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Context to the nugget

Rich talks about the origins of the Search Inside Yourself programme. It started out as a quest for Googlers looking for a solution to stay agile and resilient while you are on a “rocket-ship”. He also goes on to talk about how SIY brings in wisdom from multiple domains ranging across Neuroscience, Mindfulness and Emotional Intelligence to help people develop a new kind of intelligence that enables them to cope with the roller-coaster ride of a tech driven company.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): Let’s move to the book “Search Inside yourself” Rich is the ok with you and to the organization. I read the book by Meng with a lot of interest would love to explore few themes but before we dive in, I’d love to get a sense of the origins of the program where all does it draw from and give us a sense of the why behind the program and some of the foundation pillars of the program?

Rich Fernandez (RF): Well one thing that happen when you are in a hyper-growth company like Google that’s trying to it has his validation goals is that life on a rocket ship can be difficult let’s put it that way so stress level are high conflict can become exacerbated, you now all of the natural human challenges and emotions that we fell in the course of life and work are magnified in a situation which you have this kind of high growth, hyper growth company. I think at Google people were interested in finding solution to be resilient and remain agile and they started primarily at the neuroscience around this and one of the things that neuroscience started to point you as there is a way that you can train your brain way of a set of use of mental health habits to help promote focus and mental clarity and mental stability in the face of many challenges and the short hand term for this would be mindfulness using the skills of mindfulness. Now this is based on neuroscience the actual working of the different networks in your brain and one thing they find in neuroscience in the past couple of decades is that the set of skills called mindfulness skills which have a lot to do with attention and directing of attention, awareness and perception and then self-regulation and management which then also spills into relationship management in the interpersonal sphere. All of this can be trained and, in the brain, and the brain will actually change once its start taking up these mental exercises. Again this might not be surprising I mean you know I think this podcast of course is going out in India a place where pretty much mindfulness was invented so this is probably may not be news for folks there but the sort of empirical neuroscience of it is fairly new at least in the in the west and so what and so what they are interested in Google was looking at the ways that this mental skills change the brain and prepare you for the kind of environment in which you find yourself and help you succeed in that environment. So search as in search like Google search but inside yourself was born “Search Inside Yourself” that’s the name of the curriculum that really when combines the skills of mindfulness together with neuroscience and emotional intelligence as the outcome because what

we realize is people aren't so interested in doing a stress buster as much as they are in developing a new kind of intelligence which is emotional intelligence and so SIY (Search Inside Yourself) is a mindfulness based emotional intelligence curriculum that was developed specifically for initially for Google engineers and then brought this for the Google Population.

DJ: And today talk to us a little bit about the mission at Search Inside Yourself now clearly its setup as a as independent entity working with organization around the world so the purpose of the listener gives us a sense of what's the vision here?

RF: So, we started seeing as we rolled this curriculum out we started seeing tremendous success so thousands of Google employees were going through it every year and it occurred to us that you know there could be a great benefit we started getting a lot of request from other organization offer this to them and so you know we had a conversation with the head of HR my boss at that time, a man named Lazlo Bock and we agreed that there would be a weather we could create a separate non-profit organization and I called Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute or SIYLI.ORG and its mission would be to offer this curriculum to the world. In effect to make mindfulness and emotional intelligence practical and accessible and really take this approach of science based and evidence-based tools to help people thrive. Some six – seven years ago we rolled the institute out of Google as a separate stand-alone non-profit organization and began offering this broadly to the world. We still share the IP with Google this curriculum is still run within Google every year against the thousands of employees take it but now other organization through the Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute can also experience the curriculum for themselves.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: In my leadership development work with Entrepreneurs in the Indian start up ecosystem, I notice that a lot of them start out early in their careers because they see a big problem to be solved and they dive right in. They often have clarity around the Product and the Tech piece around the big challenge they are after. That often gets them from a 0 to 1 to borrow from Peter Thiel but when it comes to a 1 to 10 or a 10 to 100, a lot of the leadership is often about people related issues. How do you set the culture in the team, how do you handle conflict, how do you manage multiple stakeholders when you have a few rounds of investors and more employees in your system and so on and so forth. And the strange thing is that while people are taught some of the hard skills, some of these inter-personal and emotional tools are often left to chance for people to figure out. While I see the founders have mentors who help them on business related decisions and choices, they often don't proactively solve for scaling up on this dimension.

I find that this is a key missing piece that needs to be proactively solved for as an organization transitions from a Start up to a Scale up!

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End of nugget transcription

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Rich Fernandez- Nuggets

- 41.00 Rich Fernandez - The Full Conversation
- 41.01 Rich Fernandez - Leadership Development in the Digital economy
- 41.02 Rich Fernandez - Origins of SIY
- 41.03 Rich Fernandez - Attention and Meta-Attention
- 41.04 Rich Fernandez - Developing the meditation habit
- 41.05 Rich Fernandez - Benefits of Journaling
- 41.06 Rich Fernandez - Meta-distress and Response-flexibility
- 41.07 Rich Fernandez - 3 levels of resilience
- 41.08 Rich Fernandez - Positivity and Psychological Safety

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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