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## Context to the nugget

Bruce speaks about the role of a Coach/Sounding Board/Therapist in helping people through a transition. He speaks about how Coaches often help by participating in the process of co-narration (a term that comes from the world of social sciences).

## Transcription

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Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): And just in the context of the work I do Bruce, what's been your observation of the role a coach or a sounding board can play in helping people navigate a transition? What are some of the ways in which you see them adding value for people to shape-shift effectively through a transition?

Bruce Feiler (RS): I love that question actually and think about a... think about your childhood dinner table if you will for a second and think about how this is really the kind of breeding ground where we learn how to tell stories, right. So, what did you do today? Okay, let's just say that you and I were brothers. I will make you the older brother and I will be the younger brother in this dynamic. And you and I went off to on a fishing trip and we are coming back and we are telling the other members of the family whether it is just our parents or grandparents or siblings or whatever and what's going to happen? But I say, you are the older brother, I am the younger brother here. I am going to start telling the story. So, oh my gosh and threw the bade into the water and the fish came and what are you going to do? You are not going to be eight words... I am not going to be eight words into the story before you interrupt me and you tell me and you start correcting my story. I am going to you said, that's not what happened, I did it, no, no you did not do this, I caught the first fish. What are we doing? We are actually... there's actually a kind of a geeky social science word for this. We are co-narrating this story.

DJ: Hmm, hmm.

BF: That's what a coach does. A coach, a friend, a mentor, a neighbor, a loved one helps you tell the story. And sometimes you are improving the story and sometimes you are asking a question that maybe the story teller doesn't think of, sometimes you are reflecting a pattern back to the teller. This act of co-narration is a fundamental and beloved and critical part of being human being is sharing your story with others. It could be your brother or sister, it could be your family, it could be your colleague, it could be your spouse, it could be a therapist. What does a therapist do but in a sense a kind of co-narration and I think that what the coach is doing is helping you hear things in the story that you may not hear or see things in the patterns that you may not see and ultimately if it works help you a little more efficiently get to the meaning that the meaning making part of the storytelling because fundamentally a lifequake is a meaning vacuum with a kind of normal building

blocks of what's important to us are stripped away. And what the life transition is, is restoring the meaning making and why any outsider is important is they can help us tell the story perhaps a little more efficiently and get to the wisdom that's there that sometimes we are not able to see.

## Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: I really like the way Bruce speaks about the role of a Sounding Board in the context of a Transition. In my experience of working with leaders, one of the elements often is introducing them to Search Consultants and helping them navigate some of those conversations. These are relationships that I have gradually cultivated in the Indian ecosystem after I moved on from EgonZehnder. This phase can often be a lonely and an unnerving process when you need to pitch yourself across multiple people. The leaders often tell me that my helping them craft their stories after really getting to know them and with the past familiarity of the Search process is of immense value to them when there is no one else that is taking their side. For them, the fact that they can have one person around them to navigate this phase rather than zero people is of huge value. They say that this Zero to One jump for them in terms of having a Sounding Board is valuable in this otherwise high stakes, messy and lonely process.

## End of nugget transcription

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- 70.00 Bruce Feiler - The Full Conversation
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- 70.03 Bruce Feiler - What is the shape of your story
- 70.04 Bruce Feiler - Disruptors and Lifequakes
- 70.05 Bruce Feiler - Midlife to Whenever life transition
- 70.06 Bruce Feiler - Make sense from scars (not wounds)
- 70.07 Bruce Feiler - Shape-shifting instead of resilience
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- 70.10 Bruce Feiler - Role of money in transitions
- 70.11 Bruce Feiler - Role of a Sounding Board/Coach
- 70.12 Bruce Feiler - In Summary - Playing to Potential

### **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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