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Context to the nugget

Paddy speaks about how personal mastery is something that people need to pursue deliberately in addition to professional mastery. He speaks about how Sachin Tendulkar went about his journey of growing as a cricketer and as a human being. He also speaks about how this is much more important today than it might have been a couple of decades back.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): And just picking up on that piece around helping players becoming better people in the book you also talked at length about notion of personal mastery not just professional mastery and you talked about Sachin Tendulkar as an individual who is pursued personal mastery along with professional mastery I am curious about what are some of the things that you saw him which enabled him to go on this quest?

Paddy Upton (PU): I think if you take Sachin as probably the prime example and may be more recently you would have Dhoni and Koli who is similar examples of people who have reached such high level of fame in a country over a billion people where there is an absolute finalism not only for cricket but for cricketers so these guys are... obviously the time was a you know it's still is a demi god in the country and Sachin would doing out to see what he did on his own private time but I was able to see the fruits of him being keeping his feet on the ground for having personal mastery is an intentional pursuit, you know I mentioned in the book and in fact Sachin told a story of himself when he first made the Indian cricket team as a 16 year old and when he came back from that tour one of his team mates and very good friends saying to him that you know Sachin we recognize you are a better cricketer then us but since you made the Indian team you are acting as if you are more important person than us and as a group of friends we don't like that. Sachin highlights that as one of the high moments in his career one of my significant sorry should I say moments in his career when he was really able to realize the difference between being a good cricketer and being a human being. Yes he was a great cricketer but it doesn't mean that he is now a great human being or superior or more important human being to his friends and at the time he also mentioned that his father had spoken him about that your results on the field people will very quickly forget them may be you score a 100 and then you scored a naught the next week they will forget your 100 where you score a naught and you scored the 100 the following week people will forget that but always remember the impact that you have as a person. So from a young age his father had delivered that message then was reinforced there is 16 years old by his friend saying who you are as a person is separate from the results you achieve on the sports field and with Sachin having that awareness and being such a consummate professional and someone who lives no stone unturned eventually on the daily basis to try and improve who is a person and who is a cricketer he was very intentional about improving his game a cricket I never saw anyone prepare better and more intentionally then Sachin

Tendulkar literally day in and day out week in and week out and you know I was with him from his 18 to 21st year of international cricket and he was still probably the most diligent practice over the lot but at the same time because of the heights of fame that he had received in order to keep himself grounded you know it's very easy to get caught up in the heights of fame and get blinded by the lime light because what happens to these athletes and I see it also with very successful and higher profile business men is people around them treat them give them special treatment treat them as VIPs, very important people or VVIPs and they start to think because they treated as special people they start to think that they are special people but the reality is as human beings we are all just human beings and the talents we have we all have different talent but that separates to who you are as a person and Sachin was just someone who understood that I have special talent to hit a cricket ball but that doesn't mean I am a special person it means I am a talented cricketer who needs to also work on being a good person and I think in these day and age what we seeing is athletes are being more and more exposed for who they as people. We are certainly known being involved in international cricket 25 years ago a really talented cricketer could be a an unsavoury character and only the people in immediate surrounding might experience that that person is being very selfish or very divisive or you know an unsavoury whatever it might be and the greater population never really got to know about that so they often got away with it but in these... age with social media and cell phone cameras and every time someone goes in the public their behaviour is seen and recorded and if they even if it is recorded in camera someone should see someone's unsavoury behaviour they could always put that out oppose the social media and share it everyone. So players behaviour is far more closely scrutinized today so it's even more important that individuals work successful individuals understand and work who they are as people and at the same time as they continue working on whatever their professional talent or skill is and we are seeing in the cricket world now you know those individuals who are known as divisive on a really team mainly overly selfish they are actually even though they are highly talented they are actually not getting picked for example in some these T20 leagues or teams in these T20 leagues because they are known to be people who might undermine a team culture which goes back to what we are talking about for the Indian cricket team you if you have got a really divisive individual I think what Jack Welch in his book spoke about you know a cancer in the team. You want to be removing that that or not employing or not hiring or removing it as quick as possible before actually spreads and start contaminating the rest of the system.

DJ: And as a mental conditioning coach what are some of the things you did on the non-cricketing stuff going back to the notion of personal mastery what are one of the two things you did as a mental conditioning coach for people to go on a journey there?

PU: You know that would just be the personal conversation asking players for example one day when you will leave the sport when you retire I would ask players to actually write down if you have a very really great career where you deliver on all of your potential both on and off the field what would you love people to say about you and I would ask people to write down what do you want your teammates to say about you so they could make explicit what is it look like from when I am a great team man what do your coaches want to say about you? What you competitors want to say about you know that he was a very nasty person, verbally abused and sledged us or do you want to say he was a fair competitor and although he was tough really respect the individual. I asked them what they wanted to friend to say about them you know some players rise to fame and speak to their friend in the several you know he is no longer friend anymore now that he is famous and he thinks he is better than we are or even though how famous he got his actually still the same person he is still the great friend he is still very generous you know we really supports him because at some point every celebrity is gone from off the stage centre stage and out of the lime light and that where you really need your friend. I asked them what their family wanted to say. What they wanted their

kids to say about them you know dad was a very successful but he was never home and then I had also get players to write if you got things wrong what would people say to you what would you not want to these people to say to you the example I have gave him already you know wouldn't what some of your kids to say to you are so successful but you are never at home or when you are home you are really there for us you are always on your phone. So I would get players to project to their end of their career and understand what would be a great scenario and what would be a unfortunate scenario and then I would get players reflect at where are you at the moment if you would retire now with regards and unfortunate not great scenario and most players who had a 5 or 6 out of 10. If 10 out of 10 was I am at my perfect scenario so then the conversation would be if all life is different errors of your life none of them cricket related with regard being parent with regards being a friend with regards managing your health being a competitor how could you be even a better person then what you are at the moment so that would be one exercise that I might do I would ask people to define success more often than not people will advert they will be stuck with that question I have never really thought about what success is you know is it making at Indian cricket team, winning a world cup, having X Crore rupees at your bank account you know what would success would look like and when we start looking at all the material and measurable or tangible measures of success what most people realize is how incomplete the measure of success is and then the you know they start adding things like well the amount of you know the love that I have may be in my life with one people close to me the amount of joy the amount of contentment or peace in my life or security or whatever might be important and then we go across how would you go in the pursuit of that and you realize that you go and pursuit of joy and peace in a very different way it's an inward journey rather than outer journey so there is a number there is so many amazing ways out there to get people to just pause for the moment to reflect on who are you being in your life and how well are you managing in the area of being as supposed to doing.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: I am a big believer that leadership is not just about what you are doing but as much about who you are being. If that is the case, it really matters how you show up at work and in the various other domains of life. To that point, I do think it is difficult to isolate professional mastery and personal mastery. They go hand in hand. One is about evolving on the doing front, the other is about evolving on the being front. I spoke to the former World No.1 in Chess Vishy Anand (VA) on the podcast and he spoke about how tried to stay grounded as he reached stratospheric heights in the game.

VA: "I have found that a quite a lot of people that are famous or successful remain in some fundamental way the way they are, I think it's connected up bringing my parents brought me up in a certain way there were certain things that they did at the certain things at the obvious they wouldn't do and you kind of approach it like that and essentially with your family with your classmates you can suddenly act differently because they will immediately will say what's wrong with you? So you have to act normal, with fans and so on, this is not like a huge effort but I make an effort to be friendly and nice because at some level I am aware that I have a job because of them it's not obvious to me what exactly I should do differently? There are times I feel that I am trying hard to be nice then people are invading my space and then sometimes or the next time I will impose it a bit more but generally I do what I am comfortable with and I am a fairly relaxed person as such and I don't like getting in conflicts with people and so I gravitate to that approach"

DJ: One thing I have noticed is that people who do this naturally often struggle to break down what they are doing. But you can hear from the tone of the voice, how grounded he is as a person in the way he comes across.

Podcast Transcript [48.05 Paddy Upton - Sachin Tendulkar and personal mastery](#)

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End of nugget transcription

Nugget from Vishy Anand that is referenced: [Performing at the top and being grounded](#).

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Paddy Upton - 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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