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## Context to the nugget conversation

Ayse speaks about how it is critical for us to get playful when we think about coming up with ideas for Life Design. She speaks about some of the warm up exercise she conducts to get people in the right frame of mind.

## Transcription

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Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): And one of the things you talk about, Ayse, is, in your book, you suggest that we warm up our right brain before we embark on the exercises, you actually ask us to draw something for five minutes. You know, I am trained as a, my left brain has gone through a lot of training, given I trained as an engineer and I went to B school, but can you throw a little bit of light on how we can warm up our right brain before we embark on some of these exercises that you suggest?

Ayse Birsal (AB): Yes. I think it is kind of going back to your childhood. When we were three or four or five, all of us drew things and played with crayons, and there was that playfulness in what we were doing. And so, I think it is a capability that we all have but depending on our education that we forget. So I want to bring that back to people and say, before you do anything creative and you do not have to be a designer to be creative, we can all use creative problem-solving. Before we get into that space, we need to warm up our creative brain, and it is very similar to what we would do when we go to a gym and we warm up our muscles. So the idea of drawing something is really that same idea of warming up, but in this case, our right brains. And then, that centres us and gives a signal to our brains that we are entering the creative space and we are going to think differently and creatively. And I think it is essential. So I tried to get people to do that when I work with them and it does make a difference. It kind of centres them and they give themselves permission to be more creative. Now, the thing that makes drawing difficult for us is because we judge ourselves and we think, well, if we draw, it has to be a masterpiece, and nothing can be further than the truth. Drawing is a language and we all use that language, you know, we can talk in metaphors and be very visual, and we can write and we can do math formulas. So it is just one more language that we have learned as children and we have somehow forgotten and I just bring that back.

DJ: Hmm. And maybe just staying with it, just like drawing something for five minutes is a warm-up, are there two-three other things that you do, just out of curiosity, just to get people into a creative frame of mind?

AB: Yes. I ask them about their emotions, and this is something that I learned way back when, similar to your question, we were thinking about, like, how could we help people be in this moment together with us, and I learned that asking people about how they feel right now is very helpful

because it suddenly connects them. We call it the elevator from your brain to your heart, and suddenly, you connect with your mood in this moment and it gives people a chance to recognize, hey, I might have been doing something else like before I came here, like I do not know, what you were doing before you and I started talking together. I was doing email. What were you doing?

DJ: You know, it is 5 a.m. For me, it was just wake up and get a cup of coffee and get ready for the conversation.

AB: Exactly, So if I ask you, like, Deepak, how are you feeling right now?

DJ: I would say energized. Energized is the word that comes to mind, just an opportunity to listen to somebody in a different part of the world who has a very different perspective on life than the ones I have been exposed to. So just, at this point of time, soaking in the wisdom, and energized.

AB: Great. And I feel very focused right now to make sure that I can be as clear, in this moment, as I can be to articulate my thoughts. So, just saying that, did it make you kind of connect with yourself for a second?

DJ: Hmm. And it is interesting Ayse. It is in a way, back to the point around being present in the moment and being cognizant of how you are showing up, I brought back my attention to how I am showing up in this conversation.

AB: Great.

DJ: And it is also one of those things that we do not, as you rightly say, we do not give words to. It is one of those things that just remains but giving language to it and precipitating it, I am guessing, has its own power in unlocking creativity.

AB: Yes. And so now imagine I go one step further and I ask people not only to say how they are feeling in this moment, I also say, do a quick drawing of how you are feeling. And then people draw emojis or sometimes they get very creative and they do these wonderful drawings, but even a smiley face can suffice. And just that can serve as your warm-up for creative thinking, and that is it. Now you are connected with your heart and you have done some sketching. It is really interesting how small adjustments like that can help you think differently or be more open to the process.

## Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: 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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