



Guest

Devdutt Pattanaik writes on relevance of mythology in modern times, especially in areas of management, governance and leadership. Trained in medicine, he worked for 15 years in the healthcare and pharma industries before he focussed on his passion full time. He is author of 30 books and 600 columns, with bestsellers such as My Gita, Jaya, Sita, Business Sutra and the 7 Secret Series. He was a speaker at TEDIndia 2009 and spoke on Myths that Mystify, East versus West. His TV shows include Business Sutra on CNBC-TV18 and Devlok on Epic TV. He consults organisations on culture, diversity and leadership and also consults various television channels and filmmakers on storytelling.

In our conversation, Devdutt spoke about how he transitioned from the world of Medicine and Healthcare to the world of mythology. He recounts the teaching methodology of some of his professors in medicine which, he mentions, laid the foundation for him to be curious about the world around him. We spoke about his take on flourishing in the gig economy (I quite didn't expect the metaphor that he went on to share here). We spent some time talking about his views on transitioning effectively across the various stages of life and what lies behind a successful coach and a healthy coaching relationship. He uses the concept of rana-bhoomi and ranga-bhoomi to explain how leaders should think about focus and perspective and balance the short-term & long-term.

Context to the conversation

Welcome to the 4th conversation in 2018 and the 25th conversation at the Play to Potential Podcast. A series of reflective conversations with accomplished individuals across various fields on three broad themes – Leadership, Transitions and Careers. I am your host Deepak Jayaraman. I am an Executive Coach and I work with leaders and organizations play to their potential by engaging with them during periods of high stakes transition personal and organizational. You could visit transitioninsight.com for more details.

If you are new to the podcast and want to get a sense of the nature of content that is covered, you might want to go to YouTube and type "PlaytoPotential Highlights from 2017". I have tried to capture the key takeaways from my various conversations last year with leaders across disciplines. From people such as Amish Tripathi, Zia Mody, Nandan Nilekani, Viswanathan Anand, Vijay Amritraj, Avnish Bajaj, Vinita Bali and the like.

My guest this time is Devdutt Pattanaik, Mythologist, Author, Illustrator and Speaker. He writes on relevance of mythology in modern times, especially in areas of management, governance and leadership. He is an author of 30 books and 600 columns and has been a TED speaker in 2009. His TV shows include Business Sutra on CNBC TV 18 and Devlok on Epic TV. He consults organisations on culture, diversity and leadership and also consults various television channels and filmmakers on storytelling.

In our conversation, we spoke about how some of his formative experiences especially while studying medicine have helped him in good stead in his career in Mythology. He also spoke about how he transitioned from the world of Medicine and Healthcare where he spent 15 years to Mythology when he joined Future Group as Chief Belief Officer. In our podcast we also spoke about his perspectives on what it takes to flourish in the Gig Economy. We spent time talking about the distinction between the Western paradigm and the Indian paradigm when it comes to topics around Leadership and Coaching.

Just a quick note on how you could access the content at playtopotential.com. You could listen to the full conversation or a particular nugget. If you are more interested in multiple perspectives that are curated by key themes, you could access the specific nuggets at playtopotential.com and navigate through any of the tags along which content is organized.

Without further ado, over to the conversation with Devdutt.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): A good place to start maybe is to get a quick sense of what your pie chart of time looks like today. What you do and more importantly why do you what you do?

Devdutt Pattanaik (DP): Well, about 50 percent of my time goes in travelling and lecturing and the remaining 50 percent of my time is in writing. So, lecturing includes consulting work and well that's 50 percent of my time and 50 percent of my time is writing, lecturing, conceptualizing. So, that's how it goes. So, that's broadly my day always.

DJ: And has that evolved significantly ever since you moved out on your own, has that pie chart shifted significantly over the time?

DP: Well, earlier it used to be 80 percent of the time I used to do a work, I used to do a job and I had only 20 percent time of writing. Now I have more time to write but my travel has increased. So, the 50 percent of the time I just used to go to an office and come back but even then, I used to travel for two hours but my travel time, I think, that has taken a bit of more toll. I would like to reduce that but cannot teleport yourself.

DJ: To what extent people's formative years informed who they are and how that sort of shows up even in later years do you have a view on let's say how much of whom you are baked in the early years?

DP: I think you figure it out yourself I think my science background helps me in being organized and systematic, then I speak to my school teacher who say I was organized and systematic even when I was a child, which I have no memory of, I thought I was disorganised but for them I was highly organized so I guess that part has always been with me I still think I am disorganized but all my friends think I am highly organized so that's your perception, what do you know and what do others think there was a vast difference between that I think it's also about asking questions I don't take answers for granted and I have always been suspicious of simple answers I like to know the go deeper to figuring out what do people actually mean when they say something? And I think that is the very important part of my work when somebody says and especially in the management world everybody uses jargon, many of the time they don't know what they mean and even if they know

what they mean, they are using it strategically not because they genuinely mean it so, empowerment is the word that will be used by people who do not give power at all but that's the right word to say in the public forum and I hear it all the time I had seen it among bureaucrats, among politicians corporate sector workers so that is something that very early in life I would always ask very fundamental questions and I would, and I think many children do but it just that I sort out the answers, many people just wait for answers to come to them especially in certain fields, I think science background helps you a lot because I was studying medicine and I had very good teachers who told to study medicine in particular way and I think I had applied just that principal in other aspects of my life that's same principal I saw it as a principal not just to study anatomy in physiology.

DJ: When you see medicine in a particular way can you double click on that?

DP: Text books will never tell you why, they will always tell you how? And what and how mostly, so anatomy is what, and physiology is how, so anatomy of the eye will tell you how are the how I designed and the physiology will tell you how does it work? It doesn't tell you why the head eyes located in that particular location, why is the eye is not located behind your head, why is it round, why is an eye ball is a ball and not a square? These questions are not asked and then teachers would explain how this is a revolutionary process, it's something that started like this, it started here and this was neither part of the tutorials, nor even the part of any text book, its people who have sort of joined the dots and explained things as why do you have one mouth and not five mouth? How does it work because there are insects with many eyes and multiple mouths, why are the humans are the way we are, what happens when we stand on two feet, what happens to the backbone? So the why part of it, which is not taught in anatomy and physiology text book and it happened in the later years they will tell you read between the lines, and I had three four teachers I remember telling me these things, why is the carotid artery designed in the particular way? And you realize that we used to just memorise it and get done a full marks so we had the full marks get the best students sitting in front, but we never ask why does this artery have more musculature and that artery does not have must musculature, we never asked the why questions and the best teachers in medicine would always ask why? And I think that was medicine but one I applied in the corporate, I would hear word like strategy and I was like why is somebody is doing strategy? I remember once way much later in life, I was in front of somebody, and I asked the person who was talking on leadership, very senior person, so why do you want to be leader? And he just suddenly oh nobody asked this question, we just assume everybody's leadership is good, I said why? And the why questions made many people very uncomfortable and I remember him telling me oh that you are writing on leadership, just pick up text book on leadership, take the table of contents and work on it, I am saying that why is that table of content is there and why is this a first chapter and not the second chapter? Even today even graphic design people, when you are IT, people don't know when do you use the bullet point, when do you use numbering, there are two different ideas, when do you use bold, when do you use italics, everything has the reason if you are seeing a design why is the book designed in the particular way? So you see badly designed posters for example you see the government offices and you see the posters and you realize that they are bad posters and you realize that reflects on poor intellectual base, extremely poor and you look at private offices itself some are good, some are bad, some are over dramatic some are using rubbish because nobody ask the question why? And the leader is too proud to say he doesn't know. And this is very evident when you start thinking in a particular way and this thinking came to me from medical college not even from school through medical college.

DJ: How you got here? What were the key inflection points and what was some of the choices you made?

DP: I didn't really create this journey, this journey happened, I took advantage of every opportunity that came in my way, so I was just a medical graduate who didn't want to practice clinical medicine,

and didn't know what to do, and you have to earn a living, you are a middle class family, your father is retired how do you earn money and I was good at communication, one thing lead to the other and I was in what is called medical communications, writing pamphlets I didn't realize it was a big thing at that time I would do it very casually, I had 8-10 clients and I was, now when I think about it I had already a consultation in the very early days but at that time nobody told me it was a big thing, I just had to do it, because I had to earn the money and I met the right people who taught me how to write better senior people, I was just got lucky, but they always knew I had this interest in Mythology and they just used to find it amazing which have this conversations about this I joined the healthcare pharma Industry for fifteen years I am doing this in the free time, I am writing a Mythology, I was writing my Mythology and somebody just told me hey somebody wants to publish a book would you like to republish your book? So I didn't look for a publisher, publisher came to me. It was post medicine it was something that usually in the later part of the medical I would say post medicine completely. I used to read broadly philosophy religion but this Mythology is the word actually emerged only in the late 90s, I used the word Mythology for the first time very technically and I was obsessed with defining it and nobody was defining it correctly for me, so there is completely zeroing on Mythology happened only in 95-96, really my journey is because series of coming my way right person who helps me right medical literature and then I get the publisher who publish my book and I have published my first book 20 years ago and he kept publishing my books but it was not doing well, who would get Mythology and that time then I have to keep doing my management, and that time I joined pharmaceutical industry and when I joined the Pharmaceutical industry I was doing very well because you are smart, I today realize that I am a peristomes thinker, I think patterns, that time I didn't know that so I could take any job and I would like very fast, so I was like one of those rapid risers much loved by the directors, not loved by the juniors because you are thinking too fast for them and you are figuring out it very rapidly and I remember some people saying you meant to be a consultant, you can work anywhere, I didn't understand what is consultant? I never heard this word and then I heard auditors, what are auditors? I never heard these words, I am entering a corporate world and I would read up on that, what is this? So this was the all very organic, until one day in these organic, I used to give these casual lectures with the friend of mine who on Mythology and in university some people in advertising knew me a lot there were people who read my books on advertising, Santos Desai for example knew me many years ago long before I was popular, he used to always like me and he used to spend a lot of time, he writes TOI's some of the most complex articles in City bang but to give you a sense of there were people who knew but they were like but they were like the stylist segment and then you are introduced one day to Kishore Biyani of the future group and he thinks you are of value and tells you to do it full time, now this I didn't plan it, it happened so these things are happened or Ted happens to me because somebody says do you want to do Ted in Indian I have never heard Ted in my life until I went to the venue I didn't know how important or big it was I just knew we want something new in Mythology and everybody they met kept saying this is the guy called Devdutt Pattanaik so the lady met me I said ok and I thought oh my god why am I going to Mysore to talk for, and 18 minutes I would be very angry, what is this, this is not the way you can teach this and this was 2009 so I had no clue there's something called Ted and I am doing my own thing I have already written 5-6 books at that time not 5-6 I think 10 books by that time but it's not popular, popular in the sense the way it is popular today, so it's very organic, so ted happened and then Menaka Joshi walks into my future group office and tells us that we want to do a show on Business Sutra, I don't think she was also sure what she wanted and I said you know what I am very interested in Business and Management because by then I had a very good understanding of business and I saw that the dissonance with India, complete dissonance, complete and utter dissonance today I realize that there is a problem with management, everybody in this word is questioning what is management, what is the entire modules are being questioned this growth module is being questioned, we are hurtling towards the disaster but that time I sensed it intuitively because our patterns were not matching, and whenever I do use this word, nobody is educated

around me so they look me like who is this? So they used to like “*Ye Ramayan, Mahabharat ki story bolta hai*” which was fine because it help me earn my money but I knew that this is just the tip of the iceberg and now I realize that you have to see things before others and then show it to them be patient and I have been lucky in that journey, I have just got the right people and then you know Amish Tripathi happened and a lot of the things happened and the category grew without we doing anything and then suddenly people realize ok that’s entertainment and fiction but there’s something deeper so 80% of my readers are interested in entertainment part of it but there are 20% who are like hey there’s something more here which everybody in India knows, we all know there’s a lot of wisdom in India but we have never articulated it and the Guruji is articulated, when I used to read the Guruji and I was like oh my god so wise man and today I am realising no fault in thinking because now this is a science coming back you and why they are saying these words and where are these words coming from and then you read post modernism that was a very important part of a structuralism philosophy literature, you start studying other things as a free reading in order to understand Mythology and you start questioning western understandings of the subject, you start questioning the best minds in the world because you start saying what is their prejudice unlike material science where prejudice doesn’t really exist or exist very insignificant way, the human sciences or the social sciences are full of bias like Marston cannot talk without bias however hard he tries here’s data but how you read a data is based on bias now these are things that you are only learn only not in medicine because clinical medicine is full of bias but pure medicine which is anatomy, physiology, Pharmacology cannot have bias it’s just data the moment human beings come so you apply the same principles and that’s what I sort of, and that happened over time and then its organic till 2007 I am still in the pharma industry its only after 2007 so it’s literally 10 years now where I am doing my own thing I was officially employed with companies but the private understanding was I will be on my own and I will do my own thing.

DJ: What are some of the principles that people should bear in mind to operate credibly in the space?

DP: You don’t have to understand gig economy and you are not embarrassed by things you should understand a sex worker and that’s sounds very awful but market is you are selling yourself who have been selling themselves for centuries? What is the world’s oldest profession? So I always tell people in the old day and of course when we think about sex we have this very Brahmanical puritanical notions of it but honestly these are just the service providers and they are providing particular kind of service and there is demand and there is supply just the same thing you have to just think about demand and supply if there is no demand there is no supply and how does in a crowded market of suppliers does one supplier becomes more popular than the other and in old days the women only have their voice, they didn’t have anything so they would sing, so if you see some of the old Hindi movies you will see this hero walking and suddenly hear somebody sing and he goes to that house is exactly how we function, you have to reach out to people, if you don’t sing nobody is going to come to your *KOTHA* now when I say this it sounds very awful but I am very clear and I use this word often and people get very upset I say *TAWAYAF* you are a service provider and you have learnt from them and if you read the scriptures the Shastras are very clear and there are the Devdasi the Gadika must never get attached to the client and the client only cares for them as long as they are beautiful and that’s a clear relationship, so don’t fall in love with the client because the client is going to abandon you one day and go away with the others so you have to keep working hard to be worthy of it and if you understand this you understand business so well you understand market and supply, in India you know what’s the Hindi word for Marketing, generally its “*BAJARU*” that’s what is a bad word in India you are thing of the market this is the old feudal economies in India we look down on the market we were feudal, we lag the land *jameen kiska hai?* So we didn’t think in terms of demand and supply market is about demand and supply so we actually looked

down upon someone who sales his wears ye *Baniya hai!* These are all bad words in India this shows our Brahmanical feudal mindset, this is kind of a, and nobody is thinking economics, if you read Arthashashtra, Arthashashtra is very clear demand and supply, controlling the market, Chanakya has no qualms, he is ruthless about, this is the Vast difference between Manusmriti and Chanakya Arthshashtra and we don't understand that our systems in India based on economics but we were somewhere embarrassed by economy, somewhere along the line something happens in India and we look down on money although we secretly want money which is because you are not recognizing the value of Lakshmi and whenever you do that, Lakshmi will play her games and she will mess with you and I think ultimately there is the phrase in the scriptures the Rishi will always want a cow *GODAAN* he will always go the king and say give me a cow, cow means our livelihood, if anybody thinks cow means real cow then he is an idiot, because when I have a cow I have milk so I have food I have dunk so I have fuel and also dunk was used to make your house so effectively a man with a cow is autonomous he doesn't depend on anyone for his survival which means now you can focus on the stars and the if you want to study stars and write on Jyotish Shashtra and you want to study Vastushashtra anything you wants to study he can do whatever he wants because he doesn't have to think about his hunger because everybody if you ask he will be hungry he will need food at night he need to sleep he will need shelter, The king gives him a cow this is something that people don't understand, India *GODAAN* karo create livelihood is that what it means, it's a metaphor so I think people who want to become independent I always tell that how is you are going to pay your bill? Because there are only two or three ways that you can pay your bill, you inherit fortune, somebody pays for you so you are reach family and I always wonder why reach family work I think they are fools, of course they give this foolish reasons oh I am ambitious and all most of them are doing rubbish 90% of the reach people I know are doing work which can be outsource to someone else they are not necessary so I say go and enjoy your life, they can't because there's something else the issue which they don't want to deal with, second if you are not reach then you work for someone, somebody will give you the money so then you become a supplier of service, supplier of service basically means Shudra that is the meaning of the word so Chanakya arthshashtra say if you want to create a large villages get Shudras in it so he doesn't see Shudras a way the puritanical view hour it is service providing, you provide service and you get or you can create a product and third is you generally are an entrepreneur, you have a business of your own so entrepreneur ho ya service provider ho ya inheritor ho these are the three option that you have and you have to be one of the three, you decide where you want to be the toughest is to be the entrepreneur because there's nobody to fall back on but it is also liberating that you are free and you get a lot of other benefits so the Rishis were entrepreneurs but they dependent on cow so they had to do work which didn't really create immediate value so they depended, so I always tell people *Gau Mata hai kya tumhare paas?* Do you have a source of income? And you can reduce your needs but if you don't have a source of income don't think of the Gig economy because you will starve and it's the romantic to talk about starves but you have to pay your bills so I am very clear about that, I said if you don't have a steady cash flow to take care of the basic needs, Lakshmi is something that people that people forget that even in the Shraman Parampara it is the monastic orders of India whether it is Buddhism or Jainism the first goddess that worshiped is Lakshmi first goddess whose images are carved is Lakshmi not Sarasvati so these people were recognizing the value, somewhere along the line we decided to make Baazaar, Baniyaa these negative words and we have to rediscover it through colonialism because we never understood the importance of money, because even these Rajas and Mughals also they just became land owners and they were enjoying money and they spending time inheritors, they were inheritors of wealth and power and their service providers taking care of them, so they forgot to create enterprise, so here you have the Portuguese coming, the Arabs coming doing trade and you are like not thinking and they were members of the royal family if you read about the Mughal, I just read recently a history which says that Jodhabai, we show her just as a romantic thing in Bollywood films but she was actually a very she was investor in huge business in

the meditarinacy and she had ships, she owned ships so which means they were thinking business but it was never giving the respects, we never realize the value of trade, we looked down on trading, we didn't allow people to travel across the sea, we kept this close set and the power became about the land and power became about cast, not about money.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: Hi this is your host Deepak Jayaraman here. Just a quick comment here. It is interesting to contrast this with the transition of Amish Tripathi (AT) who, after going to IIM Calcutta pursued a career in Financial Services then switched to writing. In Amish's case, the seeds of transition were possibly sown in his growing up years.

AT: *"I think the seed had to be found perhaps in an incident that happened 11, 12 years ago, When my family and I we were watching TV and we discovered something interesting and a philosophical discussion ensued and that was the genesis of 'The Shiva Trilogy' it was a philosophical discussion into the nature of evil. My grandfather was a Pundit in Kashi both my parents were deeply religious, so, we have an atmosphere in our family of our mates our scriptures of discussions of debates on it in our family we also read a lot, every one reads a lot."*

DJ: Devdutt, on the other hand talks about getting to Mythology much later but the seeds of enquiry being sown during the days in medicine thanks to some of his teachers.

I think what's common however is that this transition is often an organic process and not a magic switch. It's important to realize that as we think about transitions. Both these individuals had arguably already gathered significant expertise and market recognition before they left the previous orbit whether it was Amish (AT) leaving IDBI Federal and Devdutt leaving Future Group. When I asked Amish about when he quit his banking job this is what he said

AT: *"It was a pragmatic decision, look I come from middle class family so I always joke "Bhai mere pass baap dada ka ashirvad hai jaaydat kuch nahi" so I have to be pragmatic and practical in my career decisions, I have responsibilities you know I am blessed with the child, I have a wife so I resigned only after second book when my royalty cheque became greater than my salary cheque"*

DJ: Devdutt continues to have a career in the Pharma industry at least for about a decade before he commits to Mythology as a direction. I mention this because several people quit their jobs and start going after their passion from Ground zero and that can be a really tricky proposition because that doesn't guarantee cash flows and the lack of cash flows can come in the way of having fun in what you thought might be fun!

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DJ: How should people transition effectively from one to the other? I'm curious about the reflection about these transitions.

DP: One has to be very clear what transition means in western module it is the relay race you give up something to become something but the Indian module is you build on what is there, so it is not give up A and become B and then give up B and then become C it is A+B+C, so Ram does not exclude Parshuram and Krishna doesn't exclude Ram and all but that how we are thinking even today when

people talk about change management they talk of change as replacement they don't talk of change as expansion, I will tell you and this comes from western mindset, the book has to be replaced by a new book they are not saying the new book has to be added to book shelf so the western module classically is replace a book with a new book so it is in a religious framework also, one religion is replaced by other, that's how they think of religion and ideology it is a western mind and nothing you can do about it if it is denied vehemently but they can't handle so there were Greco Romans whether Christian they gave up the Greco Roman tradition then they become secular they gave up Christianity because they can't handle two books simultaneously, Indian module of leadership is to move towards the infinite database with more and more data as you grow your data base increases, so you can handle more and more so you have to increase your RAM and your application abilities and the abilities to handle more and more information, that is growth, it is not giving up one data base, its moving one equipment to the other but it is expanding your equipment and this notion, this is just very simple idea of loss so just become a leader, so if you become a leader of the company doesn't mean you can't still do the doorman's job, you have to be able to everything and the little bit more, this is how god is described in India, he is everything and a little bit more, so it is that, here it is everybody like I see this very rich people and their children suddenly think that they will get wisdom of their parents and their grandparents through osmosis and on day one they are meant to sit on the head office and they talk to seniors as if because the inheritance gives them the authority to talk to you as an equal and I have done this and I have seen this children stepped out of international American schools talking in an American accent knowing nothing about India talking to you as an equal because they have a bigger wallet and I am like are they idiots? Or their parents are idiots and they are going to give this entire fortune to this idiot but you can do nothing about it because they are so dumb and that is the biggest discovery that large wallet size doesn't mean that you are not dumb because you are a fool, he is the blessed with inheritance but he still has to go through the entire thing that is why in Ramayana Ram has to go to the forest Vishwamitra drags Ram into the forest and says that what is this palace, Vashishtha is teaching you in a safe ecosystem, palace is a safe ecosystem come to the forest can you fight to the Rakshashas? That's a training going on, go kill save this lady this is practical when Vishwamitra is taking him through the jungle, what is the jungle? Jungle is the metaphor for the market it's very nice to sit in the father's and saying I am the head of the marketing *Jaake Bech Naa*, sell yourself sing in the street and let's see how many men will come to you when you learn that way it is the brutal thing, you see this in Airports, you will see these credit cards you will see these young MBA guys try to sell credit cards, it's very shameful, and you can see their awkwardness but you have to do it, you come down to the ground and then you learn one year that and then you learn to be a manager, so you are blessed, your roller coaster ride is up there but you have to spend time on the shop floor this is many old families I still see doing that, I know some of the families where for the first ten years the children are not allowed to sit in the board meeting, no chance you are sitting in the board meeting you will have to spend 10 years, because anyways what's the hurry? The father is still there say MD or Chairman, you are not going to become MD and Chairman in fact they are encouraged to do business and they allowed to fail in the business so they learn how brutal the world is, the uncle will not help you, aunty won't help you, you can't take up the phone to bank and get the loan.

DJ: In the journey I am specifically curious about the Ram to Krishna role modelling to being a Coach, when you work with leaders what are your observations on people that sort of move to the next level effectively?

DP: See I think many people glamorise Krishna a lot and one has to be very careful because as Indians we are seeing there is a religious tradition associated with these guys and Ram has seen as some kind of a School head coach Krishna is seen as who helps you win the battle, so you are really hiring the coaches to give me the secret formulae so I can win the battle, Krishna is not doing that

and you need to understand what is Krishna doing repeatedly? The Pandavas win the war, you have to see the story carefully he is enabling them to grow up, in the Pandwas when they was going to the forest again the forest again, the Pandavas lose the kingdom and they go to the forest and they spend whole year as servants that is Krishna training them because in the entire Mahabharat they are the kings and suddenly one day they have to servant how does it feel for a king to be a servant for a day? And he slapped, Yudhishtir had slapped in Virat Parv and Draupadi is sexually abused and Arjun is treaded like a girl she is a Brinhala, she is a Yunak treated as sex object these are psychological narratives which we don't think about so the Krishna is actually, I went once to the public sector company where they had this Krishna poster with Arjun and he is finger pointing and I am like why is Krishna finger pointing because in peoples head a coach is a teacher because they have this teacher head masters who is going to beat them up and tell them up to do the right thing, there is not right thing the coach enables you to see the parts of yourself even you don't know exists, he helps you understand see the limitation that you have, it helps you understand that what are the kinds of people you need around you to create a complimentary team for the context you are in, how to deal with the fact that you are not the smartest guy in the world or you may have been the smartest guy but in the next situation you may not have been the smartest guy, how do you deal with the uncertainty, how do you deal with the fact that you are a power hungry monster who calls himself a leader a teacher has to tell him that now I can't tell, you can't tell this. I deal with so many powerful people who have a very low self-esteem about them, all they want to hear is good things so they hire coaches to tell them how great they are!

DJ: What are the things that differentiate the great coaches from the average once?

DP: The students, it is the students who makes the difference, there are not great teachers in the world there are great students who know how to use a teacher? That is the whole thing; it is the student who makes the difference, who is able to look at the teacher and says ok what can I take from him? And there for limited by his own curiosity and limitation, it's like consulting, I have seen many CEOs who don't know how to use consultants, what is the purpose of having consultant in your office? Many people don't know they just do it because that's what is to be done and by the time you discover the real purpose of its it is too late you have moved on your career vise and that's one of the reason why you have many advisors, senior advisors, senior advisors are there to tell you why do you hire a big consulting firm this is how we show, and you can blame the student of course but that is the relationship where you know, the student allows the teacher to be teacher and the teacher allows the student to be a student and this is always a relational thing, Guru Shishya parampara is not the Guru is power and the Shishya as the powerless and recipient of the knowledge, No! the student ignites in the teacher the right questions, it's a complex process of learning which is not a linear at all, I will have knowledge I will give the knowledge it is never that until we are thinking like that, it is not like that at all, when I am coaching I look at the person in front of me and I am giving him a framework and I see what he wants and most of the time they are telling tell me a trick so I can make more money, teach me a trick, I am a pony teach me a trick, and I am like if I knew the trick why would I teach you, I would have doing business and I suddenly realize oh my god I am dealing with a very foolish person and I try to explain in many metaphor is that you know this is what we have to work, I have the body of knowledge that nobody have access to and there's a lot of knowledge in this access but you have to help me pull it out for you, I have the access I have bring the data base with me but you have to help me pull it out from here, I can't do that otherwise I would be the business man, I would be sitting in the business, I would be sitting in the throne I am not sitting on the throne for a reason, those who are sitting on the throne will not be able to do this so Ram after that Krishna is chariotee, *Naukar hai, Naukar* he is not king, he is a *Gwala* cowherd, he is the low cast man but we don't want to use because our Brahmanical not letting us see data Ram is Pattabhishekham he is sitting on the throne, there is, he is auspicious. So

what will happen if Ram and Krishna having a conversation you just have to see Vashishtha you have to see Vishwamitra and see the conversation and you will understand what's going on? Or how the Rishis would talk to the king, they would talk very differently.

DJ: For people that are brought up with the dosage of focus how do they move to a world where they build perspectives which is often required in leadership roles?

DP: Just ask people how do you earn money? I ask very blunt questions, how will you earn money if I throw you in the market? Just ask this one question and take away a wallet take away everything and throw you in the market how will you find your way that reveals so much, take away your cell phone. People don't ask fundamental questions, the basic questions, they are so consumed by their vision this is where some of the American companies are brilliant but then they work within their American context most of the time very few think in Indian context there are many clever guys who take that and adapt it to the Indian context that's a great thing, I always say Uber, Ola is the fantastic thing which has emerged because it created employment for so many people and solved so many problems for us but nobody thought, look at Goa in Goa you cannot have Uber and Ola because of a car mafia which nobody in India can break because there's a car mafia over there but when you are looking at focus and perspective it basically means moving away from only your assumptions to other people's assumptions, corporations are always talking about the vision of the corporation I don't care damn for the vision of the organization, shareholders vision, why do I care for the shareholders, this is the very horrific module in the global scenario where I am giving you service for which you are going to give me a salary that is first level, second is next level I come and I not only give you a service, my service could be a sophisticated service, thinking for you, you as an organization so for thinking you are paying me money so it's a very clear transaction, I am not here but this whole idea that you exist for the shareholder value is a very dangerous western, it does the dark side of capitalism, it is not healthy capitalism, healthy capitalism is to create value for everyone which people use lift service, people don't understand it and very few people understand the value of giving, value to everybody and I think this is what focus to perspective is it the ability to move from your needs to people's needs so you just got the warehouse of the company and check where the toilets are? Just ask who is the lowest person in your office, I ask them to visualise, and where do they stay? You have a 10000 people working for you, let put them into categories let's suppose lowest category lets us look at the most unprivileged person in that category, let's take one person and lets visualise their life and which part of you their do you intervene in and suddenly you realise the travel for two hours, when they come to office do they have the place to freshen up they are going to work for 8 hours for you do they have the place to eat? Basic things, how do you train them, how do you enable them to do their job better so you get the best out of them this visualization, which is very different from the life you are leading in your top chambers doing it repeatedly as a habit, eventually enable you to understand what is going on because if tomorrow you are going to fire that person you know what you are firing not because a shareholder wants more profit but it also demands its ruthlessness because sometimes you have to do it but empathy is something, we are too busy thinking critical thinking perspective is to see the shareholders' value and employee value and the customer value not or, not replaced one book with the other add a book to the shelf.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: Hi – This is your host Deepak Jayaraman here once again. Just a quick comment here. One company that I am reminded of when I hear this from Devdutt is Johnson & Johnson and their credo. It was crafted about 75 years way back in 1943. I want to let that sink in for a minute. This was much before anyone had heard the term Corporate Social Responsibility. The Credo is a pithy 1 page

document that basically says that their first responsibility is to doctors, nurses and consumers that use their products. The second responsibility is towards employees that work with J&J around the world. The third responsibility is towards the communities that J&J is a part of and to the world community as well. Finally, the fourth responsibility is towards the shareholders. It says that if it did these 4 well, it would make a fair profit over the long run. What's impressive is not just the clarity of this document but the manner in which this pervades various parts of business starting from how they recruit, how they manage performance, how they give feedback, the kind of stories they share in key meetings and more.

To use Devdutt's words, it boils down to whether you see the world as Rana-bhoomi or Ranga-bhoomi.

If you find the conversation purposeful, do rate and review on iTunes. It will help others discover the podcast and seek value from it. Now, back to the conversation with Devdutt.

DJ: How people build habits? What are the lessons we can learn from Mythology on how we can start building some of the habits we haven't been possibly exposed to in our growing up years?

DP: This concepts of habits is a western idea, habit is a bad word in Indian philosophy, another word for habit is conditioned I am conditioned to do it, conditioning there's a pavlovian response, a dog has a habit of salivating whenever the bell rings and the west has made it a virtue action without thought is habit repetitive action without thought is habit and if you look at the many of the cultures in the west they are like domesticated animals at a particular time they will get up and run, so they are on a treadmill all the time and this is seen as virtue, driving in a car with a coffee in your hand, nobody sees in America that this is tragedy, it's a tragedy, you can't enjoy your coffee, you can't enjoy your drive you have glamourized slavery, you have glamourized slavery and nobody sees it because you have all the gurus in white coats with their chin what is called their fist on the chin photographs, these photographs that you see are telling you therefor it must be right nobody is questioning what is the habit? And habit has been somehow projected as a good thing Indian thought is all about awareness, it's all about awareness, why are you doing what you are doing, why are you not doing what you are not doing, once you are aware then you realize what is of value to you and what is not value to you, so then breaking habits becomes difficult, there are good habits there are bad habits, habits are good or bad depending on context, so you will find people behaving, that's why I always find, when experts come to Indian they have tough time because their habits suddenly in the new context they don't know because oh my god there's no place to run, oh my god they don't have this thing because of their habit, you become like an animal and habit really goes to the lower part of your brain not the upper part of your brain and habit is about avoiding life, you do habits like it's an addiction, it's an autopilot and its addictive, like I have habit of writing, but its addiction if I don't write I get withdrawal symptoms, which means I have trained my body to be in pain when I don't do it and to get pleasure when I do it and I am not aware of it I am just doing it mechanically, so we are an awareness culture, awareness culture not habit culture, in habit culture empathy goes away, you see some of the western coaches talking and I am like it's like the sport coaches and in Indian we don't have the very big sport culture one of the reasons because this is about this physical forming thing and again the Brahmanical thing, it is the very lower end of the spectrum.

DJ: Talking about building awareness any pointers to how people could go about improving themselves in terms of...

DP: I think observing other people not as a judge, many people observe people as a judge but to recognize with empathy why is a person doing what he is doing what does the staff carry a particular kind of box how do they carry the food, why do they carry the food in a particular way? Why do they work in a particular set of hours? Why do some people talk more and do less and then you figure out and you see the dark side of it and you call out, call it out, that I noticed that you don't seem to be doing the work, and calling out very gently and compassionately putting them aside and saying that I have seen through it, I see through it and I personally believe in darshan, awareness not self-awareness but awareness of the other, everybody tells me about Maslow's law, Maslow's law is obsessed with the self, it's all about the self, there is no other, there is no other and the other is *Par*, *Swajeev*, *Parjeev* and from *Par* you have *Para* Transcendent from *Para* you have *Param* infinite this consideration for the others does not exist in western thought, it goes to the point of saying that if I create value for the shareholder I will create value for the customer and then employee and I ask people ultimately if given a choice whose value matters? That reveals who you are as a person and everybody will say of course it is me I said life is you have decided that it is not so simple there are many people in the world who think very differently from you but you have conditioned yourself into believing.

DJ: As a coach I am curious that if somebody has to change their behaviour it's important for us to change their beliefs so what are your thoughts on changing people's belief for them to start behaving differently?

DP: Belief is really a reflection of insecurity, fear you believe in something because you have frightened of something else and if you understand fear so really belief is a nice word to understand fear, the moment you handle fear your belief changes automatically, child does not want to go to the school crying, this is frightened of school I believe that school is the threat, I don't believe the school is an opportunity without seeing it also so the child starts to cry parent take the child to the school after sometime the child realises it's not that bad, there is threatening but there's also opportunity so the child starts going towards that and then gets so attached to the school and just crying when it's time to leave the school so that's the journey what happens with all of us we believe that the, and this is really you are able to do SWAT analysis what is your strength and weakness? And what are your fears your fears defines the opportunities and threat and I think the word fear is not there you don't use that in management a lot but for me when I am talking about belief I am really talking about fears, fear of not being richest man in the world, fear of not being most powerful man in the world, fear of not being relevant, I keep seeing leaders and positions of power who are terrified, who are doing business but with no vision in mind it's all about, they are still doing what they did 30 years ago, 30 years ago they wanted to make money, 30 years later they still want to make money and it's become a habit and there's no body has called out your stagnate, you are just making more money and then there's oh but I also do charity, no you are addicted, you have addicted you have not passed on whatever skills that you have to the next generation and prepared for your mortality because you are so addicted, because addiction does not have to deal with mortality if tomorrow the great names of India don't exist the world will still continue but you still have them doing exact, you just check them what they did 20 years ago and what they are doing today, they were successful 20 years ago and today also they are successful but what is that you have done differently, I am doing the exactly the same thing in a different scale because now it's become a habit but it's a virtue cycle which are making money and you are like oh my god you an idiot because you are not aware of your mortality, you are not realising that one day this has to go away you are not preparing yourself for mortality *Vaanprasth*, *Gruhastashram* is only a particular set of time so you have made your billion and they are still talking the same language and I see them and you see them in conferences and after conferences and you are like there is no shading because they are still thinking they are not successful because according to some fortune magazine or GQ

magazine they are not successful enough, I don't have my private jet, so I am not really successful and I am like that's the benchmark? Because once you get the private jet it will be like, I don't have this and you are stuck there, now its habit but nobody talks about it as a habit, it's an addiction like cigarette, it just trap and you can't get out of it.

DJ: you used the word staying relevant what does that word mean to you?

DP: It means being happy in an empty room, if nobody looked at you will you be happy with yourself? That is most the most terrifying question on earth, once you get addicted to the claps and the adulation and the adoration, in fear many people like being feared, many people who confused respect with fear. So, many people think that they are people that frightened of me therefor they respect me and they get addicted to that feeling so they want to frightened more and more people and then they get addicted and that's the habit and I think the ability to just know that even if nobody exist, I am OK with it, the Rishi again seeming along in the forest with his cow a cow is chumping grass is he happy because nobody is looking at him, nobody is cares for his knowledge, he has got all this knowledge in from of him he has been spent his whole life in the forest, nobody is looking at him what is he do now? He has to pass it on the students and if nobody is interested what does he do? So the stories are there that the Rishis are throwing the palm leaves in the air so their ability to recognize that in the end you don't matter, in the infinity that's why Buddhism came up with the idea Zero India talked of infinity, in an infinite world you really, this is Indian philosophy in its brutal form you don't matter but to render yourself irrelevant consciously and be happy about it and that what happens, your children grow up and they have children of their own, they don't pay attention to you anymore, it's a time to be happy, my time is over now they have their children they have their life I have earned enough my cows are there, I don't know one cow thousands of cows, so milk is assure and dung is assured and some cheese and butter with it but to know that they don't care for you anymore and its ok that's the great thing and I don't need them to care for me, I have grown up and its ok that is *Sannyasa* it's the process, it's the journey.

DJ: The other thing you talk about is *Sarpadrushti* and *Garudadrushti* and as sometimes you need to balance the short term priorities and solve for the long term what's your take on how they could walk on that tight rope?

DP: *Garudadrushti* and *Sarpadrushti* is same as focus and perspective, *Sarpadrushti* is focus, *Garudadrushti* is perspective, it is the same thing, it is just said differently in poetic language, what do you need to do now and what do you need to do in a short term and a long-term thinking, what do you need to do in this market versus a bigger market? And I think you have to go cyclically, rhythm is a good word in India, somebody told me rhythm word come from the word *rytt* seasons and it is about seasonality so Monday, Wednesday, Friday you do *Sarpadrushti* Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday you do *Garudadrushti* and each one influences the other and if you keep aware both are necessary and both have to be equally done and both influence each other they have to influence each other it's like a churn the force and the counter force they work sequentially and they influence each other, they are not two discreet buckets and they are not working simultaneously then it's a tug of war, in tug of war no churning takes place I am churning what you have churned now that's the different way of looking at the word it doesn't mean there a book in bookshelf don't throw the book away add a book so for me western thought is a very secrete book but you know how the western mind reads it oh Devdutt is saying against the western so replace the western book with the Indian book, so they are using the western model for the Indian subject, the Indian model for the western subject is keep the western book and add the Indian book, so many people say so why are you against the westerns I am like, you are still in the western mindset replace the book, replace the book.

DJ: the other thing I want to understand is this notion of judgment, business judgment (Dharmasankat), what's your take on leaders building that capability of good judgment?

DP: So leaders never take decision in isolation, they are trapped between shareholders they are trapped between employees, they are trapped between customers and it's a question of who matters to them in the end, you can take a very good decision that shareholder hates, I know in public sector the bank leaders who have been asked to resign to take a good job, so you take the right decision but your decision isn't in the ecosystem of other people so you have to decide what matters to you, your principles your job sometimes your job can go away and you will not do good tomorrow so sometimes you compromise and therefore sometime leaders are ... many people have faces in many large companies the CEO is just a spoke person for the family if he recognizes his role that really you are not a Kshatriya, you are a Shudra you are a service provider, you are not the face of the company you are sorted because you know that I have to follow the family or get out but you can't because in social status of the CEO you will go away and the fabulous things that you get with it and the access to clubs will go away, matters no? So you have to know what you are actually doing. In that job, in many multinational company you are just a service provider you are not a value creator, although they call you a value creator and you are certainly not the owner and by owner I mean the Kshatriya a land owner, the Vanik is the market person who is creating value and there's the Shudra who is the service provider, thinkers don't belong, you can move anywhere you want doesn't matter, we can all think but it is this, this access you have to understand.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: Hi – This is your host Deepak Jayaraman here once again. Just a quick comment here. The piece that Devdutt speaks about in the context of knowing your role is such an important one. A similar theme came up when I interviewed Rama Bijapurkar (RB) – a Consumer Insights expert and a Board member. She spoke about how some CEOs struggle to adopt the right lens when they take on a board position

RB: *"So when you are going to NED board position we find that there is a lot of sympathy for the executive management so we usually find that the board divides up when there are issues and the executives guys who have been executives have that old empathy and sympathy and so they think their job is to sort of make up for the fact that they won't be protected in their tenure and to be the protector and that what, our job is not to disappoint the management here, what is I am saying, if you want an acquisition desperately I still don't have to give it to you and if you are going to get demoralized, I mean grew up let's talk about why this is important? But my loyalty is somewhere else it is not to you I am not here to be cheer leader, nurse, maid, nappy, coach. I think that's the stuff that executive managers tend to get into and then therefore you are the coach and you are the this person and so on as compared to saying that all of us in boards are call to make judgement calls so whatever is your background, you are doing your background to make the judgement call and that's all you should do. And you just make judgment calls for everything that put in front of you and these are since of commissions, since of omissions, Plans whatever it is that's what you have to do"*

DJ: Like Devdutt Says, just being clear about the lens you are going to use in a certain context can be immensely clarifying. Now back to the conversation with Devdutt.

DJ: And from an entrepreneur's perspective, what you have seen good entrepreneurs do in getting people on board and getting them to be value creators?

DP: You have to clarify that you are creating value for whom, not for yourself only or the company and you have been hired for a service. This, you know, we make this mistake of not clarifying roles. You are being valued because you bring this beautiful ability to create value but will you get value out of it is a question, or will I get value out of it is also a question. This is then a clarified; it's a transaction, right? And many people figure out one day that oh, if he's making money out of my ideas why should I give him ideas? I am not in the share of the profit; all those questions start emerging when you are very smart. If you are not very smart, it doesn't matter, and then you are exploited, allowing yourself to be exploited. But a leader and everybody have to understand, entrepreneurs have to understand that what he is hiring for. It's not the equality business, it's INCOHERENT (0:01:00), you have to work together, solve problems, some people like to work because they get the opportunity to solve problems, that's what they want in life. You know, many businessmen figure as you hire people who enjoy solving problems but they are not interested in money, so fine, you give them that opportunity what they want, so look at what the other wants. And they don't tell it in an interview; you will figure it out over time.

DJ: It goes back to the point about empathy, I guess?

DP: Yes, you have to understand what they want in life and give them what they want and then figure out an ecosystem that you have to continuously think of the other so that he thinks about you. So, it is a very clear transaction. I will take care of you but you take care of me. This is what I want from you, I want these problems to be solved, and there is a lot of uncertainty I have to handle it. I think, it's clarity of transaction. I just do not believe in INCOHERENT (0:01:42), it's my beautiful model but she is going to starve if she does not provide service, she is going to die in the market. The market will continue, the buyers will come, and sellers will replace you. So, you have to be aware of the transaction.

DJ: What advice do you have for leaders for them to develop the story telling capability?

DP: When you are telling a story you have to be clear, there are different types of stories what people want to know is something that it has an emotional rapper rap around it and that is what really story telling means. Story telling means turning a hard fact into an emotion through plots and characters that's all it is there is an idea for which you need an emotional rap around which there are characters and plots so the character is a *Patra* and *Patra* in Sanskrit means vessel, vessel of what, vessel of emotions, so it is like imagine a vessel which contains a syrupy drink but what really matters is that there is sugar inside so it take cares of low sugar levels so the entire process is story telling so I think you should understand who are you telling the story to and why are you telling the story? Look at the audience who are you telling why are you telling, in most important resource, people don't have time tell it fast, many people go telling stories they build unnecessary details and go on and on and on, tell it fast corporate story has to be told in one minute to max that's it, that's the only lesson I have for people, tell the story fast and you can only tell the story fast if you know what is the arrow that you are shooting and that rapped in emotions and rapped that in plot and character and emotions.

DJ: And what's the piece that people find hardest in sort of storytelling?

DP: I think they go to too many details, one of the things I discovered and one of the unique things about my book and one of the things that made me famous that I prissy everything so I will not say lord with lotus ties it doesn't matter, it's just a story. In the Ramayan Ram's lotushepties doesn't matter that is where I adore Ram, adoration of Ram that eyes matter, in the Ramayan I am like what's the point? What's the point of the story? I am only worried about the point, if there is no point to the story don't tell me the story, what is relevant? You are a seller remember what does the

buyer want? Demand supply, so he has no time you have to be able to give him in two lines, so I always tell people tell me your problem in one line, they say it's a long story, I say no one line, now tell me in two lines, now tell me in five minutes, now tell me in ten minutes, same story you have to repeat it like this and then they get scared, I say then you don't know the Mahabharat, do you get it? *Samajh me aaya ken nahi?* Like I will tell you I went to this very senior economist, so I said sir one word what's economy? Not even blinking looks at me and says transaction and at that moment I know I am dealing with a guru he knows this subject, not only knows his subject he is clear enough to articulate it for the other to understand, one is many genius are there but they cannot articulate, they can't tell, they can't teach, they can solve the problem but they can't teach you to solve the problem I immediately understand and smiled, one word, that's genius, reduce it to one word.

DJ: In summary what would you say for people to play to their potential?

DP: I think you should recognize that you are a seed, potential means *Bij* what the market wants is *Phal*, now this is a complex question what will you grow to, what kind of tree are you? And what fruit do you bare and does the market want that fruit? If the market doesn't want to fruit go to another market or figure out the way to change the fruit but you have to be true to yourself you are a *Bij*, if you try to work hard to be an Apple because market sales the Apple and you are a mango tree you will be in existential crisis all your life, go to the mango market and sometimes mango markets are not big be happy with it.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: Hope you found the conversation as purposeful as I did. There were three big takeaways for me in this conversation.

- First is the distinction between Focus and Perspective – This is particularly relevant because a lot of us are brought with a strong dosage of the objective truth (like medicine, engineering, accounting etc) and as we grow through life, our ability to deal with the subjective world ends up becoming a bigger and bigger deal. I really liked paradigm of ranga-bhoomi where we build empathy and we solve not just for ourselves but for everyone around us a bit like how J&J did it with their Credo.
- Second is the distinction between awareness and habit. Very often I come across leaders with ingrained habits and they often make a virtue of the habit. The key point to note is that habits are relevant in a certain context and when that changes, it is critical that we examine our habits to see if they are still fit for purpose. The only watch out is that sometimes our context changes suddenly and we take notice but sometimes the context shifts slowly and we don't realize it. It is critical that we are mindful of how our situation is changing and to examine if the habits are still relevant so that we avoid the frog in the boiling water syndrome. I have several colleagues from IIMA and London Business School who started out their career with 80 or 100 hour work weeks and quickly baked that into a habit or a way of life. This made a lot of sense at that stage because the learning curve was steep, you built your networks with a great set of people and there was a low personal cost. But over 20 years, as the learning curve tapers and personal costs rise, they often don't pause to reflect that the context has changed. That's also because the water temperature has risen very gradually and they notice the temperature changing till it's quite late. I am not for a moment saying that people shouldn't work those hours. It's just worth asking the question if it still makes sense given your new context and choose what makes sense.

- The third thing that struck me was the point Devdutt makes about Phala and Beej – what the market wants versus what sort of a seed you are. This is a simple but a very insightful distinction. The only piece I would add here is that often what market wants is quite visible and discernible but figuring out what sort of a seed you are is a reasonably nebulous and unnerving process. Strangely enough, our education often enables us to process the outside world but doesn't give us tools to make sense of the inside world in a meaningful way. I often tell the leaders I work with, instead of asking for feedback around strengths and development areas, ask people "given you know me, what sort of a canvas do you think I will thrive in". That's a very different question which will give you an insight into the kind of seed you are.

Thank you for listening. If you find the content purposeful, please share with those that could find this valuable and do take a moment to rate and leave a review on iTunes. For more content from leaders like Zia Mody, Vinita Bali, Nandan Nilekani, Vishy Anand, Atul Kasbekar, Amish Tripathi and more, do visit playtopotential.com. You could access a full conversation, or access content that is curated by key themes that might be of interest to you. My next guest is Jay Panda, a Member of Parliament. We talk about what it takes to succeed in the world of politics and what the business world can learn from it. I look forward to having you at one of the subsequent conversations of the playtopotential podcast. Bye now.

End of transcription

Nugget from Amish Tripathi that is referenced: [Where the seeds of transition were sown](#).

Nugget from Amish Tripathi that is referenced: [Transitioning from Financial Services to Writing](#).

Nugget from Rama Bijapurkar that is referenced: [Transitioning from Executive to NED](#).

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Reinventing self: "How do I stay relevant" is a question that all of us have to grapple with as we go through our respective journeys. Careers aren't linear any more. Some of the leaders talk about how they managed to pivot during their journeys and significantly change trajectories. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Pursuing your passion: "Follow your heart" is an advice that is commonly doled out to individuals that are trying to make career choices. However, the reality is little more nuanced. People who have

followed their heart talk about how they have weaved it into their lives or in some cases, how they have been pragmatic about taking the plunge. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Gig Economy: Going solo and configuring a portfolio of initiatives is a lot more feasible today than it was a decade or two back. Leaders talk about their experience in getting the timing right in moving from a Corporate Environment to doing Gigs. They also talk about what it takes to identify your unique playground and flourish in the gig economy including how you build trust – something that doesn't get spoken about in the discussions around the flattening world and reduced transaction costs. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Leadership development: “How do I grow” is a question that all of us grapple with. The recipe for success is also changing as we move from an Industrial paradigm to a Digital paradigm. This is all the more pronounced in a start-up context where the job outgrows you very quickly. Successful leaders talk about the role of mentors, coaching, listening and more in scaling up one's capability. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Inflection points: Inflection points are when the notion of “what got you here won't get you there” hold. Whether it is a company moving from a start-up to a scale-up or a leader moving from a CXO to a CEO role, these passages of play have to be navigated carefully as there is a high risk of derailment. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Coaching: The business world is slowly waking up to the fact that just like in elite sports; there is a tremendous value to be unlocked by having an effective coach for a leader. It is not just about fixing issues but also about enabling the journey from Good to Great. Leaders across disciplines share their insights around how one should pick a coach and get the most out of such a relationship. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Judgment: Judgment is a key trait that differentiates the great leaders from the average ones. How do you make decisions and exercise choices in a world full of options and grey areas with multiple stakeholders around you. In addition, the playlist has nuggets that discuss how one creates a climate for the people around you to exercise good judgment. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Mindfulness: Given we live in a world with exponential increase in content creation and with firms like Google, Facebook, Amazon and Apple vying for our attention, it is quite hard to reclaim our own space and attention. In this context, being mindful could be a key differentiator and a competitive advantage. Some leaders talk about how they created that space for themselves amidst the noise. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Habits: Habits are routine behaviours done on a regular basis. They are recurrent and often unconscious patterns of behaviour and are acquired through frequent repetition. Guests on the podcast share their experiences in baking habits in their lives. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Staying relevant: How do we stay relevant as we go through our journey is something that keeps a lot of us awake. This is both in the context of refreshing and rejuvenating ourselves over time and also ensuring that our skills and capabilities are fit for purpose in the world we live in and the future of work. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Executive to NED: Leaders talk about how Senior Executives need to think about being effective in a Board context. This often involves a rewiring of their mindsets in terms of being clear around who they are accountable to and where their loyalties lie and a shift in the way they interact with a group

of people to drive outcomes, something that can be hard for a lot of people. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Communication: Communication and story-telling is at the essence of building culture in an organization. Lessons from an ad-guru, mythologist, armed forces officer, motivational speaker and more about how one could think about narrating compelling stories. You can access the playlist [here](#).

In Summary - Playing to Potential: This playlist captures the essence of what the speaker is trying to say in their conversation. In a way, it captures the key principles with which they have approached life which has brought them to where they are today. They share their perspectives on the mindset we need to adopt as we navigate through life. You can access the playlist [here](#).

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Devdutt Pattanaik - Nuggets

- 25.00 Devdutt Pattanaik - The Full Conversation
- 25.01 Devdutt Pattanaik - Early formative years
- 25.02 Devdutt Pattanaik - Transitioning from Healthcare to Mythology
- 25.03 Devdutt Pattanaik - Being effective in the Gig Economy
- 25.04 Devdutt Pattanaik - Dealing with various life transitions
- 25.05 Devdutt Pattanaik - Effective coaching process
- 25.06 Devdutt Pattanaik - Focus vs. Perspective
- 25.07 Devdutt Pattanaik - Building Habits vs. Enhancing Awareness
- 25.08 Devdutt Pattanaik - Understanding fear to decipher beliefs
- 25.09 Devdutt Pattanaik - Building perspective and judgment
- 25.10 Devdutt Pattanaik - Building story telling capability
- 25.11 Devdutt Pattanaik - In summary - Playing to Potential

About Deepak Jayaraman

Deepak seeks to unlock 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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