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Context to the nugget

Herminia speaks about the criticality of sticking to your core and playing to your strengths but at the same time finding a way you can experiment and try different experiences on the edges. She speaks about how you need to build a bridge into a new possibility. Has a parallel with the journey of Papa CJ and Amish Tripathi.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): How do you think about the tight rope between diluting yourself and going too far verses staying to your core how do people think about that because there is a risk of just going all over?

Herminia Ibarra (HI): Right play to your strengths verses not adding value because you are in something that you, that's not your strength. We have to first approach this with realism so you know nobody is going to become a rocket scientist or a concert pianist that mid careers we know that. The problem is just because something is your strength does it mean that you love it and you want to do it forever. So people like to play to their strength, they like to be competent and be adding value for it but people also like novelty and challenge in learning it's a human need and those two can clash and so you know sometimes people simply change because they can't stand at any more and but they still have to kind of build bridge because nobody is going to hire them or finance them for something they don't know how to do and that's what the transition process is where are you going to build the bridge? What are you going to draw from? Where can you find some common ground? All of that is kind of complicated and often may be not even the answer you would have thought at the very beginning you have to learn the way through it.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: The point Herminia makes about having a bridge from your current situation to a future possibility is a profound one and something that we need to solve proactively. Sometimes, it is not a step jump but more of an organic process. I want to go back to a conversation with Amish Tripathi (AT) at the podcast. He is an alumnus of IIM Kolkata and was in the business world while had a passion for writing that he was cultivating on the side. But he says something really interesting about the timing of when he quit the corporate job.

AT: *"It was a pragmatic decision, look I come from middle class family so I always joke "Bhai mere pass baap dada ka ashirvad hai jaaydat kuch nahi" so I have to be pragmatic and practical in my*

career decisions, I have responsibilities you know I am blessed with the child, I have a wife so I resigned only after second book when my royalty cheque became greater than my salary cheque”

DJ: He goes onto say that had he quit earlier, the commercial pressure would have come in the way of the creative pursuit and he wouldn't have gotten here.

Back to Herminia's point, it is critical that we don't see the transition as a one off event but something that we architect carefully and ensure that we strike a careful balance between sticking to the core, experimenting and solving for financial outcomes.

Thank you for listening. For more podcast content, please visit playtopotential.com. The website also has content organized by specific themes in the Curated Playlists section. Given you are listening to this podcast; you might specifically find the themes Reinventing yourself and Navigational principles relevant.

The Playlist reinventing yourself is about leaders who were at inflection points who were courageous to try different things and move into a new context. This includes Amish Tripathi speaking about how he moved from a career in Financial Services to writing, Roopa Kudva moving from CRISIL to Omidyar Network, Papa CJ speaking about moving from Management Consulting to Stand up, Nandan Nilekani moving from Infosys to the UID project and to politics, Atul Kasbekar moving from being a Photographer to a Producer, Devdutt Pattanaik moving from Healthcare to Mythology and so on. Hopefully the diversity of perspectives will provoke your thinking around how to navigate the transition.

The Playlist Navigational Principles gives you a flavour of the frameworks that various people used to deal with the various inflection points. In a world with more divergent pathways than before, the quality of the steering wheel is possibly as important if not more important than the quality of the engine we have in our car. This playlist gives you some thought starters which will help you build a more robust steering wheel for yourself.

You can access these playlists in the Curated Playlists section at playtopotential.com. And to know more about the Leadership and Transition Advisory work I do, please visit the about section at playtopotential.com. Bye now.

End of nugget transcription

Nugget from Amish Tripathi that is referenced: [Transitioning from Financial Services to Writing](#).

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Identity: Identity refers to the reputation, characteristics etc. of a person that makes the individual or the people around him/her think about them in a certain way. To put simply, how do we think of ourselves and what to the others think of us. Identity is a key element that we need to wrestle with during pivotal transitions. Herminia Ibarra shares her insights on how we should treat Identity as a Work in Progress that gets influenced by the journey we go through and the choices we make. Ram Guha speaks about the multiple identities of Gandhiji. Atul Kasbekar speaks about how he saw his

identity evolve from being a photographer to a producer. All this and more in this playlist. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Reinventing Self: “How do I stay relevant” is a question that all of us have to grapple with as we go through our respective journeys. Careers aren’t linear any more. Some of the leaders talk about how they managed to pivot during their journeys and significantly change trajectories. You can access the playlist [here](#).

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Herminia Ibarra - Nuggets

- 47.00 Herminia Ibarra - The Full Conversation
- 47.01 Herminia Ibarra - Acting your way to new thinking
- 47.02 Herminia Ibarra - Experimenting with different pathways
- 47.03 Herminia Ibarra - Portfolio approach versus Full-time role
- 47.04 Herminia Ibarra - Pausing to reinvent
- 47.05 Herminia Ibarra - Operational, Personal and Strategic networks
- 47.06 Herminia Ibarra - Identity play versus Identity work
- 47.07 Herminia Ibarra - The perils of foreclosure
- 47.08 Herminia Ibarra - Role of the spouse
- 47.09 Herminia Ibarra - Transitioning from well-paying time-greedy careers

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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