



Guest

Bombay Jayashri is one of the leading Carnatic musicians in the country. She is born into a family of musicians with a rich lineage in classical music. She represents the fourth generation of music practitioners in her family. Apart from her contribution to the world of Carnatic music, she has collaborated with artists around the world including Egyptian musician Hisham Abba, Senegalese musician Thione Seck and Finnish composer - Eero Hammeeniemi. Her collaboration with Sir Ang Lee (for the movie - Life of Pi) got her a nomination for The Academy Award.

In the conversation she spoke about how the role of an inspiring guru, her approach to growing as a musician and training for performances. She also sheds light on some of the elements behind team work that play out in a concert when artists from different contexts come on stage. She talks about her experience with Sir Ang Lee and his orientation towards excellence when she recorded the title track for The Life of Pi.

Context to the conversation

Welcome to the 33rd conversation at the Play to Potential Podcast. A series of reflective conversations across three broad themes – Leadership, Transitions and Careers.

I am your host Deepak Jayaraman. I am an Executive Coach and I help leaders and organizations play to their potential by engaging with them during periods of high stakes transition. You could see transitioninsight.com for more details.

This podcast is a passion project of mine where I have been speaking with individuals from various fields to decode responses to two questions from their journeys. Where to go and how to grow? We discuss, how these individuals have made crucial choices that has changed their trajectory and how they have evolved as leaders in their respective fields. Just to give you a sense, the list includes sportsmen like Vishy Anand, Vijay Amritraj and Viren Rasquinha, CEOs such as Nandan Nilekani, Vinita Bali, Suresh Narayanan and Meher Pudumjee, Thought leaders and writers such as Devdutt Pattanaik and Amish Tripathi. I try and divide up each conversation into smaller nuggets and curate the content so that it is easier for you to access them in a targeted way. Please visit playtopotential.com for more details and sign up to be intimated when we upload new content.

My guest this time is the accomplished Carnatic Musician Jayashri Ramnath also popularly known as Bombay Jayashri. She has performed across 20 odd countries and has collaborated with a range of artists. She was nominated for an Academy Award for her collaboration with Sir Ang Lee for the movie Life of Pi. She is also involved in discovering the healing power of music by working with autistic kids.

In this conversation, we talk how she practices for her concerts, what she learnt by observing her guru Shri Lalgudi Jayaraman in action, how she has made choices about going broad across genres

versus going deeper into Carnatic Music and how she leverages music as a platform to make a difference.

At the outset, I should mention that if you want to listen to conversation offline, say during an airplane ride or during a gym session or another time, you could access it at iTunes, Google's Podcast Player, Stitcher, Saavn or any of the other podcast apps that are out there.

Without further ado, over to my conversation with Jayashri.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): How you think about time today? How do you spend your time and more importantly give us a sense of why you do what you do today?

Bombay Jayashri (BJ): Most of my time spent around music of course, planning for the concert, what to sing, how to sing, rehearsing for the upcoming concert, thinking of what mistakes I made in the earlier one, once in a way I do record so that means going to the studio and understanding the song etc. Basically everything is around trying to make my work better.

DJ: Rewind the clock I am curious about the point in time where you probably made the commitment to take music as a full time profession talk a little bit about that inflection point.

BJ: The pathway were created very early in my life when I was a child both my parents taught Carnatic Classical Music in our home, in Bombay, my father taught my mother taught and so waking up to the music in the morning and going to bed with music, listening to their classes is what I remember, so there was music always but that it would become eventually my career came much later so it always meant going for school participating in school competitions, inter college contests and then starting to sing jingles in Bombay, singing for documentaries landing my voice for multiple languages and then small concerts and then a trip or two in Chennai to be the part of the December festival these were all that little paths that came along my way, they just happened to be there, when I moved to Chennai to be under the guidance of my guru Shree Lalgudi Jayaraman, at that point I think the couple of ones after moving to Chennai when I realized that this is what I am going to do for the rest of my life.

DJ: How did you think about learning under Shree? Lalgudi Jayaraman? Talk to us about the choice of the coach.

BJ: I was training with my parents always and with SMT. T.R. Balamani a very very loved teacher and guru in Bombay for several years. There was something in Chennai, it was a competition again and I was happened to receive a prize given to be my Lalgudi sir and he heard me sing and I had an opportunity for the first time to hear his concert in Bombay around that time and when I heard that music and I remember I was sitting on the floor, it was Gandhi Maidan University with my friend and almost I was be able to touch the end of the stage where the artist were seated and it was something inside me that told me, If I can just pack a small bag of what I need and just go away with where this music takes you I didn't even know what it meant and how it could be possible and fortunately with me, when he heard me sing he told my mother if you send her to Chennai I will teach her and my mother wasn't sure, because it was a very tall order, I means somebody as great as he, somebody as accomplished as he, a busy person, why would he want to take a young student

like me who was just work learning to sing better but everything like I told you the pathway just formed in my life it just had to make a deep wish and a deep desire and I came to Chennai and I started training from him in 1989.

DJ: And you are saying those two were two independent things, you attaining that concert in Chembur and him hearing you sing and telling your mother that's where I guess in a way both happened on the parallel of the same platform. Around the two month mark after which you said, again what shifted if I may ask for you to say this is life?

BJ: So I came with a lot of self-doubt about myself, my music whether this is even a pathway for me though all I knew and all I learnt and was trained was music so my guru created that urge within me to be committed to be motivated to practice and he told me that I have faith that you will take this up full time and I think he saw it in my eyes, me? ... And he said yes only you can do it so every word of that I remember now, only you can do it! Is what so coming from someone who was a disciplinarian, who was an achiever himself and there was nothing he hadn't achieved and he was the ultimate musician's musician and for him to say that for me meant a lot it was a huge responsibility, after that it was me it was a hope that he placed in me and also I had to do it for him.

DJ: For people who are at that cross roads often in a lot of families, music is treated as a hobby or vocation on aside but what advice do you give to people at that cross roads of making it as a commitment or making it as a career what are the mistakes that you see when they taking that plunge?

BJ: I think if the music bug by its you and then by its in your heart and if there is any youngster who comes and tells me, I want to do music all time I just tell them one thing, plunge into it but understand you have to work persistently long hours for the rest of your life and you have to keep your motivation and drive up and you should have the good fortune of someone guiding you otherwise you will be lost in this deep ocean so if someone wants to take music they must take music, because it's a very beautiful world.

DJ: And actually if I may persist with that, off the three or four things that you said, three are within your control discipline, long hours and so on somebody taking you up is something outside your control so for somebody who is sort of that lone voice out there who still yet to find, let's say home in terms of a mentor what's the advice in those situations?

BJ: Its possible they don't find that person but they can find that inspiration around them in several of the musicians who have given us this wealth of music before by listening to them by, I have realized when I work some of the answers just don on me, my guru is not around now and I still have several questions and queries about the music but then you seem to hear them if you look deep within, it's possible.

DJ: I want to sort of move to this notion of learnings from gurus that you have mentioned and Shree Lalgudi Jayaraman but again coming from the world of let's say from the corporate world or the business world and if I think about how we have the coaching process where we help another leader achieve his or her potential, you have learnt under few guru what are some of the things they do that make them great gurus, just decode that for us?

BJ: First of all what they do itself inspire, in terms of their self-discipline, the way they look at the subject Art in this case. I remember when I came to Chennai and I started learning from my guru, he was about 59 or touching 60 and sometimes late evenings after class the household would not let me go back to where I was living because it was too late to commute by the bus so I have to stay

back, and at 4 am his Sadhana would wake me up, at 4 am in the morning he would start practicing his violin and until 7 am he won't come out of the room, so that relentless addiction to be perfect and to learn more and more and more these are the things that they show you through their music and their lifestyle they conduct, the second thing is he had several students but he would go to each level at a pace that was required he would come to that level and teach you at that level and make you believe that you can do it, so give you the hope, give you the fundamental material to achieve it and I do believe he had a different material for each student, different set of tools which he would say this is what would work for you this is how you have to do it but you have to do it, he was a disciplinarian but he was very affectionate. He was very strict but his eyes would well up if you sing well he was very forgiving but he was quick to be angry if you failed in doing a duty which was to practice so day after day when you see someone whose love for music contagious enough for music. When you see it then you are bound to be like that.

DJ: Going back to some of the things that you said practicing from 4 am to 7 am, I am curious about this notion of excellence, how do people who are already at the pinnacle of excellence keep pushing to higher and higher, so give us an insight into how they practice? How does he spend 3 hours and how is that different from, sometimes people often use this term deliberate practice where you are sort of mindful about what you are doing, maybe give us an insight into the nature of practice that some of these people do and you do?

BJ: So it could be three hours, it could be four it could be two sometimes, but it is mindful there is a schedule how you split your practice? You have warm up exercises for your voice, there are small compositions that help you build up your stamina to be able to ultimately render three or four hour concert and there are compositions to help you to set your mind to think faster because a concert like the word is the concerted effort with many musicians on the stage three four sometimes five so it means that everyone should have one voice in the end in my case it could be the vocal with the violin and Mridangam or a Kanjira or Ghatam in that case but we have to sound like one beautiful voice there is a lot going there in terms of giving space to each other letting your ideas pace forth but allowing another person's idea, idea to come in so in the end it sounds beautiful it sounds spontaneous because it finally about communication, music is about how well you communicate to your audience but it has a lot of emotion a lot of feeling because Carnatic music is like that so it's a combination of the heart the mind the soul all coming together and a unified beautiful way in a language that can reach immediately.

DJ: If I may come back to that three hour ritual you spoke about, Warm up, having a set of things you do for you to prepare for the concert, again if I were to use a term syllabus, early journeys people have syllabuses that's available but at that rarefied level you created own syllabus, how do you fill the time apart from the...

BJ: I could start with warming up with familiar compositions, familiar territory and then move on to learning something new which I wish to sing, for which I believe I need about three or four months practice, because I don't want to learn something now and sing it tomorrow, because I haven't internalised it so much, I wanted to be second nature and it should just flow through me and I just to be a conduit at that point, I would think ideally for something to soak in and for me to be able to for it to flow out of me ideally it should take that, it should be given that much time so I would move on to practicing something new after that and maybe I try go back to something old and look how much I can better it, there are compositions I may have sang 200 times but I remember feeling that, I still not got this part right or if I heard a greater version of it from a legend, I want to get there at that point so there is always so much to do with I have learnt and rendered many times there's yet so much want to do that I haven't learnt at all, sometimes three or four hours doesn't seem enough at all.

DJ: How do you get feedback as a musician? When I say feedback, when you are sitting in that room alone three hours, let's say you starting out with the new song that you want to master or you want to sort of feel and sing at the end of three four months and I am curious music the way you hear it is actually quite different from the way others hear it, so how does the feedback process work for you to get better over time?

BJ: The passage of time and having given a lot of time to internalization, concert singing is one thing but internalization happens only when you are alone just me and my very beautifully tuned Tambura sometimes I can get lost just enjoying the beauty of the music at that time I tend to forget that I am a subject there, that has to improve then I have to tell myself ok stop enjoying and swimming in the music work at how that can be achieved in my voice which is another segment or another world so there is always this agony of that world and this world, which is being, someone who loves it a Rasika and someone who has to internalize it to bring it out of you but it's a beautiful process and I am always like jumping the court, this side and this side but I have to be very aware and conscious that I want the music that beauty and that epitome of perfection to flow through me, it's not easy but it's not difficult either.

DJ: As you practice, what's the point you hit when you say this is concert ready is there a certain click that goes around your head that makes you say its concert ready?

BJ: Not exactly concert ready, I feel yes now I must try it and then it further gets readied as I sing it in the concert because that seems to me another version altogether because when I am signing at home, it's just me my voice and my thought, my creativity but in the concert it also has others participating and embellishing the music, others who possibly you may be distracted or attracted in terms of their way of playing the music so that's another process where the music undergoes a lot of tuning reshaping, shaping.

DJ: Picking up on this dynamic in the concert, am curious about team work as a theme, again of the various concerts you have done and people you have performed with what's been your insights around when it all comes together, what are some of the pieces if you sort of decode that what are some of the underlying things that need to go right for you to come across as one voice to the audience?

BJ: First and foremost is to have a very healthy attitude and peaceful relationship with everybody on the stage on and off stage, the second is to at least in my case what I try to do is I try to empty myself completely before I going to the stage without a baggage or without a notion of how I want the music to sound, I try to just ok now I am just going empty and I have often found that when I do that everybody else is able to do that at the same time which happens sometimes with people who have worked for the long time, you tend to have a kind of a levelling attitude with each other and then the music takes over, we don't have to do much, I don't know if I can explain this in words but, I have had experiences that enriching my thought process to believe that empty yourself and then years of training and practice just flows through.

DJ: And when you say empty yourself, I am sure its simple statement but I am sure its complex, so give us a sense of how you empty yourself?

BJ: Maybe what I mean to say is if I take a melody, I could compare it to say a river, river that flows through hill or valley and at every turn there's a melody, there's what we called a Gamaka or Anusura there are these inflections in music, when we look at the river, look at the beauty and we say aah! We are not thinking of all these things, when I am trying to perfecter, when I trying to learn a Raga or I am trying to perfect it's like a river, every Raga is a different river it flows through me and

the nuances come through my voices but when I have worked and internalized these nuances, these vocabulary, that grammar for many months, after that point I am not thinking of the book that vocabulary that created that Raga, I know it, but I must allow it to flow freely from inside of me, so I try to create that space inside me and that's what I meant by emptying myself. So that river can gush out.

DJ: How you made choices along the way? How have you thought about choices along the way, give us a sense of the underlying thinking behind some of the choices that you have made?

BJ: I was blessed because I came into a family that loved music and different genres of music and growing up in Bombay helped every bit because I was hearing the movie song, I was admiring the movie song, I was witnessed to several great Jugalbandis, concerts that I have attended, at home there was Carnatic music, I went through a convent so there was English music there, I learn to play the Piano, my brothers older to me would bring Abba and Michael Jackson music at home and every bit of it we loved, we listen to be admired with equal reverence so when the pathways open for me to be a musician myself, I had to find the ways of creating these opportunities for myself and in doing that I have worked with some of the most wonderful artists whether it was in dialogue or Jugalbandis I have worked with Shubha Mudgal, Ronu Majumdar, Leela Samson, Valli, Chitra Visweswaran in dance, who was a finished composer and every time I have a little journey with them creating a music or singing with them or performing with them am able to closely watch another trained musicians life of how he or she looks at music of his perspectives of his dreams and that fascinates me and am always starving more for that more and more of that is what I would love.

DJ: How you made choices along the way? How have you thought about choices along the way, give us a sense of the underlying thinking behind some of the choices that you have made? Are there some common threads across these people?

BJ: Yes, hard work, an addiction for perfection, sincerity, never to give up, because sometimes you just cannot get a Raga, the composition doesn't flow but when doesn't give up there are moments of self-doubt frustration but I think all the great people that I have met, they see the greatness of purpose so much that the end of the day what they go through becomes very small and that's what I see.

DJ: And when you say sincerity, what you have in mind? What's behind that term?

BJ: Sincerity means to do nothing else but music, to want nothing else but music. The quest for knowing more, to learn more to listen to more music, to perform, I don't know if there's another way of performing other than being the best at sincerity.

DJ: Of the choices that one makes there's often the go broad versus a go deep kind of a choice, in the sense stay rooted and go deeper and deeper into one domain versus embrace how have you thought about that choice?

BJ: So I have had this question with myself and I have share it with a few friends who I thought would help me but at the end I had to find the answers within me, go deeper or do a Jugalbandi, go deeper or sing a movie song look more into Todi Ragam and Karharpriya Ragam because that one Ragam will take a life time or say yes to life of pi, I don't believe I have attained any kind of a balance all I can see is I have learnt where ever and the learning here has helped the other side and am constantly having this multiple pathways in my life and there was a point when I just thought no I should just do one but before I know the most tempting opportunities hitting my back and saying hello it never happened, I see this as my the way of my life.

DJ: How music has changed from the development of the technology, how people have tried to stay relevant as sort of the place around them has changed or disrupted in some cases? So talk to us about what you had to do to stay relevant in your space?

BJ: There was a time when there were no mics in concerts, I am talking about 60 70 years ago, now as musicians we carry our own mics, we don't even depend on the ones in the auditorium, I have my own mic I would find myself telling the sound engineer, when my guru learnt music he told me he even did not make notes on paper, it was all internalise here in the head, when I learnt from him, sometimes he would allow me to make notes but the rest I have to sing from the memory in the next class, my students walk into the class requesting me, meekly though, can I record this class because I might not be able to remember it so it has changed, technology does aid learning but when one puts off learning to technology, when one becomes dependent then one loses it all, I could have a class recorded with me but if I push it for tomorrow because I have the recording ... then and there because there are so many subtleties in music like any subject in art mostly that I know little of, you cannot remember even after two hours, you have to sit right there and work it out, start working out, so with technology often we push all the responsibility on technology and that to me is very scary.

DJ: So that is sort of a, from a student guru dynamic perspective but as a performer has technology required you to change the way you do things significantly in terms of the way you practice or the way you perform?

BJ: Not so much but singing jingles in Bombay and singing film songs in a studio helped a lot with the sense of my mic, then mic does help a lot because nowadays you need that equipment to be able to reach that person, not in terms of transmitting of sound it's a lot that happens with the mic, when my music reaches you it comes through this little instrument so it has aided what I do definitely, as long as I know that I can do even without that.

DJ: You have worked with in the context of life of pi, I am curious about working with people from different cultures and backgrounds as let's say as compare to maybe Carnatic music where most of the others might have come from a similar let's say cultural or a musical upbringing, what's some of the shifts that you need to make when you work with somebody from a very different space?

BJ: One is to be open minded and to what that opportunity so when they called me up and they read out the list of names I was jumping with joy that I blessed with this opportunity with reference to Ang Lee he is Zen like, he is calm and he speaks very little but he will affectionately prod you to deliver what he wants, while rendering this song I remember, we recorded this in Bombay and the song is very small, it's about four or six lines but it took over a week to record that, to get finally where sir Ang wanted us to in Mychael Danna at the end I think what he told me is, I want the child not to sleep to your lullaby, I want the child to feel safe and I want that in your voice and if you look at the way they have, the song plays through the film, of course it lulls the child to sleep it also wakes by up, it gives them the courage and more importantly its, the song the track is used as a connect between the audience and Pi through-out and even when I thought deeply I realized, how the song plays through the movie so to work with someone sir Ang is universal he maybe Taiwanese on paper but it's fascinating to work with somebody like him, who loves what he do and he does knows what to get from the artist that he is working with.

DJ: Five days for a six line song, so how do you break that up, what happens in those five days in the sense in even that simple thing that you said about, understanding the emotion of the song and bringing it into your voice, how does that play out for an artist?

BJ: I think it was very similar to how I practice Carnatic music, basically over that five days, those five lines or four lines, I was internalising the melody and it was simple melody, it was intense but very simple melody so I remember even in sleep those four lines were going on in my head and I think that process is what was beautiful and that what was required and that was why I was given the time, so I could internalise and not just, if you see a mother singing to a child, it's not something she learnt five minutes ago it's something she may have heard her grandmother singing or mother singing, which was inside her and I was lucky that I was giving the time for to internalise it at least for five days and interestingly neither of them knew Tamil but they wanted words that sounded, that had that relationship, when you hear they wanted that warmth that affection that motherly love, so I would pick words and they are saying not this, this is a little harsh, and they were constantly telling me no no, I want a word ending with aa, I want a word ending with oh, I don't want too much of sounds like which is there in Tamil but they wanted the whole thing to be soft melting butter like, because any of the audiences it a universal audience and they wanted the sounds emanating from the lullaby just not the voice but the sound had to be that affection.

DJ: For people striving for excellence where do you hit a point where you know OK, I think we are done, I think we have the version that sort of, which is as good as it can get.

BJ: I think it's just the clock. Given a choice we go on and on and say yet another chance some more time but no, its five days and you have to say stop and then you have to tell yourself, maybe I have given everything that's inside me, I have to wait for the another song to give another version of the beauty.

DJ: How have you thought about juggling your commitments towards work and home, that's again the piece am curious about when I talk to a women and careers am curious about how they have thought about those choices along the way, how have you made choices, along the way?

BJ: That's the continuous exercise of trying to divide your focus, energy and time in both spaces, but honestly I have given most of it to the music I have a very supportive set of people around me, when I grew up the family that I married into, they just let me be and took care of so many things that had to be done for my life to be functioned meticulously and normally, I had missed a lot of occasions, it could be family outings, my sons school day, anniversaries, birthdays, weddings, it was always like that's not in town, she must be busy, she may not have a concert but she needs the time to rejuvenate or be by herself, its ok let her not come, so I have had really fabulous support always but ya there have been many agonising moments, I would be away, far away five thousand miles away and my son has fever or there was someone at home would need just maybe my touch or love and am not been around it has been difficult but once I go to the stage I forget that there could have been a moment when I fly back, once I am signing I don't remember anything.

DJ: You do work in the space of autism, I am curious about the therapeutic role music play in people's life not just in the context of autism but just a wider point? Am curious about the role music can play in improving people's lives.

BJ: I don't think there anything better than art in making one a better person happier person, a more sensitive person, a person with some amount of equilibrium, at every point in life, whether it's a young child, a student, or someone who is getting married, music is always around like a dear friend, a friend that demands nothing of you except to give. With respect to autism, it was more than a decade ago that I met a child after a concert in Dubai who came straight up to me and looked into my eyes and said, you sang it wrong, and I didn't wanted to believe it and believe nobody around me heard because we are so used to hearing only adulatory comments after the concert and then I did found out that child was right when I heard record of my concert and I had made mistakes and I also

remember another four year old in Bangalore who was signing very difficult Raga with such ease, something which students who have learned music for 10 or 15 years find very hard to navigate, one thing lead to the other and I started sharing the music with children with autism in schools, in specials schools in Chennai in Bangalore wherever I could find the time when I was visiting and this lead finally to my forming a trust kind of an umbrella for me to carry on the activities with my students where we share the music with children with autism. I do believe many children with autism have a special flare for music the roles reverse sometimes in a typical classroom it's not that I sing or I teach and they repeat, sometimes I am singing several times and they will not repeat but after about few weeks, you will find the child singing the whole song in a refreshingly different way sometimes adding nuances which I have not sang which I have not heard before so its magical how this happens with children with autism and I just feel I need to do it as much as I can and I do it with the help of many of my students.

DJ: I think the broader question is how have you thought about using your platform, music have reach to make a difference to the wider community apart from this initiative in autism are you involved in other social causes?

BJ: I work closely with Speak Mickey enriching music to school and colleges in remote areas in India and even outside, I remember a military school in regiment in Himachal Pradesh where they hadn't even seen Mridangam or they hadn't even seen anything like this so it's usually satisfying to be part of Speak Mickey or some such organizations at my own small level I and with the help of my students I try to reach some homes where we have seniors staying to reach the music today because they can't commute because they just sit back in there home and then enjoy the music so some small things like that.

DJ: How people think about the journey ahead and how they think about impact and success as they view life forward, how do you think about these terms as you think about, what next in your life?

BJ: I think there's something about music when you keep singing and the more you sing and the more you get into the music words like impact and success almost sound redundant and I just have to hear five minute track of a past master that would make me feel further that these words have really no meaning, how much have I succeeded in singing a melody better is the question I would ask, how much has a melody or Raga impacted me to flow through me is what I love to ask.

DJ: In summary for people to play to potential.

BJ: When I was in my twenties I wanted everything oh maybe earlier, I wanted everything to really go fast now in my early fifties I want everything to be very slow, so there is always a state of confuse or time warp around your head but the best is to grab the moment and two or three hundred percent best whether it is art or any other field because the time gone is not going to come back.

DJ: How do you practice the art of staying mindful and present?

BJ: There is no other choice you have to be present away and completely dedicated to that moment at that time, there could be a mistake in my concert but if I am going to think about the mistake, I am going to spoil the rest of the concert, I have to just push that mistake behind, it could be even a big mistake which I keep doing but I can't think about that and bring down my moral and bring down the moral of the musicians around me, I have to search ahead and do so much better that seems like a small mistake. So that concert challenges you the concert prepare you to be in the moment and everybody is there, I can't tell them OK I will send you the better version of the song which we will record, it's just there and they will remember it for the rest of their lives. You can make mistakes,

you are allowed, flaws can be there but I should try to not and that's important and that happens only when I am there hundred percent.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: I hope you found the conversation as purposeful as I did. There were three big takeaways for me here.

- First is the point Jayashri makes about practicing a song for 3-4 months before she can perform it on stage where it “flows” out of her. I want to relate that back to the habits we build that lead to behaviours flowing out of us. While I see a lot of people placing emphasis on skills and tools, not many give adequate mind space to baking in habits in a systematic way over 3-4 month period so that appropriate behaviours flow out of us as if it is second nature. I see leaders with a growth mindset often systematically work on accumulating a balance sheet of habits around health, productivity and discipline which shows up over the long term

- My second takeaway is the piece around solving for the ecosystem especially for women who pursue a career. One of my earlier guests Vedika Bhandarkar who was a senior leader in an Investment Bank and now is on several Boards and heads Water.org spoke about this. Insert this from Vedika.

second mistake which often girls and women make is trying to do everything with yourself to be the super women who has the perfect career, who has the best households, who throws the most amazing parties I think if you try and do everything on your own you are more likely not to get the one so you need to figure out what your priorities are and just focus on them and build networks so ask for help, I think many women find it hard to do but I would say build your networks be as systematic about building your networks in your personal life as you are in your professional life. So build the networks of friends, absolutely lean on your family or build a good network of help at home but build your networks, otherwise it's going to be much harder, it is going to be hard and you have to be ready for that and probably ten years are really really hard but after that it gets easy.

- This might seem like obvious stuff but the key takeaway is that solving for the ecosystem is possibly as critical as solving for your career at your workplace.

- Third is the insight around how we make a difference to the world around us. Sometimes we have this plain vanilla notion of social work where you are of service to a community by doing grass-roots social work. But in the podcast, it is fascinating to see how people have combined their passion and background with purpose. Vinita Bali of Britannia spoke about her efforts with GAIN (Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition) to improve health among under privileged, Vedika Bhandarkar spoke about how she leverages the power of markets and finance in solving the Water problem, Nandan Nilekani spoke about using Tech to solve large intractable problems, Paralympian Deepa Malik spoke about Wheeling Happiness foundation where she is building awareness about physically handicapped. I guess we all have our respective strengths, resources and passion and there is an opportunity for us to leverage that and be of value to the community than look at Community Service or Social Impact as a separate sector or a different set of activities. The real question often is, how can we use our background, our networks, our relationships and capabilities and put it to best use to be of service to the world around us and what are the platforms that we could plug into for that purpose.

Thank you for listening. If you find the content purposeful, please rate and review on iTunes. Signing off this is Deepak Jayaraman – your host. To know more about the work I do, you could visit transitioninsight.com.

Thank you for listening and look forward to having you at one of the subsequent conversations at the Play to Potential Podcast.

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Culture: Culture eats Strategy for breakfast but how does one build it. Leaders across domains (Academics, Armed Forces, Silicon Valley, Bollywood, Venture Investing) talk about the notion of culture and how they go about building it in their organizations. You can access the playlist [here](#).

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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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Bombay Jayashri - Nuggets

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- 33.01 Bombay Jayashri - Committing to a career in Music
- 33.02 Bombay Jayashri - Characteristics of great coaches
- 33.03 Bombay Jayashri - Deliberate practice
- 33.04 Bombay Jayashri - Team work in a concert
- 33.05 Bombay Jayashri - Making Directional Choices
- 33.06 Bombay Jayashri - Music and Technology
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- 33.09 Bombay Jayashri - In Summary

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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