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Context to the nugget conversation

Sally shares some insights for parents as we bring up our boys and girls. She specifically speaks about how we could get boys to listen more and girls to let go without being trapped by the quest for perfection which could be counterproductive beyond a point.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): And changing topics, Sally, I have two young kids, I have a girl who is 11 and a boy who is 7 and I realize a lot of what you say in the book are actually deeply wired mindsets both with men and women. So I am curious what advice you would have for parents in the way they bring up boys and girls so that we have more women leaders in the future.

Sally Helgesen (JG): I think that they can benefit by trying to help their boys be better listeners, that that is an essential skill for rising together for achieving their own best, while helping women and the rest of the world achieve it as well. So I think they can emphasize listening skills to their boys, which I see often are to some extent disregarded. I think that certainly for girls, it does not help female children to be complimented by saying, oh, that is perfect, you did a perfect job, etc. because it gives them that idea that mental clue, oh, this is what being good at something else, it means that I have to be perfect at it. So I think there is some really good modeling we can do. I want to share a quick little story that was from an event that I was working at a great tech company out in Silicon Valley, right before the pandemic. And afterwards, a young woman came up to me and she said I have a thing in the book where I, you know, trying to let go of worrying and rumination and I put up a sign in my office, it says, oh well, to remind myself to have a kind of a let it go attitude. And she said that was the most helpful thing I read in the book, she said and I am a real ruminator that is one of the behaviors in the book. She said, so I find that it is really helpful for me to put up little stickies all over my house that say, oh well, oh well, oh well, to remind myself. Well, when things happen, I will go, oh well, oh well. She said, well, I just want to tell you that she said a couple days ago, my 3-year-old daughter came into the kitchen and she was carrying a big bowl of Jell-O and she tripped on the door sill and the Jell-O went all over the kitchen floor and she just looked up at me, in her little 3-year-old voice and said, oh well, she said and it was because she read these so many times. She said so I felt really happy that I was modeling something for the next generation of women and raising a strong confident young daughter who was not going to second guess, apologize, shrink, feel terrible because she made a perfectly normal mistake and was not expecting herself to be perfect.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: I am going to take this Oh Well story and play it to my wife. I would be curious to get her response to Oh well to a kitchen floor filled with Jell-O. But I guess that's a different discussion and I digress here.

As a father of a daughter and a son, I have been curious about what my wife and I should be doing around our children in this context. One of my earlier guests Anu Madgavkar (AM) spoke about not having gendered roles in the family. But she also spoke about encouraging the girl child to be economically independent and using that as a compass for making pivotal choices.

AM: "there was also a voice of reason and then came from a very unexpected quarter, so after I graduated, I had a degree in economics and I was wondering what to do next? And I had gotten into the IIMs but I was also toying with this idea of maybe I should even go and do like a masters in economics or something completely different there was this slightly romantic idea of what else I would like to do and then there was this cousin of mine who was not particular influence in my life at that point but out of the blue he just said you are a girl and you should remember that it is very important for you to be financial independent because you don't know what your circumstances are going to be you should be able to earn your own living and live well and stand in your own field. So, whatever you do needs to be marketable and have value in an economic sense that was not the message I got from my parents at all because they were fundamentally believers that life works itself out just do what you like but I got this hard nose input from the cousin and I think that was pivotal actually because I did this I had to go to the IIM and them have conventional career and making money was part of that set of objective that I set out to do myself."

DJ: This is a complex topic, no doubt but I thought getting the girl children to be financially independent is an interesting perspective to help more women rise.

End of nugget transcription

Nugget from Anu Madgavkar that is referenced: [Early formative years](#).

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Sally Helgesen - Nuggets

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About Deepak Jayaraman

Deepak seeks to unlock the 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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