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## Context to the nugget

Suresh talks about the importance of values that he derived from his childhood. He talks about the emphasis on Goddess Sarasvati (education) than Goddess Lakshmi (Wealth) in his family. He also discusses the important of Rishi Valley School and Jidu Krishnamurthy in shaping his attitudes and beliefs.

## Transcription

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**Deepak Jayaraman (DJ):** What got hardwired into you if you reflect on first 15, 18 years?

Suresh Narayanan (SN): First let me rest the comment that, the term Turned around MD is something that I feel very uncomfortable about. turnaround is almost sounds as if it is a singular act that is done by a person in order to retrieve a situation in my case it is more than 7000 employees who have been together and they have been partners and associates of the company, who have played a very critical role so I would be going against my conscience if I were to not acknowledge the role that they have played but in so far as my own journey is concerned, I come from a very, a humble modest family, so my background is, my father was a Techno crat in the government, he was a civil engineer with the Border roads organization so he built roads all over the borders on the country, my mother was a housewife but with the book, so she used to read a lot so therefore I think my childhood was spent in a lot of storytelling so my mother has given me many stories, my mother my grandmother these have been the people who have formed my life. Because of the transferable nature of my father's job which ranged from Andaman Nicobar islands to Nagaland to Bhutan he obviously felt and my parents felt the first five years of my schooling that I would have almost the kind of schooling tracked record that you talked about as your father having worked in a Bank so they decided to send me to a school which was more out of a recommendation by a colleague which was called Rishi Valley which is a Krishnamurthy foundation school, so I spent about five years of my schooling there in boarding I must say that, that was probably the most exciting and most rewarding part of my journey so far, it built a couple of things one, it built a very strong belief in values, I think I was there when Jidu Krishnamurthy was alive, so I had the benefit to not only listening to him not comprehending to him but listening to him and also the benefit of number of internationally renowned people, who used to come and talk to us, *a students plus it's a very strong education system which is more based on enquiry and more based on moulding and tempering you own conscience and personality rather than just pandering to the requirements of being a commercially or cosmetically successful human being* and way ahead of its times, so I think in that sense it built certain strong values, for my background and for my parents I got the value of education and one of the things that I have always joke about culturally amongst Tamilians is I am sure your father would have been more proud to introduce you as an IIT, IIM graduate rather that whether you have three cars and four Houses so for us it is always the education, goddess Sarasvati counts much more that

goddess Laxmi, so the value of education, the value of hard work the value of integrity the value of trust, the value of diligence and I think what was instilled me relatively young is that is that famous line from Bhagwat Geetha, “*karmanye vadhika-raste maa phalesu kadachana*” so it is never been a journey for me, where it has been I have to do well in whatever I do but it will be on my terms and it will be to my conscience and it will be to the best of my abilities if I succeed well and good if I don’t succeed its fine, there must be something else that must be there for me, so I think there has been a kind of equanimity in my personality make up and since background wise we have always been more modest about our achievements I have tried to keep myself always on the ground even when I was rivetingly successful, I was in few of my assignments, I never allowed, I try and see that doesn’t become the centre of my personality that it is part of the journey, it is something that I have achieved together with a lot of people and I always say that look this success will be long lasting only when the seeds of a continuity are sown by me otherwise it is just an event that you mark in your calendar and I think that has kept me in good state .

## Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: The big takeaways for me in this were the emphasis on values and how early years are such a fertile ground to build them in children. I just think that with the accelerated pace of change, working on the “meta-elements” like values, curiosity, equanimity, modesty, integrity can be tremendously valuable over the long run. Having gone through education in the old paradigm where premium was often on knowing the answers, it is tremendously unnerving to see my daughter go through enquiry based learning where things are quite fuzzy and the learning is often not visible on the surface. But, I guess that is the transition that we need to make as we move to the future where the education Suresh talks about will become more and more relevant and pertinent.

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## End of nugget transcription

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## Suresh Narayanan - Nuggets

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- 24.02 Suresh Narayanan - Career - getting off to a good start
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## About Deepak Jayaraman

Deepak seeks to unlock 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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