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Context to the nugget

Devdutt talks about people transitioning from being a Parshuram (rule follower) to Ram (Role Model) to Krishna (Coach) as they go through their career. He discusses the distinction between the western model (that he says is substitutive) and an Indian model (that he says is cumulative). He refers to how sometimes children in family businesses aren't exposed to adequate real-life experiences before they join the business.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): How should people transition effectively from one road to the other?

Devdutt Pattanaik (DP): One has to be very clear what transition means in western module it is the relay race you give up something to become something but the Indian module is you build on what is there, so it is not give up A and become B and then give up B and then become C it is A+B+C, so Ram does not exclude Parshuram and Krishna doesn't exclude Ram and all but that how we are thinking even today when people talk about change management they talk of change as replacement they don't talk of change as expansion, I will tell you and this comes from western mindset, the book has to be replaced by a new book they are not saying the new book has to be added to book shelf so the western module classically is replace a book with a new book so it is in a religious framework also, one religion is replaced by other, that's how they think of religion and ideology it is a western mind and nothing you can do about it if it is denied vehemently but they can't handle so there were Greco Romans whether Christian they gave up the Greco Roman tradition then they become secular they gave up Christianity because they can't handle two books simultaneously, Indian module of leadership is to move towards the infinite database with more and more data as you grow your data base increases, so you can handle more and more so you have to increase your RAM and your application abilities and the abilities to handle more and more information, that is growth, it is not giving up one data base, its moving one equipment to the other but it is expanding your equipment and this notion, this is just very simple idea of loss so just become a leader, so if you become a leader of the company doesn't mean you can't still do the doorman's job, you have to be able to everything and the little bit more, this is how god is described in India, he is everything and a little bit more, so it is that, here it is everybody like I see this very rich people and their children suddenly think that they will get wisdom of their parents and their grandparents through osmosis and on day one they are meant to sit on the head office and they talk to seniors as if because the inheritance gives them the authority to talk to you as an equal and I have done this and I have seen this children stepped out of international American schools talking in an American accent knowing nothing about India talking to you as an equal because they have a bigger wallet and I am like are they idiots? Or their parents are idiots and they are going to give this entire fortune to this idiot but you can do nothing about it because they are so dumb and that is the

biggest discovery that large wallet size doesn't mean that you are not dumb because you are a fool, he is the blessed with inheritance but he still has to go through the entire thing that is why in Ramayana Ram has to go to the forest Vishwamitra drags Ram into the forest and says that what is this palace, Vashishtha is teaching you in a safe ecosystem, palace is a safe ecosystem come to the forest can you fight to the Rakshashas? That's a training going on, go kill save this lady this is practical when Vishwamitra is taking him through the jungle, what is the jungle? Jungle is the metaphor for the market it's very nice to sit in the father's and saying I am the head of the marketing *Jaake Bech Naa*, sell yourself sing in the street and let's see how many men will come to you when you learn that way it is the brutal thing, you see this in airports, you will see these credit cards you will see these young MBA guys try to sell credit cards, it's very shameful, and you can see their awkwardness but you have to do it, you come down to the ground and then you learn one year that and then you learn to be a manager, so you are blessed, your roller coaster ride is up there but you have to spend time on the shop floor this is many old families I still see doing that, I know some of the families where for the first ten years the children are not allowed to sit in the board meeting, no chance you are sitting in the board meeting you will have to spend 10 years, because anyways what's the hurry? The father is still there say MD or Chairman, you are not going to become MD and Chairman infact they are encouraged to do business and they allowed to fail in the business so they learn how brutal the world is, the uncle will not help you, aunty won't help you, you can't take up the phone to bank and get the loan.

DJ: In the journey I am specifically curious about the Ram to Krishna role modelling to being a Coach, when you work with leaders what are your observations on people that sort of move to the next level effectively?

DP: See I think many people glamorise Krishna a lot and one has to be very careful because as Indians we are seeing there is a religious tradition associated with these guys and Ram has seen as some kind of a school head coach Krishna is seen as who helps you win the battle, so you are really hiring the coaches to give me the secret formulae so I can win the battle, Krishna is not doing that and you need to understand what is Krishna doing repeatedly? The Pandavas win the war, you have to see the story carefully he is enabling them to grow up, in the Pandwas when they was going to the forest again the forest again, the Pandavas lose the kingdom and they go to the forest and they spend whole year as servants that is Krishna training them because in the entire Mahabharat they are the kings and suddenly one day they have to servant how does it feel for a king to be a servant for a day? And he slapped, Yudhishtir had slapped in Virat Parv and Draupadi is sexually abused and Arjun is treaded like a girl she is a Brinhala, she is a Eunuch treated as sex object these are psychological narratives which we don't think about so the Krishna is actually, I went once to the public sector company where they had this Krishna poster with Arjun and he is finger pointing and I am like why is Krishna finger pointing because in peoples head a coach is a teacher because they have this teacher head masters who is going to beat them up and tell them up to do the right thing, there is not right thing the coach enables you to see the parts of yourself even you don't know exists, he helps you understand see the limitation that you have, it helps you understand that what are the kinds of people you need around you to create a complimentary team for the context you are in, how to deal with the fact that you are not the smartest guy in the world or you may have been the smartest guy but in the next situation you may not have been the smartest guy, how do you deal with the uncertainty, how do you deal with the fact that you are a power hungry monster who calls himself a leader a teacher has to tell him that now I can't tell, you can't tell this. I deal with so many powerful people who have a very low self-esteem about them, all they want to hear is good things so they hire coaches to tell them how great they are!

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: The one company that comes to mind, when I think about the Jungle metaphor is Hindustan Unilever. One of my friends, who is now a leader there told me that you might come from an IIMA, but when you are given the first Sales stint, it like going to the jungle. A lot of what you have learnt for 2 years is often not relevant and that is not the reason people will respect you. The grooming that they get when they spend that time on the field, I can imagine is invaluable when they come back to the palace (or the corporate office to assume roles in Marketing and beyond).

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End of nugget transcription

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Devdutt Pattanaik - Nuggets

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- 25.02 Devdutt Pattanaik - Transitioning from Healthcare to Mythology
- 25.03 Devdutt Pattanaik - Being effective in the Gig Economy
- 25.04 Devdutt Pattanaik - Dealing with various life transitions
- 25.05 Devdutt Pattanaik - Effective coaching process
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- 25.08 Devdutt Pattanaik - Understanding fear to decipher beliefs
- 25.09 Devdutt Pattanaik - Building perspective and judgment
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- 25.11 Devdutt Pattanaik - In summary - Playing to Potential

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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