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Context to the nugget

Tasha speaks about the Catch-22 (paradox) of Self-Awareness. The really self-aware people often actually think that (rightly so) that they know only a little about themselves. The un-self-aware ones often think that they know themselves really well. Tasha goes on to speak about one of the unicorns that she had studied who uses the metaphor of space to describe the quest for self-awareness.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): And coming to receiving feedback Tasha you talk about three types of people lost cause, aware don't care and... and I loved the way and I used to work in a McKinsey so whenever anyone breaks it to three things so its instantly appealing how do you look out for these types and in what ways do we approach our feedback differently towards each of these segments?

Dr. Tasha Eurich (TE): So this might not be the answer that you are looking for but it's something that I feel very passionate about. At some point and almost every key note I give someone will raise their hand and ask that question and I think at that heart of that question is usually something to the effective. How do I make other people more self-aware? And you brought up the different types of un self-aware people and I'll briefly define what those are and then come back to my original point. So one are lost causes these were the people who despite the amount of feedback they get they could hear the same thing from 100 % of the people they work with and live with and they are still convince that they are close to perfection. These are not people that anyone is ever going to change. There is also the aware don't care these are people who know exactly what a jerk there are being and we'll continue to do it anyway because they believe mistakenly that that's helping them achieve something that they want right success or some twisted version of success in their mind the third which is most people is something that named "Nudgable" people who are able to be nudged and if you are the right type of person if you have the right kind of relationship if you use the right kind of approach you can very often help these people see themselves more clearly. This goes back to what we were discussing earlier where you know most un-self-aware people are not bad people, they just don't know what they don't know. But in spite of all of that it's so common for us to focus our attention our self-awareness attention on all the people around us right. I wish my spouse could be more self-aware, my co-worker, my client but it's usually is a risky endeavour. If we take it on ourselves to make someone more self-aware. We may or may not be successful and there is often an inherent risk so the first thing I tell people is think really carefully about whether you are willing to accept the worst case scenario of trying to help that person and you know there is a lot of nuances to that depending on the relationship we have with them the power dynamic we have. I would even make up a percentage; say a large amount of the time channelling that energy into our own journey is a better use of our energy and attention. That doesn't mean that we don't have to live with these self-aware people so one of the things that our unicorns taught us was focusing on our own reactions

and perceptions of their behaviour is something we have a lot more control over than the behaviour itself so there is one tool I can talk about it in my book I call it the laugh track and this is actually a mindfulness reframing technique, I developed when I was working for this very un-self-aware, very un-intentionally nasty boss and every time he would say something nasty instead of getting wrapped up in feeling hurt or offended or sad I would imagine that we were on a television show with a canned laugh track and the laugh track would come on every time we said something horrible and what I noticed was it allowed me to snap out of the moment and out of the instinctive reaction I had and see him a little bit differently you know sometimes I would think about it later and I would say actually with the laugh track behind it that was kind of funny and so what I would encourage people to do is if diving head on to that I am gone give this unaware person feedback is to again be very careful about making that strategic decision is you want to talk to them or not and the no matter what you can always focus on your own perception of their behaviour and try to limit the amount of time you spend with the if that is all possible.

DJ respond: "That's fascinating I am reminded of the Wimbledon finals recently between Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer and you know Novak had the whole crowd in Wimbledon and routing for Federer and then somebody asked him how did you really manage to keep you calm and keep you motivation levels when everybody was routing for Roger Federer he said something interesting he said each time somebody said go Roger I sort of transmuted it in my head and made it sound as go Novak for myself so it sounds bit like the laugh track point you just made but that's fascinating"

DJ: How does one watch out for not falling in this trap what are the watch out so that we don't get caught in that catch 22?

TE: I want to make this really simple for all of us and this is a hard one and far less in for me personally. It's to make the decision to gently stop assuming that we are self-aware and there is an inherent paradox both to unawareness and to awareness right the unaware people usually don't know that they are unaware but the other side of that paradox is the most self-aware people never get overly confident about their level of self-awareness and they don't do it in a way that is self-deprecating or in a way that erodes their confidence they do it in a way that is open and curious. There is one unicorn that we spoke to his name was Kelcy, and he is a middle school science teacher. So inspiring amazing young man and he enlightens the quest of self-awareness to exploring space and what he said was you know what I loved about it is no matter how much we know there is always so much that we have yet to learn and you know just speaking personally this research program has knocked me off of my own self-awareness pedestal you know I thought when I started I am pretty self-aware I am probably gone discover that and I discovered that I am not nearly a self-aware as I thought I was. But what I have been able to do learning from our unicorn in a research subject is to reframe that it's to say you know I am going to take the default mind-set that I don't know myself as well as I think I do and I am going to take every piece of data that come in my way as data as exactly that right ohh this is really interesting I wonder what this is about and I think if we can do that, in some ways that's half the battle. If we can make that decision that no matter how much I think I know about myself there is always more to know that puts us far and away beyond most people.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: The metaphor of space is a great one. I guess building self-awareness is a never-ending journey and not something where you get complete mastery. As somebody who learns the guitar, I would possibly liken it to music. The more you learn, the more you realize there is to learn and as you build

your capability, you start appreciating nuances that you didn't even know existed earlier when you started out on the journey.

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End of nugget transcription

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Dr. Tasha Eurich - 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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