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Context to the nugget conversation

Ayse speaks about how long it takes for somebody to design their life. She touches upon the benefit of leveraging others' perspectives and how we can accelerate our design process. We connect the dots with an insight from Herminia Ibarra.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): The other piece I was curious about Ayse was the elapsed time. You talk about the four-step process. This is also one of those things which is not an overnight exercise but it requires us to immerse in some of these things over a period of time, sleep over it and get to a meaningful place. But in your observation, what have you observed about the time it takes to a meaningful redesign, these four steps, is it weeks, is it months, is it days, any perspective here?

Ayse Birsel (AB): It has been really interesting because I have been doing this for now more than 10 years, helping people design their life and I have done all kinds of slices of time. I have done it in an hour at conferences like the Fast Company Innovation Conference, I have done it over one week at a retreat, I have done it over seven weeks with my students at the School of Visual Arts, I just did it yesterday in two hours using our new digital tool Design The X You Love as an online tool, so it really changes. And the thing that I try to do is, I really believe that what is the most difficult thing and the most important thing is to start. Once you start, once you start a design, the rest is easy because you get hooked in the process of developing new ideas, but starting that first, you know, like kind of that white page is what is so difficult. So my goal these days whether it is with the book or the online tool that I just mentioned, is to find ways to get people into that state quickly and accelerate that process. And so, with the online tool for example, I get people in 40 minutes from the beginning to writing their manifesto about their life, or a subset of their life, and in 20 minutes from a manifesto to an action plan. And once you do that, you have something tangible that you can sleep on and think about and develop. So that has become my, kind of, a shortcut. And I was listening to a podcast about shortcuts, and I learned that shortcuts is when an expert does a lot of thinking so that other people do not have to think about it and really can take the quick route. So I feel like I have created the shortcut to design the life you love.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: This reminds me of a conversation I had with Herminia Ibarra (HI) of London Business School. She is the author of Working Identity and is one of the leading thinkers in the space of Leadership and Career Transitions.

DJ: "How do you see the spectrum of the of the time it takes for senior leaders let's say the successful leaders in the mid-40s to move from let's say context A to context B is it 6 months, 12 months?"

HI: 3 Years, It's still 3 years, I mean I ask people all the time you know we have people here who are in the program that a 1 year program and they are hoping that will do the trick it never does in it's very frustrating because and honestly you know part of it is where does it start? When does the time frame actually start because there is also the bit of getting yourself to the point where you can start walking and so it's often a longer chunk than you think but it's if you think about extricating yourself, getting yourself to the point where we are actively looking for something else and then the looking and then the finding just exactly the right fit if you take time often between and you have taking on back to school in between it can be easily be 3 years and it's because people not gone hire you unless you have the experience because you don't have the network into that yet, you don't even have the language, you are still sorting it out for yourself. Experiment and learn takes a little bit longer and that's the hard part for people but that's often why they also go portfolio they start consulting us some of the old stuff just to make sure some money is coming in because you have got a continue life."

DJ: I guess there is no silver bullet here but it is critical to note that transitions are not an instantaneous switch but an organic process that take time. Creating space for that possibility to emerge and being deliberate about it are critical. I find that given the busy lives people lead, taking a pause and creating the space is often the biggest barrier coming in the way of people being able to redesign their lives.

End of nugget transcription

Nugget from Herminia Ibarra that is referenced: [Pausing to reinvent](#).

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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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Podcast Transcript [86.06 Ayse Birsal - Life Redesign - How long does it take?](#)

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