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Context to the nugget conversation

Michiel speaks about the criticality of rest and recovery for a leader to be effective. He speaks about how the recovery period could actually spark some creativity and new possibilities.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): And you also say that growth, you use the metaphor of working out in the gym, and you say that, the muscle actually builds when we are resting during the phase of recovery, and you talk about physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual recovery, I loved the emphasis on recovery, can you talk a little bit about your observation on how leaders think about this or do not think about this, and why this phase of recovery is important when we look at leadership effectiveness?

Michiel Kruyt (MK): Yeah, I think recovery, and especially in times where adaptability and learning agility is so important, is critical, and it is a grossly overlooked dimension of leadership. So busyness is being celebrated and recovery is being overlooked. It is like the physical metaphor is always easy, I mean, your muscles grow after you have done the workout. Your cognitive loading has a limit to it. You can do four hours of real, deep, concentrated high quality cognitive work in the day and the rest you can do a little bit more easy stuff or administrative stuff, but you cannot do 8 or 10 hours of high quality work. So what starts to happen is that your presence starts to come down, very high likely your cortisol and adrenaline levels go up, and you get into this busy mode. So it is important to notice in yourself that you are building those recovery periods because that is when, one, your system can recharge, but it is also where new ideas come up where you can actually work through things that have happened and you can really actually process it, so it does not leave any residue. And you just become a better long-term practitioner leader.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: I guess the reality is that there is an inverse correlation between the quantum of work you have to do and the time it takes. Unless we really focus on decluttering what is on our plate, it is hard to build recovery time in our life, whether it is exercise or it is leading a company.

Matt Dixon (MD), a Triathlon coach who trains the Who's who in the Valley including Sir Michael Moritz, speaks about the criticality of recovery and the risk of dumping a training programme on top of life.

MD: *“so the biggest mistake that we see people make is to think I know I need to exercise because I know that’s something to do that’s makes me healthy so, how am I going to add this on the top of life and many people what they do and the great example is Oh it’s wonderful go to bunch of friends I am going to do Ironman Turkey and it sounds wonderful and what does it take to train for that and it takes 20 hours a week goodness me I don’t have twenty hours a week but there’s the training program and to dump it on top of life and I am just going to have to find a way to cram it in. To be successful and to actually integrate the key components of rejuvenation and recovery as well as training what we have to realise is that we have to integrate it into a person’s life so that not only does, they can then improve in that discipline because hopefully they are looking for improvement but so that they can lift their health they can lift their performances as a CEO or an executive and it can help them to thrive across areas of life and so it’s all about integration, we go through a very particular process where we look up the habits the start and we look up their genuine landscape of their life what have been non-negotiable? And when we think about non-negotiable there’s obviously the commitments in the work place quite often there’s the commitment with their family and we want them to be available and present for their family, their children, their wives, their husbands or whatever it might be and then the other component that we have is non-negotiable is sleep and saying ok how much do you sleep and is that necessary and is it high enough quality which is the other component of effective sleep not just quantity are you getting enough? And with those building blocks in life we have a certain amount of time left over and that ebbs and flows with the different demands of life but then we can go about same equation, with that time is left over how do we optimize it? how do we create an optimization mind-set with that time is left over and that’s a very different way of going about it, so rather than just dumping a training program on top of life or throwing a bunch of habits and saying this after navigate it becomes an all-encompassing recipe for them and that’s really where took element of resilience, and ultimately success comes from.”*

DJ: Back to Michiel, I also love what he says. Sometimes, the best ideas come from the phase of recovery when we are not doing much but our brain is subconsciously working on something. Leaving that space is helpful for us to be more effective and creative.

Thank you for listening.

End of nugget transcription

Nugget from Matt Dixon that is referenced: [Rest, Sleep and recharge](#).

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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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