Ricardo speaks about how we can tune into the emotions that are within us with the help of our body.

## Transcription

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Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): I think one of the pieces you mentioned about feeling the emotion through the body. I was talking in this podcast to Jennifer Garvey Berger, who I think also does a lot of work with Egon Zehnder.

Ricardo Sunderland (RS): Yes.

DJ: And she speaks about that, right? She says that very often emotions, we feel them before our mind thinks of them.

RS: Yeah, yes.

DJ: So, can you give us some examples of tuning into emotion through the body just for the purpose of listeners. I find that to be very powerful. So, if there is a story or two about that, then that would be wonderful.

RS: Yes, absolutely. I recently did a talk at the World Happiness Summit in London. There were about 1,000 participants and I walked them through a brief meditation in which I invited them to just close their eyes and through a very small breathing, to just visualise, and maybe your audience can do the same, just to visualise an event in their lives, which they were incredibly happy and incredibly grateful for. And once I was able to feel that they were in that moment, I asked them to place their left hand in the part of their body where they actually feel the joy of that event, and Deepak, it was beautiful to watch a thousand people or close to a thousand put their hand in the part of their body where they actually feel that joy and you could see that everybody put their hand in different places. It is... the heart is not necessarily in the heart when it comes to joy. Some would put it in their head, some would put it in their chest, some would put it in their stomach, some would put it in their jaw. And I invited to do the same to connect an image of sorrow. And sorrow lives in different parts of our body as well. When you know where sorrow is in your body, when you know where anger is in your body, when you know where happiness is in your body, you can start to then know how to connect to the physical feeling of the emotion of each of these emotions which is very helpful.

Tuning in and tuning out of joy and sorrow, it is a choice. One, that it is easier to know when you do it through your body because the mind can play many tricks on us, like Jennifer would say. But the body would always speak your truth. How you are able to help leaders, for example, learn how each of these emotions lives in their body allows for them to be able to then when the event is happening, then you can create freedom of choice. Anger, for example, it is a very powerful emotion. When it is not done by choice, it can be destructive. When you do it by choice you can, for example, create boundaries and boundary setting in these very big leaders it is essential for them to be able to create space so they can be able to understand what gives them and what takes energy away and protect their time. So, these are just simple examples of what do I mean and what you are asking me to help the audience understand. What do I mean by feeling the emotions or the energy in your body, yeah.

## Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: Tuning into our body and what it tells us is such a key element of building self-awareness. Jennifer Garvey Berger (JGB), a Leadership Coach and somebody who has studied leading in complexity speaks about this here.

*JGB: "Actually, when we look at our psycho-biology, our body is giving us signals all the time that our mind is making sense out very, very quickly and often reacting to without noticing that it was an embodied sensation that we are reacting to. So if we give someone some studies that are greater, like if you give somebody a shot of adrenaline and then you have them meet a stranger, depending on the gender of that stranger they are either likely to be more drawn to that person as a love interest or more threatened by that person as a possible threat or enemy after this shot of adrenaline than they were under normal circumstances and they tend to attribute that to the other person, and they don't attribute that to their bodies in anyway. And so their body is giving them a signal and then they are acting out of that signal without ever noticing that the signal happened. This is very dangerous that we are responding to data by taking action in a way that is completely divorced from our seeing of the data in the first place. So we need to get much more in touch with what our body is telling us. I see leaders all the time and you see their studies about this as well. People who go into meetings hungry because leaders I work with are very busy and they hate all the ideas, like they hate all the ideas on the table, none of the ideas are quite right. Well, is this about the quality of the ideas or is this about the fact that you didn't have time for lunch? Like we don't tend to think oh, my goodness, I hate these ideas because I have no blood sugar and I have no creativity left. But actually this is the way our bodies work. There's fabulous studies of the thing that makes you most likely to get parole when you are in front of a parole board in prison is how close to a break the judges are when they look at your case. If you are right after they ate lunch or breakfast then you are very likely to get paroled, if you are right before it's time for a break or a meal you are very unlikely to get paroled. And this has nothing to do with the merits of these cases. This is completely because the judges are responding to a bodily sensation, but they don't know that they are responding to a bodily sensation, so they think they are responding logically. If we are more in touch with our bodies we can avoid those mistakes."*

DJ: I must share something very small which has made a difference to me. When I am in the gym and my trainer asks me to lift weights, I often strain my face when I am lifting a heavy weight. Very often, my trainer would nudge me to keep a normal face and that micro nudge helps in bringing the awareness to my body. My son who is ten years old often points out that my nose is twitching or the forehead has wrinkles when I am irritated and as a result of this in the moment, micro feedback, I

find that slowly I am able to bring these things into my awareness. It is a journey however and it is work in progress for me. The limited point I want to make that our body often carries very valuable signals and just tuning into that can help in just being centered and moving forward.

## End of transcription

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Nugget from Jennifer Garvey Berger that is referenced: [Actively listening to your body](#).

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## Ricardo Sunderland- Nuggets

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### **About Deepak Jayaraman**

Deepak seeks to unlock the human potential of senior executive's / leadership teams by working with them as an Executive Coach / Sounding Board / Transition Advisor. You can know more about his work [here](#).

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