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## Context to the nugget conversation

Amy speaks about the term, Naïve Realism, that was coined by Lee Ross of Stanford. This is a phenomenon where we believe that we all see a certain version of reality but believe that that IS the reality. She speaks about the implication of this trap.

## Transcription

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Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): In your book Amy you also talk about a cognitive bias called naïve realism.

Amy Edmondson (Amy): Yeah.

DJ: I really loved the term where you say that the leaders forget to acknowledge what they are seeing is just their subjective version of reality and not reality itself and therefore they end up not listening enough to other voices to form the full picture. Can you say a little more about this and how it comes in the way of decision making?

Amy: Yeah, the term was coined by a professor at Stanford named Lee Ross and it just refers to a fundamental aspect of psychology which is that we all have the experience of seeing reality, that you have that experience, I have that experience. I just I can't I almost can't shake it, right? I look around and I think I am seeing the light switch in the door and you know the other people in the room or whatever it is and I think that's just reality itself. I don't think oh I am seeing a picture inside my head that neurons are coming together to create. Now that it's not that we want to be bogged down by the amazing neurology of perception but we do want to have a healthy skepticism about what we are seeing so that we are open to the fact that we might be missing something. We are open to the fact that you might see it differently but because of our naïve realism we tend to think that we are seeing reality and you must see it too and then we are surprised and disappointed when you see something differently and it's usually not a happy surprise. And so, we sort of think, we then make inferences about the other person that they are not as smart as they need to be or that they are disagreeable in some way. So, in other words we have this wiring, I like to say, to put it simply, I like to say, it's hard to learn if you already know and naïve realism means that we feel like we know, which means I am right and you are wrong which is...

DJ: And in a way I guess it's pronounced in the social media-driven world where we are sort of operating in a bubble and in our echo chambers I am guessing?

Amy: Yes, yes. I mean, I think social media has exacerbated this problem because we are... it's so easy to find people who agree with us that we then are at risk of just looking for... because of course

we all prefer that and so we are at risk of just collecting agreement and not encountering enough disagreement and dissent and perspective enhancing views.

## Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: A similar insight came from Jennifer Garvey Berger (JGB) who was on this podcast earlier who speaks about how the Human Operating System that has evolved over hundreds of years is not quite wired to deal with all the complexity of the world we find ourselves in. She speaks about 5 traps we find ourselves in, one of them is the power of believing a simple story:

JGB: *"Well, so we become, we kind of fall in love with our own conclusions and we fall in love with our own stories without even noticing they are stories. You could hear it in our language like your people said, well, it's obvious that or it's totally clear that, I hear it in my language all the time and almost never is it actually obvious the thing that I am talking about and so forcing ourselves to listen to when we have a simple story. Like it's obvious what the government should do here, completely not obvious what any government should do right now, completely not obvious. And so when we hear ourselves interacting with a complex set of ideas as though it were simple, then we know that we are in this trap. And so I think the solution there is to be able to construct a series of alternate stories not to confuse us but in a kind of almost a scenario planning way, not to try and get the right one but to try to help us understand that there are these multiple possibilities, none of them are likely to be a 100 percent right and to help us create a kind of a flexibility of our thinking that will hold us in good stead."*

## End of nugget transcription

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Nugget from Jennifer Garvey Berger that is referenced: [Trap1 - Looking for simple stories](#).

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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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