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Context to the nugget

Anu talks about her moment of epiphany during an interview with a McKinsey partner that really pushed her to reflect on what she enjoyed and what she didn't. She talks about how she has tried to get to the bottom of what gives her energy.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): How you have thought about navigation of career? How you have thought about the where to go question in the context of what you were solving for at different points in time?

Anu Madgavkar (AM): I think the navigation is important for, if a certainly important for me as I sort the holy grail of work life balance but I think this navigation and choices we make are actually relevant for everybody regardless of your so called personal or life circumstances and this is because I feel that there is a sense renewal and a sense of just tapping into your own energy that keeps you going, every professional actually needs to be aware of and has to take stock of every few years to say is my sense of energy high? About what I am doing for me that sense of energy came I think a lot from being intellectually excited about problems that I was looking at so at every major transition that I made move from the trading desk to credit an equity research was prompted by wanting to kind of challenge my mind in a different way the curiosity that made me get into the consulting and finally I found that as a consultant I had spent many years looking at the financial services sector and because I was not very mobile I had a family etc. I ended up looking at this in the context of, in a certain, I looked at India, I looked at other emerging markets but over a period of time I found that it wasn't exciting me enough and there could have been other options for intellectual growth and renewal but the McKinsey global institute option came my way which was fascinating because it was completely different and as I said earlier it afforded me the opportunity to looking at huge problems that you don't normally think about in a very fundamental way so I think making a transition necessitates you just self-reflecting a little bit to say what is it that I really am looking for that make me tic and give me the energy that I need to make kind of the next phase of growth happened for me, for me it was all about finding the right source of intellectual challenge and doing so by making these different transitions.

DJ: And if I may double click on that to persist with the theme and the reason I do it is, I think even at the days I go back to IIMA and some of the other education I have been through I think a lot of the education is focused around making sense of the outer world but solving the inner world is often left to chance so just to make it tactical, if you had to sort of decode the how of, how you figured out what makes you tick are there any thoughts on, how people could make sense of the inner world to get to the bottom of what makes them tick?

AM: So my advice would be to talk to a few people I go back actually to the moment of epiphany that I had in a very unexpected place which was when I was being interviewed by one of the most senior partners in McKinsey 15 years ago when I was applying to join the firm and I have had a series of interviews which went fine and then this very senior partner was sitting there and he said, asked me a little bit about my career goals or something like that and I started telling him that how I enjoyed every aspect of my professional journey so far except this one particular phase and he stopped me there in my track and he just in a very penetrating way he said why did you not enjoyed that phase and sitting in that interview actually I went through a moment of complete self-awareness, I was not aware of this but because he asked me that pointed question I took a couple of minutes to think about it and then I came back and I said as I think about everything I discovered in that phase that I am not fundamentally a very comparative person I am much more a collaborative person and that situation demanded a level of comparative behaviour that I was not very comfortable with, which I was not aware of earlier so I think having that conversation with someone who provoked me to think was actually very helpful, not everyone provokes you to think but seek that out in your mentors or seek that out in your couple of close relationships that's all I would say, get to level of that conversation because that's what actually provokes you to reflect.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: In our professional lives, I realize that people often receive feedback on what they are good at and what they are not. Very seldom do people tell you what energizes you and really makes you tick. When I work with leaders in transition I talk to some of the people that know them well on the personal and professional front. In those conversations, I find mining for insights around sources of energy and frustration tremendously revealing in terms of providing clarity around navigation for the future. Leaders in transition often jump into problem solving the "what next" without adequate emphasis on seeking feedback from the world around them that can provide valuable cues that can guide direction. You might just want to ensure that you don't fall into that trap if you are in a phase of transition.

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End of nugget transcription

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Anu Madgavkar - Nuggets

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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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