

The banner features the 'play to potential' logo on the left. To its right are contact details: a WhatsApp icon with the number '+91 85914 52129\*', a Twitter icon with the handle '@PlayToPotential', and a globe icon with the website 'playtopotential.com'. Further right, under the heading 'Also available on:', are icons for Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Google Podcasts. On the far right, a portrait of a man in a suit and glasses is shown, with the text 'Podcast Host Deepak Jayaraman' overlaid on a red bar below it. At the bottom left of the banner, a small note reads: '\*Just send us a Whatsapp with your name, number and email and we will add you to our distribution list.'

## Context to the nugget conversation

Rajiv elaborates on the benefits of mindfulness. One obvious benefit is that we are able to observe ourselves better. Rajiv goes on to say that this practice also ensures that we are able to be more open to various possibilities that emerge along the way.

## Transcription

\*\*\*\*\*

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): So powerful, Rajiv, thanks for sharing. Moving on, you talk about mindfulness, and you actually say it consists of two key tenets, one is, being fully aware in the present and staying open to possibilities, and I found it interesting because there is a lot of literature around being present, but it was interesting to hear you talk about staying open to all possibilities. Can you say more around what you have in mind here?

Rajiv Vij (RV): Yeah, again, you are very insightful in picking these little variations of the standard things that I have. Yeah, so mindfulness is all about being present and so forth, but one of the things that is a source of stress and also a distraction from our ability to be mindful is that we get attached to outcomes. So, oh, I need to get promoted this year, or we have to move to a new house this year, or COVID must end in the next four months, whatever it may be, we all have little outcomes that we are trying to accomplish but we get attached to them. And because we get attached to them, it becomes hard to be present and hard to be mindful because our mind is somewhere else. As against that, if fundamentally, not only do we learn to engage with the present but also fundamentally, we become open to possibilities, of all possibilities, in any situation, our ability to be more mindful will go up. So for example, if I were to be open to the possibility that, yeah, I like to get promoted this year but maybe it will happen this year, maybe not, I do not know, and it is okay. We want to move to a new house this summer but hopefully it will happen but if not, that is okay too. And in this very moment, wherever I am, if I am open to the possibility, and the possibilities here are on the positive side as well by the way, Deepak, it is not like, oh, I am resigning to saying this, no, both ways, so, whatever, I am playing golf and I had two terrible holes. Now what is our mind telling us, one, we are not being present because we are thinking about the two holes we messed up, but also, our mind is caught up in the fear of the fact that our score is going to be bad today because we are not going to be able to make up those two bad holes. But if we stay open to possibilities, how do we know the next 7 holes or next 16 holes are not going to play out of my mind today, how do we know that? We do not know, let us just stay present, let us just stay open to possibilities and engage with the current moment in a mindful way, and let things unfold, let us not assume anything. So not being caught up with predetermined notions, etc., etc. and staying open to possibilities relaxes us emotionally and mentally, and that helps us be more mindful in a given moment.

DJ: Hmm. At some level, it is also linked to this notion of agility, just being agile every moment in terms of how the world opens up in front of us.

RV: Yes, it is the adaptability, I mean just being adaptable to that and for that, we need to let go of our preconceived notions about stuff, about people, about situations, about ourselves, about outcomes, and simply engage, just know the prospects. If we stay open to possibilities, if we engage with anything in a mindful way, we are going to get the result that that situation needed to create. It may be different from what I wanted, but it will be still a good effort towards whatever needs to transpire.

## Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: This insight from Rajiv reminds me of the insight from Rich Fernandez, CEO of Search Inside Yourself, an organization incubated in Google but with the perspective of helping leaders make sense of the inner world. He speaks about the notion of Agility and Response Flexibility.

*RF: "So, let me give you a concrete example because this might seem like I'm talking about riddles. So recently we did not meet a certain financial bench mark and I started doing that narrative like how did I do this. This is a complete failure. I can't believe that I miss this particular thing would have changed everything of we have seen this and I felt myself berating myself and along those lines until I realized wait a minute, I'm feeling upset about the fact that this was missed and I'm having the experience of stress and frustration around it but it's just an experience that I'm having at the moment and it doesn't need that we can't remedy this things doesn't mean we can't learn from them but I'm just at the moment experiencing frustration. So I note it and in noting it starts to diminish somewhat and I'm not governed by it anymore. I'm not defined by that experience and my mood states starts to shift actually as well. So I'm not just an angry grumpy leader because we missed financial targets. But one whom is like starting to develop this agility, this ability to learn, this ability to see the next path, see around the corner and actually look at other solutions so it's a way to kind of manage yourself moving from the facts or moving away from the story that you tell yourself about the facts and simply dealing with the facts directly.*

*That's actually the bed rock because it actually informs your world view and how you show up as a leader so this skill is something that we teach we call it response flexibility the ability to respond rather than react to challenging situations and most people in business face challenging situation all the time but if you are only reacting to them and being very hot and angry all the time you are being responsible actually. You are not being balanced and you are not being clear headed and that's the difference being response flexible in the face of challenges and disruption is a critical skill for business leaders and for technical leaders and it does very much have to do with your own internal landscape."*

DJ: I recently came across the term Way Power in the context of Resilience. We all know the notion of will-power, the ability to brave through a tough situation. This author spoke about Way-power, which is the ability to pause and imagine all the various possibilities to a particular problem and says that the more we pause and evaluate various pathways, the better the solution. The hypothesis here is that we don't make poor decisions because of poor judgment but because we are so rushed that we don't pause enough to consider multiple pathways before marching ahead.

And back to what Rajiv says, developing a sense of stillness not only makes us aware, it also increases the odds of us evaluating multiple possibilities as we go through our journey.

## End of nugget transcription

\*\*\*\*\*

Nugget from Rich Fernandez that is referenced: [Meta-distress and Response-flexibility](#).

### RELATED PLAYLISTS YOU MIGHT LIKE

**Mindfulness:** Given we live in a world with exponential increase in content creation and with firms like Google, Facebook, Amazon and Apple vying for our attention, it is quite hard to reclaim our own space and attention. In this context, being mindful could be a key differentiator and a competitive advantage. Some leaders talk about how they created that space for themselves amidst the noise. You can access the playlist [here](#).

### SIGN UP TO OUR COMMUNICATION

**Podcast Newsletter:** Join 1000s of leaders who benefit from the Podcast newsletter. Not more than 1-2 emails a month including keeping you posted on the new content that comes up at the podcast. High on signal, low on noise. Sign up for the podcast newsletter [here](#).

**Nuggets on Whatsapp:** We also have a **Podcast Whatsapp distribution group (+91 85914 52129)** where we share 2-3 nuggets a week from the Podcast archives to provoke reflection. If that is of interest, please click [here](#) and send a message stating "INTERESTED". Do also add this number to your Phone Contacts so that we can broadcast our messages to you when we share a nugget.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Rajiv Vij - Nuggets

- 84.01 Rajiv Vij - Stepping off the corporate track
- 84.02 Rajiv Vij - Attitude towards Money
- 84.03 Rajiv Vij - Key choices as a Coach
- 84.04 Rajiv Vij - Working with the leader as a whole
- 84.05 Rajiv Vij - Building the Spiritual Quotient
- 84.06 Rajiv Vij - Self acceptance before Self Improvement
- 84.07 Rajiv Vij - Delegating thoughtfully
- 84.08 Rajiv Vij - Decoding Executive Presence
- 84.09 Rajiv Vij - Multiple levels of listening
- 84.10 Rajiv Vij - Being, not just doing
- 84.11 Rajiv Vij - Staying open to possibilities
- 84.12 Rajiv Vij - Coachee selection
- 84.13 Rajiv Vij - Unlocking our potential

### 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](#).

### **Disclaimer and clarification of intent behind the transcripts**

This written transcript of the conversation is being made available to make it easier for some people to digest the content in the podcast. Several listeners felt that the written format would be helpful. This may not make sense as an independent document. Very often spoken word does not necessarily read well. Several of the guests have published books and the language in their books might be quite different from the way they speak. We request the readers to appreciate that this transcript is being offered as a service to derive greater value from the podcast content. We request you not to apply journalistic standards to this document.

This document is a transcription obtained through a third party/voice recognition software. There is no claim to accuracy on the content provided in this document, and occasional divergence from the audio file are to be expected. As a transcription, this is not a legal document in itself, and should not be considered binding to advice intelligence, but merely a convenience for reference.

The tags that are used to organize the nuggets in the podcast are evolving and work in progress. You might find that there could be a discrepancy between the nuggets as referenced here and in the actual podcast given this is a static document.

All rights reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, or stored in any retrieval system of any nature without prior written permission.