

S01 - E25 - Rooted & Unwavering - July 14 - Rick Gage & Hylke Faber

Presenter 00:05

Welcome to rooted and unwavering a podcast and radio show which features leaders from all walks of life in conversations about courageous connectedness. How do we stay connected to our best selves, especially when we are challenged? What becomes possible when we truly stay committed to our own and others greatness also when we don't feel it? Join host Philco Faber, transformational coach, facilitator and award winning author of taming your crocodiles and his guests as they explore leadership greatness in today's episode of rugged and unwavering

Rick Gage 00:46

Welcome to the router did unwavering podcast where we help leaders connect with their innate potential. We're broadcasting live today from Phoenix, Arizona and Mount Vernon Washington and I'm your guest host Rick Gage. And our guest today on this 25th episode of our podcast is our usual host Hilco Faber, the founder and CEO of growth Leaders Network. After 24 episodes, deep conversations with amazing leaders that I found very engaging, and insightful. I thought maybe it was time for us to turn the tables and get to know our hosts in a bit different way. And I'm so delighted that Hilco agreed. So hookah, how does it feel so far being the guest?

Hylke Faber 01:25

Fun and uncomfortable? I feel still like I shouldn't be saying what you're saying. But keep going. Yes, I love it.

Rick Gage 01:34

So before we get started, let me say just a bit more about the podcast to set a further context for our conversation. And then I'll share a bit of background about Hilda and we can dive in. The intention for rooted unwavering is to help us connect more deeply to what is true. Recognizing that we as humans are often pulled in different different directions can easily lose track of what is true, taken in by our own stories about what's going on in our lives. We know that becoming more deeply grounded in what is real what is true is the beginning and the heart of transformation and growth. It's a coming home to ourselves that unleashes innate greatness and power within us. And it's from that place that we can make contributions in the world and have life be more fulfilling. So let me share just a bit of background on Hilda Hilco was born and grew up as many of you know in the Netherlands on his family's dairy farm. He started his work life as a business strategy consultant with powers parent and then partner and strategic decisions group. During that time, in his own words, he describes being a typical hard charging 16 hour a day strategy consultant rapidly on his way to burnout. In that time, fortunately, he discovered meditation a new path that changed his life and became the foundation for his work for the



for the last 15 plus years as a facilitator and coach, working with many high profile companies and leaders to help them discover their own greatness and create extraordinary teams and organizations, while also building a fulfilling, rewarding professional and personal life. In addition to consulting Hilker, has taught at the Columbia School of Business has been recently collaborating and teaching with the climate conscious Leaders program with the Arizona State University, I've had the opportunity to interview a number of Hillcrest clients and what I consistently hear is that their time working with Hilco was transformative, even life changing a watershed time that they look back on as having a long term impact on the course of their lives. He's lived in the US now for 30 years in Washington DC in New York, Seattle. And now Phoenix is award winning author of *To Tame Your Crocodiles* books. He's a trained opera singer and musician. He's a tennis and hiking enthusiast and avid reader. And I've come to know him as a generous man of strong values, great humility, a committed colleague and friend, I'm delighted to have this opportunity to put him on the hot seat and give you our listener an opportunity to get to know him better. So he'll go let's start our conversation today, with having you describe what does rooted in unwavering feel like for you, that's an interesting phrase that you chose for this podcast that I'd love to hear. What's that like for you to be rooted in unwavering?

Hylke Faber 04:22

Well, just listening to your introduction, I had an experience of that very particular experience and I teared up a little bit because I felt very seen by what you said and I wish for anyone in the world to have people introduce them as you just did. I was very beautiful and I felt seen and I think being rooted and unwavering has something to do with feelings seen.

Rick Gage 04:51

And for a long time, we may think that comes from the outside. That's understandable. And then after a while

Hylke Faber 05:00

Oh, if we're lucky, and usually life says, Hello, you know, look inside, you can get rooted and unwavering inside of yourself. And what I mean by Rooted is you get rooted in something that's always there. I remember, as a young child, I was terribly homesick, I was always trying to hold on to this farm family idea that I thought was the only point in the world where I ever could be happy. I remember when I was 18, a walk I took with my parents just before I was going to college. And my dad and I talked and we said, you know, this is this is it, this is it. This is the last time you'll be living here, and you'll be going out into the world. And to me, that felt both exciting and terrifying, in a way. And I think many of us had that experience where we associate, being rooted in with a place or a person or an experience. And what I came to see through meditation, through life, through working with clients, through living, is that there's something in us that we can always come home to that is constant. And the more we know that the more we don't notice this note with our hands, but it's know and viscerally like our bones know it, the more we come to a place of peace, to vitality, to insight, to adaptability, sense of connectedness, and then it becomes unwavering. Because it doesn't mean that therefore you become like, or I become like a block of concrete. There's unmovable lifestyle happens, you know, clients do what they do. People



respond to emails, people don't respond to emails, there's sometimes smaller and bigger upsets and tragedies happening in life, people get sick, I get sick, or tired or whatever. The question is, how do we how are we with those waves? Do we become? Or do I become identified with those who I become attached to them? And do I lose myself in them, you could say part of my mind drifts off into this experience, like in a really good movie, or am I able to stay centered in this place of home, that has nothing to do with place, or people or experiences, or outcomes, it's always here. And it's the place from which I can relate in a way, that's you could say, is unwavering. And has also something to do with values, unwavering, and to what's important to me. Because once I connected that still place, I also relate that to some things in me that are very important to me, like being loving being unconditionally loving. So that's a bit about how this idea of those two words sprung up.

Rick Gage 08:04

Thank you. Thank you for that. You talked about how life has a way of coming and knocking on the door and saying, Hello, time to look inside. Wonder if you can share a couple of times when you when you had that experience. And what that led you to and in finding a more internally rooted place?

Hylke Faber 08:26

Yes, yes. Well, there's so many moments, and I would say, the knocks are daily. So I could lead to an experience from last week or from yesterday, or from earlier on my life. And I'll share one experience from earlier on my life. You mentioned I was this hard charging strategy consultant. And what was really a watershed moment that what knocked on my door was insomnia, I could not sleep and I sometimes wouldn't sleep for an entire week. And it was like my mind I didn't know at the time trying to control and be the PERT is perfect being this perfect consultant like sex successful and like hitting all that and even like having great relationships and it was just a big control game, but I didn't know that because I was in the midst of it. And then I didn't sleep anymore and not sleeping is really uncomfortable. Like it's really uncomfortable, especially if you keep doing that for many days. And after a while having that experience. I wasn't vacation at some point on our Milan, this little village this little island close to where I was born together with some friends and I was basically lying there in the middle of the night with my friends snoring in various degrees in the early morning hours, and I was again not sleeping for like day number six or seven and something in me was like This, gotta change this, this, this can't be this. This can't be this can't be. And then I became very curious about what what could be. And it wasn't like an immediate solution. But then I discovered meditation. And through meditation, I discovered that there was something beyond my thinking. That had something to do with peace, something to do with love, something to do with compassion, something with something that's always here. Walt Whitman says, an unflinching sufficiency in something that's always here is enoughness. And, and I could sleep again. So that was, that was one of those experiences.

Rick Gage 10:54

So how long did it take from that sort of night with friends snoring, to the point at which you were able to get back to sleep again?



Hylke Faber 11:05

Well, I took about a year because I started with yoga, which helped a little bit but not quite. And then I went on vacation to Vietnam. And I had somebody there that I met in yoga that said, I want to teach you meditation. So he taught me meditation. And I sat down in one of those temples by a very noisy street in Ho Chi Minh City for an hour. And it was very painful for me, because this person had me sit cross legged, which I did not know how to do. And yet I did it. And the night after that, I just slept so incredibly well. And after that, the insomnia pretty much went away.

Rick Gage 11:50

In so many is erode so many things that having having some sleep, some good sleep can be a building block for lots of other things, maybe say a little bit more about how meditation has, has opened up for you this this access to unfailing sufficiency and other core truths for you?

Hylke Faber 12:09

Yeah. Well, to me, it's like brushing my teeth. In the morning, I get up. And of course, I do the usual hygiene things and breakfast, and I sit down and meditate, usually for half hour or so. And what I noticed is that, in the early morning, it's almost like my brain mind comes up with the gunk that hasn't been cleaned up from the previous days. It's like the, like, I sometimes have the 3am still waking up in the middle of the night for a second or for an hour to go to the studio, in the mind goes into this contraction. And, and I'm through sort of meditation while sleeping, I can sleep again. But then in the morning, when I meditate, it's like, a clean out, like, like really doing the dishes from the previous day almost in it, it starts to feel more open, more grounded, more manageable, more kind. And the energy drops from the head more into the heart. That's what meditation helps me do. And I also have to say, I don't want to make this an advertisement for meditation, because I remember once sitting in meditation hall, and everybody was talking about this, and I thought for a second. Wait, we're now getting very attached to this thing of meditation. Now we have to do this. Well, you know, and I even have some pride in my ego has some pride in doing this 30 minutes every day, or something like that. It's just a tool. It's like having a conversation with you as a tool. It's also my meditation simply becomes familiar becoming familiar with reality. That's what the word points to right and the practice points to. So that's always and it's not just this practice, it happens while walking while having breakfast. Well, having a conversation with your friend by while being in a meeting while writing something that can be always just an orientation of you could say connectedness and that to me is the takeaway from meditation that helped to orient me from running after to connecting to something that's deeper here.

Rick Gage 14:33

Yeah, thank you for that, as you describe it a little bit here. And as we've talked about this before, the sense of rootedness and unwavering ness is something we return to again and again that we that we lose hold of it and then we and then we come back. And I'd love for you to describe some more recent perhaps experiences of of when you when you lost that rootedness and unwavering pneus and and how you notice that you lost it? And what brought you back? I really



Hylke Faber 15:05

don't like this question, right? Because now I have to come clean. Okay. So well, what experience comes to mind? And I love you asking this question, because when we do workshops when I facilitate workshops with others, I always think of examples that are happening in the last few days. And what's interesting over the last 15 to 20 years is that these examples are always there. So that's, that's a data point that always there. So if we did this episode a year from now, I'm sure I'll have another another episode. So that's the first thing to notice is that it's not wrong, that we have these experiences. It's more like, Ah, I have these experiences. To learn something to become more rooted, you could say, to expand my perspective, you know, so an experience I had this week was with a client, I got an email from them, saying that they wanted to change the scope, about by 50%. And that they wanted to change our fees about with about 80%. And both of them were downward. So I got that email. And I sent an email back with, okay, so let's think about the scope. And here's my perspective on what that what the work that's already been done. And no part of my mind wants to please, right, my mind says, Okay, sure. We'll do 50% Less of work, and you pay us 80% Less, it's okay, you know, I'm going to be a good nice boy. And I'm, like, really compassionate person, and I'm so peaceful. But then something in me says, whoa, hold on, what's going on? What's really going on here? Like, what? What's really going on here? And I looked at the deliverables that we created, the time we had spent. And so I sent an email back saying yes, I see that the scope needs to be reduced, given some things that were happening in the company with organization change that they couldn't foresee. And I understand you have a budget constraint. And this is the work that's already been done. Therefore, I propose that we meet somewhere in the middle, and I gave them the number. And while I wrote that, I felt very strong. It feels almost like you know, when you're singing or something like the energy was flowing, and I felt like in it. And I sent the email around 10 o'clock in the morning. And I did my coachings. And just from time to time, I was checking my email, has this client responded yet and responded. And night came and they hadn't responded. And I felt like I went to the end of my days, okay, well, this is what it is, it's fine. It'll be fine. However, then, at about 3am, in the morning, I woke up, and my brain started to go like, Oh, you shouldn't have said that. You are, you are way too assertive, you will now lose all work with this client, this kind of catastrophic thinking started to kick in. And I couldn't stop the thinking because the thinking just did what the thinking does. And this and I come to understand this is the crocodile. This is the reptilian survival brain that needs to protect me from the worst case scenarios by letting me see what that could be. It's like, okay, well, you you do that you're there to do your work. You know that Titanic didn't do that very well. So it's good that I have this mechanism in minutes. Okay. But I could feel it in my mind. Like I started to feel like all overheated. stressed out and then I just noticed it. What am I doing? I'm being caught in some maelstrom of thoughts. So I'm breathe it and ask myself a simple question. Is this true? I don't I don't know whether this is true. This is probably not true. And it feels familiar, like ego. Attachment madness happening in me. So what if I let this go? What if I just let this go and come back to my heart and just let this go and let go of my control because I realized it was my fear of outcomes that was influencing me and be really kind to myself and to this other person because I realized the mind wasn't very kind to me or the other person. And then just by able being able to drop that I touched into something deeper in me that was more quiet, more peaceful, and I went back asleep. And then the next morning I woke up. And there was an email saying, Thank you so much for



sharing your perspective. So kindly, and that makes total sense for me. Let's go this way. And I thought, I'll be tired.

Rick Gage 20:18

It's so interesting. How so often any gaps that may exist, just natural gaps in communication or you know, the the unapplied to email is the classic example. Our mind fills in a story about what that's about. And the story writers are almost always crocodiles are fearful parts of us that aren't writing in what are the horrible things that might happen? I love them what you describe Toka, though also there was the you describe to think as an overheated mind. A recognizing kind of the energy of the thoughts that were that oh, this is a familiar ego energy control, kind of set of thoughts. So there were several sort of flags that you had, that you could use to identify, oh, I'm in I'm in that unrooted state, I'm in that not remembering what's real state, and then you use the question just is it real? Is it true? And often the follow up question, Can I really know that it's true? Yeah. As as a way to sort of deepen into that. And, and that helps you say, Well, no, I can't really know that. That's true. Yeah, this is just a story. Yes. Yes. Reminds me of the theme. You've heard me often say no news is just no news. Right? Just a gap in news. It's not. It's not a new story, although my mind wants to make it that very quickly.

Hylke Faber 21:47

Yes, yes. I am struck by Rick that. The, there's there's two parts to it. Is it truthful? And is it loving? Kind. And in the last few years, I really started to develop a deeper relationship with the second question as well, which is this kind and loving. And my crocodilian mind wants to say, when you're in crisis, there's no space for kindness. And then I asked myself, is that true. And I realized, there's always space for kindness and love and peace, no matter what happens, even when I'm in the middle of a battle, I can still be kind to myself, and the other person, even if it means I'm going to be totally disagreeing with this person, or being totally firm, I can still hold this intention, and be connected to that energy, of kindness, of love of care. I was coaching somebody last night. And this was a senior executive in a technology company. And they were describing a conflict they had with an other of their peers. And it was basically about getting into each other's territory, that their colleague felt that they were getting into their territory with their team all the time. And they thought that they were being very innovative, and actually very purposeful. Right? So we're talking about this. That was interesting, right? Because this person that I was coaching, let's call them Carlos, Carlos said, yeah, I, I felt I need to please them and say the right things. And this is not right. But then the in a very big strategy very, very complicated what they needed to do with the team to build some kind of alliance with this other group within this company, right. And it was very apparent that this was all mind stuff, but not high mind. But very low, contracted mind stuff like fearful mind stuff that was talking, it makes it very complex. That's another way we can think it's not always like, panicky, it can always also be very, very complicated with very and sophisticated, but it very complicated, right? And so then a way to get through that is by asking, So what do you feel about this, Carlos? And Carlos said, I feel angry. Right. Now, in some school of thought you could say, well, anger has no place in love. But that's not true. Right. Martin Luther King was a great example of AR and GM. They were good examples of saying no, no, I am standing for this. You are you're crossing a boundary. This is not working. We're out of alignment with



what I see as true, right. So as soon as Carlos realized his anger and realized it wasn't bad that he had anger, there was a firmness that came up and he realized that the actually He was afraid of the other person. And that he was going to be seen as the troublemaker by their manager, by their senior leader for even wanting to change the dynamic of collaboration, but required him to take a step back, connect with his feelings and look a little deeper and say, What is this really about? So that's the third question. Is it true? Is it loving? And what is this really about? As opposed to the surface mind that creates a lot of complications?

Rick Gage 25:32

I love that. Thank you so much for the those three questions. So let's let's dive into that second question a little more. I'd love to hear how that emerged for you. What sort of brought that forward? For you that will? Is it loving? Is it kind? How did that come to become be a part of the of the questions that you ask yourself?

Hylke Faber 25:53

First, because I'm a really slow student. So I have been working with this coach since 2003, for us over the last 20 years. And her first question to me was, I was I was attending a small meditation center session that he was leading at the time. And my ego says, because he had wave music going, and I thought, you know, I'm the silent meditator. I don't need all this kind of new agey stuff, so he doesn't get it. But there was something in me that I need to talk to her anyway. So as I asked the first question, she asked me while I when I talked to her after that session in 2003, was on a scale from one to 10. How much do you love yourself? And I'm like, a four. Because this is not working. My relationships are falling apart. My deal hasn't come in. Don't feel so good that the huh. And so over the last 20 years, she's been coaching me on this very simple idea of what is it like when you commit to being unconditionally love, unconditional love to being unconditional love being rooted in that. And notice when you're caught by something that gets you away from that, which is probably fear, or some kind of control? So I've practiced that question for the last 20 years. But somehow, I've resisted it. Also. What I think okay, this is this is very uncomfortable for me to share, but I'll say it anyway, what really brought me to my knees was my my relationship with my now husband. Because there was something in me in the early years of our relationship, we've been together for about eight years now. Is that I thought I knew. So this question, is this true? Like, oh, I know the truth here. This is what needs to happen. You don't do that? Well, you need to do this because a good relationship looks like this and a good husband looks like this. And if you don't do this, I'm going to coach you being very smart with truth questions into what it should be. Which is not loving to them. Or or to meet Fortunately, I'm married with somebody who doesn't take that doesn't play the game so he just when I do that, it's more recess. Hmm. Like it stops everything. And is this loving, helps me under GIZ instills a sense of humility in me it's like that's not kind and I may not know what to do right now. I may not know what it should be right now. But what I can be is kind and here I mean, that's there's a sense of surrender in that

Rick Gage 29:08



yeah, that's beautiful. Thank you. I hear in that kind of a I can ask the what is true question from my head. And it is an aligning question that helps my head be in the right place helps me focus on the right things. But the question is it loving is it kind drops me into my heart and as you describe it a little bit I think perhaps the What is this really about drops me into my gut. But maybe we'll explore that a little bit after the break. For now let's take a short break and in just a moment we'll be back again with the with the hilker Faber and this turning the tables Hilda as guest conversation

Presenter 29:52

you are listening to rooted and unwavering presented by growth Leaders Network, the leadership, team and culture Development Company. If you would like to learn more about working on connectedness for yourself, your team or organization, please contact growth leaders network on LinkedIn. And now back to the show.

Rick Gage 30:18

Well, we're back. Now again with our guest, Hilco Faber. I'm your guest host, Rick gage and delighted to continue the conversation that we've been having. Okay, I love what you shared in the first half of our of our conversation about what rooted and unwavering feels like for you and where that's come from, and some of how you notice when you're there and when you're not. And these three questions that you've that you flagged for us that we've talked a little bit about, I'd like to dig in a bit further on. The Is it true sort of I was suggesting head question first that you ask, is it loving and kind, which I suggested might be a hard question. And what's really going on here, which might get to something in the gut. So maybe I'll first let you react if you have a have a different thought process than the sort of head heart and gut thing that I just threw on the table and see what your thoughts are to take that conversation forward a little bit.

Hylke Faber 31:14

I love that. I love that head heart gut frame on this. And I would add the hands. Which gets us to the fourth question, what's of service here? So this is not just me being all feeling good about myself? Or getting aligned? The alignment also leads to like you said earlier, Rick, to extending that, then? No, it's like, okay, so there's a sense of, like, with this situation that I just described with this client, is this true that they are about to haze me or, like, pull one over? No. Is it true that everything is gone? No. So what is true? Oh, the change of situation? And this might probably this is an opportunity for something deeper or further with them. That may be something is it? Is it loving? drops me in the heart, no, because I'm actually I can feel the separation. And the the the loving part, when I'm out of it, it goes to judgment, like I'm in judgment of them, and of me, like I shouldn't have done this, they shouldn't have done this. And now we're in this kind of mental like, clash, as opposed to coming from the heart. Being loving, as it gets this sense of stillness, kindness, let's be in this together, whatever happens, we're in this together, we are in this together, I feel like the proverbial hand behind your heart. In that situation, like, Oh, we're in this together, this client sending this email must been hard for them to to write that, wow. That's like, I'm appreciating their openness, like, oh, then it opens a whole different way of relating to the other person. And that interesting starts to interact with the head again, right? Like, it starts to



give different insights, like I can have a different kind of conversation with them. And then what's really at stake for you more of the gut level, right? Also gets to like, why am I here? What am I rooted in? Is it about maximizing the deal? You know, getting the most out of this squeezing the most out of this? Or is it about something deeper? And, you know, then I, that brings me back to what work for me is about what life for me is about is about connectedness, it's about connecting to what's true about ourselves about what's our reality, and how do we serve from that place. So then almost like a natural outflow, like, there's a movement that is like outward, but with the hands I want to be of service like i How can I help? Like, how can I help? How can I help? And in this case, that means like, okay, so what can I do? Or what can we do to help you be successful in this different scope? Like and you know, my ego brands will say, Well, you know, you've cut it, I'm going to cut you to, you know, as it was no, no, I and then we have a beautiful interaction together, that we have a beautiful interaction together, it gets to a much better place. And we're now describing this sequentially like truth love steak service. Steak, not as vegetables with steak is what's at stake here. And it can it can be in any order, and I find that the fourth question, how can I be of service here is can be a question that can cut through all the others. Because it takes me out of my shell, like, at 3am. That night, if I'd been able to get to the question, what's of service? It would have probably quieted my mental chatter even faster than it did.

Rick Gage 35:22

Well, but let me caution a little bit because I often rushed to the service question. And I don't don't let the other question surface. And even as you just recounted the story, you kind of skimmed past the what's at stake question, because a part of what I heard come up was, wait a minute, we've done more work than that. And rather than just giving Oh, yes, I'll go along, that will be of service. Yeah. If I just asked the service question, then it would be of service for me to acquiesce to the to the client's request. But really, there's something else at stake here. That's That's my guts telling me Wait a minute, this isn't fair. This isn't right. There's some there's a boundary here that I need to pay some attention to. And I need to advocate for myself, so I can trust myself. And I can I also stand for something here? Yes, I want to be of service. Yes, I stand for the client. And I also think for me, for me and my team. Yes, balance is an important piece. So I really like all the questions. And you're right, they can come in any order in service in any way. But they're all important.

Hylke Faber 36:28

I love that. I also like what you said just now about when I dare to take a stand for myself, it helps to create more trust for myself. And paradoxically, when I don't basically I give into some kind of fear of what might happen, like if I did, but now I'm creating what might happen by giving in to the fearful scenario, which is I'm just going along with what's not true, right. And that's actually now I'm creating a fearful anecdote, you could say another fearful example, fear based example from my mind to come back to this, which says, you see, you can trust anybody. Because they're going to pull one over, and then you're going to be doing all this work for nothing. And you can trust anybody. Right? And, and that's what would have been the end of the story. But as you said, by asking this question, what's really at stake for you? What do I stand for, are able to change that story, and bring it more into alignment with what is higher truth, which is like, Ha, we delivered this work, you need a smaller budget, smaller



scope. Let's find a way that works for everyone. Now, I even give my mind a little reminder saying don't mess with hookah. Right? Don't mess with hookah. He stands for something, and you can rely on that. And that, to me is part of connectedness as well. So it's all like, gooey and soft and kind and cuddly. It's also firm and learning to stand in our own truth, and also enjoying that not to hurt the other. But to actually practice self respect and dignity.

Rick Gage 38:32

I think that's beautiful and hilchot touches something that's, that's quite personal, I think, for you and I and even in our relationship. We're both people who very much value generosity, and whose instinct is to be generous. And there have been many times in our relationship over the last several years, when our instinct to be generous, has been for each of us are not paying attention to something that was important to us. And it's been a learning process that it's better for us in the long run. If we pay attention to that niggle that sense that there's something here that doesn't feel right or fair to me. And each time we have confronted those things together, it's deepened relationship and brought us forward. Yes, that that leads me to maybe a shift in our the focus of our conversation a little bit. I'd love to explore with you a little bit how rooted and unwavering supports connectedness and in particular, connected teamwork. We spent the last several years focused on connectedness, the last couple of years focused on how connectedness can really help teams at function at the next level. Talk a little bit about how you see rootedness and unwavering this as valuable in the context of teams and teamwork.

Hylke Faber 39:52

Yes. So it's interesting when I connect the dots going back, you know And we've been working with teams for the last 1520 years, I would say 20 years. And when I connect back to all the retreats, and all the workshops, and all the development journeys, and all the coachings individual or with groups that was done, that I was part of, or did I observe that I led, the thing that always made the difference was where people became truthful. And people became rooted in something deeper than the superficial conversation, like we access a deeper level of intelligence. And that intelligence wasn't just words, it was also feelings, it was meaning. It was the way we had conversations, the way decisions were made, but it came from a much deeper place. Like there was almost like, you know, when you have a beautiful piece of music, there's a, an undercurrent of the melody that sweeps everything with like, where by itself, the little drum going, it doesn't mean too much. But the drum in you know, the ninth symphony or the of the earth don't even know that the Fourth Symphony from Beethoven makes a big impact because it's enveloped in this deeper intelligence. And that's what I would say, happens when you work with teams on connectedness. And that may sound esoteric. So make that very specific, right? For a team but brings that deeper connectedness is one people connecting to themselves, right? So if everybody's phoning it in, nobody's there we just have, like, sort of an almost artificial intelligence reality where there's just computers talking to each other, which by the way, has a great function too. But that's not what this is about. Right? It's like, okay, so let's think about a team, we talk about an issue. Think about the example there's dimension with Carlos and his is calling, but that could be a team issue is a team issue. Okay? So we're gonna just play placate it and put some values on it, we're going to be respectful. And we're going to be owning and no, that's BS. We're going to talk about how does that



feel? What is at stake for you? What's caring, like we're asking those deeper questions to access a deeper level. So the first piece of connectedness is people connecting to themselves, and also realizing when their reptilian brain, like I was just describing with this other client was this acting up, or whether I'm coming from this deeper values driven place, right. The second part of that is connecting to each other. And that means that I need to be able to see Rick Ulrich, right. So in our interactions, when you do something that I don't like, am I therefore going to judge the heck out of you know, or think you know, my old story, I have to do it all by myself? No, that's my judgment. So I can step out of that I can accept you for who you are, accept you for the brilliant being that you are, that is unchanging, that's always I can see the unfailing sufficiency in you. And at the same time, I can have honest conversation with you and honor you with my truth and hear your truth. So we can be in truth together that's connecting to each other part of that, and there's a lot more to that. And then the third part is connecting to the task to the purpose, why are we here together? Like why are we here together? What is the purpose of this team? So with Carlos and his group is, is to create a better experience for our customers? It's not about one person owning and the other person not owning? No, that's, that's besides the point that's not purposeful. So what's the purpose of part of working with teams is to ground on the bigger why, which always is higher than the next quarter or the next year's number? That's important too. Because without that, we won't have a business. Right? Shareholders won't pay for what we're going to do here. But what is it that we are here for? What is it that we are really here to do? Why do we do what we do? And when we connect teams with those three pieces, and that's an ongoing practice, they become more intelligent. more caring, more, you could say those four questions, you come into action become people more truthful, they become more loving, caring, compassionate. They become more rooted in what's actually going on, which is another form of truthful and they become more of service to what's really needs to be happening as opposed to the service to their own ego agenda, which takes a lot of energy

Rick Gage 45:00

I think that's really powerful to think about those different layers and how that can be helpful. I also think it's interesting that in in a team context or in a in a, in a community context and bumping up against others is often the feedback loop. You know, that's where some of the universe's knocks on the doors come from, you know, hey, look inside. And it's often true that others can see me more clearly than I can see myself. So when I'm in a context of a loving, supportive relationship, in a work setting, my colleagues can be a huge advantage to me in understanding myself. And in getting more clarity about what's important to me. And we can call forward in each other. This this more rootedness. Sometimes somebody else will be aware, before I am, that, you know, you seem a little unsettled, Rick, what's what's going on here? Your energy shifted there. And I don't know what that's about. And maybe I don't even know yet what that's about. But I can pause and say, Yeah, that's right. That did feel different to me, something does feel off. What is it? That's true for me? And I can go through that, that, that, that question series and become more clear myself and come back together. And you touch just briefly on what it's like when we don't have that in organizations. And I think it's worth spending a minute or two there. I've been working with an organization in which there are very nice conversations. It's a very cordial, apparently collegial, executive team, in which I don't think they have the real conversations.



And the conversation they have about the conversation, when they talk with me afterwards is very different than the conversation when it was happening. And I think there's kind of an epidemic right now of these not real conversations that are happening in organizations, and there is just as it is, in life, not sustainable in as individuals to be locked in this not real conversations happening internally, it's not viable in organizations to have conversations that aren't real. We can't make real progress on the challenges that we're facing. We can't tackle the tough problems that humanity faces without getting to those real conversations. I'd love your perspective on how you see teams functioning, when they're when they're not having some of these, this kind of connectedness, what are some of the symptoms that might be clues that some deeper focus on on connectedness and this route of destined unwavering this would be helpful?

Hylke Faber 47:51

Well, the simple reflection would be always because it's not an N station, like truth, love service or not. Things that you get, and then you're done. It's to me, it's a lifelong project of discovery, right? So for me to be in a team means I'm always working on myself. I'm always, as you suggested, in feedback with the other, connecting to the other and learning from them. And I'm always thinking about, so what is of service now and it can be very different from the way it was yesterday. Because situations can change even though my purpose may stay the same. Now, how practically, do we see teams having like a high need, even though I just said it was always but a high need to do something about it? Well, the first thing that I'd say is the entropy, which is the energy not available for productive use is high. Which means a lot of conversations happen about the conversation, but the conversation doesn't happen. Like you were suggesting that people are writing very long emails to each other to explain their positions, there's defensiveness happening, that we are not making progress towards our goals. That we have people dominating the conversation, that there's a lot of drama, that we're pleasing each other all the time that we are always in opposition to each other, that we're in some kind of competition with each other, that we are not enjoying what we're doing, right. That we're getting feedback from the people that we lead that we are causing a lot of confusion that people have no idea how it's all gonna work out that our agendas are overly full, that we're not feeling we're living our our best. Life like life continues happening and we just feel like we're finding it. These are all symptoms you could say is like Ha we could say well, this is just out That work is this. Now when you're part of a team, you're not supposed to say what's really going on. Or you can say, Well, wait a second, is that true? What would happen? What would happen? What if not to make the wrong where we are, this is the part of our human evolution, there's reasons that we don't say, what's on our mind, because we don't want to get fired. Or we wouldn't want to lose that pole position, or we don't have any experience doing that, right? It's we can be compassionate with ourselves. But when that's happening, can say, well, what if? What if I just allowed myself to be a little bit more connected today? To what's truth, loving, truthful loving, and acts of service, even if the rest of my team doesn't do it. And then, if I have the wherewithal, the position may be, but definitely the influence, I can ask my team. So what would happen if we looked at how we work together, how we work together, and if we became a bit more, we found ways to become even more honest, even more respectful, even more impactful in what we do. So yeah, so the main thing for me is to not to be discouraged. To say, Ah, of course, I'm a human being in 2023, or whatever it might



be. As humans, we are very stuck in ego consciousness for the most part. So of course, we're going to have all kinds of thoughts that separate each other from each other. And that's just where we are. Now, what do I how do I respond to that? What's my choice in that today, and not even getting attached to a beautiful outcome? That to me is practicing connectedness right now?

Rick Gage 51:57

Thank you, thank you for that. Well, let's, let's maybe look at a bit the balancing part of that. So share share with us a little bit when the experience you've had of when, when there was that kind of interconnectedness and team connectedness and connectedness to the task. And what that was like and what that felt like and, and what you learned from one of those peak experiences?

Hylke Faber 52:25

Yeah. Well, fortunately, they, they seem to happen more and more. So when I look at my home team, the growth Leaders Network team, I see that happen, more and more. Because what happens is, well, the practice we start our every meeting with is checking. So we talk about how we feel, how we're growing and what our intention is. And invariably, that access is this deeper level of intelligence already, right? There's this more sense of reflection, we slow down a little bit. And we see each other for where each person is at that given time and point, you know, and we all go through things in life. And you and I have had our own experiences with that, and, and just being able to be with that. We share peace with each other, sharing peace, it's like passing each other a glass of water, Here have some peace, even if we're not in a peaceful situation, right. And then the second thing that I noticed was, when we keep coming back to this question of purpose, and I see people self regulate. Like, there's a lot of things we could talk about in a meeting, and I see the team staying in tune with like, just knowing that this is off key that's okay with knowing that we're gonna stay with this. So a great example of that is a colleague of ours from Eastern Europe, who teaches me always to keep it simple. So for example, in growth Leaders Network we're entirely focused on for new clients, introducing them to connect it to events. That's all. But my crocodile brain wants to do this, and then that and then 500 Other things and didn't know keep it simple. And just that purposefulness makes it so simple. There's a sense of simplicity that comes and then an other thing I've noticed is that feedback flows very easily, like feedback is not such a big deal. Hey, I noticed you that this can we talk about that second? Yeah, of course. And we create because we've done it so many times. When I say or when I hear from somebody hey, I have some feedback for you. I don't think now it's the end of the world. Because we've been through this so many times. Oh, feedback time. All right? Knocking on the door. Let's talk about this because I know what's on the other end, which is growth, kindness, and a deeper rootedness. So I could talk about this fall for a lot more. But those are some of the things I want to say. And then maybe as a last thing is I just noticed people being more joyful, just more joyful. Because there are more people, everybody's more, you could say, feeling taller on the inside. We help each other that way.

Rick Gage 55:46

I appreciate those reflections, I love how you're, I would describe it as reclaiming the word feedback, because I think feedback has come to have a negative charge. For many of us that I hear you're



reclaiming it in a way that that this is a positive element of relationship. This is our relationship to deepen and form and grow. And I think that's really positive. I have a colleague who, who said that you sometimes people just blurt something that, you know, really strikes you deeply. She said something like, we're okay being angry with each other, because we know we love each other. You know, we can be in conflict. And we're okay because we know there's something deeper, that holds us together. And that this conflict will come and go, it's whether that will that will pass. And that that sort of deeper connectedness creates the opportunity for teams to have the healthy conflict and, and discussion and different points of view, that allow better decision making and better creativity and, and more energy and I love that you highlighted the the sort of joyfulness I noticed that in the teams that are connected, I think of in every Friday meeting that we've had Hilco for, for a long time, there's lots of laughter. With with another colleague that were that we get to meet with and that laughter is a good sign of, of a healthy relationship and collaboration. Or we're just about at the end of our time, hookah. Let me just offer an opening as you always do. What else would you like to say, before we close today

Hylke Faber 57:28

that I've enjoyed this conversation, I feel the connectedness, and the joy of reflecting on what it means to connect together with others, and maybe that invitation to people listen, everything that said here are just parts of perspectives from two people. And to me, the power is not so much in what's being said, but that we're talking about it. So my invitation, if you're listening is to have conversations about what does it mean to be truthful loving and of service? What does it mean to be connected with yourself and with others, as simple as that?

Rick Gage 58:14

Thank you for joining this Eternals episode of rooted unwavering in which he'll go Faber has been our guest. Will next time we'll we'll be back again to the usual format and Hilco will be the host. And we'll look forward to more conversations over the coming weeks and months. Thanks, everyone for joining.

Presenter 58:39

Thank you for joining us in today's episode of rooted and unwavering leadership conversations about courageous connectedness presented by the leadership development company growth Leaders Network. To learn more, subscribe to this podcast. Connect with growth Leaders Network and Helga Faber on LinkedIn or read Holcus award winning book taming your crocodiles. Now take a moment and appreciate something that is great about you. Celebrate the gift that you are and enjoy connecting more deeply to your best self today. See you next time on rooted and unwavering

