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## Context to the nugget conversation

Rajiv speaks about the different levels of listening. Level 1 – Focusing on the message; Level 2 – Focusing on the emotions of the communicator; Level 3 – Staying tuned to our own emotions as we receive the signals.

## Transcription

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Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): One of the people I spoke at the podcast, a lady called Jennifer Garvey Berger, she actually also talks about listening to our body for cues as well. You know, sometimes listening, we limit it to the world of grammar and English and language, but sometimes, there are a lot of cues that we can get through our body in terms of how we feel, you know, our wrist clenching, is our back stiffening and so on, which I thought was quite profound in the way we listen to ourselves. Any nuance there, Rajiv, in terms of listening to ourselves, anything that you have sort of gleaned through the years of this practice?

Rajiv Vij (RV): The point is certainly valid. We can definitely pick it up in our physical sense as well. And physical sense is not just yet, one is the body, the other is the impact of the emotions in the body, I mean whether it is stiffening of the back or, you know, that sort of sinking feeling, in your stomach, if you are feeling nervous or something like that or sometimes a punch in the gut if somebody said something that you really were extremely uncomfortable with, and all of these just being attuned to that, I think the other thing is, as I said, just the meditative nature is to be mindful all the time and as we build that practice of mindfulness, we will naturally be just more aware. It just happens, it is like the radio, you tune it to a certain frequency and that is the music you are going to hear, and you tune it to a different frequency, you start hearing a different music. So, with mindfulness meditation practice, you will alter the frequency at which you are listening. It will just happen. It is not a conscious thing and so forth, it will just happen. You will just be, in everyday moment, just more aware of what is happening inside you at different points in time.

DJ: That is a wonderful metaphor. I guess one needs to be a minimum certain age to relate to that metaphor of tuning a radio, that is so powerful, with you. And if I may stretch the matter further, there is a little bit of noise that you need to deal with as you move from one station to another, but the pursuit is worth it.

RV: Good one. Yeah, you will eventually get there, yeah.

## Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: I love the nuance here in what Rajiv says. Very often we hear a lot of people talk about focusing on the emotion of the sender but being aware of our emotions as we receive these signals significantly impacts the way we show up in a conversation, I guess.

In the conversation, I refer to a piece of insight from Jennifer Garvey Berger (JGB). Here is Jennifer speaking about listening to the signals from our bodies.

JGB: *“I mean there is this way that many of us have been taught over centuries in our cultures and our societies that the mind is the great thing and the body is the source of temptation or misleading data. And so, we have learned to not trust or believe what our body tells us and really think that it is the mind that is the most glorious human achievement. Actually, when we look at our psychobiology, our body is giving us signals all the time that our mind is making sense out very, very quickly and often reacting to without noticing that it was an embodied sensation that we are reacting to. So if we give someone some studies that are greater, like if you give somebody a shot of adrenaline and then you have them meet a stranger, depending on the gender of that stranger they are either likely to be more drawn to that person as a love interest or more threatened by that person as a possible threat or enemy after this shot of adrenaline than they were under normal circumstances and they tend to attribute that to the other person, and they don’t attribute that to their bodies in anyway. And so, their body is giving them a signal and then they are acting out of that signal without ever noticing that the signal happened. This is very dangerous that we are responding to data by taking action in a way that is completely divorced from our seeing of the data in the first place. So, we need to get much more in touch with what our body is telling us. I see leaders all the time and you see their studies about this as well. People who go into meetings hungry because leaders I work with are very busy and they hate all the ideas, like they hate all the ideas on the table, none of the ideas are quite right. Well, is this about the quality of the ideas or is this about the fact that you didn’t have time for lunch? Like we don’t tend to think oh, my goodness, I hate these ideas because I have no blood sugar and I have no creativity left. But actually, this is the way our bodies work. There are fabulous studies of the thing that makes you most likely to get parole when you are in front of a parole board in prison is how close to a break the judges are when they look at your case. If you are right after they ate lunch or breakfast then you are very likely to get paroled, if you are right before it’s time for a break or a meal you are very unlikely to get paroled. And this has nothing to do with the merits of these cases. This is completely because the judges are responding to a bodily sensation, but they don’t know that they are responding to a bodily sensation, so they think they are responding logically. If we are more in touch with our bodies, we can avoid those mistakes.”*

DJ: If this topic is of interest, you might like the Curated Playlist on Listening at the Podcast.

## End of nugget transcription

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Nugget from Jennifer Garvey Berger that is referenced: [Actively listening to your body](#).

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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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