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Context to the nugget conversation

Ayse speaks about how we move from getting some of these ideas cognitively to making real change happen. She speaks about the difference she made to Marshall Goldsmith and how her input helped Marshall develop the MG100 programme. We had Marshall on the podcast earlier. We connect the dots with his take on this subject.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): Ayse, as a coach one of the things I think about is the gap between cognitively or getting something in our mind versus living it, I was curious about your thinking around what it takes from designing the life to living the life, any insights there in the way that plays out and also the iterative nature of the two?

Ayse Birsal (AB): Absolutely. You are so right in, like how do you go from idea to actually living it. I think that often, the idea happens inside us, in our own brains, we are alone when we are creating the idea. And then to live it, we have to do it collectively, so we are together. And this is true for the design process as well, as like design of products and designing your life. When I am designing something, I am sitting in my chair at home, listening to music and working in my sketchbook. But then once I have the beginnings of a good idea, something that I feel like answers the criteria or turns the challenges into opportunities in a certain way, something that excites me, that is when I take it to my client and I share it with them early on and then, we start working on it together. And I feel the process with life design is very similar. You have an idea, you have an insight, you have something that excites you, and then, that excitement is what propels you towards the future and you realize, but to bring this idea to life, I need collaborators, I need help, I need to do this, I need to try it out. And you make a little prototype, you test it with other people, you bring them in, you build it together, you create it together and then you test it, you realize this part does not work and then, you replace that and it is sort of like that. And one of my favourite examples of this is Marshall Goldsmith who is known as the world's number one leadership coach who works with the best CEOs in the world. He came to one of my sessions and when I was asking everybody to design his life, he came up with this idea, based on his heroes, to create something where he could teach everything, he knows to other people without asking for anything in return. And from that simple idea of I want to teach everything I know to others, he created the idea of 15 initially, it was called 15 Coaches. He said, I want to teach everything I know to 15 coaches. And he put this on LinkedIn as an idea and he said, I am giving away my knowledge, who would like to learn from me and then he thought maybe 100 people or 1,000 people would reply, and 17,000 people replied. And from that, the idea of Marshall Goldsmith 100 Coaches was born, it grew from 15 to 100 and now, it is more than 100 people. And the idea is Marshall teaches his expertise and his knowledge to us, and I am part of Marshall Goldsmith 100 Coaches, and then, the only thing we need to do is when it is our time to

teach what we know to others for free. And so, it is this idea of a knowledge philanthropy. So anyways, long answer, but Marshall had the idea and then once he had the idea, by putting it on LinkedIn, he opened it up to collaboration and then from that, it became something that was real.

DJ: And it is also interesting that you played a role in opening up that possibility, now you are playing a role as a disseminator of that possibility as a part of MG100, even this conversation, I guess in a way you are sort of, this is knowledge philanthropy, I sincerely appreciate you are doing this.

AB: Oh, I love how you connected the dots there. Thank you so much, Deepak. Truly, it was, and you are right, you know, it is funny because with Marshall, he says, Ayse, you changed my life because I came up with this idea in her session and I tell, Marshall, hold on a second, you changed my life, and so it is kind of like a circle of giving really.

DJ: Fascinating. And Marshall was on this podcast as well a few moons back. And he spoke about you on that podcast as well, so clearly made a big difference to him and all of us are beneficiaries of his and your philanthropy.

AB: Thank you, and yours.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: We had a chance to speak to Marshall Goldsmith (MG) on the podcast earlier.

MG: *"I met a great woman named Ayse Birsal who is a designer and she said who your heroes are? Well, my heroes back to my story were these kind and generous people who are great teachers, Paul Hersey, Peter Drucker and Frances herself and Alan Mulally and all those iconic people. And she said why don't you be like them and I said that's a nice idea. I decided to adopt 15 people and teach them all I know for free and the only price is when they get old, they had to do the same thing. So, I made a little selfie video and put it on LinkedIn. So, I had 1.3 million followers on LinkedIn and I thought a 100 people would apply, I'd adopt 15 young people, they would follow me around and I would tell stupid jokes, they would laugh, make me feel good and then they would get old and do the same thing, you know, cycle of life. I was wrong, over 18,000 people applied and over 280 have been adopted. And so, now this program kind of changed my life."*

DJ: If this topic is of interest, you might also like to tune into my conversation with Herminia Ibarra where she speaks about designing micro-experiments. She says that we have to Act our Way into a New way of thinking, not think our way into a new way of acting.

End of nugget transcription

Nugget from Marshall Goldsmith that is referenced: [The full conversation](#).

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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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