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Context to the nugget conversation

Chris speaks about how Roger came back from different phases of his career when he was having a rough patch. He speaks about how, at each of those inflection points, his career could have taken a nosedive.

Transcription

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): One of the themes I wanted to touch upon Chris was his resilience. One of the matches that really stand out for me, personally my all-time favorite Roger match is possibly the 2017 Australian Open final, Roger, Rafa, I think he would come back from an injury or from a surgery, he was an unseeded player in that tournament and he went on to win it, and one of the finest backhand exhibitions I have seen, one-handed backhand exhibitions I have seen. What have you learnt about his resilience when things are not going well for him at various points in his journey?

Christopher Clarey (CC): Yes, that is an underrated part of Roger's career. He would like you would put that match very high on his list. If you ask him three most important matches, biggest moments of his career, that one would be on it for sure, because it did show that he had grit and he was coming off, but for some athletes, six-month break would not be considered a huge break but in tennis terms for him, it was, and his results before that had been dipping. He had not had the same success, he was still very much a relevant player at the top, but he was not really in Grand Slam winning position. He had not won a Grand Slam since 2012 Wimbledon. It had been almost five years when he won that Australian Open title. So that answered a lot of questions. And he was never in death spiral mode during those five years, but he had lost a lot of ground to Djokovic and to Nadal at different times, other players were also emerging like Andy Murray. So, it was a time when he could have not regenerated and he did, and he really took a lot of pleasure in working his way through the problem, coming back feeling physically strong. In that match you mentioned, he was down 3-1 in the 5th set and Rafa was playing some pretty good tennis and required a flurry of brilliance from him to turn that match around and the commitment to not slice in the backhand and hitting through it, commitment to, that is just zeal and love of the game that he was feeling from coming back as the underdog for a change, seeded 17 instead of seeded number 1, 2 or 3, he took a lot of pleasure from that. But otherwise, Roger, if you go back to the beginning when he left home at 14 to go down to Ecublens in Lake Geneva at Swiss National Training Center, the language of the day there was French, not Swiss German and he was an outsider, did not speak French very well at all and he was mocked, taunted, hazed a bit, struggled in school, that was very hard period for him and he always said later on that it was a huge factor in his later success, was being able to be resilient enough to get through that and come out on the other side a stronger person, it has been like a boarding school experience for a regular person. And he grew up a lot from that and took a lot of

strength from that. The Peter Carter situation we described when Peter Carter died, Roger running through the streets in Canada, trying to process his emotions overcome by grief, yeah, he used that as a launching pad to greatness but it could easily have gone the other way, could not it, could have been a lot of guilt, lot of regrets, lot of emotions he could not handle, it could have knocked him back as well. So, he is somebody, with his vulnerable side, is able to show consistent resilience throughout his career and somebody also who chose to travel with his wife Mirka and his family of two and then four children and hang out in the hotel and not get a good night's sleep and come out there and play a great match the next day. Roger has never had, on a personal level, beside Peter Carter's death, to deal with some hugely debilitating thing in the prime of his career. But he did show a lot of grit.

Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: What struck me here was how when we face these hurdles, we have a choice. A choice to fight and come back on track or go off the rails. It is fascinating to see how Roger fought and came back on track each time he faced turbulence and shock waves.

If this a topic of interest for you, you might like the Curated Playlist on Resilience where different leaders speak about how they turned a corner when things did not quite go per plan for them. Just go to playtopotential.com and find Resilience in the Curated Playlist tag.

Thank you for listening.

End of nugget transcription

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Resilience: Research by Angela Lee Duckworth (of Wharton) talks about a special blend of passion and commitment that she calls Grit. Leaders from various fields (Armed Forces, Writing, Sport, Entrepreneurship and more) talk about their experiences in cultivating resilience. You can access the playlist [here](#).

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Christopher Clarey - Nuggets

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- 100.03 Christopher Clarey - Roger's curiosity and empathy
- 100.04 Christopher Clarey - Managing down-time between rallies
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- 100.06 Christopher Clarey - How Roger picked his Coaches
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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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