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Context to the nugget

Stew speaks about what has stayed the same and what has changed significantly in his thinking around work life integration. He talks about the ubiquity of technological devices that now surround us and speaks about the need for all of us to build psychological tools to benefit from the technological advancements without incurring the cost that often comes hand in hand with such developments.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): What are the big shifts in your thinking around work life integration, what has changed?

Stewart Friedman (SF): So, let me tell you what hasn't changed is that the principles are being real being hobby ... reflecting from what you learnt from trying, experiments that are designed to make things better with the people who matters most to you in the different parts of your life and to be more aligned with your values in terms of where you invest your attention that has become even more important to more people and to be reflecting on what you learnt from consciously, deliberately, intentionally trying to create meaningful change in your world, where you learn about leadership and about creating change that's sustainable because it works not just for you, not just for your business, not just for your family, not just for your community but for all the different stake holders in your life that has become increasingly important to more people men and women but in the digital age, in the early stages which is still young a lot has changed and so there is the much greater need, hunger, crying, pain for people to learn how to manage the boundaries between work and the other points of life because it is so hard now with the ubiquity of the information avail with our smartphones and all the digital devices to shut it off so there are many more people doing experiments in the type that I call focus and concentrate where the goal of the experiment is to try to do one thing at a time or focus on one person at a time, to bound your attention to one thing there are a lot more people doing those kinds of experiments now and seeing the benefits during that. So, with the power the remarkable power of digital communication making so many things more efficient, it also come at some cost which am sure, you have thought a lot about probably talked a lot about here, and what I see with my clients or my students is that this is a major issue that they are wrestling with how to deal with how do we develop the psychological tools, the social tools that enable us to use this technological tools in a way that advances the human prospect without undermining it or destroying it, there is a risk of that. There shifts including and especially the role of man and women in society which is radically changed over this last few decades.

DJ: You also talk about the notion of psychology interference to your point across the four domains and you say that comes in the way of people being effective in each of the domains I found the term

quite interesting, could you talk to us a little bit about what you mean by that? And how it impacts our effectiveness each of their domains?

SF: We all wrestle with psychological interference across the different pursue, it simply means, you are with your child worrying about a problem at work or a person at work is cause you difficulty she is looking right at you maybe you are having dinner or maybe watching her playing with sand box or to a puzzle or something but your mind is not there you are somewhere else and that psychological interference that's when your mind is somewhere other than where your body is and your thoughts are interfering with your being present and that causes all kinds of difficulties. Especially for kids because they will pick it up, they will pick it up and I had done research on this, looking specifically at children's mental health and how it affected by their parent's experiences with work and their values about work and in one of our findings in that study, just issued a piece out that probably our digital icon at HBR I have heard about this what are our finding, that is try to summarise and that is that when parents especially fathers are thinking about work, there is interference between work and family their children have poor mental health as a result so it's a really important concept and it's one that we can do something about, you can change that it takes efforts, you have got to care about it, you have to know that it's an issue which is why this stake holders dialogues that we have people do are so crucial because they really do send a wake-up call to many people where you have conversations with say your children and ask here is what I think is important to you, do I have it right? And they are going to tell you what I really need from you is for you to pay attention to me that's really common.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: If I may build on what Stew says, I notice a couple of things happening as a result of the tech penetration in our lives.

- 1) Work becomes all-consuming and it becomes difficult to shut down work wherever we go even when we are in vacation; that really comes in the way of time with family, community and self
- 2) The other piece that people often don't realize is that tech often comes in the way of time for self. A lot of the buffer time that we had that could have been an opportunity for reflection now gets consumed by either Social Media like WhatsApp, Facebook or LinkedIn or by Netflix or YouTube which are endless pools of uninterrupted content

So, as Stew says, Focusing and Concentrating and being present and being mindful of our attention getting hijacked into an endless reservoir of content is something that we all need to bear in mind as we navigate the tech driven world with significant downsides if we don't manage our attention carefully.

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End of nugget transcription

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Stewart Friedman - Nuggets

- 40.00 Stewart Friedman - The Full Conversation
- 40.01 Stewart Friedman - 4 porous domains - Self, Work, Home and Community
- 40.02 Stewart Friedman - Positive spillovers across domains
- 40.03 Stewart Friedman - Role of Authenticity, Integrity and Creativity
- 40.04 Stewart Friedman - Tradeoffs by stage of life - Early career, Mid-life, End-career
- 40.05 Stewart Friedman - Technology and psychological interference
- 40.06 Stewart Friedman - Managing stakeholder expectations
- 40.07 Stewart Friedman - Role of a Coach in Work-life integration
- 40.08 Stewart Friedman - Flex the current context or reboot?

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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