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Context to the nugget

Vishy spoke about how his habits and attitudes have been shaped by his parents. He also talks about his style of chess being significantly influenced by his parents. He traces his pragmatism on the chess board and open-ness to ideas (in terms of borrowing from other leading minds) as something that possibly was influenced by the style of his parents.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): What gets formed in the early years of growing up? You spoke about your mom introducing you the chess, what was some of the other things or approaches to life of attitudes that got built in you which have helped you in a journey this far, are there three four things that stand out in your first 12 to 15 years?

Viswanathan Anand (VA): I guess I got most of my values from my parents, my parents were quite protective, mother would accompany me to tournaments when I was 16, 17 and then after that she came for some of the big ones even if she didn't travel with me everywhere So I had this typical phase when I was 15, 16 where I wanted to go alone as well, you know, you are a teenager and you want to explore a bit more, so my mother probably felt this and didn't stop coming everywhere but certainly it might have been there in the back of their mind that too much independence and you pick up bad habits and things like that, so my habits and my attitude is probably are very similar to my parents in the sense, there were things that never ever occurred to me, within my own range of adventures there were things that I would feel comfortable experimenting with and things that wouldn't and so on, I feel it in my chess that I am quite pragmatic and I am not very adamant in a certain way, if someone has a good idea and it works for them I am interested to copy it, I have a ability to improvise and I have no problem with borrowing ideas, some people come with the very scientific bend of mind, where you know it's their concept, their idea, It's not about success or failure it's all about what works for you? But because I came from the non-scientific background for chess, in chess it has engaged to play in those days everything is spontaneous so I would say, I was sensible and pragmatic.

In my time there was no chess coaching, I think like that, so everything that I learnt at the pickup on the fly and that means you are comfortable with certain level of improvisation and of course I have changed heavily since that I mean as I have got to the top I have to learn lots of skills and perhaps now I am more comfortable in well prepared areas and things like that, but I think that was the best.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: Just a quick comment here. This reminds of my conversation with Vinita Bali (VB), a distinguished leader who has had a successful career across 6 countries in 5 continents. She spoke about her early childhood years where she got exposed to several extracurricular activities and how that has informed her leadership style. It was interesting that she mentioned that this exposure enabled her to see things in a continuum rather than discrete compartments and helped her get her right brain and left brain capabilities to bear as a leader.

VB: "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"

DJ: You might want to look up Nugget 16.02 on playtopotential.com if this is of interest. Marrying this back to Vishy's point, not only do these pursuits energize you by giving you a break, they can even help you in your core pursuit whether it is leading a business or pursuing a sport at the highest level.

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End of nugget transcription

Nugget from Vinita Bali that is referenced: [Early childhood wiring](#).

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Viswanathan Anand - 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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Podcast Transcript [21.02 Viswanathan Anand - Early formative years](#)

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