

INSIGHT

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INSIDE:

*Q&As with today's
leading Marquis
luminaries and
influencers*

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Hylke Faber is a coach and the chief executive officer of the Growth Leaders Network (GLN), a group of coaches and facilitators based in the United States and the Netherlands. GLN helps leaders, teams and organizations realize their true potential with a simple yet unconventional focus: connectedness. He offers executive coaching, team development and culture development services with an emphasis on connecting leaders with their authentic selves. Over the years, he has shared his insights as host of the podcasts "Rooted & Unwavering" and "Connected Teamwork" and as the author of two books, "Taming Your Crocodiles: Unlearn Fear and Become a True Leader" and

the sequel, "Taming Your Crocodiles Practices: Daily Reflections for Leadership Depth." He has contributed to Harvard Business Review, Forbes and other publications. Recognized as one of the Best Leadership Books by Bloomberg in 2018, "Taming Your Crocodiles" set the groundwork for his latest book, tentatively titled "The Connectedness Quotient: How We Thrive Together."

How have you navigated disruptions in your industry to remain a top professional?

What the COVID-19 pandemic brought, besides hardship, was a rare opportunity to reflect and look deeply into what we're doing, who we are and what we want to do. That's what my work is about - helping people become more contemplative. I call this the connectedness quotient, which is about how deeply we're connecting to who we are, to others and to our purpose. In a way, what COVID-19 did was provide us with space. We had to be home, and it became a time of introspection for many. It also helped us to evolve how we work. I traveled a lot for work pre-pandemic and was slated to give a series of workshops in the Netherlands in March 2020. When the pandemic emerged, our team needed to find a workaround. We were already practicing virtual coaching and team development, so we were able to get our workshops online in a week. What changed was the people with whom we were working also became more comfortable being online. They also became more ready to look at the deeper questions: Why are we here? What is our purpose? How do we want to live and work going forward?

What are two key behaviors/personality traits that allow you to be effective in your role?

Deep truthfulness and compassion. I can't help people with things that I'm not willing to look at myself. So, I invite leaders and teams to look at their mindsets and behaviors, which includes identifying their fears and past conditioning. Once they can spot what is holding them back, they can let go and come out on the other side. The first book I wrote, "Taming Your Crocodiles," has a unique subtitle in its Dutch translation: "Letting go of the patterns that keep you small." Those are the patterns that keep you living in a nontruth. Letting go requires self-honesty, and I can't help people with that unless I'm willing to do it myself. Without the second component of compassion, truthfulness can become ruthlessness, and you need both truth and compassion to be balanced.

How do you feel your industry has changed/evolved?

I'm incredibly grateful to the founders of my industry. At the beginning of the 1900s, the business of human development experienced major growth outside of religion. In the beginning, it was reserved for the outliers. When I first began talking about reflection and meditation in the workplace 20 years ago, I had to translate these concepts because people thought they were weird. Even among emotionally intelligent people, the narrative was that emotions don't belong at work. We've come a long way since then. We talk about being respectful and inclusive, and I think coaching has

become more of a mainstream solution as opposed to something on the fringe. I am proud to be part of an industry that is evolving. It's creating not only happier people, teams, and cultures but also organizations that are evolving the system into one that's truthful to our innate nature and, therefore, more harmonious, respectful, sustainable, and geared toward helping us figure out how to keep this planet a great place to live.

What innovations or technologies do you feel will shape the future of your industry?

For thousands of years, we've tried to control our environment. We're getting close, but it doesn't work very well most of the time. We're bombarded with technology that doesn't make us happy. The cacophony of outside stimuli is so intense that it is becoming more apparent that the first place to look for peace is within. In the future, I can imagine people becoming so dissatisfied with the outside world that finding wisdom and compassion through introspection turns out to be a compelling alternative on a mass scale. Guided introspection used to happen only in very precious places, such as retreat centers, workshop rooms or on your meditation cushion. Now, technology supports introspection. There are dozens of apps to help with mindfulness, and we turned to them in droves during the pandemic. We can use technology for massive reflection together in a way my mind cannot quite fathom yet; it's very exciting. We are launching what we call the "Connected Teamwork Game," and we have an online game, "Taming Your Crocodiles."



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