



The banner features the 'play to potential' logo on the left. To its right are contact details: a WhatsApp icon with the number '+91 85914 52129*', a Twitter icon with '@PlayToPotential', and a globe icon with 'playtopotential.com'. Further right, under the heading 'Also available on:', are icons for Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Google Podcasts. On the right side of the banner is a portrait of Deepak Jayaraman, with the text 'Podcast Host' and 'Deepak Jayaraman' below it. At the bottom left, a small note reads: '*Just send us a Whatsapp with your name, number and email and we will add you to our distribution list.'

Context to the nugget

Ashley speaks about implication of valuing time (as a Taylor) or money (as a Morgan) on how we make career choices. She speaks about how it is all the important for us to self-select ourselves into a career that we are intrinsically passionate about given that the paradigm is shifting from driving on a highway to navigating a maze.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): It's a great point you make Ashley, and if I may relate it to one of the things I picked up when I spoke to Tarun Khanna, who is your colleague at Harvard. One of the questions I asked him was how does he think about, how the world of careers would evolve, you know, if you wore your strategy hat and had a view on how that would evolve? And his headline point was, given the exponential rate of change in various disciplines and the exponential rate at which the dots are being connected across different disciplines, we are just going to see an explosion in terms of the number of possibilities that will open up in terms of career pathways. So, the reason I mention it is, you know, if we sort of zoom out and look at how the career was let's say in the industrial age 1960s, 70s, 80s and maybe in the 90s to now, clearly it sort of moved from driving on a highway where everybody sort of made similar choices and moved forward to driving through a maze. And I guess in a way one could even argue that the bar on being self-aware and making good intrinsic decisions is much higher today and, in the future, and the cost of not doing it is going to pinch you much, much more. Does that make sense? Do you have a view on that?

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: Just to provide some context to where this came from, here is the clip from Tarun Khanna (TK). I had asked him the question "How do we apply some of the developments in the field of strategy to how we think about careers"

TK: *"Well I think one of the things that's at least I can give you my impressionistic answer to that field as a scholar of it or a practitioner of it, I don't know that in the field as young as strategy that it's very easy derived consensus on these points of view so take it with the proverbial pinch of salt but my own senses that one of the dominating sort of empirical regularities with which we are confronted with more and more frequently is this idea that newer avocations as you were just saying Deepak, new industries if you want to call them that are perpetually being created and created out of existence, created and uncreated if you will that's the word and then this is happening very rapid rate and I think it's becoming more and more transparent, the extent to which this is happening is the result of combination of prior insights so think of it this way this are some very interesting work done*

by scientists and social scientists saying that, you know precisely because the stock of overall knowledge is exponentially increasing by some measures the amount of codified knowledge that humanity has added to its repertoire in the last decade probably exceeds that in the previous century and probably last two three decades exceeds that of a millenia before that so the rate at which we are understanding new things is truly accelerating and what that means is that if it's possible to think of exponents of exponents that the combinatoric explosion in new possibilities is even more bewildering and that means that this speed with which new combinations of things that were hither to uncombined if you will or things which you would not normally think of in juxtaposition position to each other are increasingly coming into combination and forming new vistas and new possibilities in different ways and of course each of these entails a resetting of the table if you will and if you are not careful you could find yourself out of a role to play, in order to this if you apply this to my previous thought experiment you could find that you may have had some unique value addition in the previous landscape but the new landscape has emerged in let's say last five years and suddenly your particular calling card is no longer in as much value at this point so you see this happening faster and faster and I think the underlying structural construct is that the rate admission you have knowledge and the rate of combinatorial possibilities is increasing very fast and there is no reason to think that that will diminish. That's the first thing"

DJ: Let's now get back to Ashley Whillans.

Ashley Whillans (AW): Yes, I mean, I think that absolutely makes sense given what we know about the importance of learning and development and growth for our career satisfaction and success to the extent that careers really truly become a choose your own adventure and a continual process as opposed to an outcome. It's going to be really important that we self-select in to amaze that we are curious to always see what's around the corner. Because if we do end up in these situations where we are in a career that we are not excited about, we are probably going to be more likely to be left behind because we are not going to be curious to learn more, we won't want to intrinsically do the learning and development programs. I completely agree with this idea that jobs will require more flexibility and offer more flexibility than ever and that we are also going to change our careers more than ever. I am writing a case actually on this issue right now about how the nature of work is fundamentally shifting employees' relationship with work such that employees were used to getting on a highway and driving in one lane straight are having a really difficult time adjusting to this new way of working. But especially as we are entering into a labour force it is so important to pick a path that we want to go down or that we can keep exploring that there's many avenues, because jobs are not only more... have more possibilities, our career has more alternatives like more options, more forking paths, but they also are going to be increasingly precarious going forward. So, we might have to be agile and nimble within a skillset, learn new skills on the job and there is good psychological research suggesting people who are intrinsically motivated are going to be better at seeing that as an opportunity as opposed to a threat. And so, I do think purpose and autonomy, I see this in my data even now. So, we have been running a lot of surveys over the Covid period over the last 8 to 10 months and we are seeing in our data that emerging adults, college graduates want even more purpose, mastery, flexibility. They wanted it before and now they are really seeking out careers that allow them to express fundamental aspects of who they are and contribute to society. So, I think that at the individual level employees who do seek out those kinds of opportunities will be the ones that have the longest lasting and both satisfying and successful careers. And also at the organizational level the organizations that are able to provide employees with these stretch opportunities, learning and development goals, these growth and stretch assignments are really going to be the ones that stick around because they will be motivating to employees and will be able to be as agile as needed to survive and thrive in this new very challenging and interesting competitive landscape. An aside completely from this conversation as I just finished a set of case

interviews with Kraft Heinz and that's exactly what they see as their competitive advantage. They often will hire one employee and then move them to a completely different division, a completely different division, a completely different role and then have all of these corporate development programs within the organization to attract and retain employees who are interested in being thrown in the deep end and be able to stretch and think differently so that they can be having these interesting intrinsically motivated experiences, but also contributing creativity to the company as well.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: I do think the bar on self-awareness is even higher today than it was 30 or 40 years back. I remember speaking with Rama Bijapurkar (RB), a Board member, an Author and an expert in the realm of Consumer Insight. I asked her about this notion of Paradox of choice.

RB: *"One of the young man actually I know who said to me, and he was a student of IIMA and I said to them that you were very lucky because you could do whatever you want but my generation was told that if you made your bed sleep in it, so my brother went to IIT for two years, hated it was told to finish it and then he went to the Indian Army after that into the public commission so he said mam but you don't understand my anxiety, he said my father has told me you can do anything you ever want to do and he said I am always looking around the corner to see is there something better and I absolutely what you are saying the fear of missing out but I think the more there are choices the more you have to be cantered to the world is complex and volatile and I think more complex and volatile which is the more you have to understand your centre and your core, going back to the earlier discussion we were having, you have to really really understand, so if you are anchored then you can with stand being buffeted it's a same for companies too. I tell companies that if you are going to competitive busting and whatever the competitive came up with you are going to reengineer it reverse engineer it and do better, when you have 20 competitors who are putting our 20 products because they also don't know all ready far end then are you going to bust 400, how do you know which 20 of the 400 to bust? So you eventually have to have a deep understanding of who you are and what you are trying to do with your customers and take it from there so if you don't have that who you are understanding or at least the navigational principals, I mean I am willing to sacrifice money for glory or listen I want a certain amount of balance in my life and I think you then figure out that even if the answer is that I have to do this thing because I have to do then though I believe something else, I am saying as long as you know that's what it is you will be able to deal with it better but knowledge is an absolute master what is inside of you."*

DJ: If this topic is of interest, you might like my conversation with Tasha Eurich, who is an expert in the area of Self-Awareness. She speaks about the notion of internal and external self-awareness and how we can leverage both to become a better version of ourselves.

End of nugget transcription

Nugget from Rama Bijapurkar that is referenced: [Careers - Paradox of choice](#).

RELATED PLAYLISTS YOU MIGHT LIKE

Navigational Principles: Leaders discuss their personal frameworks around how they made choices around pivotal moments in their lives. They articulate the set of criteria we should consider having when we are at a fork on the road and have to pick between disparate options. Arguably one of the most critical skills of the future as we navigate a world of abundance. You can access the playlist [here](#).

SIGN UP TO OUR COMMUNICATION

Podcast Newsletter: Join 1000s of leaders who benefit from the Podcast newsletter. Not more than 1-2 emails a month including keeping you posted on the new content that comes up at the podcast. High on signal, low on noise. Sign up for the podcast newsletter [here](#).

Nuggets on Whatsapp: We also have a **Podcast Whatsapp distribution group (+91 85914 52129)** where we share 2-3 nuggets a week from the Podcast archives to provoke reflection. If that is of interest, please click [here](#) and send a message stating "INTERESTED". Do also add this number to your Phone Contacts so that we can broadcast our messages to you when we share a nugget.

Ashley Whillans - Nuggets

- 66.00 Ashley Whillans - The Full Conversation
- 66.01 Ashley Whillans - Understanding the notion of time poverty
- 66.02 Ashley Whillans - When money stops moving the needle
- 66.03 Ashley Whillans - Are you a Taylor or a Morgan?
- 66.04 Ashley Whillans - Career choices in the future
- 66.05 Ashley Whillans - Consulting causing an adversarial relationship with time
- 66.06 Ashley Whillans - Optimizing versus Satisficing mindset
- 66.07 Ashley Whillans - Big why, Small why and Time Confetti
- 66.08 Ashley Whillans - Changing our relationship with time
- 66.09 Ashley Whillans - Relating to time during "Covid times"

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](#).

Disclaimer and clarification of intent behind the transcripts

This written transcript of the conversation is being made available to make it easier for some people to digest the content in the podcast. Several listeners felt that the written format would be helpful. This may not make sense as an independent document. Very often spoken word does not necessarily read well. Several of the guests have published books and the language in their books might be quite different from the way they speak. We request the readers to appreciate that this

transcript is being offered as a service to derive greater value from the podcast content. We request you not to apply journalistic standards to this document.

This document is a transcription obtained through a third party/voice recognition software. There is no claim to accuracy on the content provided in this document, and occasional divergence from the audio file are to be expected. As a transcription, this is not a legal document in itself, and should not be considered binding to advice intelligence, but merely a convenience for reference.

The tags that are used to organize the nuggets in the podcast are evolving and work in progress. You might find that there could be a discrepancy between the nuggets as referenced here and in the actual podcast given this is a static document.

All rights reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, or stored in any retrieval system of any nature without prior written permission.