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Context to the nugget

Mouli talks about how the early years were often focused on achievement, which later gave way to an orientation towards Mastery and the last phase being driven by purpose. He talks about how he found his purpose along his journey and how it has impacted the choices he makes in everything he does whether it is a market visit or writing a book.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): How have you thought about the success at various points in time and with the benefit of the journey how would you think about it if you went back in time?

Chandramouli Venkatesan (CV): I think it's a very challenging question and I have tried to define it in the book at some stage to say what motivates people in their career? And I kind of through a set of inspiration and my own decoding I figured out there is a pyramid of motivation, most of us are motivated at the base of pyramid by the need to achieve, which is how do I achieve material benefits, how do I achieve a reputation? A designation a sense of success so on and so forth I think the next stage of motivation is what I called mastery, which is how well I do stuff? So as a marketer it is also important for me to achieve success but also to say when I put out the new product or I put out new piece of advertising it must look with the Mouli stamp of class and quality and mastery and how well you do stuff and the last leg of motivation is purpose which is why do I do stuff? I think typically what tends to happen is, you graduate up this pyramid, we tend to start as achievers at some stage we just say some achievement is not enough of a motivation for me I also wanted to do stuff well I want to be a master of what I do. A lot of people don't get to purpose at all, which is why do I do it? I also went through the same journey, I had been an achiever and out and out achiever very driven kind of an achiever I think I felt moved fairly quickly to mastery to it doesn't, I don't feel motivated only by saying I achieved something I must do stuff very well I must always set bench marks and standards of what I do? But I think I passed that phase of that fairly quickly and I was struggling for motivation and I think somewhere then everybody has to find their own purpose, I found my purpose in my HR stint. Where I suddenly found that the ambition of wanting to help people succeed was a powerful ambition and I think that became suddenly my purpose to say whatever I do I create results for the business but in that process I must make people better and that became a purpose and that the gives me a purpose to anything I do as simple as a market visit and I go to a market visit and I meet four people of my company in the market visit, I am not doing the market visit only to find out what is good and bad in the market. I am saying in that market visit I must make those four people better as a result of having spent a day with me. And that suddenly gives me more purpose to a market visit which otherwise after 26 years you get tired of doing market visits, you do it a little more ceremonially so I think finding that purpose is actually the final unlock.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: The point Mouli makes about Purpose is a profound one and it can make all the difference especially as one gets senior. If you are interested, do look up Simon Sinek's TED talk on the Power of Why. Its possibly one of the most viewed TED talks. One of my earlier guests was Viren Rasquinha (VQ), who used to play Hockey for India and now is the CEO of Olympic Gold Quest, spoke about this in the context of what makes athletes resilient. OGQ works with Elite athletes and helps them prepare for medals at the Olympics.

VQ: *"the why is very important for every person and what does it mean to that person and I have seen many super talented athletes but just the why is not clear to them they are sort of drifting and it's not very clear to them what is their dream, why are they doing what they are doing every single day in training and for me the why has always been very clear and that i wanted to win an Olympic medal as a player and I shattered when I couldn't win it for myself and now what drives me every single day is to ensure that the same mistakes are not repeated for the next generation of players"*

DJ: The key is that over time, we all need to find an inner driver that will push us towards achieving great things. And that comes from having clarity on the Why question.

Thank you for listening. If you are new to the podcast and want to get a sense of the nature of content that is covered, you might want to go to YouTube and type "PlaytoPotential Highlights from 2017". I have tried to capture the key takeaways from my various conversations last year with leaders across disciplines. From people such as Zia Mody, Nandan Nilekani, Viswanathan Anand, Vijay Amritraj, Amish Tripathi, Vinita Bali and the like. For more, please visit playtopotential.com where the content is organized by nuggets and they are tagged by themes so that you could get perspectives from multiple individuals on a topic that you care about. If you want to listen offline say during a car ride home or during airplane travel, you could also access the Podcast on iTunes, Stitcher, Saavn and several other podcast apps but that may not give you the flexibility to navigate across speakers by theme. If you find the content purposeful, please go to iTunes, rate the show and share a review. It will help others discover it.

End of nugget transcription

Nugget from Viren Rasquinha that is referenced: [Building the Grit muscle](#).

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Chandramouli Venkatesan - Nuggets

- 28.00 Chandramouli Venkatesan - The Full Conversation
- 28.01 Chandramouli Venkatesan - Genesis of the book - CATALYST
- 28.02 Chandramouli Venkatesan - Turbocharging your growth - TMRR
- 28.03 Chandramouli Venkatesan - Raising the game when it matters
- 28.04 Chandramouli Venkatesan - Playing the 1st half to win in the 2nd half
- 28.05 Chandramouli Venkatesan - Picking mentors thoughtfully
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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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