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Context to the nugget conversation

Jeffrey speaks about being true to oneself as a limiting construct. He says that by being true to some version of self in the past, we might be limiting our possibilities.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): The other piece that really resonated Jeffrey was a term being true to yourself that we hear so often and you pause us here and you ask us to think about which self we are referring to when we think about this term. Can you say more about here, more about this term?

Jeffrey Pfeffer (JP): This goes back to this whole thing about authenticity, you need to be true to your inner self or your true self, but I would hope that most human beings are on a journey of learning and development and that Deepak at your current age, whatever that is because you look amazingly young to me, is not exactly the same person as Deepak a 10 or 5 or 20 or 25 or 30. My hope would be, from our conversation, my belief would be that you have been on a journey of learning and self-discovery and that you have been on a journey of growth and development, and so that therefore, when you say be true to yourself. If you are really true to yourself, you are basically not going to be on a journey of growth and development because you are going to say I have to be true to my one-year-old self which basically does not use the toilet. That is an extreme example but you get the point. The point is just that as you have evolved, as people learn, I believe in the redemption of souls, I believe that people can forgive, I believe that people can develop, I believe people evolve, at least I hope they do, and so as they evolve, their values, their beliefs, their behaviors, everything would change. I do not think that is being authentic, I think that is called learning.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: I love the point Jeffrey makes about indexing to the past self-coming in the way of our growth. Something similar came up in my chat with Jennifer Garvey Berger (JGB). She speaks about how human minds trick us to believe that most of our changes are behind us. We overestimate the changes we have been through and underestimate the change we will go through.

JGB: *"It's a fascinating result that says that most of us spend most of our lives believing that our major changes are behind us. And I wonder whether there is kind of a psychological health. I don't know the answer to this question so I am just musing here. I have never seen anything that actually explains the why of it but I have wondered whether there is a... it takes so long for us to develop into the time of our life this sort of self-transforming time of our life when we welcome change and move towards it as opposed to initially resisting at our finding it destabilizing. And so I wonder whether our*

brains have evolved to trick us into believing it is all going to be okay from here so you can relax as opposed to having us on constant alert our whole lives.”

DJ: I guess it's worth bearing in mind that staying true to our current or past selves can be limiting our future possibilities.

End of nugget transcription

Nugget from Jennifer Garvey Berger that is referenced: [Trap 5 - Shackled by the past.](#)

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Jeffrey Pfeffer - Nuggets

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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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