



Guest

Jennifer believes that leadership is one of the most vital renewable resources in the world. This might be truer than ever as organizations across sectors and around the world are facing an unprecedented amount of volatility and change. Jennifer designs and teaches leadership programs, coaches' senior teams, and supports new ways of thinking about strategy and people with clients facing these dramatic shifts in complexity, volatility, and change in their workplaces and markets. She blends deep theoretical knowledge with a driving quest for practical ways to make leaders' lives better.

Jennifer also supports leaders one-on-one as a leadership coach. Over the last decade, Jennifer has developed The Growth Edge Coaching approach, which she describes in her book, *changing on the job: Developing leaders for a complex world* (Stanford Business Books 2012). She supports clients to find their current growing edge and then make choices about how they want to grow, and she teaches coaches around the world transformational and developmental coaching approaches in her Growth Edge Coaching certification series. Jennifer speaks at leadership and coaching conferences, and she offers occasional courses for coaches at universities all over the world like Harvard University, the University of Sydney, and Oxford Brookes University.

Jennifer has a masters and a doctorate from Harvard University. Formerly an associate professor at George Mason University, Jennifer learned about deep change a more than a decade ago when she turned down the tenure offer and moved to a small seaside village in New Zealand with her husband, two kids, and the family dog. Transformation is not a one-time event, though, so two years ago Jennifer and her family moved to central London to see what joys urban living holds.

Context to the conversation

Welcome to the 57th Conversation at the Play to Potential Podcast. I am your host Deepak Jayaraman and I work with leaders as a Coach, Sounding Board or as a Transition Advisor as they navigate their journeys. In this series, we feature conversations from leaders from different walks of life on three themes - leadership, transitions and careers.

My next guest is Jennifer Garvey Berger, an Executive Coach who has been studying Transitions from the lens of Adult Development for several years and also has been studying the complexity as a theme and how the leadership ask has evolved over the years. She speaks about how humans have evolved and says that we humans actually don't have an operating system that is fit to operate in the complex world we find ourselves in. She goes onto talk about 5 traps that we find ourselves in when we deal with complex situations.

Some of what she says is especially relevant as we find ourselves in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In our conversation, we first speak about her insights on adult development and implications on transitions especially around mid-life and then move to talking about her perspectives on how we safeguard against the traps that we often find ourselves in. We wrap up with her thoughts on the new leadership paradigm that the world needs to grapple with some of the challenges it faces.

Without further ado, let's dive into the conversation with Jennifer Garvey Berger.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): Jennifer, thank you so much for taking the time to come on the Play to Potential podcast, excited to be talking to you.

Jennifer Garvey Berger (JGB): Yeah, it's lovely to be here, thank you so much.

DJ: And before we dive in I would love for you to talk a little bit about what you do and maybe also a flavor around why you do what you do just to set the context and then we can dive in.

JGB: Sure. I am a coach, I think about leadership development and do leadership development for mostly large organizations. I run a firm of people around the world who do this work and I write and speak and research particularly about the intersection of adult development, how do we grow and change over time and complexity, what does the world demand from us and leadership, how do you lead through our changing selves in this changing world?

DJ: Got it. No, it's lovely and I would love to talk about both these themes along the way Jennifer. One is around your thinking around adult development and the second is complexity. Maybe we start with adult development, maybe just to set the language for the purpose of listeners could you talk a little bit about the five stages of adult development and then we can pick it up from there?

JGB: Sure. So there are a bunch of developmental theories and they each have their own kind of language, of course. They are all cousins to each other as you see quite strong family resemblances. So I will use the language that is mine or Bob Kegan's because Bob Kegan at Harvard was my PhD advisor. So, there you have it and it actually begins in childhood not in adulthood so much that... we are talking about human development, really. The earliest stage I think of is the magical mind when little kids live in this world of wonder and exploration. Then as they grow they move into what I think of as the self-sovereign mind, this world where they become the king or the queen of a tiny, tiny little kingdom of one and then they begin to let the world in and begin to take on society and become really fully enmeshed in some other group and begin to take their identity and their cues from that group and that's called the socialized mind. Then as we grow some people but not all adults begin to move into a place where they are tired of just breathing in what society wants from them and instead they begin to write their own story, which is why that form of mind is called the self-authored form of mind. And then, for a much smaller number of people they find that the complexity of the world is actually too much for them to be even writing their own story with their self-authored mind and they grow into a way of metabolizing change and complexity as a development and seeing every interaction as a possibility for co-creation and growth and we call that the self-transforming mind. So, there you get all five of them from childhood through old age really.

DJ: And just a maybe a silly question. I could somehow in my mind picture stages 1 to 4, but stage 5 are there examples of people just to bring it to life what sorts of people are we talking about?

JGB: Yeah. It's such a small percentage of the population and it's so out of our kind of normal thinking or what leadership development programs or leadership development books teach you to be which is much more in the self-authored space. The self-transforming spaces are the place that we would mostly recognize as a kind of wisdom and we would see more examples of it in wisdom traditions, people who are able to set down their own agenda and reach for something more collective. You see it in the great, sort of, most iconic leaders that we could name. Nelson Mandela, who talks about... as long as any of us are in prison both the jailers and the prisoners are all together in chains. So it has the sense of surpassing any individual perspective or point of view and being able to handle and hold a multiplicity simultaneously.

DJ: Got it. And I was also curious about the numbers Jennifer. I understand research says that about 58 percent of the adults are on stage 3, the socialized mind kind of space and about 35 odd percent are in the self-authoring phase and about 7 percent in the rest of the three categories. Maybe we spend a little more time on stage 3 and stage 4 given that sort of the big chunk of the universe, of the human universe if you will. Talk to us a little bit about maybe the transition from stage 3 to stage 4. What triggers it and how do people... talk to us about what happens in the middle as people move from stage 3 to stage 4.

JGB: Yeah. So, the socialized mind has probably been the most helpful mind for human flourishing for almost all of human history. It allows us to live in connected tribes that allow us to subordinate our own interests to the interests of the collective. It allows us to take our cues from like common leadership. And so when we were living in smaller and less diverse groups, that was a fantastic way to see the world and I think probably a few people grew out of it. In a modern world where that's just so hard for you to take all of your cues from a particular discipline, domain or human, more and more people are finding themselves particularly leaders in my work, in my research, I find particularly leaders tend to be in pain because there are so many voices, so many pressures that leaders become overwhelmed, torn apart by trying to figure out how do I fit into all of these different things simultaneously. And then that begins for many of these leaders this move where they start to question the larger surround in which they are and then begins to question whether they can find a better surround or whether they have to kind of make it themselves. And this takes place over sometimes a decade or more as people keep one foot firmly in the socialized space and over time begins to put one other foot in the self-authored space. But even there they can be at war with themselves with one part of them battling the more socialized part of them looks at the self-authored part and says, you are disloyal, you are arrogant, why do you think you can be in charge of these things and writing these things, who are you? And the self-authored part looks at the more socialized part and says, you are small, you are weak, you don't have your own perspective, and you are blown about by the wind. And so we can live in kind of the state of tension or conflict inside us as these different forms of mind live in us and that can be often very confusing for the people around the person who's in this transition. And finally over time, slowly we begin to rely less and less on the earlier form of mind and rely more and more on the next form of mind as we begin to much more frequently see the world through that space and not the earlier one and the battle dies down and then we would say that we are more fully self-authored.

DJ: And is this something that you would call just linking it to a term that is often used in common language midlife? Is this what that makes midlife complex or are these two different issues?

JGB: Midlife often brings about some kind of change. Unlike child development though adult development is very idiosyncratic about the ages at which people move. So the general idea of

midlife that here we are at this halfway or sometimes farther point of our life where we are looking back and asking ourselves a new set of questions and we enter this new phase, for some people that does kick them from a more socialized perspective into a more self-authored one, but for somebody who is already self-authored when they arrive at that place, it might kick them into the next transition in fact, because it's the sense of not enough-ness that characterizes midlife and that sense of not enough-ness is a catalyst for growth across the life span.

DJ: Got it. And the other term I wanted to understand from your perspective Jennifer was a term called liminality. I was talking to Herminia Ibarra another lady in London at London Business School who was on the podcast a few months back and when she describes transitions she talks about this phase of liminality where you are neither here nor there and you need to deal with your identity through that period of flux. And you briefly described that sort of conflict between the socialized mind and the self-authoring mind. How do you see liminality and what is your advice to leaders to grapple with that phase of transition between the two stages?

JGB: Oh my goodness. I am... I love this idea of liminality so much that I thought to name our consulting firm liminality. This is years back when we were first forming. So I think a lot about this incredibly fertile and yet incredibly painful bewildering time when we are neither here nor there. And yes, there is some developmental spaces that feel that way but really when we focus on it, this question of what is solid and what is not solid and how do we make our way from a solid place into the next space whatever that next space is either requires a push into the liminal zone as when we have some significant change in our circumstances that we have not directed like being fired or a massive pandemic or whatever that might be, or it requires a kind of dissatisfaction with where we have been to step off from these familiar shores into the next place but no matter what causes it, I think research is clear that once you are in that liminal space it is a time where our bearings don't work well and we can... I think one of the things about helping leaders in that space is that people very often wish to rush back to the shore they have just left and they don't know how to grieve the part that they have lost as they make space for what new thing might be emerging for them.

DJ: And maybe sticking with this for a couple of minutes Jennifer, in your work as you think about let's say levels of happiness or levels of fulfillment across these stages and just to maybe pick stage 3 and stage 4 again, is it fair to say that people in the stage 4 are likely to see a greater sense of fulfillment and happiness than stage 3 or would that be an incorrect assertion?

JGB: It's funny when I first got into adult development, the research didn't point that way. The research pointed to an unclear correlation between happiness and development in fact. But now research that has been done over the last 15 years or so increasingly points to exactly your point here is that as the world is calling on us to be more able to author our own experience, those people who cannot yet do that are less happy. And so there is really interesting research that points at the connection particularly in this transition that you are talking about, this transition from the more socialized way of making sense of the world into the more self-authored way of making sense of the world. It does seem to increase happiness, success, satisfaction and marriage, parenting, jobs. So this question then arises how we support people who are interested in this growth journey to be able to grow in a faster more intentional way as opposed to the way adult development usually happens, which is kind of happenstance and patchy.

DJ: True and maybe to take a more philosophical approach, if 58 percent of the adults are still in stage 3, if we are solving for global happiness, then we would be doing the world a service by moving people further along the chain, moving them into stage 4. So I was just wondering what has been your experience in helping people move from a socialized mind to a self-authoring mind, do you

think a coach can trigger that process or do you think it has to come from within? What's been your experience in grappling with the transition as a coach?

JGB: I mean, I have done quite a lot of work with leaders in that space as you might imagine. So I think that coaching and change in general tends to be triggered by the client because of something that's going on for them, either something in their personal lives or something in their professional lives that has given them a sense that who they have been is not going to work for what their life needs to look like in the future. So that sense which many people don't think of as a developmental sense because many people don't have any idea that there is adult development, that sense is still I think the most important ingredient, the sort of change willingness is the most important ingredient. Once you get through that gate I think coaching can be extraordinarily supportive because we actually know quite a lot about what this transition looks like. It's the most well-charted of all the adult development stages because it's as you say it is a major focus of adult growth for most people. And so we know a lot about how to help people begin to hear and make sense of their own voice, help them notice the ways they rely, they over-rely on the voices of others, help them find their own authority and there is a way that you can use developmental theory and even the position of a coach as the kind of external authority on behalf of helping a person develop her own internal authority. And so that work is extraordinary and very transformational.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: This is your host Deepak Jayaraman here. If this topic is of interest, you might want to tune into an earlier conversation I had with Herminia Ibarra, one of the leading thinkers in transitions. While Jennifer and Herminia speak about this transition at an individual level, what happens as a matter of fact is that this plays out in a messy way with Couples as both individuals grapple with this transition, often concurrently. One of my earlier guests, Jennifer Petriglieri (JP) (Professor at INSEAD and Author of *Couples that Work* – a book about how dual career couples can navigate transitions) speaks about this.

JP: *"I am very often actually when we talk about relationships we talk about them through the idea of a zero sum game so you know there is a pie and the more I get the less you get so you know if I push ahead in my career that mean you can't push ahead in yours and this is where we get. When we have a zero some view of our relationship this is where we get to the language of trade off and sacrifice you know I gave this for you now it's your turn to give something up for me. But what I found is that it doesn't necessarily have to be that way in couples. One person's growth and development can bleed over and spark the persons growth and development such that becomes the essential the couple the more you succeed and grow the more that enable me to succeed and grow which is a very different mindset from thinking about it as that the more you succeed and grow the more that diminishes me the less opportunity I have to do this and what I found that is really interesting is this was a mindset it wasn't based on any objective facts that we can think our way into this growth mindset this positive sum mindset as a post you know the zero sum mindset where as if you gain and I lose."*

DJ: She speaks about Couples going through 3 big transitions as they go through their journey. If this is a topic of interest, do look up my conversation with Jennifer Petriglieri.

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Now let's get back to the conversation with Jennifer Garvey Berger.

DJ: I would love to move to talking about your thinking in dealing with complexity Jennifer. You have written a book "Unlocking Leadership Mind traps: How to Thrive in Complexity" a few months back. Maybe before we dive into talking about the book I would love to get a sense of why you wrote the book last year, right.

JGB: Yeah, so each of my books comes from trying to figure out how do I communicate and share ideas that I think are quite life-changing with more and more people in the world. So I started by writing about adult development because this set of ideas has so profoundly changed my life and has so profoundly changed the lives of the people around me and yet it's hard to get access to those ideas. Then with my friend and colleague Keith Johnston we wrote a book called "Simple Habits for Complex Times", which was meant to be a much more accessible practical book about complexity that had a developmental edge to it, because as we are growing better able to handle complexity, we are also growing our adult development space and we got... you know, many people said wonderful things about that book and also some people said, I really just don't have time for that, can you give me something faster, can you give me something really targeted at me right now and what I could be doing differently. And that is where our leadership mind traps comes up. I started to look at the ways that people were taking their lessons that we were teaching in simple habits and some of them people were able to like totally get and move forward with and then others of them people seemed to have a much harder time. And in fact with the leaders I worked with around the world, these are all really smart, switched on capable leaders who are desperate to handle complexity well and they seem to be making all the same mistakes. And so then I started to get curious about like, what is that and did the research for unlocking leadership mind traps, which is basically a tiny little how-to guide to understand the way our own minds get in our way when we are dealing with complexity.

DJ: And in the book you talk about... you say that humans are brilliantly designed for older, less connected and a more predictable version of the world and you go on to say that the operating systems that we have through years of evolution is not really equipped to deal with the future that's unfolding. And even if you look at the current situation with Covid-19, that's quite timely? So talk to us about what you have in mind when you say that we don't possibly have the right operating system to grapple with these situations.

JGB: Well, it makes so much sense, right? We have spent most of human history in spaces where the biggest threats first of all tended to be physical dangers and second of all tended to be from unknown or uncertain possibilities. And like if we saw a new plant, heard a new noise, met somebody from a new tribe, like for most of human history it was these sorts of things. And so the decisions we needed to make are like very straightforward decisions. Do I run? Do I fight? Do I hide and our biology is set up to simplify to cut out nuance so that we can get to this question run, fight, hide as quickly as possible and then be able to engage in that. But this is not a useful approach, if the

thing that you are dealing with is a very tricky issue in the boardroom and your brain is still sort of preparing your body to run, fight or hide, like these are not useful responses in the modern world. And you see it's particularly unhelpful for something that is hard for our minds to even get a handle on like Covid-19 where there are so many moving parts and it's so nonlinear and it's so interacting, and none of these things are normal habits for the mind. And so we have to actually evolve ourselves very fast to grow new capacities, to have new habits and also to be a little bit suspect of what we would think of as obvious or the clear solution, because in complexity that's very likely to be your mind playing a trick on you.

DJ: And I would love to explore some of the themes in the book Jennifer but before we dive in I was curious about one of the things you mentioned. You say that there's a lot of discussion around the complexity we face in the work front, but you actually move on to say that the complexity on the non-work front has increased significantly as well. Say more here.

JGB: Oh my goodness. Well, a month or two ago I might have had a really different response to this question. I think that in general our work our home lives are becoming much more complex with working parents, blended families, new sets of pressures on both parents and young people, the pressures of social media and the way they play into our family systems, the reducing of the extended family in villages that used to take care of and nurture young, like all of these things have led to increasing pressure and complexity. Now that so many of us around the world are locked into our homes, I think we are seeing that the line between home and work has literally dissolved right now and we are literally in an entirely new phase where we are all trying to work, to live, to communicate, to socialize, to get our own space, all in a home that we never imagined would have to hold so many different activities. So I think the pressures on our personal lives and right now the blurring or erasing of the difference between our work life and our personal life is just extraordinary.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

This is your host Deepak Jayaraman here. Over the last few weeks, in my conversations with several leaders across companies, if there is one theme that they are losing sleep over, it is around how they integrate across various domains of life. I like to point them towards the work of Prof Stew Friedman of Wharton. He speaks about 4 domains – Self, Work, Home and Community. I notice that there are a couple of mistakes that people often make in the way they frame the situation.

- 1) First is that they treat it as a 2-piece jigsaw and solve for work and home and ignore self and community. I notice that if you ignore self, then over time you lose your vitality and you could burn out. If you ignore the community piece (which is about caring for people beyond your immediate family and colleagues), you might start feeling hollow and feel a sense of vacuum in your life
- 2) The second is that people often look at these domains as trade-offs and look for ways to balance across these. I feel a better metaphor is that of a flywheel. I think we need to find a way of moving across these domains in a way that we get energy from one and pour it into the next and so on

The one point I would make is that in our normal life, we end up treating these as big blocks (we go to work from say 9 to 7 pm, treat the evenings as home time and weekends as possibly time with self and possibly for some community work. I like to think about the game Tetris where we have to align blocks and twist them around to fit perfectly. I feel the current COVID-19 situation has given us the opportunity to play Tetris with smaller pieces and it is an opportunity to weave these various

domains in the way it makes sense for us rather than the artificial constraints we had earlier that said that this is stipulated work time and this is stipulated home time.

Thank you for listening. For more content across 50+ speakers, 500+ nuggets painstakingly curated across 65 odd themes, please visit playtopotential.com. Now let's get back to our chat with Jennifer Garvey Berger.

DJ: And you talk about five traps in the book that leaders find themselves in. While I wanted to explore these in little bit of detail, it will be great if you could maybe give the listeners a sense of what the headlines are here around the five traps and the gist of the idea and I wanted to sort of go deeper in some of these ideas later in the conversation.

JGB: Yeah, super. So these are the five traps I find most sneaky and dangerous when we are faced with complexity. The first one I think about is what I call the rightness trap, right? It's actually the way our minds trick us into believing we are right, even when we have not enough evidence or thought devoted in this direction. As people have been studying this phenomenon, which is widely studied that's like why do humans think they are right so much when they are dealing with things that they couldn't possibly be right about even, and why is it that we have so much confidence in our own capacity to be right about a crazy variety of things, researchers started to find that rightness is this sort of sense of certainty or feeling of certainty is actually an emotion, it's not in fact a cognitive process, it's not the result of a thinking. And so we get trapped by this sense that we are right and that disguises data from us. The second one is simple stories. We humans have grown to live in and love the narrative, it connects us, it makes our communities, our societies, our organizational cultures more possible, but it also tricks us into thinking that pretty much everything can have a beginning, a middle and an end, that pretty much everything can be connected in a straightforward linear story way and that there are heroes and villains and dragons out on our landscape then we are always trying to fit those archetypes which are very unhelpful in a complex world. So we get really trapped by our connection to narrative and to a narrative character. So that's the simple story trap. Then there's this way that humans have been... in many ways we have evolved to live together well and to know who our people are and who our people are not, and one of the ways we seem to have done that is by focusing on agreement, what is it that you and I both agree on and it turns out that we both get a hit of dopamine whenever we find something about which we agree actually feels delicious to agree with somebody else, we have a sense of recognition and happiness there that comes from that. And similarly it causes the same... in a brain scan you cannot tell the difference between physical pain and social pain and so to our brains, to our neurology it really is the same whether we have been injured or whether we have had our feelings hurt. So this means that we have created all sorts of ways for us to escape conflict and disagreement with those to whom we are close and at the same time to amplify conflict and disagreement with those with whom we disagree and this creates all kinds of unhelpful dynamics and polarization that we could all point to and the great political spheres of our world as well as the organizational ones. So that's the third idea that we are trapped by our need for our desire for agreement. The fourth one is about control. We love feeling like we are in control. Actually feeling like we are in control of things has all kinds of positive health outcomes and at the same time in complexity you cannot control any outcome that matters. Nobody can control complexity, it's one of the defining features of complexity is it emerges from the interaction of a variety of interconnected forces or people. And so often we are unsettled by this and we try harder and harder to control a thing that's uncontrollable and as we do that we tend to create very perverse outcomes and often times oddly opposite the outcomes that we were hoping to go for in the first place, that's the fourth one. And then the last one which is quite connected to this adult development idea earlier is that who we are today often requires us to kind of protect or defend that person, that way of being and we have some significant energy bound up in making us

feel okay and look okay with the person we are today and that gets in the way of growing into the person we will be, it's sort of that question we were on earlier about do you leave the shore behind. You have to believe that the shore behind is worth leaving, that there's something else out there for you to leave the shore that you are on and so there is a way we get trapped by our own egos, by the person we are being gets in the way of the person we could be becoming, so those...

DJ: Interesting. No, thank you. And if we maybe dive into the first one, you talk about the fact that deep desire for causal thinking and automatic stories are too simple for the complex world and do you make the statement in the context of the world in the last 10-20 years, or is that something that you would say as a topic that's relevant for the last 100-200 years? So is it a recent phenomenon or is it a wider issue that humans have had an issue with? And also maybe reflecting on what you suggest you talk about the need to carry three different types of stories for each story you hear. Talk to us about how you see this phenomenon and also a little bit around how we can deal with this.

JGB: Yes this question about causal thinking. So humans love to figure out causality, right? It's one of the ways our mind works and I think it's why we have been such really good problem solvers. We do that by pulling things apart, taking them apart and trying to examine them and humans have been doing this for as long as we know... as long as we can track them. My son is using this space, my son is in university, he is using this space to be re-reading a lot of ancient philosophy and you just see people trying to make sense of the causality, the way to create particular outcomes happenings. And so I think this is a thing humans have been trying to do for a long time and it's had extraordinary benefits. And the more interconnected the world is, the more issues of simple cause and effect are very unhelpful. So the question about whether this is new or not humans have always loved this thing, but I think... and it's always had like its downside in an unpredictable space but a lot of the world has been what's been quite unpredictable hasn't been so interconnected as it is right now. And so I think the downside of our causal thinking is growing as things get more complex. We see that in the Covid situation just as we look at different governments trying to figure out what will cause the slowing of the virus without causing the ruining of the economy, right? This is the thing that so many people or governments are trying to figure out. And as long as you are in a kind of linear way of thinking about the world, you are not going to be able to actually respond to the interconnecting forces and you are not going to be able to take action quickly enough really so... or action that's suitable for complexity quickly enough. So you get this strange blend of people talking about Covid-19 as though we really understood the cause and effect of things when really in this complex world, we couldn't possibly understand what makes Italy the way Italy is and what makes Singapore the way Singapore is, like we can just look at the little tiniest features that we think we can control but then you and I thinking about like what's the impact of pollution in large urban places and is the impact of pollution does that actually help the immune system or does it degrade the immune system, do that help the lungs recover, do... like we don't know, we don't know and we may never know.

DJ: True and maybe responding to the point about the three different stories for each story. Could you talk for a minute there?

JGB: Well, so we become, we kind of fall in love with our own conclusions and we fall in love with our own stories without even noticing their stories. You could hear it in our language like your people said, well, it's obvious that or it's totally clear that, I hear it in my language all the time and almost never is it actually obvious the thing that I am talking about and so forcing ourselves to listen to when we have a simple story. Like it's obvious what the government should do here, completely not obvious what any government should do right now, completely not obvious. And so when we hear ourselves interacting with a complex set of ideas as though it were simple, then we know that we are in this trap. And so I think the solution there is to be able to construct a series of alternate

stories not to confuse us but in a kind of almost a scenario planning way, not to try and get the right one but to try to help us understand that there are these multiple possibilities, none of them are likely to be a 100 percent right and to help us create a kind of a flexibility of our thinking that will hold us in good stead.

DJ: Got it. And moving to the second trap you said our sense of being right about something is not really a cognitive process but an emotion. It has nothing to do with whether you are right or not. I found that an interesting nuance. What's the crux of the insight here and how do we overcome this issue?

JGB: I know, I think it's actually mind-bending, right? I think when we think about it, we have the sense of ourselves and I was teaching this to a client once and he said no, no, no Jennifer, this might be true for other people but I actually think things through before I come to conclusions about them. And so for me, this one is not a problem. And then... and I said, you know, yeah, that's the way it feels for all of us actually like we all think that and he came back to me about a week later and he said, oh my goodness! You have... I have been noticing I make up my mind first and then I backfill data, I do this all the time and that is of course the way it works. In a brain scan we see that the arrival of the emotion of certainty comes before, not hours before but milliseconds before the cognitive part of our decision-making actually comes online. And so this shows that we feel certain and then we figure out why as opposed to we feel like we don't know and then we figure out what we believe. Now, of course sometimes we absolutely do it the other way, but by and large we don't.

DJ: Is this related to the point around having a gut instinct or are these two different things?

JGB: No, they are two similar things and it's one of the questions that people often ask me is like what do we do with our instincts? And I think the thing is we want to understand our instincts particularly if they come from a non-cognitive part of us, our bellies, our bodies, we want to understand them pay attention to them because there's really important data there. We just don't want to have blind faith in them just as we don't want to have blind faith in our ability to think our way through these challenges.

DJ: So, how do we... so maybe just sticking with this Jennifer, so how do we ensure we are not carried away by the emotion, but we ensure that we are rational? What do you advise leaders to ensure they are not caught in this trap?

JGB: I have us look for what certainty feels like and begin to notice that as separate from a cognitive process like what does it feel like when you feel certain. You can often notice some things your body does like I move forward in my seat, I start thinking ahead to how I am going to defeat the disagreement or the perspectives of others, like I have a sense of righteousness in me. Now when I notice those things I am able to say oh wait, wait, wait, this is an emotion, this is closing me down to new possibilities, new data, and I could totally be wrong here. So asking myself what is it that I am really believing right now, not what's true but what I believe is true and then how could I be wrong about this allows me to listen in a new way not to defeat the other person, not to listen to win or listen to fix their ideas, but to listen to learn from them to hold my mind open as a practice, as an intention or practice as opposed to just going with this emotion that bowls over my capacity to learn.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: This is your host Deepak Jayaraman here. I love an anecdote in the book where Jennifer asks us to imagine the difference between wondering if the capital of New York State is New York City and knowing that it is. She goes on to say that *if you wonder, you might ask, do some research and find out it is Albany!*

Hope you are finding the podcast of value. If you are, do take a moment to rate and review on Apple Podcasts or any other platform where you consume the content. Do also consider taking a moment and contributing to Antarang Foundation, a not for profit that I work with closely. Your contribution will mean a lot more in these times where we are looking at a gaping challenge in solving for employment.

You can find more details in the Pay it forward section at www.playtopotential.com. Let's now get back to the conversation with Jennifer Garvey Berger.

DJ: And moving to the other trap you talk about which is about the desire to agree, you mention that the urge to compromise in complexity takes us from two viable options to one potentially mediocre solution and to borrow from Clay Christensen, who passed away recently gives you a one size fits nobody kind of an answer, right? So talk to us about the insight here and more specifically I found the term disagrees to expand quite interesting in the context of making sense of complexity and how you think about compromises during complexity. Talk to us about how you see this phenomenon.

JGB: Yeah, we saw so many times as we were working with leadership teams that even when they knew that they were dealing with quite a complex situation and they were trying to build a kind of experiment to figure more out about the situation, they would argue with each other about which was the best experiment. And one of the core features about complexity is you can't know which thing will work until afterwards. The relationship between cause and effect is only available later and so because of this people were either trying to defeat one possibility or the other or they were trying to, you know, I'll give a little, you give a little, I'll give a little, you give a little and so instead of having two hypotheses that we were going to test or two ways to test these hypotheses we sort of get this mediocre middle one when really in complexity if I have an idea that we ought to do it this way and you have an idea that we ought to do this very different way and we are both smart people then quite probably the thing that we want to do is explore both of those paths. There's no knowing until afterwards what it's going to be. So instead of having executive teams arguing over which one was best, we worked on using this thing as you say disagreeing to expand our solution set, how do we take the different views and expand our set of possibilities and expand the number of possible experiments we run.

DJ: Very interesting. Rather than trying to have a winning argument and going down one path, how can we construct prototypes or experiments and then learn from it and then move forward with conviction?

JGB: Exactly.

DJ: Would that be a fair way of understanding that?

JGB: Exactly.

DJ: Got it. Moving to another theme about control, right? A lot of us have grown up in a paradigm where control is often seen as a virtue and you say that desire to control actually distracts us and

often leads us focusing on small proxies that seem controllable rather while missing the bigger picture. What is the insight inside here, what is the nuance here?

JGB: Ah, humans just have this... we have this wrongheaded sense of control and complexity. We often hold our leaders responsible for things that they could never conceivably be responsible for, we don't understand lag times, we don't understand interconnectedness, we don't understand exponential change, we don't understand emergence, like there are all these features of complex systems that the human brain doesn't understand and that makes us anxious. And one of the human responses to anxiety is to try to control things because in the past when things were out of control and you could control them then suddenly things got better. But now as you say we come up with these proxies so classic example is people are dealing with customer dissatisfaction with call centers and one of the things customers complain about is wait time. And so leaders say oh, that's a thing that we could manage and solve for; so let's focus on wait time, we can really make a difference on wait time. And so they tell everybody you are going to be really measured by wait time because that's going to make customer satisfaction go up because customers hate waiting, they always complain about that. So as people focus on wait time, they have this perverse effect, wait time goes down, but it tends to go down because people are saying to their customer oh, I can't deal with this right now because the phone is ringing and I need to pick up the phone, you'll have to call back later, which means customer satisfaction goes down even as wait time goes down because we picked this proxy measure and humans consistently solve for these proxy measures and then lose the big picture that actually mattered to them in the first place. You see this on large scale with these scandals about people opening up bank accounts in customers' names because the proxy measure there for success was how many bank accounts do you get to open or how many credit cards you get to open or whatever. And so humans are oriented to try and control things that can't be controlled.

DJ: Got it. And maybe reflecting on the current situation we are going through Jennifer, Covid-19. As you think about how people are processing and making sense of the evolving situation, would you say there are simple proxies people are latching on to instead of trying to grasp the bigger picture, bigger and more nuanced picture?

JGB: It's funny right now; we are in a place that's even more complex than complexity, right? Dave Snowden would call this place that we are in chaos, because we actually are having a hard time even seeing patterns at this moment. We are kind of scrambling to make sense of patterns, but the thing is changing so quickly it is hard to see patterns. And so in those cases, the first thing a leader needs to do is to try and figure out how to keep people as safe as possible. It is safety that's most important and complex in chaos. And so sometimes that looks like making everything stop, so that we can get a handle on things and that is in fact a pretty controlling move and it's what you are seeing happening all around the world, like you and I are both in places where our governments have said stop, just stop and let's see if we can get a handle on this thing. That's actually buying time which is a clever thing to do in a chaotic situation, but it obviously is not a go-to that you would want to use very often because it's breaking the economy. So sometimes there are these situations where a heavily controlling blunt instrument is important. But in general complex situations you would want to stay away from instruments like that and instead nudge us into a better place over time. But the threat to life and limb is so significant right now that a kind of nudging approach which is very useful in complexity is deadly right now. So leaders have to use a different approach which does come across as more controlling. In fact, each of these mind traps of course has its own light as well as its own shadow and in moments of real danger it is super useful to be able to take direct action because you feel you are right, to be able to tell a quick and simple story about what to do next, to be able to get everybody to like rely on their tribe and agree to get to have somebody have like these very significant controls. Each of these mind traps in the moment of great life threatening chaos can be useful.

DJ: Got it, and in way tying back to evolution, I guess, maybe that's why they've gotten so hard coded because they did serve a purpose for all these years.

JGB: That's exactly right. They have saved our lives so many times.

DJ: Got it, and maybe talking about nudging Jennifer as a coach how do you get leaders who have grown up in a control heavy environment to transition to being effective in moving towards a nudging kind of a approach, it sort of requires deep unwiring and rewiring. What's been your approach as a coach to nudge the leaders you work with to moving a little towards a little more of a nudging kind of leadership if that makes sense?

JGB: Yeah, it's really about helping people first connect to how much of their controlling behavior is not about making good things happen in the world but really is about protecting themselves from their own anxiety and fear. So much of our control drive comes from our anxiety. And as leaders realize that very often they want to change that because people don't tend to find that their best self comes out as they are driven by or reacting to their own fear. And so as leaders come to understand that connection, they are more willing to start experimenting slowly gently with taking their hand off the wheel and see what happens and we design... with my clients I design very safe experiments that they will do for a week and then report back on and very often what they find is oh, you know, I didn't... I was going to send this set of instructions out, these PowerPoint decks to show people what to do, I was going to do that, I experimented this week in not doing that and it turns out the solutions my people came to were much better than the solutions that I myself was going to propose. So maybe I am going to just like not do that anymore or only do that 10 percent of the time. So the benefits of it become more and more available to folks and that's very convincing.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: This is your host Deepak Jayaraman here. This insight reminds me of my conversation with Prof Kartik Hosanagar Ep 2 (KH) of Wharton who has written a book on AI – A human's guide to Machine Intelligence. He was on the podcast a few months back and he spoke about unanticipated consequences of human decisions and he narrates a story that illustrates this fallacy of going after false metrics!

KH: "the Cobra effect is an interesting effect where we don't know the exact details of this but legend has it that way back during British rule in India, specifically in Delhi one of the governors there wanted to get rid of what he perceived as a cobramanous, there were just too many cobras and therefore the government announced the bounty for anyone who catches or brings the cobra head and so the idea was this would result in hunting or cobras and snakes and would ultimately help bring down the population. Now, initially it seemed to bringing lots of people who would come in and produce cobras and collect the bounty but again the legend has it that what was happening was that once people realised that there is a bounty if you bring in Cobras they started breeding cobras and they started breeding these and bringing it in and collecting the money and so it wasn't really addressing the problem and in fact when the government realised it and said the bounty is no longer available people just released whatever they were breeding into the wild, making the problem worst so it was one of those situations when there were perverse outcome awaiting this person and essentially what I call unanticipated consequences, you thought what this would do is reduce the cobra population but the unanticipated consequence was that it actually might have increased the cobra population and I bring that up because this notion of unanticipated consequences has been around and sociology for a while and certainly with a lot of human decisions we know these things happen where you intent to fix something and you make it worst by your intervention"

DJ: Kartik goes on to say that AI systems are a bit like that and we need to watch out on how much we tightly control. We might be hurting the system in other ways. Back to Jennifer, one of the things she says in coping with this is for us to start thinking more and more about direction and less and less about specific outcomes. She says that solving for direction opens us up to different possibilities. So, instead of saying “I want my daughter to take over my business, we say, I want my daughter to be independent and entrepreneurial”. Instead of saying “I want to retire by that beach side house in this city, we say I want to live by the nature when I retire”. You get the broad idea. Now let’s get back to the conversation with Jennifer.

DJ: In the book you also talk about how we think about change. You say that every age we feel like we are done with our evolution and we are wired to believe that our big changes are behind us. I found that observation quite interesting just in terms of how we process the curve of change with time when we look at the past and when we think about the future. Why does this happen and how does that impact the way we function?

JGB: I think it’s a fascinating result, right? It’s a fascinating result that says that most of us spend most of our lives believing that our major changes are behind us. And I wonder whether there is kind of a psychological health. I don’t know the answer to this question so I am just musing here. I have never seen anything that actually explains the why of it but I have wondered whether there is a... it takes so long for us to develop into the time of our life this sort of self-transforming time of our life when we welcome change and move towards it as opposed to initially resisting at our finding it destabilizing. And so I wonder whether our brains have evolved to trick us into believing it is all going to be okay from here so you can relax as opposed to having us on constant alert our whole lives. So there is a kind of a you have arrived, take a breath, this kind of what are our body and our brains are telling us when really there is no such thing as arrival, the world is going to keep getting more complex, our lives are going to keep changing, the demands of our lives are going to keep changing and therefore we are going to need to grow better and better able to meet those demands. And in fact, I think that it is not even a helpful trick these days, because I think so many people are so overwhelmed that the idea of adult development itself has become like a very hopeful helpful useful notion that gives people the very optimistic sense that it can be different and it can be better than it is right now and that is a lifeline.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: This is your host Deepak Jayaraman here. This is where I like the work of Herminia Ibarra at London Business School where her ways that we all need to act our way into a new way of thinking than think our way into a new way of acting. Let me pause for a couple of seconds here. It is a pretty profound way in which we think about transitions.

Something similar came up in my conversation with James Clear (JC), the author of Atomic Habits. He speaks about how small things we do can slowly start changing the way we think about our own identity.

JC: *“every action you take is like a vote for the type of person you want to become. So in a sense your habits are how you embody a particular identity like every time that you make your bed you embody the identity of someone who is clean and organized, every time that you make a healthy meal and cook that at home rather than eating out you embody the identity of someone who is focused on eating healthy. Every time that you write one sentence you embody the identity of a writer and know those little actions, those tiny habits do not radically transform your body overnight, they don’t lead*

to a written book in a single day but they do cast a vote for being that kind of person. So early on that's really powerful because those habits provide evidence of this new identity that give you a reason to root that belief in something. So it can be a very powerful thing to adopt to a new identity, could be very powerful to look at yourself in this new light and habits and think of the best path to doing that but use down the line when it's time for another change or another upgrade you also have to be willing to repeat the cycle again and continue to grow and evolve."

DJ: He makes a similar point that Herminia makes. Rather than thinking about the next mountain to climb, let's start climbing a few hills and may be one of those could be the pathway to the next mountain as our identity evolves as well along the way.

If this is of interest, do look up my conversation with James Clear – Author of Atomic Habits. Now, back to my chat with Jennifer.

DJ: And you spoke about this a couple of times in this conversation and you refer to this in the book as well. You talk about how we connect to our body, you mention that we should treat this as a source of knowledge and support rather than see it as a vehicle that carries us around. Again, I found that super nuanced. Give us the insight here, what can we learn by observing our body and how does that help us become better leaders?

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

DJ: Got it. I am smiling to myself here as we speak. My wife uses the term hangry.

JGB: Like this is a very clever way of understanding a signal that your body is giving you so that you don't blame other people for it.

DJ: Got it, but one is clearly the stomach and the hunger but are there other common bodily signals that you see leaders missing? Are there one or two things that stand out for you apart from hunger which you spoke about?

JGB: Oh, absolutely, anxiety. Anxiety is huge. When we feel anxious, we make more protective decisions, we make more short-term decisions and many organizations have leaders rushing so quickly from meeting to meeting from crisis to crisis that leaders spend a lot of their time anxious and not noticing that they are anxious. It's just like their regular way of walking through the world, they don't even notice that they are stressed or anxious, which is why mindfulness has come roaring into organizations because actually it gives you a moment to notice what is going on inside you which then helps you decide oh, how do I want to relate to this thing that is going on inside me? If I had a bad meeting an hour ago, and it made me anxious and then I come into this meeting now and I haven't dealt with that anxiety, I am going to be ruled by this short-term fear-based narrow vision that anxiety produces in the brain and in the body with this cortisol that rushes through my bloodstream and I am going to act out of that place probably without even noticing that I was anxious because of the thing that happened just now.

DJ: And maybe just to understand this further Jennifer, even if we take anxiety one would think it is a feeling or a signal to be processed from the mind. How do you think of this as a signal from the body? How does one listen to that signal?

JGB: You can notice what it does to your body. You can notice like what does anxiety show up as or are your palms sweating, is your heart beating? What's your breathing doing? Do you clench your thighs or your belly under these circumstances? Like we can tune into what are the signals I am getting because the mind rationalizes things. Like the core of this book is that we are constantly rationalizing the decisions we are making, the data we are processing, and so we can't just believe that we have got access to it. We need another set of clues and figuring out what is going on in our body is very useful. The best way to process anxiety by the way is to exercise. So we actually want to burn it off. These hormones are in our bloodstream and it is one of the problems with this lockdown right now is how are people able to sweat out the anxiety that they are feeling versus how much are they just having this buildup in them because anxiety is also particularly bad for long-term health and it is bad for our immune systems, it is bad for our mental and physical health. So being more connected to what is going on in your body is extraordinarily helpful in complexity.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: This is your host Deepak Jayaraman here. The big takeaway for me here is the point Jennifer makes about several leaders being anxious and running from meeting to meeting without realizing that they are anxious. I realize in the coaching work I do, that the biggest unlock is in actually in enhancing the self-awareness of the leaders and opening up some of these blind spots. A very similar point came up in my conversation with Matthew Walker (MW), a sleep researcher at University of California, Berkeley and the author of *Why we Sleep*. We spoke about how sleep deprived people are like drunk people. They don't quite know how drunk they are!

MW: *"So in studies where we take individuals and these are studies done by lots of other sleep researchers where we take individuals and we will start to give them different doses of insufficient sleep let's say putting them on a week of seven hours of sleep or six hours of sleep, five hours of*

sleep, four hours of sleep and over that week or that two-week period gradually we see cognitive impairment, typically we see these what we call cognitive lapses all these micro sleeps. And what's interesting is that we can objectively assess how impaired you are when you are dealing with insufficient sleep. What we can also then ask you as a participant how are you feeling right now and what do you think your performance was like on that last test and we can keep asking that question. So, we have an objective measure of your performance and then we have your subjective assessment. And unfortunately, what we find is that your subjective perception of how well you are doing with insufficient sleep is quite a measurable predictor of objectively how you actually are doing with insufficient sleep. Translated it actually just means that you don't know you are sleep-deprived when you are sleep deprived and the analogy would be a drunk driver at a bar. Maybe they've had five or six drinks and they stand up and they pick up their car keys and they say look I'm fine to drive home. And your response is no, I know that you think subjectively that you are fine to drive home but trust me objectively you are not, you are impaired and unfortunately that's the same way with a lack of sleep."

DJ: I realize that I am a lunatic when I am sleep deprived. Now, when I go back to my days in IIM Ahmedabad, the nickname I was given was because of my neurotic response to lack of sleep during one of the early days where we had to pull an all-nighter. It took me a few years to really recognize it and work around it. The related point I would make is that as a result, it is also important to focus on how we manage our energy rather than how we manage our time. When are we doing our most productive work? How we plan our day needs to be in sync with when we are at our best and how our body responds is a big part of the equation. I would say now is a great opportunity to architect our days in line with what gives us energy given we have the ability to manage our sculpt our schedules given our unique contexts.

DJ: And as you wrap up the book you talk about the fact that we are living in a time where our ability to influence the world as an individual is much higher than what we could have done a few decades back. I was curious why do you say that and how does that impact how leaders think about the choices?

JGB: It's this funny paradox, so much of complexity is paradoxical that are our ability to influence things is outsized and our ability to control things has shrunk. So we don't know exactly what our influence is going to be, what thing we say is going to take off, what habit we have is going to be transferred to others, what product we launch is going to make a difference in the world. So we see now in a very literal sense that there are some people who unbeknownst to them were super spreaders of this virus. They didn't know that they were doing that, they didn't know that they were having this outside effect on the world. Actually we are all... we all have the potential to be kind of super spreaders of something of connection, of trust, of innovation, of any of the good or bad things, mistrust, anxiety, fear. We can each spread these things through ourselves and leaders have a much greater possibility of spreading because as mammals we look to our leaders for signals about how we should behave, how we should feel even. And so each of us has a better shot right now because we are so interconnected and because there are so many different ways for ideas, our emotions, our products to get into the world with a better chance than ever of having an outsized influence, and at the same time there is much less we can directly control. And so I think it is important for leaders to think about that question of influence versus control at a much bigger level than we tend to think about it.

DJ: And just as we wrap up the conversation Jennifer last but not the least given the times we are in Covid-19, extraordinary times, which is shaking up a lot of assumptions around the world around

how we work around relationships and how we spend time and everything else. Any reflections from your end for leaders to navigate through these surreal times?

JGB: I think leaders are called on to actually be developing a new form of leadership right now. I think it is way bigger than we are working from our homes or we need to have our meetings virtually. I think actually there is this funny way that leadership needs to be more fully embodied even in this virtual world than it has ever been before. We need to be dealing with whole human beings, with their emotions, with their bodies, with their experiences, with their brains, like the whole human is coming into the picture and leaders are going to have to very quickly get good at crossing these boundaries and helpful ways at protecting the physical health of people, the emotional health of people, the economic health of people, you know, in ways that we just never had to consider before. And I think that there is a way it is actually extraordinary for a new set of possibilities to emerge. We have needed a new leadership paradigm for quite some time, we can see this in our extraordinary struggles with environmental degradation and the difficulty we are having as a global community of working together. And so this new form of leadership has been necessary and I think maybe this moment is the moment that we get the actual like right in the face practice that we need to develop what is needed next.

DJ: And while this will take it's time to play out, are there three or four legs to the new paradigm of leadership that you have in mind? Some pillars around which you think the new paradigm should stand on?

JGB: I think that leaders in the future will need to respond not to the short term but to the long term; we are seeing that right now, not to the disconnected but to the interdependent. I think leaders will need to respond with their whole selves, their mind, their bodies, their emotions and to the whole selves of other people, their minds, their bodies and their emotions and in a much clearer way, away from competition which has often fueled humans and organizations and into a deep sense of interconnectivity because here we are all together and trying to find a way for all of us to thrive is going to be every leaders' job into the future.

DJ: And as you look around Jennifer any role models you see while it is still early? Any role models of leadership that you see emerging as you see different people deal with this crisis that's in front of us?

JGB: I mean, I have a bias here, but I am just finishing a blog today that highlights Jacinda Ardern, the Prime Minister of New Zealand who has had to face more crisis in her time as prime minister than other New Zealand prime ministers had to in many, many years, and I find her blend of clarity, humanity and experimental approach, I find that refreshing and incredibly helpful and hopeful for what great leadership looks like in the future.

DJ: Got it. Jennifer, pleasure talking to you. Thank you so much for your time and your insights.

JGB: You are very welcome. Thanks for the conversation.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

Thank you for listening and for your time and attention. Hope you found the conversation purposeful. If you are seeking value from the podcast, I would urge you to pause and pay it forward to Antarang Foundation, a not for profit based in Mumbai that works with children from challenging backgrounds and helps them acquire key life skills and enables them to find jobs. These are

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Next up at the podcast, we have BJ Fogg, a Professor at Stanford University and is the Founder, Director of the Behaviour Design Lab at Stanford. He has been studying habits for at-least two decades and is the author of the recently published book – Tiny Habits. Bye now.

End of transcription

Nugget from Jennifer Petriglieri that is referenced: [The second transition - What do we want to become?](#).

Nugget from Kartik Hosanagar Ep 2 that is referenced: [Unanticipated consequences and "Cobra effect"](#).

Nugget from James Clear that is referenced: [Keeping the identity small](#).

Nugget from Matthew Walker that is referenced: [Leading former peers](#).

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Listening: When you talk, you are only repeating what you already know. But if you listen, you may learn something new”. This is a quote by Dalai Lama. Several leaders talk about their experiences with listening and how they have grown with it. More specifically, leaders also reflect on the criticality of listening when transitioning into a new context. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Innovation: Leaders discuss how they have adopted “out of the box” approaches in various contexts. They also discuss how they have balanced commerce with creativity. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Influencing: Leaders reflect on what it takes to get the ideas in your head to a wider set of people and drive buy-in. It’s often a function of being tactful about listening to what the various stakeholders want; getting a sense of when the timing is right and driving the change you want by influencing the various constituents. 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](#).

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Jennifer Garvey Berger - Nuggets

- 57.00 Jennifer Garvey Berger - The Full Conversation
- 57.01 Jennifer Garvey Berger - Stages of human development
- 57.02 Jennifer Garvey Berger - Transitions in mid-life
- 57.03 Jennifer Garvey Berger - Humans - an outdated OS
- 57.04 Jennifer Garvey Berger - 5 traps that leaders fall into
- 57.05 Jennifer Garvey Berger - Trap1 - Looking for simple stories
- 57.06 Jennifer Garvey Berger - Trap 2 - Feeling right doesn't mean it is right
- 57.07 Jennifer Garvey Berger - Trap 3 - Desire to agree
- 57.08 Jennifer Garvey Berger - Trap 4 - Controlling instead of influencing
- 57.09 Jennifer Garvey Berger - Trap 5 - Shackled by the past
- 57.10 Jennifer Garvey Berger - Actively listening to your body
- 57.11 Jennifer Garvey Berger - Leadership in a post COVID world

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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Podcast Transcript [57.00 Jennifer Garvey Berger - The Full Conversation](#)

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