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Context to the nugget

Deepa talks about the mindset with which she took stock of life when she had chest-below paralysis and had to recalibrate her approach to her activities, schedule, relationships and aspirations. She talks about how she developed a sense of gratitude for what she had and how she and her family chose happiness. She also talks about how her hobbies enabled her to immerse herself into an activity and bring happiness to her life.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): How did you take stock of life and how did you recalibrate what you wanted to get out of life?

Deepa Malik (DM): Initially it was just a learning new body and the new life tricks, how to transfer, how to sit, how to eat, how to change a diaper, how to do Catheterization, if you end up with constipation, how to take enema at home, the nursing the physio and the continued maintenance of the body, adapting it as a lifestyle to be honest and not just being treated like a patient throughout so we all had to take charge, children had to learn, husband had to learn we had to deal with our marital confusions, because this was the new body and of course we were a different couple earlier and we had to be a different couple later the children had a different looking mother so they had to relate to her and my immediate family had to be very cautious in drafting lines and saying this because they were extra cautious that something they would said should not have a double meaning or it should not come across as something said in a negative manner so there was a lot of home work that we all had to do, when you said calibrate of course we chose to be happy I think the key point and the code word was happiness and that's why even the foundation that we have chosen to run, me and my elder daughter we call it Wheeling Happiness so we decided there will be no melodrama, so the calibration rule was happiness and zero melodrama so we stop seeing those stereo typical Hindi movies where disabilities is always shown as sadness and we started looking for the fun element to be brought into it and I think the fun element could only come in because we had certain hobbies, I love to be a biker, I love to drive cars, I loved outdoor activities, I loves cooking, so all these passions and hobbies came together to calibrate and reset the life.

DJ: For people who are going through the near-death experiences, what are the two three pieces of wisdom you want to share with for them to have the courage to sail through those situations, what have you learnt?

DM: I think I have learnt that life is the only festival, that can be celebrated every day, you don't have to wait for dates time, engagements, create time to do that, I think every day should be celebrated and the other experience that I felt or I personally decided or you may call it a resolution that I made

to myself, when I was walking to the operation theatre because I chose to do that, I did not want to be wheeled or put on a stretcher and taken and then I took the last set of stairs I ever took in R&R Hospital I was actually looking at my feet and realising that I have legs. How many times we stand up in front of a mirror and say oh I have hands, I have eyes, oh my god I do have feet on which I can walk, we never really take time to count our blessings and one thing I have learnt is I look for happiness one, I look for positivity two, and three I take everything in my way as a blessing and I celebrate it. I don't take anything for granted anymore and I have stopped postponing things in my life, if I have something on my wish list I try to act on it as soon as possible or maybe I can put it in a way that I don't wait for things to happen, I initiate the change. I take initiatives now, I don't wait.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: It was fascinating to see Deepa talk about happiness as something that she chose every step of the way rather than melodrama which is often the default approach to these situations. I guess, it is critical for the ecosystem around you to also embrace that mindset of gratitude for what is there and move forward with a positive spirit.

The other piece that struck me was her point around hobbies. We often think of hobbies as a useful life skill to broaden our perspectives, build new connections and get more rounded in life. But it was fascinating to hear her talk about her hobbies as something that gave her the diversion, positivity and the strength to deal with her extreme situation.

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End of nugget transcription

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Deepa Malik - 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 [32.03 Deepa Malik - Rebounding from a near-death event](#)

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