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Context to the nugget

Rich speaks about three levels of resilience – Inner calm, Emotional Resilience and Cognitive Resilience. He talks about the example of Captain Sully Sullenberger (who miraculously landed the plane on the Hudson river after his plane was hit by birds after taking off from LaGuardia) to talk about how calm and composed he was and stayed present during the ~3 minutes he had between the bird hit and when he landed the plane.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): Moving to a different topic you talk about three levels of resilience. Inner calm, Emotional resilience and cognitive resilience and once again I found it interesting that you broke it down into this three normally people talk about resilience at a headline level but it was interesting to see these three different levels of resilience talk to us about what these terms mean and how we can build this muscle?

Rich Fernandez (RF): Well inner calm is the first thing that we talk about earlier which is the skill of mindfulness and being able to manage your attention and something happens when you are able to direct your attention to the present moment, the breath, Mantra whatever you call it where you become calm and less reactive because you are just simply grounded and focused so that's the habit of inner calm is the habit of mindfulness. Emotional resilience happens when you are able to become aware of the emotion that you are having as you are having them. This has a little bit more to do with open monitoring that I was discussing earlier. You are noticing what's arising within you as an emotion as it's arising in real time and it allows you then to take that distance that I was talking about to exercise that response flexibility when you are aware of your emotions you are able to manage them, when you are aware of your emotions you are able to respond rather than react. Now some listeners might say well look Rich it's really important to react I'm in a business where I have to react and I would say to you unless you are experiencing an existential threat its gone always be far more effective to respond rather than react because responding doesn't mean going slow. Let me give you an example to make this really concrete and really clear have you ever been in airplane and experienced heavy turbulence, you have right and so the listeners have too who do you want in the cockpit in that moment somebody who is reacting and just alarmed and on fire or someone who is calm, competent, clear headed and knows exactly what need to happen and when it needs to happen. You want Captain Sully Sullenberger. That I actually met the man he came to give a talk at Google and he is that way when you meet him like one of the calmest most grounded people but what does he say actually he says that he trained and this is by the way for the listeners who aren't familiar with Captain Sully Sullenberger he is the man who landed the jet plan that was flying over New York City. It flew through a flock of gings so they lost all jet proportion because the gings flew into the engines and burnt them out so in the space I think I have about 3 minutes to make a split second

decision to land the airplane on the Hudson River it was the only available large open space over New York City but he thought about it very calmly. So, I'd ask you to Google it or YouTube it you will see interview with him he explains it. But how did he do that he says he trained his whole career for it. He said I have 30 years as pilot and so I just know the routines. I knew what needed to happen and he just calmly proceeded to do that he didn't react and become over blown or over-whelmed by the situation and this is why we talk about emotional resilience is being a key quality of a leader in a digital economy and then the last piece Deepak because you asked me about this was cognitive resilience and this is simply your mental outlook its very simple it's one of two things its optimism vs. pessimism. Studies have shown that people that have positive outlook and that are optimistic are people that see possibility and they feel agency they like they are able to act against those possibilities and they them-selves can have a positive impact on making possibilities or reality that's what an optimist does pessimist tend to be people who actually take a disempower mentality they often feel like they are victim they often feel like injustice simply exist and there is very little you can do against it so why bother you even trying to form the cynicism and it's not particularly effective as a leader to be a turbo pessimist because you feel like you can actually make progress against difficulties and you can cultivate by the way cognitive resilience by actually doing things like expressing gratitude and looking at positive qualities, positive attributes in your lives those around you.

DJ: You spoke about inner calm cultivating inner calm but, on the emotion, resilience coming back what you have said about.... Any observation on how people can cultivate emotional resilience?

RF: So, this is the process starts with open monitoring and developing that self-awareness, emotional processes that happening in your body as they are happening so this is a type of meditation you can do this is a type of mediation and simply allow you or read the book or take one of our program we teach you a kind of become aware of thought feeling, sensation and just kind of move through those different domains of experience you could do sight, you could smell, touch just notice go through the categories of experience and just simply notice what is happening for you in that moment and that will then build the skill of open awareness so that when you do faces situation where you are triggered in real life and have this difficulties you are immediately aware of what you are feeling. If you can name it then you can actually manage it very much like Peter Drucker said you have to be able to measure it to manage it. Well in this exercise of emotional resilience you have to be abler to name it to then be able to manage it and you respond to it verses react to it and if you ask most people when they are really triggered, when they are really pissed off, they can't really explain what they are feeling. So the more fluent you become in your own emotionally literate you become about your own emotions, your own internal ecosystem then the more emotionally resilient you will be able to be and you develop again that skill by being able to monitor your own experience as you are having it.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: The movie Sully which captures this episode is one of my favourites. It is directed by Clint Eastwood and Tom Hanks does a wonderful portrayal of Captain Sully Sullenberger. Just to build on the point Rich makes, as they show the conversations in the cockpit, they first show the Captain evaluating different options of landing at nearby runways including a return to LaGuardia and very quickly he realizes that those options don't make sense given he has a dual engine failure. Then he decides that Hudson is the only chance they have to land the plane and to survive. At that moment, the Captain pauses and asks his co-pilot in his calm voice – "do you have any other ideas". To me that moment really captured the point around response flexibility versus Reaction that Rich speaks about.

DJ: Thank you for listening. For more, please visit playtopotential.com. For curated insights by theme, you could visit the Curated Playlists Section in the website. If you want to listen offline (either during a gym session or a plane or a car ride), you could download the podcast from iTunes, Google Podcast Player. Spotify, Saavn and most other platforms. If you find the content purposeful, please share and rate and review on iTunes or any of the platforms you use to consume the podcast.

End of nugget transcription

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Mindfulness: Given we live in a world with exponential increase in content creation and with firms like Google, Facebook, Amazon and Apple vying for our attention, it is quite hard to reclaim our own space and attention. In this context, being mindful could be a key differentiator and a competitive advantage. Some leaders talk about how they created that space for themselves amidst the noise. You can access the playlist [here](#).

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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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