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## Context to the nugget conversation

Dan speaks about how elite athletes conjure up peak performance when it matters the most. He speaks about how even some of the Olympians experience imposter's syndrome. He speaks about the notion of neuroplasticity and how this can help performance.

## Transcription

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Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): And in the book in a related context, you talk about the power of visualization as well, right, and you refer to the golfer Jack Nicklaus and you sort of say that he was able to recreate a successful experience in his mind before he played a shot, talk to us a little bit about the parallel you see between a sportsman or a sportsperson rather sort of using the power of visualization to deliver that perfect shot versus, you know, us using the highlight reel to visualize ourself.

Dan Cable (DC): There is two important ideas here. So the first really important idea is our brain gets stronger when we practice and that is just the notion of neuroplasticity, which, at this point, I think is a fact. In the book, I try to go to some of it, but it appears for example that when taxi drivers in London have to get the knowledge, their actual physical brain changes to allow that many streets to get into their brain. And that is really interesting and it is powerful and it is really important that we remember that the brain is just a muscle. And sometimes it does not seem like that but the fact is the brain is just a muscle. And when you use it, it gets stronger. So that is a really important point. So you asked me a really good question, which is to kind of talk about the similarities and the differences between visualization and the highlight reel. Okay, so let us talk about how it is different and how it is the same. One way that it clearly is different is, unlike athletes, we do not usually actually create films of our best moves. You know, we are not able to look at that perfect golf swing or that perfect kick where the ball just went into the net and over the goalie's head. So what we have to rely on instead are people's memories of how we made them feel, how we solved a problem, what unique value we brought to the party. So that is one really important difference because that means we are dealing more with memories and words and less with, you know, video recorded. I think that is where it is putting out there, I know that is a big difference, but a big similarity is, trying to make yourself at your best salient. So I recently did one of these podcasts with a coach who worked with gold medalists and silver medalists at Olympic levels. He worked with some of the premier athletes in the world. And he says, what is so interesting is when we are on the outside of that, we look at those as the gold standard and we think oh, they must be so confident. He said in reality, they suffer an imposter syndrome just like we do because they too get there and think, I do not belong here, I am not this good, I am going to blow it. And what they do is they have to make salient the times that they were that good. They have to really bring forward in their brain, almost as a confidence boost and also is a way of practicing this is what you are capable of. So it

allows them to access that more immediately, more readily and so actually, wow, that is really an exciting point actually for me, we have just got to the most important element. This is not wishful thinking. This is not hoping of what I might achieve one day if I just wish hard. This is saying there have been times in my life when I have created an exceptional impact on other people. The question is, how can I get there more often. It is not saying 24 hours a day. It does not even say seven days a week. It is just saying I am capable of that impact. I know it because these 20 people have written me memories of times I have done that for them. I can do that more often with intentionality and I think right there, there is so many more things I could say about it of course. I actually think that right there should help even the, okay, when I was a cynic, that is one of the reasons why. I thought it was just wishful thinking. And what I have come to learn is, the neuroplasticity of the brain says, what leaps into your brain about who you are. And if we can train the brain to dish up memories of what you are capable of, you are more likely to do that more often.

## Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: I like what Dan says here. It is not about imagining you winning that game or lifting that title. It is actually going back into the past and playing the highlights reel of your best self from the past and playing that in loop and the impact it can have on your mindset as you get into a high-stakes situation. Thank you for listening. For more, please visit [playtopotential.com](http://playtopotential.com)

## End of nugget transcription

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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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