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Context to the nugget

A lot of who we are often gets formed in the context of our childhood. Vinita reflects on her upbringing, her parents' influence and her passion for extracurricular activities and links it to how that has played a key role in her growth as a leader over time.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): One of the pieces I am curious about is how much of us who we are gets formed in our early years, so again if you were to go back in time are there three four things that got baked in your formative years let's say till end of schooling or end of college which still forms a core part of who you are?

Vinita Bali (VB): I agree with your proposition of we are a product of our experiences right from childhood to otherwise I think the most significant part of thinking about since in multiple dimensions or not in a single dimension or thinking about things systemically I think comes from my exposure and my interest, I think it was my exposure which lead to my experience to a lot of things when one was growing up. In school I used to do sports, I used to do dramatics, I used to for a long time I was a student of Indian classical dance which I pursued in the evening outside of school, so I was interested in doing everything you might say and not that I thought about it but I was also the school selector, junior school captain and head girl and so on and so forth, and those roles in a strange way come with their own responsibility which seems like a lot when you are a school kid, So I think it was the combination of all of that and my exposure to the world of theatre to the world of classical music and dance, I think refined in many ways, my aesthetics or my thinking about things across a continuum rather than fragmenting that this is cool and this is extra curriculum in my life everything moved off from one to another, the school finished we stayed back and then we did dramatics and then played hockey and then so I think in its own way that was quite formative that was quite formative in terms of looking at issues from multiple dimensions in terms of a sensitivity and sensibility which things like the arts and when I talk about arts, I talk about visual arts, I talk about performing arts, I talk about theatre I think those things enabled you to touch something which the rational objective world of valuations and NPVs and IRRs doesn't allow you to, and I think both are important I don't want to undermine one versus the other but I think if we can create a greater sensitivity and sensibility and a respect for the bigger environment in which businesses operate I think it would change things a lot and I think it would help a lot, I think we have become too unidimensional in our thinking.

DJ: The other piece I am curious about Vinita is also from a parenting perspective was there anything about the parenting context which helped you come on this journey that you have come?

VB: I think that's a very interesting question as I think about it ours was quite a happy household and there weren't any challenges, my parents were, for both of them I think the education exposure was very important, all the right brain stuff of theatre and dance and poetry etc. I got from my mother who was a reader very interested in these other dimensions of life but as I think about it, it was a very secure childhood and I think that security of childhood gives you confidence, it enables in you the creation of trusting relationships as compared with kids growing up in households which are insecure where dramatic things have happened, so nothing of that drama happened in my life, my dad worked for the government we were encouraged to have a lot of dinner time was always a time of debate, discussion, argument and conversation so it was that security I think which gives you the confidence and sort of the trust, which stays with you later on in life.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: It was interesting to hear Vinita talk about how having interest in multiple domains helped her see life as a continuum than discrete compartments. I am reminded of the work of Wharton Professor Stewart Friedman, who talks about work life harmony instead of balance. He talks about dividing your life in to 4 broad areas self, work, home and community. He says that the smart guys really find a way of driving interlinkages across these various elements and have osmosis rather than treat them as discrete buckets. Can you do something with your children to do social service, Can you link your passion to something you do with your colleagues and so on and forth. How can you cleverly enmesh the different domains of life in a mutually re-enforcing and an enriching way is an interesting way to look at this whether it is Corporates looking at CSR or individuals looking for harmony across various domains of life.

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End of nugget transcription

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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 [16.02 Vinita Bali - Early childhood wiring](#)

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