

The banner features the 'play to potential' logo on the left. To its right are contact details: a WhatsApp icon with the number '+91 85914 52129\*', a Twitter icon with the handle '@PlayToPotential', and a globe icon with the website 'playtopotential.com'. Further right, under the heading 'Also available on:', are icons for Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Google Podcasts. On the far right, a portrait of a man in a suit and glasses is shown, with the text 'Podcast Host Deepak Jayaraman' overlaid on a red bar below it. At the bottom left of the banner, a small note reads: '\*Just send us a Whatsapp with your name, number and email and we will add you to our distribution list.'

## Context to the nugget

Matt speaks about the similarities across and differences between how elite athletes and time starved CEOs approach training for triathlon. He makes the distinction between those individuals that check box and those that really use this as a springboard to thrive in their mission.

## Transcription

\*\*\*\*\*

Deepak Jayaraman (DJ): And just may be to pick two archetypes in the people that you train, on one end you have world class triathletes on the other end you have time starved CEO's and founders in the valley and other places so in what ways is coaching this two groups similar and in what ways is it different give us a sense of how you think about coaching in each of these two situations?

Matt Dixon (MD): Sure, I think it's interesting because we sort of have our visions of what it takes to be a really successful CEO and a really professional athlete. But one of the things that first point out is that toughness is not a differentiator and so people that are successful it's a pre requisite be tough and that's the most obvious thing. What we see with working with these types of athletes and these types of CEO's is there tends to be a set of very common trait's or personality traits a way of thinking that ultimately developed, successfully and we bucket those into forming categories. The first is the they all operate within a frame work and this is the most obvious piece but they all have a North Star vision they all love a journey they have a massive intentional focus for consistency and so we think about that all of these people are habit driven they have big picture thinking several creditability to come out of the way it suppose the professional athletes and the CEO's and the thing I find the two element I find very similar always there is a thirst for coaching and so both population really require cry out for accountability and feedback but have humility to be coached and I think that's a really interesting one because people think about successful people as just being great leaders driving from the front but in fact leaders need leaders and they tend to be the most humble and thirsty for knowledge really understanding the why and the final component is a that what we call purple patch change-able. May understand that the journey to performance is never linear and so there has to be this amazing resilience and adaptability with in both populations. When we think about the professional athlete the interesting thing is in many ways those athletes are looking after looking for world class performance.

DJ: Let's pick up with one of the pieces you spoke about Matt people being changeable and you spoke about that being a common threat across a lead athletes and successful leaders How do you search that out as you think about that people that you take on a purple patch what sort of people do you say no too?

MD: Well I think the first I would say we have to acknowledge a couple of things the first is the change is hard and in fact even when change is a positive thing it's a real challenge for people. And you mentioned to be in there how do we say no to people? How do we suss out whether they are the changeable? Aren't you believe that developing adaptability and resilience which is the hobby of being changeable is a learnable skill and so the first component is really looking at all the way have these characteristics and now when I just there similar to some god given gift or something like that? But instead what we really look at is do they value coaching; do they have the ability to rise up and create perspective and are they the immersed in the positive component of requiring accountability of feedback and so really what I look for... do they have humility to be coached. Is this someone that is a person that leads with and I always say this do you lead with more questions than just trying to provide the solutions. A common phrase that we all know nowadays is a growth mind-set but is this athlete or particularly is this CEO. Do they want to understand the Why behind it and people don't want to just follow a plan that just wants peas spoon feed that doesn't suggest a characteristic of adaptability it's simply box checking and there fir I would say No only all they less equipped to become a great CEO and executive that certainly not going to improve in the sporting component of life in the way that they could.

DJ: I guess if I would have made sense what you have said that certain curiosity towards the next level of detail not just the sticking to the plan or just blindly following it but really showing a healthy curiosity towards what's behind it that's what I'm picking up?

MD: It exactly that what curiosity is a wonderful word it on an athletic sense. Imagine if one of your listeners was training for I'm in Goa or I'm at Turkey one of these triathlete that are becoming more popular in the area and all they want is a plan just tell me what to do as a central base line characteristic that's box checking and the characteristic that is going to separate these the follower plan and do well because it's the small plan and then it so and the people that are going to really going to really thrive, really shine at the people actually look at the plan and say how is this thing to my life? What's the meaning? What are we looking to accomplish out of this? So the ultimately from the plan they creating mission. I understand what my purpose is and from there a whole thing start to become unpacked and really what it creates within that person in empowerment in the same exactly the same applies for a CEO and if had is a very busy executive comes and just said great I'm gone get a coach give me the fairy dust, give me the magic that's never gone be ultimately the most successful relationship because pure excellence and development in any area in life is going to come from intrinsically the person and any coach is going to drive them by setting the path not just an helping them guide them along the way not just saying this is what you should do because I said it.

## Reflections from Deepak Jayaraman

DJ: I wanted to pick up on one of the things that Matt says that is seemingly contradictory but something I have noticed as well. When he speaks about some of the common trait's across CEOs and Elite athletes he speaks about intentional focus for consistency and being habit driven. But later he also goes on to say that the people that get the most out of the program are not those that bake these habit's by checking boxes but those that are able to reflect, ask deeper questions around how this fits into their mission and are clear about the why behind the training.

This reminds me of my conversation with Indian Mythologist Devdutt Pattanaik (DP)

DP: *"habit is a bad word in Indian philosophy, another word for habit is conditioned I am conditioned to do it, conditioning there's a pavlovian response, a god has a habit of salivating whenever the bell rings and the west has made it a virtue action without thought is habit repetitive action without*

*thought is habit and if you look at the many of the cultures in the west they are like domesticated animals at a particular time they will get up and run, so they are on a treadmill all the time and this is seen as virtue, driving in a car with a coffee in your hand, nobody sees in America that this is tragedy, it's a tragedy, you can't enjoy your coffee, you can't enjoy your drive you have glamourized slavery, you have glamourized slavery and nobody sees it because you have all the gurus in white coats with their chin what is called their fist on the chin photographs, these photographs that you see are telling you therefore it must be right nobody is questioning what is the habit? And habit has been somehow projected as a good thing Indian thought is all about awareness, it's all about awareness, why are you doing what you are doing, why are you not doing what you are not doing, once you are aware then you realize what is of value to you and what is not value to you, so then breaking habit's becomes difficult, there are good habit's there are bad habits, habits are good or bad depending on context, so you will find people behaving, that's why I always find, when experts come to India they have tough time because their habit's suddenly in the new context they don't know because oh my god there's no place to run, oh my god they don't have this thing because of their habit, you become like an animal and habit really goes to the lower part of your brain not the upper part of your brain and habit is about avoiding life, you do habit's like it's an addiction, it's an autopilot and it's addictive, like I have habit of writing, but it's addiction if I don't write I get withdrawal symptoms, which means I have trained my body to be in pain when I don't do it and to get pleasure when I do it and I am not aware of it I am just doing it mechanically"*

DJ: In my experience, I find that successful leaders have an interesting combination of habit's that give them the momentum and progress in a certain direction but also build the awareness and the mindfulness to be able to zoom out and reflect and break out of the habit if it doesn't make sense in a certain context.

Thank you for listening. Please visit [playtopotential.com](http://playtopotential.com) for more content. You could visit the Curated playlists section for specific bite sized nuggets that are captured by themes some of which might be relevant for you.

You can also find the podcast offline on platforms like Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify and more. If you find this content purposeful, please rate and review wherever you consume this content. It will help others discover it. To receive updates on new content at the podcast, please sign up at [www.playtopotential.com](http://www.playtopotential.com)

## End of nugget transcription

\*\*\*\*\*

Nugget from Devdutt Pattanaik that is referenced: [Building Habit's vs. Enhancing Awareness.](#)

## RELATED PLAYLISTS YOU MIGHT LIKE

**Coaching:** The business world is slowly waking up to the fact that just like in elite sports; there is a tremendous value to be unlocked by having an effective coach for a leader. It is not just about fixing issues but also about enabling the journey from Good to Great. Leaders across disciplines share their insights around how one should pick a coach and get the most out of such a relationship. You can access the playlist [here](#).

Podcast Transcript [46.01 Matt Dixon - Coaching CEOs and Elite Athletes](#)

Also available on Apple Podcasts | Google Podcasts | Spotify

[www.playtopotential.com](http://www.playtopotential.com)

**Curiosity:** "A Curious Mind" by Brian Grazer (Oscar winning Producer of movies like A Beautiful Mind and Apollo 13) was the inspiration behind the Play to Potential Podcast. In this playlist, Leaders reflect about the role of curiosity and how it has helped them in their journeys. As Alvin Toffler says, the Illiterate of the 21st Century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn. You can access the playlist [here](#).

**Deliberate practice:** Deliberate practice refers to a special type of practice that is purposeful and systematic. While regular practice might include mindless repetitions, deliberate practice requires focused attention and is conducted with the specific goal of improving performance. Leaders across fields talk about how they think about this topic in their respective fields. You can access the playlist [here](#).

## SIGN UP TO OUR COMMUNICATION

**Podcast Newsletter:** Join 1000s of leaders who benefit from the Podcast newsletter. Not more than 1-2 emails a month including keeping you posted on the new content that comes up at the podcast. High on signal, low on noise. Sign up for the podcast newsletter [here](#).

**Nuggets on Whatsapp:** We also have a **Podcast Whatsapp distribution group (+91 85914 52129)** where we share 2-3 nuggets a week from the Podcast archives to provoke reflection. If that is of interest, please click [here](#) and send a message stating "INTERESTED". Do also add this number to your Phone Contacts so that we can broadcast our messages to you when we share a nugget.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Matt Dixon - Nuggets

- 46.00 Matt Dixon - The Full Conversation
- 46.01 Matt Dixon - Coaching CEOs and Elite Athletes
- 46.02 Matt Dixon - Coach Coachee relationship
- 46.03 Matt Dixon - Athlete to Coach to Entrepreneur
- 46.04 Matt Dixon - Forced growth - plugging the weaknesses
- 46.05 Matt Dixon - Toughness is not a differentiator
- 46.06 Matt Dixon - Expanding the mental reservoir
- 46.07 Matt Dixon - Visualization as a technique
- 46.08 Matt Dixon - Dealing with the "wall"
- 46.09 Matt Dixon - Rest, Sleep and recharge

## 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](#).

## Disclaimer and clarification of intent behind the transcripts

This written transcript of the conversation is being made available to make it easier for some people to digest the content in the podcast. Several listeners felt that the written format would be helpful. This may not make sense as an independent document. Very often spoken word does not necessarily read well. Several of the guests have published books and the language in their books might be quite different from the way they speak. We request the readers to appreciate that this transcript is being offered as a service to derive greater value from the podcast content. We request you not to apply journalistic standards to this document.

This document is a transcription obtained through a third party/voice recognition software. There is no claim to accuracy on the content provided in this document, and occasional divergence from the audio file are to be expected. As a transcription, this is not a legal document in it'self, and should not be considered binding to advice intelligence, but merely a convenience for reference.

The tags that are used to organize the nuggets in the podcast are evolving and work in progress. You might find that there could be a discrepancy between the nuggets as referenced here and in the actual podcast given this is a static document.

All rights reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, or stored in any retrieval system of any nature without prior written permission.