



Guest

Ayelet Fishbach, Ph.D., is the Jeffrey Breakenridge Keller Professor of Behavioural Science and Marketing at the University of Chicago, Booth School of Business and the author of *Get It Done: Surprising Lessons from the Science of Motivation*. She is the past president of the Society for the Study of Motivation and the International Social Cognition Network. She is an expert on motivation and decision making.

In the podcast conversation, we start with her journey from the sharing economy of the Israeli Kibbutz which is based on the principles of equality, public ownership and voluntariness. From there she goes to the other extreme which is the University of Chicago which is all about Capital Markets and incentives drive human behaviour. We then dive into her recent book and talk about the various elements of motivation – how we think about goal setting, psychological reactance and what it can teach us about parenting, motivating ourselves during the long middle, mining the silent graveyard of failure, the power of joint goals as illustrated by Madame Curie and much more.

Context to the conversation

Welcome to the 91st conversation at the Play to Potential Podcast, a series of reflective conversations from leading people from various domains on three broad themes – Leadership, Transitions and Careers. Just like businesses think about where to play and how to win in the context of their strategy, we all think about the two questions – where to go and how to grow at various points in our lives. These questions become that much harder in a world of abundance, multiplicity of options and limited feedback. Through this podcast, I hope to share some insights that might help you navigate these questions in a more thoughtful way.

While podcasting accounts for 10-20% of my time and effort, my primary vocation is that of an Executive Coach and a Sounding Board with CEOs/Entrepreneurs. I engage with leaders and organizations with a growth mindset and helping them play to their unique potential. You can learn more about the podcast and my work at www.playtopotential.com.

My guest this time is Ayelet Fishbach – Author of *Get it done* (Surprising lessons from the Science of Motivation). We start with her journey from the sharing economy of the Israeli Kibbutz which is based on the principles of equality, public ownership and voluntariness. From there she goes to the other extreme which is the University of Chicago which is all about Capital Markets and incentives drive human behaviour. We then dive into her recent book and talk about the various elements of motivation – how we think about goal setting, psychological reactance and what it can teach us about parenting, motivating ourselves during the long middle, mining the silent graveyard of failure, the power of joint goals as illustrated by Madame Curie and much more.

Without further ado, let us listen and learn from Ayelet Fishbach at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): Ayelet, really excited to have you at the Play to Potential Podcast, thank you for making the time.

Ayelet Fishbach (AF): Thank you Deepak for having me, it is great to be here.

DJ: Lovely. Ayelet, before we talk about your recently published book, *Get It Done*, I would love to know a little bit around your journey, how did you get here?

AF: Well, I am a Professor at the University of Chicago and I have been here for a while. I grew up in Israel. I grew up in a small communal environment that was very different than the University of Chicago. I, somehow, got to the big city in Israel, Tel Aviv, and got my degrees there, and then, came to the US for a post-doc which is a kind of standard for anybody that is looking to pursue an academic career outside of the US. I had no plan to stay in the US. I was convinced to apply to a job at the University of Chicago. I really didn't know what it meant but I ended up here, and I just loved it. It became the place that shaped my thinking and the work that I am doing.

DJ: Wow. And in the book *Ayelet*, you talk a little bit about the kibbutz and how it shaped you as a person. Could you spend a couple of minutes just talking a little bit about your early years and sort of the social structure of the kibbutz just for us to get a sense of your childhood?

AF: Yes, I give it as an example for that, how much self-motivation we all have in our life, how much every transition requires that we adjust and we motivate ourselves. I was referring to that, my upbringing in Israeli kibbutz where we did not have money, we did not work for money, everybody was equal, and then some years later, I find myself at the University of Chicago that basically prides itself for their thinking about capitalism and thinking about how capital runs the world. And I give the example that where I grew up, like if you wanted to read a book, you would just ask someone who had the book to give it to you. And, you know, I go to the University of Chicago and I prepare my first class, and I ask my colleague to give me his book so I can prepare my class, and he looks me at this funny look and says, well, you can just buy your books. Now do not get me wrong, I think that people should buy their books and I just wrote a book, I think the people should buy it, but for me that point was like, well, this book is on your shelf, why do not you just give it to me, you are not reading it at this moment. So it is just an anecdote but it illustrates that when you transition from one place to another, you learn how people in that place think and how they do think and what kind of things are even valued. And each of these transitions requires so much of motivating ourselves to learn and to adjust.

DJ: Hmm. And of the various career choices you had in front of you Ayelet, how did you think about academics?

AF: I am a forever student. I, only a few times in my early life, had thought about leaving academia. Well, for us, growing up in Israel, I had military service that was required, so that was non-academic, I sold bread for a while, this is how I made money to pay for college, and then, while in college, I tried a couple of jobs. I always realized that it is best to just stay in school, and so, I finished my college degree and then I got my master degree and then I continued to PhD. I keep thinking that at

one point, this will end and I will have to get a real job, whatever that means. Turned out that I was lucky to just stay in school and continue learning for my entire career.

DJ: Lovely. And coming to the book Ayelet, *Get It Done*, I think so much has been written about motivation. The one thing in my head was I find it helpful to understand when an author writes a book, what is it that has not been said so far that prompts them to write the book. Can you give us a sense of what is the void you are attempting to fill with this piece of work?

AF: I like this question Deepak because I wrote this book mainly because it did not exist, because I wanted a book that will organize my knowledge of motivation. It felt like a very messy room, like, there are many ideas and some of them are presented in books, some are not. Often, the books that I could point out were focusing on one aspect and not others, you know, they may have done a great job in illustrating how to do that one thing but then some things were not in any book. And then, I just could not find the book that would just make all there in what I know about motivation, and I figured that if something does not exist, then you create it.

DJ: Hmm. And diving straight in Ayelet, you use the metaphor of pulling ourselves with our own hair using a folktale, and you speak about a four-step process to move forward. You talk about how we choose goals, how we measure progress, how we think about juggling multiple goals, and how we leverage social support. I think before we discuss these four, I am curious how you landed on these four, what are some of the other variables you had to exclude for you to really shine the light on these four. So if you could give us a sense of, maybe it is the nerdy engineer in me, but I am curious about how you ended up with these variables as the primary variables that explain motivation.

AF: Yeah, it does sound a bit like the engineer's question. Assuming that I started with 10 variables and then limited it to four, I actually started with zero variable. Actually, I refer to these as elements, the areas of behavioural interventions, places where you can think about how to change things for you so that you will be more motivated. So I started where I think all social scientists thought which is the idea that if you want to change behaviour, whether it is your behaviour or someone else's behaviour, you change their circumstances, you change something about the situation. You want to wake up in the morning, you set off the alarm. The room will become noisy when you need to get up and you will be awake. You change your situation. But what does it mean to change the situation, and often, in psychology, this is more changing the way you think about the situation, what does it mean to change the way we think, to change the way we frame the situation? Well, I just had many ideas for how people can do that and many research findings, and I tried to put them into buckets. It was really just organizing a very messy environment. These were the four buckets. I did not feel like I created them, I felt like I found them.

DJ: Hmm. And can you expand on these four just for the listeners to get the overall architecture of your framework, Ayelet?

AF: Yes, of course. So you mentioned that there are four, choosing a goal, monitoring progress, juggling multiple goals and seeking a social support or leveraging social support. Let me start with choosing a goal. The first set of interventions are about deciding which goal is worth pursuing, how should we define them for ourselves, how specific, how abstract, do goals versus do not goals, how to think about targets, and how to make our goals intrinsically motivated. Now we have a goal but we need to get from here to there, from point A to point B, and my second element, all the interventions are that help people get feedback and monitor the progress, when to look back and when to look forward. The third bucket refers to everything else and to succeed in pursuing any goal. This goal has to fit with everything else that the person is trying to achieve. There needs to be some compromise between the different goals that we are pursuing, we need to be able to set some

priorities. And then the last section, now in all these interventions how we leverage the people around us, how do we choose role models, how do we coordinate our efforts with others, how do we work with other people so that we can get things done.

DJ: Hmm. And diving into step one Ayelet, you talk about the goldilocks balance while setting a goal, it needs to be aspirational enough, but at the same time, it needs to be specific enough, and you cannot swing too far on each of these extremes. Can you talk a little bit about getting that balance right, maybe illustrate that with an example if possible?

AF: Yes. So the problem with very specific goals is that they feel like chores. If your goal is to, let us say, apply for a job, that feels like a chore, like I need to write a resume, I need to send many applications, I need to interview, that is not exciting, that is not pulling me. Too abstract goals and now I will go all the way to the extreme of like being happy or being fulfilled, it is hard to know how to pursue them. So I might feel very excited about being happy and fulfilled but I have no idea what is the action that needs to happen tomorrow at 7 a.m. for me to be there. And so we try to find the right balance that it is a goal that is as abstract as you can be, is most inspiring and least like a chore, but it is nevertheless connected to action. So, for example, having a job is better than applying for a job. You apply for a job because you want to have a job, so you know what it takes to have a job, you know what the steps are, but having a job is fun, it is good, it is like having a career, is something that people aspire to have. Owning a house is better than searching for houses is another example. As an exercise, you can think about it as asking yourself many why questions, like why do I do whatever I do, and why do I do that. Now, let us say, I am writing a resume, why do I do it because I want to apply for a job. Why do you want to apply for a job because I want to be employed? Why do you want to be employed because I want to do something interesting, because I want to make impact on the world depending on my career, and so on? And stop at the level of why questions where you can still see the action that relates to it, that it does not become so abstract that you just do not know how to answer how anymore.

DJ: It is a great perspective, just dig deep enough so that it is still driven by action rather than go too deep that it becomes too abstract.

AF: Exactly.

DJ: Fascinating. And talking about goals Ayelet, you also talk about approach goals and avoidance goals, and you say that each of these works in a certain context and it is important for us to recognize that. Can you shine the light on this one?

AF: Yes. Approach goals are the do goals and avoidance goals are the do not goals. When we ask people to list their goals, we have recently asked many people to list new year's resolutions, some people talk about what they should do, other people talk about what they should not do. So if you tell me that your goal is to stop smoking, that is an avoiding goal. An approach goal is to start exercising, do something that will make you healthier. The problem with avoidance goals is that they are often harder to pursue. They often make us think about a thing that we are trying to avoid. Dan Wegner back in the 80s asked people not to think about white bears, it is the ultimate avoidance goals, try not to think about something really how to do. The more you try not to think about white bears, well, guess what, you think about white bears. And so avoidance goals are hard but avoidance goals seem urgent which means that if you need to do something immediately, then often this is the right way to think about it as what I should not do. Approach goals seem like, well, I do not need to start right now, I can start next week. So I say, in general, try to avoid the avoidance goals, try to think about what you want to do, not what you want not to do, unless you are trying to motivate yourself to act as soon as possible.

DJ: Hmm, let the approach goals crowd out the activities we are trying to avoid, I guess, is a way to look at it.

AF: Yes. Now some people are also in the personality, more approaches, others more avoiders. Now some people tell you that it is more natural to them to think, let us say, about their career in terms of avoiding and messing up other than approaching success, but for most of us, approaching success is easier, is more motivating than avoiding failure.

DJ: Absolutely. And one of the pieces that caught my attention was you talk about a study of marathon runners where you say that there are many more people that clocked 3 hours 59 minutes than people that clocked 4 hours 1 minute. Just because a 4-hour goal where people push a little harder when they are near the goal, but you also say that once we reach the goal, people tend to ease out a little bit. So as I was reflecting on this, I was wondering what does this mean if we are trying to play the long game and we want to keep ourselves motivated for the long run, how should we think about the goal and avoid slipping once we reach a goal?

AF: Well, it does make sense to relax a bit after you run a marathon. Even for you. The 4-hour target for running a marathon is interesting for us because it is certainly not easier to run a marathon under 4 hours than over 4 hours and nevertheless, there are so many more people that finish the marathon just under 4 hours than just above 4 hours because the 4-hour target motivates them. And it is true for any target that we set. Every time we put a number on our goals which is like how much and how soon, how many steps in a day, how much money I am going to save this year and so on, these numbers motivate us to reach them. But if we ask for too little, there is the risk that once we achieve that target, we are going to relax and maybe we are going to relax too soon. I, in my book, talk about the example of taxi drivers in New York, and this is also like a classic study already that found that taxi drivers who set their goal as daily income, they quit once they reach that daily income, and the problem with that specific target is that they do not make enough money on rainy days when they very quickly reach their target and just quit for the day. They end up working many hours on other nice days where there is less demand for taxis and it is just hard to reach at the daily target. So there are certainly issues with setting targets, one of them is that you might give up too soon, feel too good too early and just quit for the day or for the week. There are also other issues with targets, but they are still generally good in motivating.

DJ: Hmm. I think moving to measurement, later in the book, you talk about the concept of psychological reactance. Actually, we are still in the realm of goal setting. You talk about the criticality of us owning a goal. And as I was reading it, I was wondering what implications does this concept have in the way we lead and in the way we parent children, could you throw light on this concept of psychological reactance that you talk about in the book?

AF: Psychological reactance is our tendency to not want to do something just because we were asked to do that. It is this feeling that we do not have our freedom of choice, we are not allowed to do something or we are asked to do something, and therefore, we do not want to do that. It is very easy to see it with kids and, in particular, with teenagers because they are very strong on reactance. I was saying before the avoidance goals tend to be problematic. Let me quote one study that looked at what happens when you tell teenagers not to eat certain foods, well, guess what, these are exactly the foods that they want to eat. Now I tell my child that they should not eat French fries, and there is nothing that they want more than French fries. So psychological reactance can be a problem, and for motivating others, also for motivating ourselves, it is important to own our goals, it is important to understand that. Whatever someone is suggesting to us to do is a suggestion, we need to accept it, we need to own these goals, and if we do not own these goals, then we might rebel.

DJ: Hmm. So taking next step Ayelet, may be staying with the use case of parenting, any inputs on how to inspire the children towards a certain direction than ask them dos and don'ts, which leads to reactance?

AF: Ask them about their goals, ask questions in general is a way to influence people. We know that the way to influence anyone, and kids are no exception, is by getting them to influence themselves, by getting the person to adopt the idea to the extent that they feel like they came up with the idea, they own the idea, it is theirs, the goal is mine, I decided to have it. You can do it via actions. Sometimes, you have to just suggest activities to kids without necessarily talk about the goals, why do not we go and play soccer. You do not necessarily need to say that this is important because you need to exercise or because you need to be outside. We did the study with food where we found that telling kids that food will make them stronger or healthy, it was counterproductive. If you just put the food on the table, they will eat more.

DJ: That is a fascinating insight actually, yeah. Got it.

AF: Yeah. They were not teenagers, they were 3 to 5-year old. So they were very young and they were already realizing that if someone tells me that this food will make me smarter, then probably, this food is not good, it is not very tasty, and we just put that food on the table, they ate.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: This is your host Deepak Jayaraman here. I came across the point around Psychological Reactance in my conversation with Jennifer Petriglieri (JP). She is a Professor at INSEAD and is the author of the book – Couples that work which is about how dual career couples manage both their journeys. She speaks about the notion of how one of them can provide a secure base for the other to explore but more importantly she uses a phrase which stayed with me – Giving a loving kick to gently move them away from the comfort zone.

JP: *"So the couples who do very well I found are those who flick their model of support from that to a model of support called a secure base. Now secure means three things first it means of course there is that level of comfort that level of support but layer on top of that are another two things. One is an if I can think if there is a loving kick away from a relationship so loving persuade say you know I'll be here to dust you off but you get out there and figure it out so if you aren't sure if you are having these existential questions the response is don't worry, we will be fine. It's okay gets out there then and figures something else this push to explore a push away from the safety of the relationship away from the comfort zone and into that learning there are not risk zone. Now this a bit counterintuitive because in a relationship when our partner feeling a little bit uncertain and a little bit wobbly our natural instincts just like that with our children is to hold them close is to give them a cuddle you know metaphor and this is quite the opposite when we see our partner struggling with something feeling a little bit unsure instead of pulling them close we actually push them away and in a loving way and to it's quite a different model of support but the third thing about a secure base is also a very arm's length support so it's not about interfering it's not about did you call that head hunter, did you read that book did you go to that networking event that really unhelpful so it's a real arm's length push away and what I found in couples was when they could both do this for each other when they could both provide the secure base that's when the magic happened because what happened was both partner could then go out and do the work the experimentation, exploration and reflection that all of us need to do to get to your transition and both felt very supported in that and both could get to the other side."*

DJ: Sailing, not driving is a term I came across in one of my recent coaching conversations. I think that captures the crux of the approach!

If you are deriving value from the podcast, do take a moment to rate and review the show on Apple or Spotify or wherever you consume the content. It will help listeners discover our content and will also help us attract better quality of speakers moving forward. This is a journey we are on for the long-term and your vote of confidence makes a difference!

Let's now get back to the conversation with Ayelet Fishbach.

DJ: And talking about motivation Ayelet, you talk about the role of incentives as achieving our goals. And as a student of careers, I am curious about the question, if you had all the money, what would you do with your time. And some of the leaders I work with in midlife are at that point where they have made adequate money but they are still figuring out what to do with their time. Can you talk a little bit about your observations of people in journeys where they hit a point where the financial metrics are taken care of, now they need to find other motivators to move forward, how do you observe some of these people and what have you observed working, as they find a new compass to guide them?

AF: So here is what we know, what makes people feel good, what makes them satisfied with their lives, with whatever they do, is not usually reaching the goal, it is pursuing that, is making progress, is being on the path to get somewhere. And to the extent that we feel that we are making fast progress, that things are moving faster than we expected and we are happy with our life, then we feel these things are good. So it is not really the static condition of I have reached my goal, it is the way there and the extent to which I feel that the way there is working. Why is this relevant, well, for many people, feeling like you have reached your goals is not a satisfying experience. If you were hoping to achieve something and you worked really hard, then you achieved it by, I do not know, like age 30, then what is else, what will happen in the rest of your career, what is the next challenge. It could be that you have made more money than you planned to, it also could be that you had an idea and you are done exploring it, you had a product that you wanted to develop and everything worked great and you were able to create the right team to develop this product and you developed this product and you sold it to someone and now what, now you have the crisis, now you have the emptiness that we often feel when we are done with our goals. You talk about career, many parents feel that when their kids leave home, just like I was very invested in that goal for a long time, and it is kind of done and maybe I did an amazing job and maybe my kids are really happy in their adult lives, but what is now for me, what motivates me in the morning.

DJ: Hmm. And actually, a related point you make is about harnessing the gratification in the moment rather than thinking too long term in terms of goals. I like the point you make, focus on the crunchiness of the carrot rather than the long term health benefits. Can you talk a little bit about that, just enjoying the activity and enjoying the moment and not getting carried away by the significance of what we are doing?

AF: So the best predictor of engagement in basically everything is intrinsic motivation, and intrinsic motivation is the feeling that when you are doing something that feels the right moment, when you want to do it for the sake of doing it, not really for any long term purpose. Now for most of the goals that we set, we try to motivate ourselves, we do start from the point of wanting to be in a different place than where we are now, so we are not 100% intrinsically motivated. It is not like reading the most interesting book, watching an amazing movie, or having a terrific meal, it is wanting to get yourself somewhere. But what predicts extent to which you can stick to the way there, you can stick to the means that you set, is often the extent which you feel right to you at the moment, that you

feel that there is purpose, that it is fun, that it is something that you do with people that you like. I just gave you different examples for ways in which people say, I like doing what I am doing.

DJ: Hmm. Changing track Ayelet, I love the point you make about our ability to connect with ourselves on a timeline, and you talk about this notion of connecting to our future self, and you talk about this notion of empathy gap which is our psychological connectedness with our future selves. Can you talk a little bit about how this impacts the decisions we make and what we can do to strengthen this empathy with our future selves?

AF: So I talk about the connection to the future selves in actually two places, one place is with intrinsic motivation, and why we often choose the wrong activity for ourselves, so the wrong job or the wrong project because we do not have sufficient empathy for our future self, we do not know that our future self will be tired or bored or very similar to our present self. I know that what got me out of bed this morning was the idea that I am going to have fun at work, I am going to work on interesting projects, that I am going to meet new people. Here, I am meeting you and it is going to be interesting. When I plan for the future, I tend to underestimate how important that is in motivating myself. The empathy gap is basically how a lack of empathy to our future self is something that we see when people plan to drive too many hours in the morning when they are awake, not realizing how hard it is to drive when you are tired. We see something similar when people do not pack their warm jackets when they live in a warm place and are traveling to a cold place, somehow, it is really hard to imagine how I will feel when I am cold, so I do not take the appropriate clothing. And these are funny examples, but when we look at people's careers, they often make the suboptimal plan by not taking into account just how important it is to be intrinsically motivated to like what you are doing. Now I also talk about this connection to the self in another context which is in being patient in choosing something that benefits you in the long run. And often, that requires that you care about yourself in the long run, that you feel connected to this person. If I am starting to study for a degree that I am only going to get in four years, I should care about the person that I am going to be in four years in order to put the effort in doing well. If I save for retirement, that is really hard because we need to start saving for retirement, when retirement is so far away and this person feels so different from us. And interventions that make people feel more connected to who they are going to be, make them think about this person and think about how this person might be who they are now, make people more likely to study for this future person, save money for that future person, just be more patient, so you can benefit the person that you will be in the future.

DJ: And the piece that stood out for me was, once again, going back to Chicago's capitalist orientation, you talk about the notion of discount rate of the future which I found quite interesting as a way of looking at how we think about the future. Can you just maybe expand on that a little bit?

AF: I like that, I did not even realize it I was being a capitalist by talking about discounting. We discount the future in the sense that we value everything more when it is now than in the future. 100 dollars now for most people feels much better than a promise for 100 dollar a year. Seeing someone that you like this week is so much better than seeing them next month. There is a reason why we are willing to pay more to get everything now, whether it is a dinner in a restaurant or a show that we buy tickets for, we are just more excited about the present than the future. And that means that doing anything that will be good for us in the future kind of goes against our human nature, or animal nature actually, to value the present more than the future.

DJ: Hmm. And is there anything we can do to modify the discount rate if you will, just so that we are not, there is something to be said about living in the present but also for us to be mindful of the future we are walking into, any commentary there Ayelet, or is that hardwired you think?

AF: It is definitely hardwired but we are doing something, we are trying to fight it off. So unlike other animals, we can actually think about the future, we can plan for the future, and we are willing to work for our future to some extent. We already mentioned the psychological connectedness. So thinking about the future person and how similar they are to me as opposed to thinking about them as a stranger that I do not care for. Other interventions that increase patience, that increase the willingness to postpone immediate gratification so that you can get more in the future, involve reminding you that this is important, reminding you what you value in life, so any reminder of how much you value, let us say, having a successful career or having a saving account or being healthy, allow people to say, well, maybe I will forego that donut today so that I am healthier in 10 years.

DJ: Hmm. Moving forward Ayelet, you refer to Leon Festinger's cognitive dissonance theory somewhere in the book where you say that, we try to ensure that our behaviours, and as a result, we tend to adopt goals that are a match with our past actions, and I was reflecting on this question in the context of people that are trying to reinvent themselves. Now I was curious how does that play out because in a way when you are at a pivot point, you are trying to break away from past actions that define you, and you are trying to find new patterns and new actions to fill your life. So any reflections on this, especially when people are at an inflection point?

AF: A lot that you have asked here. Let me first remind our listeners that Leon Festinger's work was on cognitive dissonance on the idea that when we behave in a certain way, we want our attitude to match, we want to be consistent. In a way, the idea of cognitive dissonance is the idea that we do not like a dissonance between what I do today and what I did yesterday or what I did yesterday and what I say today, we do not like to find ourselves being inconsistent. And one takeaway from that work is that when we try to figure out what we like doing, what our values in life, we often look back to see what we valued before and what we did before. And to the extent that we worked in a certain industry, then we become to believe that this is important, this is something that will add value. If we adopted a dog, we become dog lovers, if we invested in some environmental cause, we become to think of ourselves as people who care more about the environment. And at work, the more we work in a certain industry, the more we see that as part of who we are, we see that as our identity. Maybe when I got my first job at a bank, I just thought about it as a job, it was not really something that was very important for me. But if I have done it for a number of years now, I think about myself as a banker, I adopt the congruent values of caring about money and investment. And this is part of who I am as a person. Now you are asking about how do people change, well, change is not easy, change requires that you realize that this is not enough. Often, change is the result of some crisis. Many people change their jobs, so no change in their careers because something happened, maybe they lost their job, maybe they had another sort of crisis at work, they were working toward a promotion and that did not happen, they were working on a project that failed, and that is the point where they need to reevaluate their commitment. For others, it is the sense that we briefly touched before that you kind of completed what you had to do, you set your goal to achieve something, you achieved it, and now what, now you need something else. So then, it is easier to start something else when you feel like you have completed a thing that you were working on.

DJ: Hmm. And in terms of motivation, you talk about how we need to be thoughtful about whether we use the glass half full approach or half empty approach in the way we measure progress, do we think about the height we have climbed or the height that we are yet to climb. Can you shine some light on which of these approaches might make sense in which context?

AF: You can always monitor progress in terms of what you achieved or in terms of what you still need to achieve. You can look at your job and say, here is what I achieved, here is what is still ahead at me. You can look at some loyalty program that you were involved in and look at the rewards that you already collected or the rewards that are still ahead of you. Turns out that it is really important for motivation and how you monitor your progress will impact your motivation. And specifically when you look back, that helps you establish your commitment. If you look back and you say, well, I have already done so much at my job, then you feel more committed, you feel that what you do is more valuable, you feel more able and your past actions suggest to you that you can do it very well. And so looking back is very useful when we are unsure about our commitment. When we dealt with it, this is something that is useful or something that I can do, look back at what you already did, and you discover that, yes, you can do it, you already did some of it, you are capable. Looking ahead is motivating when it encourages progress, when it highlights how far we are from the goal in a way that leads us to close the gap. When we think about this discrepancy, like I wanted to be somewhere and I am a little bit away from it, I will increase my effort to get there. The metaphor that we sometimes use is the metaphor of the thermostat. The thermostat senses that the room is not warm enough, so the engine gets into action to get temperature higher and our motivation system sometimes does the same. Now the question is when should I look back, well, if your uncommitted, you want to look back. If you are already committed, you already know that something is important, then you want to look ahead at what is missing. To give you an example, we did the study with students that were studying for either an exam that was not very important for them, so they were not really sure about their commitment, or an exam that was absolutely important that was part of their major. Turned out that for the important exam, directing students to think about the materials that they have already covered increased their commitment. For the important exam, directing the attention to the materials that they have not yet covered increased their motivation, thinking about what they still need to study increased their motivation to study.

DJ: Lovely. Ayelet, moving to a different section in the book, you go on to say that we do a good job of motivating ourselves at the start and at the finish line, but it is a long middle which is the hard part. Can you say more about how we should think about sustaining a motivation in the middle?

AF: First, we should realize that it is going to be hard in the middle. We celebrate beginnings, we celebrate ends. When students come to campus, we have a party, when they graduate, we have a party. At the beginning of the year, we celebrate the new year, at the end of the year, we also have our holiday parties. We celebrate beginnings and ends, and the middles are not so easy. Once we realize that, we can start to address it. And one thing that we can do is having short middles. Let me give you an example, in our studies, we found that people relax their both, like ethical and performance standards in the middle, and so we shorten the middles. One example is a study in which people were cutting shapes out of paper, so we kind of drew shapes with many corners and we gave them a pair of scissors and they had to cut the first shape in the second shape and the third shape and so on. The first and the last shape they were not having any trouble with, they were doing perfect job, the middle is when they were literally cutting corners, there, they did not do a good job. And so what do you do, well, you make that the middle short. You set subgoals, you think about a weekly goal, or a quarterly goal instead of an annual goal, and all these keep the middles short. You also remind people that their identity is attached to their performance, and so it will make it harder to hide from yourself in the middle, you will realize that, you are watching yourself in the middle, and that helps. And another solution is to just have a fresh start, and Katy Milkman has worked on the fresh start effect. Now a Monday, the first day of the month, my birthday, always seems to have a fresh start of your goal, you are no longer in the middle, you are at the beginning.

DJ: Hmm. Katy was in this podcast a few weeks back and she spoke about how Google had used fresh start and tried to create moments around which people could be triggered to action, so it is fascinating to hear that.

AF: Yeah, like she did a lot of work on it. And the nice thing about the first start effect is that it is not really the beginning of the goal, it is some other cue that makes you think like this is a beginning. You are not starting your exercise goal because it is a Monday, you are just using Monday to say oh, it is the beginning of the week and if my subgoal is to exercise three times this week, then the beginning is on Monday.

DJ: Absolutely. Just to give a different example, one of the entrepreneurs I was talking to on this podcast, he actually spoke about his family business and the fact that there were a lot of internal conflict, and he said what helped in resolving that was actually the death of a loved one in the family. In a way, it was an opportunity for a fresh start for everybody to huddle together and move towards a better relationship with each other which is interesting. After I spoke to Katy and when I used that language, it seemed to make sense that we can have fresh start opportunities in various things that are happening around us.

AF: Yeah, I like this. I mean it is a sad example but I like it.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: This is your host, Deepak Jayaraman. I love the point Ayelet makes about short middles. Dan Pink (DP) speaks about the notion of having punctuation marks in the context of catching drifts.

DP: *“Peter Drucker has a technique that I use, because Peter Drucker figured out everything that you and I thought we figured out 50 years ago, I cannot think of what it is called Deepak but I do it myself, is that, what you do is you write a memo or you say, here is my prediction of how the next six months are going to go, this is what I do, and I cannot think what, it is not my idea, it is Drucker’s idea, I am going to think through the next six months and here is my prediction of how things are going to go. And then, I put it in drop box and I never look at it, except that six month from that date, I put a tickler in my calendar to look at that. And then I see, okay, so where were my forecasts right, where were they not. And at some level, that kind of punctuation mark, that kind of assessment might allow us to do that. I feel like there is the way to avoid the frog in the boiling water, is to, sort of, set up a timer and stick your finger in to see how hot the water is getting.”*

DJ: The other thing that Ayelet speaks about is the notion of a Fresh start. Here is Katy Milkman (KM) of Wharton who has researched this notion of Fresh Start and how we can apply it to our lives.

KM: *“What we found is that there are moments, this would not surprise you at all that feel more like fresh starts to people. And the one that we are all familiar with already is New Years. This is a moment when around the world people are setting resolutions at a higher rate than usual, trying to pursue goals at a higher rate than usual, and it feels like a fresh start. The psychology of New Year’s actually turns out to be familiar and extends to many other moments, but the psychology of New Years is you can say, sort of, well, that was the old me last year, the old me could not achieve this, you know, the old me tried to quit smoking and failed, but that was a whole different person. The new me in the New Year can do it. And you feel this dissociation from your past failures in this renewed optimism as you open a new chapter in life. What we found is that New Years is actually just one moment that has that new chapter fresh start feeling. There are lots of other moments on the calendar and in life when we also feel we are turning a page and can get that same dissociation*

from past failures and motivation, and also the likelihood that we might actually step back and think big picture about our lives is greater. So some of those moments include, according to our research, the start of a new week or a new month, the celebration of holidays that feel like fresh starts in our culture, the celebration of birthdays. And, of course, there is other research looking not only at these psychological or temporal markers that give us the sense of a clean slate and a fresh start, but if you physically change environments, that has not only psychological appeal and helps you, but it can literally disrupt routines in a way that is helpful as well."

DJ: The way I see it we need to have shorter middles and find the right punctuation markers, whether they are journal entries, Fresh start opportunities, mini-goals or something else. We need to find what works for us to keep us on track during the long road in the middle. If you want to learn more, do tune into the conversation with Dan Pink and Katy Milkman. You can just go to playtopotential.com and find them in the Guests section.

If you are deriving value from the podcast, do take a moment and rate and review on Apple Podcasts or Spotify or wherever else you consume the content.

Let's get back to the conversation with Ayelet.

DJ: The other piece you talk about in the book that really caught my attention was about how we deal with negative information. At the outset, you say that two pieces of negative information often end up being more different than two pieces of positive information. As a result, we are probably more likely to get a meaningful juice from mining the silent graveyard of failure than the loud screams of success. Can you say more about where this comes from?

AF: Well, the interesting part is that it is hard to learn from negative information, it is hard to learn from failure, and it is hard to learn from negative feedback despite the fact that it often has better information. Now you ask why negative information is often more informative, well, the reason is that it is often the case that there are fewer ways to succeed than the way to be wrong. And if there are more ways to be wrong, then one mistake will not be similar to another mistake. Let me illustrate this with an example. If you think about being appropriately friendly, an employee that is just say is the right level of friendly, he is not constantly talking in your face but is also not withdrawn. That person is very similar to another employee who is also friendly. Now let us take someone who is not friendly who has some issues with her social skills. Maybe she is withdrawn, she is very different than the employee who has the wrong social skills because she is very chatty, she is constantly needing of attention. And it can basically take any dimension of performance and say, well, there is often the right range, and if you are underperforming, it could be because you are doing too much or too little outside of this range. Other reasons why negative information is often more informative is that when people give you negative information, they are often more thoughtful. Negative feedback tends to come with an explanation, so if you ask me how am I doing and I feel well, I am just going to say, good, thank you. If I do not feel well, I am going to say, well, I do not feel very well today, and I will then explain why. Like you are not going to accept just, oh, I am not feeling well and me going away, you would like me to explain, you expect the elaboration, and I expect this for myself. And if you take these two things together, the idea that negative information is often more elaborated and that it is often the case that the ways to be successful are similar but the ways to fail are different, that would result in many situations in which negative feedback is more informative, failure has more information, not always, but many times.

DJ: That is very interesting Ayelet. If I may try and link it back with another conversation, I had with a gentleman called Professor Dan Cable at London Business School, he actually talks about the notion of a highlights package. He says, just like you have sports highlights, when you are trying to work on yourself, try and organize your own highlights, what were the different ways in which you touched people and the difference it made to them, and he says that can tell us a lot about who we are and what makes us distinctive, our super power, etc. It is interesting that as I hear you say, maybe the fact that we do not hear so much about what makes us special, it makes it worth the while for us to create a highlights package because otherwise nobody really talks about it, I think people also offer more negative information more easily to us, is that a good way of reconciling the two?

AF: I am not sure that there is more negative information out there. I like the advice to think about what you do well because you will often come up with more abstract variables than what you will hear in feedback. The feedback is often more concrete and more specific and to extract your values, to extract something such as I care about the people at work, or it is important for me that we adhere to certain values. This is often too abstract than what you hear when you get feedback, but it is not true that feedback tends to be negative. Actually when we look at it, feedback tends to be a positive and, in a way, empty. So positive in the sense that oh, Deepak, you are doing a great job, and you are really, you do not know what is great and what to do with that feedback.

DJ: Hmm. It is a great point. I think the abstractness of it makes it valuable given that the daily feedback is often more tactical and more concrete. So I think that point is well taken.

AF: Yeah, and often empty, the problem with feedback that it is often hard to extract valuable lessons, I would say that when I did the exercise of having people in my class, these are business students give feedback to each other, they are often very vague about the negative, about the points of improvement, so the other person is not really learning how they can improve, how they can do things differently. And the positive is kind of empty, more of oh, things are going very well, good, let us move on.

DJ: And talking about negative feedback, you make the distinction between whether we are talking about commitment or progress and depending on how we frame our feedback, people are likely to respond differently, can you say more in the nuance here about giving good developmental feedback?

AF: Yes, so the problem with negative feedback is that, well, actually, let me step back. There are a few problems with negative feedback, and one is that the person might not pay attention. So there is no learning whatsoever because I do not even remember the negative feedback that I received, I was not paying attention. The other problem is that I might pay too much attention and get to the wrong conclusion. I might conclude that I am not good at it, that I have no chance that I am unable. And as it turns out, the most productive way to use negative feedback is to think concretely about what needs to change, about how we can grow from the feedback. I make the distinction between commitment and progress, if you think about negative feedback, it is suggesting that I am committed, well, too bad for you Deepak, you are just uncommitted, you just cannot do this. If you take this negative feedback and think about it in terms of lack of progress, well, I can just work hard there, I can figure out how to do it right. Maybe it is about putting more work, maybe it is about doing things in a different way, it is really in the interpretation of the same feedback. Is it a sign that I need to try to do it in a different way or just harder, or is it a sign that it just not for me or that in the extreme cases that the world is just calling and there is absolutely nothing I can do about it, I am just going to be get negative feedback?

DJ: Hmm. And is there an example you could use to illustrate how we find the right language, and also how do we tailor it to whether somebody is committed to it versus somebody who is still unsure if it is the right activity for them?

AF: What we find is that it is best to give negative feedback to people who are already committed. You are not going to doubt their commitment as a result of the negative feedback. And there are a few approaches to do that. First, you can just give more negative feedback to those who are already the experts, those who are committed. And we find that people intuitively allow themselves to express constructive criticism towards those who they feel are secured, towards those who they feel are already sure about their commitment. We also find that more committed individuals or experts are more likely to seek out negative feedback. And really what I mean by negative feedback is seeking out information about how I can do it in a different way, what is less than ideal about the way that I am doing it so far. When people feel like novices, when people are novices, when they are not sure about their commitment, then negative feedback can really give them the wrong message, they can take it as a sign that they are unable. To give you an example of a study, we found that students in an advanced language class were more interested in an instructor that will tell them what they do wrong than students that were just starting to learn this language.

DJ: Hmm. Moving forward Ayelet, you talk about goals and you say that we often compromise or prioritize based on what our actions tell us or the world tells us something about our identity. What is the phenomenon here, how is our identity linked to whether we prioritize or compromise?

AF: So you move to multiple goals and how we navigate multiple goals and we always have multiple goals. And we should always decide whether we want to prioritize or compromise. And I encourage people to just write down what are the main goals that they are pursuing in your life at the moment, what you are doing to be healthy, to succeed professionally, to take care of your finance, of your family, what are the main goals that you are pursuing, and how much you want to focus on all of them versus set priorities. To give you an example, if we take career and family, which are two goals that many people have, you can seek the compromise to think about how you are going to pursue a career and a family, or you can think about prioritizing. Maybe you will postpone having a family because you really want to focus on your career, maybe you will put your career on hold because you want to prioritize your family at this time. Once you know what you are trying to achieve, then you can have a better way of organizing your goals. Now you mentioned identity, often when we think about our actions as telling us something about your identity, we are more likely to prioritize, that is we are more likely to say, well, my identity leads me to prioritize one goal over the other. I might, for example, prioritize environmental actions over just doing what feels good at the moment, or I prioritize financial responsibility over seeking the right balance between saving and spending. In practice what that means, when people prioritize, then they pursue the same goal across several actions. I might choose the cheaper option in the morning when I make approaches and then also in the afternoon. When people compromise, they jump between two goals. Maybe I will choose the healthy breakfast but the unhealthy lunch in which case I am compromising between health and taste.

DJ: Hmm. That is fascinating, you are saying it is a function of how rooted we are to one particular Identity or multiple identities and that could have an impact on how we think about goals, whether we compromise or prioritize.

AF: So one variable that informs us whether to prioritize or compromise is how much we see that the action is part of our identity. And you can think of any trade-off. Let us take the trade-off between being financially responsible and buying organic food, organic food tends to be more expensive. Now if you just think about these two goals, many people decide to sometimes buy

organic or for some products to buy organic, for some products or some other times to go for the non-organic, so they find the balance between organic and not too expensive. But if we emphasize that this choice has to do with their identity, if we ask people, are you the person that cares about your health, that cares about eating organic food, do you feel close to nature, then they start prioritizing. So they might decide to, let us say, go all organic, and compromise their saving also that they can feel good about really focusing on organic food.

DJ: Hmm. Moving forward Ayelet, one of the stories that struck me in the book was about Marie and Pierre Curie winning the Nobel Prize in 1903 as a couple for their study of spontaneous radiation, and three decades later in 1932, their oldest daughter Irene wins a Nobel with her husband. You discuss that in the context of the power of joint goals, can you share the insight here?

AF: I love Marie Curie, she is my personal hero and maybe tells you something about who I am as a person, but she is such an inspiration. She won the Nobel Prize at a time when women were not part of science really. She did that with her husband. She had two daughters and her daughter won the Nobel Prize also with her husband. By the way, Marie Curie won two Nobel Prizes, one with Pierre and one by herself. So that is the story, it is an inspiration. But it is also a story that tells us a lot about how we pursue goals with other people. We pursue goals with other people often because they are shared goals. We connect to people who have similar goals and we do the work together and really our most important goals in life are usually things that we do with other people. We might start a business, we might start a family, we might pursue some scientific discovery as in the case of the Curie couple, so we do things with others. We also have others as role model. Others inspire us by what they do and Marie and Pierre were the inspiration, were the role models for the daughters. They inspired their daughters to excel and to be really good at their career. They also were able to very well support each other in life. They helped each other achieve goals even when they did not work together. It was Pierre who insisted that Marie will get the Nobel Prize. The first Nobel Prize, the one that she got with him, that was not joint work, that was him working for her, enabling her to win a prize that she deserved. We often connect to people who are just helpful to us with our goals. And I describe much of the research on how we work with other people, how we connect to other people that help us with our own goals or that help us with joint goals.

DJ: Hmm. And on a related note, you actually say that in a relationship feeling known is possibly more important than knowing. Once again, it felt like an interesting insight. Could you shine the light on this one?

AF: Let me start with research. When we ask people how much they feel known and how much they feel like they are knowing someone, and then they have to rate their satisfaction from their relationship, it turns out that what predicts satisfaction from a relationship is more how much you feel known than how much you feel that the other person knows you. This is not just for romantic couples; this is also relationships at work or relationships with family members or just friends. The extent to which we feel that the other person in the interaction knows us is a better predictor of our relationship satisfaction. Now why is that, well, because a person that knows us can support our motivation, can support our goals. If we are known, then that person will help me do whatever I need to do. If my spouse knows that I want to excel at work, they are going to help me do this, they are going to ask me the right questions, help me to walk through difficult situations at work, they are going to be supportive. The interesting thing is that of course relationships are about two people, not just one and so while feeling no one is a better predictor of my satisfaction unless the other person in the relationship also feels that I know them, then there is no real relationship, like it is not going to work. So I encourage people that despite the fact that you are really looking for people who can support your goals, be aware that unless you are instrumental for their goals, unless you know

them and can help them with their goals, then they really have no incentive to be in a relationship with you.

DJ: Got it. You need to hold your end of the bargain.

AF: Yeah.

DJ: Ayelet, this podcast is titled Play To Potential. One of the questions I ask all the guests is what does this term mean to them, what does this term mean to you?

AF: Oh, what does it mean to you?

DJ: Sorry Ayelet.

AF: What does it mean to you? I mean to say like how did you come up with the name?

DJ: The Play To Potential I think I have always been curious about potential, somehow deep within, I have a belief that while experience and capabilities might be unevenly distributed, you know, Warren Buffett talks about the ovarian lottery, I feel intrinsic potential is uniformly distributed around the world irrespective of economic condition. So somehow, unlocking that and helping people play to potential came up as a theme as I was thinking about the podcast. So in a way, that sort of was the starting point, to focus on the intrinsic potential rather than the capability. I would love to know how you think about the term potential given all the research you have done.

AF: Yeah, I was interested in your answer because you came up with the name and so, there must be a lot of thinking behind it. I was kind of curious to hear that. The way I think about it is that many of us are fortunate to engage in this conversation, and not everybody is, like many people just have to do what they have to do to survive, but many of us can think about our potential and can think about our options and what we can do so that we thrive. And we might want to keep in mind that this is wonderful, that this is an opportunity, that this is something that we were really lucky to get, we can do things, we can get somewhere if we choose wisely, if we are careful with that, how we work towards certain goals, if we basically motivate ourselves to reach certain destinations. And so, often people remind me and I have to tell you this is always on my mind that opportunities are not equal, not everybody can have the same set of options, but many of us have many options, and it is really up to us to take full advantage of that.

DJ: Ayelet, real delight having you on this podcast. Thank you so much for making the time.

AF: Thank you for having me, Deepak.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: I hope you found the conversation purposeful. If you want to listen more on the topic of Behavioural change, you might like my conversation with Katy Milkman of Wharton. A related topic is habit formation. If you want to know more on that topic, you might like the conversations with James Clear, Author of Atomic Habits and BJ Fogg of Stanford and the author of Tiny Habits.

Thanks for your time and attention and look forward to having you at a subsequent conversation at the Play to Potential podcast. To know more about the Advisory work I do, you can just visit playtopotential.com and look at the section About Deepak. Bye now.

End of transcription

Nugget from Jennifer Petriglieri that is referenced: [Securing the base for the other to explore](#).

Nugget from Katy Milkman that is referenced: [The power of a fresh start](#).

Nugget from Dan Pink that is referenced: [Rifts and Drifts](#).

RELATED PLAYLISTS YOU MIGHT LIKE

Driving Change: Ability to drive change in an organization is one of the critical Leadership Competencies for a CEO today, given more and more is getting done at the intersection of different ecosystems, and a large portion of value add is not directly under the leader's control but in the wider realm of influence. In this segment, leaders talk about how they drove change through a complex system/organization. You can access the playlist [here](#).

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

Resilience: Research by Angela Lee Duckworth (of Wharton) talks about a special blend of passion and commitment that she calls Grit. Leaders from various fields (Armed Forces, Writing, Sport, Entrepreneurship and more) talk about their experiences in cultivating resilience. 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](#).

Parenting: Discussions around the role that parenting plays in shaping who we are and our beliefs, habits, behaviors and mindsets. Leaders share their personal experiences around how a lot of who they are got baked in their early years. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Navigational Principles: Leaders discuss their personal frameworks around how they made choices around pivotal moments in their lives. They articulate the set of criteria we should consider having when we are at a fork on the road and have to pick between disparate options. Arguably one of the most critical skills of the future as we navigate a world of abundance. You can access the playlist [here](#).

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

Identity: Identity refers to the reputation, characteristics etc. of a person that makes the individual or the people around him/her think about them in a certain way. To put simply, how do we think of

ourselves and what the others think of us. Identity is a key element that we need to wrestle with during pivotal transitions. Herminia Ibarra shares her insights on how we should treat Identity as a Work in Progress that gets influenced by the journey we go through and the choices we make. Ram Guha speaks about the multiple identities of Gandhiji. Atul Kasbekar speaks about how he saw his identity evolve from being a photographer to a producer. All this and more in this playlist. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Self-awareness: Insights around what it takes to build a better understanding of self. This includes perspectives around how we can deepen our picture of ourselves through a combination of inner work, mindfulness practices and by gathering meaningful feedback from the world around us. You can access the playlist [here](#).

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

Resilience: Research by Angela Lee Duckworth (of Wharton) talks about a special blend of passion and commitment that she calls Grit. Leaders from various fields (Armed Forces, Writing, Sport, Entrepreneurship and more) talk about their experiences in cultivating resilience. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Curiosity: "A Curious Mind" by Brian Grazer (Oscar winning Producer of movies like A Beautiful Mind and Apollo 13) was the inspiration behind the Play to Potential Podcast. In this playlist, Leaders reflect about the role of curiosity and how it has helped them in their journeys. As Alvin Toffler says, the Illiterate of the 21st Century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn. You can access the playlist [here](#).

SIGN UP TO OUR COMMUNICATION

Podcast Newsletter: Join 1000s of leaders who benefit from the Podcast newsletter. Not more than 1-2 emails a month including keeping you posted on the new content that comes up at the podcast. High on signal, low on noise. Sign up for the podcast newsletter [here](#).

Nuggets on Whatsapp: We also have a **Podcast Whatsapp distribution group (+91 85914 52129)** where we share 2-3 nuggets a week from the Podcast archives to provoke reflection. If that is of interest, please click [here](#) and send a message stating "INTERESTED". Do also add this number to your Phone Contacts so that we can broadcast our messages to you when we share a nugget.

Ayelet Fishbach - Nuggets

- 91.01 Ayelet Fishbach - Goal setting - a Goldilocks balance
- 91.02 Ayelet Fishbach - Goals and the long game
- 91.03 Ayelet Fishbach - Parenting and Psychological reactance
- 91.04 Ayelet Fishbach - Choices post financial independence

- 91.05 Ayelet Fishbach - Connecting with our future self
- 91.06 Ayelet Fishbach - Glass half full or half empty
- 91.07 Ayelet Fishbach - Motivating ourselves during the long middle
- 91.08 Ayelet Fishbach - Mining the silent graveyard
- 91.09 Ayelet Fishbach - Identity and Optimizing vs Satisficing
- 91.10 Ayelet Fishbach - Marie Curie and power of joint goals

About Deepak Jayaraman

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

Disclaimer and clarification of intent behind the transcripts

This written transcript of the conversation is being made available to make it easier for some people to digest the content in the podcast. Several listeners felt that the written format would be helpful. This may not make sense as an independent document. Very often spoken word does not necessarily read well. Several of the guests have published books and the language in their books might be quite different from the way they speak. We request the readers to appreciate that this transcript is being offered as a service to derive greater value from the podcast content. We request you not to apply journalistic standards to this document.

This document is a transcription obtained through a third party/voice recognition software. There is no claim to accuracy on the content provided in this document, and occasional divergence from the audio file are to be expected. As a transcription, this is not a legal document in itself, and should not be considered binding to advice intelligence, but merely a convenience for reference.

The tags that are used to organize the nuggets in the podcast are evolving and work in progress. You might find that there could be a discrepancy between the nuggets as referenced here and in the actual podcast given this is a static document.

All rights reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, or stored in any retrieval system of any nature without prior written permission.