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Context to the nugget conversation

Pradeep speaks about how some of the greatest rulers had the habit of keeping a journal and touches upon some of the benefits of journaling.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): The other theme that caught my attention Pradeep was this notion of journaling, right. You refer to Baburnama, Babur's autobiography, which is based on the extensive notes that he took during his life. Can you talk a little bit about what you have observed great leaders do in the way they journaled in those times?

Pradeep Chakravarthy (PC): Right. So we do not have many examples of these frustratingly, any even Babur's is incomplete and it is a remarkable feat that it survived for such a long time after all the troubles that Humayun had, his successors had. And there were other Mughal emperors who had this as well but I have chosen Babur in this book, so I have spent a lot more time on that. The other person is Krishna Deva Raya, we have Raya Vachakam, which gives us a fairly good insight into his life, and there are some others, other Nayak kings as well, but these are difficult to come by. Journals have not stood the test of time but what is important from this Deepak is, I have seen very successful leaders practice journaling, which might be as simple as just writing down what are important lessons they have learned for the day or they may be tracking something. So, for example, have I listened well today, and every day, they would track whether they have been able to listen, they have been able to summarize. Sometimes, it might be actual words that they will enter, sometimes, it might just be tally marks, the number of times that they have done something. But one thing that I arrived, I have maintained a journal myself several times over, I change this very often, one thing that I find is the power of journaling is that it makes us self-aware. And when we become self-aware, most of the times, we become self-correcting as well. The data of the journal just stares back at and it is unbiased information, right. I am doing it for myself, nobody is biased there, nobody is judging me, it is just my own observations of myself, it is a pretty powerful way to change behaviour. So I would definitely recommend, in fact in the last part of the book where I have talked about how you can make this history a very tangible way for us to improve our own leadership, journaling is something that I have mentioned. And I might say, if you read Aurangzeb chapter for example, and you find there is one insight that you have learned from it. Every day, ask yourself in the journal whether you have practiced it or not. And if you have maintained the journal just for a week or maybe a fortnight, the insights will be enormous.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: In this podcast, I had the opportunity to speak with Rich Fernandez (RF), CEO of Search Inside Yourself, a leadership development programme that was initially designed in Google. He speaks about journaling as an opportunity to reprogramme ourselves.

RF: *"Your presiding some studies by James Pennebaker and others who found that journaling how has helped all sort of outcomes physiological but also very tangible in terms of like finding new job after losing them. I think the part of the factors that lead to that are that when you journal you are basically capturing and encoding your thoughts about a specific situation rather than letting them basically fester to use a very untechnical term and so when you doing this very concurred exercise of staying how you feel stating what you hope for stating your goals you are really making them very clear in your own mind. I think it really help to navigate towards those positive outcomes. One thing we know also thing we know also another bit of neuroscience is that what they found is that people have a better memory for things they have written down then that which they have typed in class room setting that's bit of finding in neuroscience and what's neuroscientist have found is the reason for that is that because we can type faster than we can write long hand and we can type almost at the speed of what's being spoken and so basically what we are doing is we are just essentially quickly processing but not encoding what's being said. When you write something long hand like when you journal you actually have to articulate the entire thoughts in your heads and they become encoded in your memory in a much stronger fashion. Basically, you are programming yourself in another sense of the word when you journal you are programming your brain to perceive a situation through a certain lens or perceptive and it becomes much more real and concrete and, in some ways, you start to live your way into that if that make any sense."*

DJ: I love the distinction Rich brings between typing online versus Writing on a notebook. It is such a nuanced and a profound distinction.

If you want to know more about journaling you might also be interested in the conversation with Vinay Sitapati about Narshimha Rao and how the practice of journaling gave him the ability to process the complexity around him. Thank you for listening.

End of nugget transcription

Nugget from Rich Fernandez that is referenced: [Benefits of Journaling](#).

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Journaling: Leaders across contexts share their perspectives on how they reflect and take notes as they go through life. You can access the playlist [here](#).

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Pradeep Chakravarthy - Nuggets

- 88.01 Pradeep Chakravarthy - How Kings and Queens were groomed
- 88.02 Pradeep Chakravarthy - Council of Advisors
- 88.03 Pradeep Chakravarthy - Chhatrapati Shivaji and strategic patience
- 88.04 Pradeep Chakravarthy - Journaling
- 88.05 Pradeep Chakravarthy - Jahanara and her political savviness
- 88.06 Pradeep Chakravarthy - Serfoji and Social Development
- 88.07 Pradeep Chakravarthy - Content Marketing in the olden days
- 88.08 Pradeep Chakravarthy - Decline of the Mughal Empire and Corporate Office

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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