

S01 - E16 - Rooted & Unwavering - Feb 24 - Hylke Faber, Olena Sergeeva, Yaryna Klyuchkovska

Presenter 00:03

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 rightness 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 rooted and unwavering

Hylke Faber 00:44

welcome everyone, back to roots and unwavering podcast brought in broadcasting live from Business Radio x in Phoenix, Arizona, where we help leaders connect more deeply to their innate potential. I'm your host Ahsoka Faber, and I'm here today with two guests from the Ukraine today on this momentous day, which marks the one year anniversary of the full scale invasion of Russia, by Russia after Ukraine here today with uremia clue to Casca. And I'll lean us our Gaver yurina. How are you today?

Yaryna Klyuchkovska 01:22

Happy to be alive 36 538 365 days into the war, grateful for being alive, grateful to all the people who made it possible, including a lot of brave Americans who have supported Ukraine throughout this time.

Hylke Faber 01:39

Thank you Reena. It's an honor to be here with you today. How about you, Elena, how are you today?

Olena Sergeeva 01:47

Well, I'm grateful for being here and having an opportunity to focus. You know, the attention of everyone who's going to listen on how war has affected lives, you know, like our lives here and lives of others, and reflect together upon what it means.

Hylke Faber 02:11

Thank you, Elena. So that's what this podcast is about in this series is about before we go into this topic of today, which is about connecting in times of extreme challenge. Warren this case, I want to talk a little bit about what Rudan unwavering is for what the context is in which we have this conversation. So Ruth and wavering is a podcast series. We're now in our 16th episode, which is all focused about how do we help ourselves in each other, connect more deeply to what's true about us, that quiet place, that



peaceful place, that strong place, that place of energy and compassion and deep resourcefulness in the face of whatever the odds are that life brings upon us. And that's what this series is about. And the intention is that by listening to different leaders, Mike Olena, and arena today is that each of us wakes up more deeply to what's possible within us, so that we can respond from greater wherewithal with greater perspective and humility and peace power, you could say to whatever is coming into our path. So I'm going to introduce our two guests a little bit more. We already know that both Irina and Elena from the Ukraine. They're so much more also than that, you Rena is comes with us from Ukraine, and she actually is in Kyiv. Today, with 20 years of experience in Strategic Communication Consultant in Ukraine. She specializes in strategic communication, crisis communication and communicating change. She is a communications adviser and media trainer. She's helped dozens of senior executives, government officials and politicians. He's also recently worked as a corporate communications director for our salami tall, which is the largest foreign investor in Ukraine. And she's worked with many, many prominent leaders, both in Ukraine and also outside. He's worked with the ministers of economic development, the Minister of Finance, National Health Service, and the number of businesses and NGOs, NGOs in Ukraine, and such a varied backgrounds. He also worked, for example, in Microsoft. She worked to lead the largest communication department. She liked let the lead the communications department in one of the largest Ukrainian and international companies. She led that in Vodafone and Metro cash and and carry it and many organizations. And as he also has studied both in Ukraine and in the US, which you will notice is also true about Elena. She studied at the University of Kyiv Mahila. I probably don't say that right, and the University of San San Jose San Jose State University. He started public relations and business communications at the leading business schools. He's also founded the Ukrainian Association of Public Relations and shared sport. For a time she was also named of one of Ukraine's best PR directors by marketing media Review magazine. NC helped good create in 2014, Ukraine crisis Media Center, you've done so many things, Karina, I think one of the things that struck me when I met you last week, for the first time or the week before was your tremendous heart and courage and fortitude. I sense so much fortitude showing up every day. And that is something I'm going to explore more when we talk with you now, for Elena. Almost like your sisters in some way, in terms of your your backgrounds, both also very accomplished. He's a coach and facilitator consulting, working on organizational change and leadership development projects, executive coaching and team alignment. So he happens to be now a colleague and growth Leaders Network. Today, Elena lives in Seattle, she left or fled. I'm not quite sure we'll talk about this more, a month before the Russian full scale invasion started last year. C has been a 15 years in senior management and 12 years in business education and consulting. One of the things he did, which I think is so beautiful is he headed Mary Kay Ukraine and Moldova as a general manager, so like the CEO, so we're sitting here with her as a CEO, she was listed amongst Ukraine's top 100 managers. She was also a founder, just like the arena of Ukraine's Direct Selling Association on serves as chairman or chairperson of the board. There's my full conditions as chairperson, and he also led courses as an MBA lecturer at Eastern Europe. Yes,

Olena Sergeeva 07:09

he'll get the sound is breaking the sound? Is it?



Hylke Faber 07:13

Is it breaking? Now? It's good. Okay. I think I'm just looking around me in the studio and looks like it may be a Seattle thing, not a phoenix. It also happens. And the question is, how do we respond to this, right? You hold the degree from Rutgers University in New Jersey, and a master's degree from the National Geographic Jenko, University of Kyiv, and your certified coach and a certified HR professional. Okay, that's a lot. But I wanted to say that anyway, so that people know a little bit more about you. I know, Elena, for the last 1112 years now. And the first time I met her, I was struck by her heart by her tremendous depths of reflection, and also fortitude. So in that way, you both are sisters in some way. So I said enough. Let's just dive right into this podcast in this conversation. You arena, tell me and tell us a little bit about how you've managed to stay connected to yourself in these last 365 days.

Yaryna Klyuchkovska 08:29

You can dive right in? That's the \$100,000 question. A year ago, I woke up I was sick with COVID. My brother woke me up at five o'clock in the morning to tell me that there are explosions in key of the Russia duct. We knew it was going to happen. We just didn't want to believe it. And at this point, it becomes real. A few hours later, I heard explosions where I lived in the city of Kibera him the south of Ukraine, where Russians made a lot of progress and the initial days I wasn't scared. I didn't see anybody who was scared. People just dealt with it. People went to the bank to get cash. People stuck, piled food. People with little children were trying to go westward where it's safer. That's what I did eventually to be with my family. It was just dealing with things. It wasn't as scary as it looks from the outside. I spent the first few months of the war with my family in the western part of the city. We had some missile strikes and of course a lot of people we knew went or volunteer or work and straight conscripted. So they wanted to fight. We helped however we could to help find and purchase equipment for the army or food or medicine, there was a lot of things to do. You can call it probably this association, it wasn't a conscious decision to be brave or to stay active. It was the only way to survive. And I think it speaks a lot to the resilience of the Ukrainian people. I know that Ukraine has been in the headlines in the United States, mostly for conflict, revolutions. disquiet in any case, and I think that's what we learned to survive, we certainly learned to sort of mobilize our internal energy without sinking. And just you go ahead and do the right thing. But the word does, and I think any crisis does, it shows you who you really are. It shows you your weakest spots. And it also also shows you the strongest sides of your character. And that's what you rely on. Without much reflection, the time for reflection came later. I think people have reflected upon this fully years from now, after we've hopefully survived. And one, I just wanted to say that the hardest part was the unknown. We feel much better now. We know we're winning. We know it's a question of time. We know it's a question of support from around the world. We know it's a question of how we can endure. A year ago on that day, we didn't know what's going to happen. We didn't know if our government was staying in place. We didn't know if the President would leave or not. We didn't know where the Russians how far they would have made it. If they would successfully invest invaded, gave the capital, which was their strategic objective and still is. Now we know so much more. And it's always best to know if even if it's best, even if it's bad news. It's better than not knowing. And also just one word about leadership. Our president Wolanski, he's had not what you call a standard presidential background. Just a few days before the invasion, he had made



that speech that called for peace and negotiations and diplomacy. If you didn't know that he would turn up the leader that he is now I think it's a case study for the books one day, how a person grows into the challenge that life presents, how a person becomes a true leader, when he hears the call. And that was a big inspiration to all of us as well. I was never a big fan of him beforehand. But I'm able to appreciate how he stepped up, how much he's grown over this year. And I'm just hoping that all of us have grown as much as a president over these past 12 months

Hylke Faber 12:54

for sharing your arena and very struck by you saying in a moment of extreme difficulty. We got to know both our weakness and our strength. And we get to rely on what's strong enough that we may not even know that's there. Right. So thank you for thank you for sharing that your Rena. And thank you for sharing, honestly, honestly and openly what was what's what's that like? Because we can talk about in this in the past tense because you're in the midst of it. I was struck by when we had our pre show conversation that you said that you were grateful that the lights were on, and today had been a relatively good day because no missiles had fallen. That is reality that you live in. And you look at us with bright eyes. So I just salute you and all other humans that are able to look at with bright eyes to something as unspeakable as that. Thank you. Yeah. Thank you, Elena. Share with us a bit about the same question. Like what has it been like for you to stay connected to your self and maybe sometimes lose your connection and find again, in this is last year?

Olena Sergeeva 14:20

Well, my my journey was quite different this year from Uranus, and those who are in Ukraine because I was watching the news about a year ago in January and made the decision to leave and come to the United States to stay was France the decision was to come and I had the return ticket of course and come back in a month or something and then the war started and when the war started, even though I left worried about something like this I was still shocked. And it was, I mean, shocked tremendously. It wasn't, it wasn't just shock of how this affected my life. At the time I woke up. Actually, I was I think on the night of the here, it was the night and in Ukraine, that was the morning, I had dinner with a friend, and we were like, having a good time, basically. And then my daughter called and she said, I just woke up from explosions, and we didn't know what's happening, it looks like, you know, Russia attacked. And the horrific effect of that the horrifying effect of that was kind of an on multiple levels. One is your own life and people you love and care about the country, the implications it has for like, the, you know, the people of Ukraine. But then also, for me, what came later, of course, it wasn't something I was consciously thinking about on that first day. Later, it was kind of loss of meaning. Some of the things I was very convinced then because I taught and teach, still teach courses on leadership, you know, leadership comes with integrity, and trust, and, and so on. And I have a strong sense of like, putting my efforts into something I believe, and then have a net grow right? War as a collective group putting efforts together and having progress, right, moving forward. And then one day seen how urandom or maybe not sir, a missile attack, destroy them, like huge supermarket that was just built on the highway to return from Keith digital, mega market that was just burned. And I've seen that been built for quite some time I was driving by buying then when it when it was built, I was buying groceries, there was



really, you know, it was cool, huge, nice, more than store, and it can be destroyed, just like that. Literally in, in, in in minutes. Right. Not to mention the lives of people. It really had a deep effect on, you know, an overall, like, understanding of what's the sense of life, what's the meaning of all we do here on this planet. If you spend years fixing the roads, you spend tax money doing this and that you you your heart rejoices that your country's is, is you know becoming more beautiful, more organized and so on and then a bully a barbarian can just do something like that. And that sense of like local been lost and, and confused was, well, it still is I cannot say look, I just resolve it all for myself. And now I know what's the meaning of it. I still don't i but that was really effecting me very, very deeply in terms of like, who I am, what I am doing, who we are, what we are doing and so on. And, and of course, I had multiple effects of the war on on my own life. My family got, like many other families, right? I'm not unique. That way. I got sort of fragmented to, let's say, a New Year celebration a year ago. We usually come to my mom's home. And it's been like maybe 12 people together me my sister, our kids, some other relatives. And the next thing we were supposed to do together was Easter, April, right. But April previous April last year, it was just my mom there in that house. So no one no one else could be there. To have my close relatives, my relatives they volunteered to serve in the army in February. They both are in the army from February. So almost a year now. Luckily, both are alive and in one piece, but there are significant implications of that. For everything.

Hylke Faber 20:22

Yeah. Thank you for sharing Elena. Like, I'm struck by both of your stories, how the mind actually cannot make sense of this totally. There's something that is bigger than what what we actually can understand in terms of making it making meaning of it, or whatever it is just it's it's so vast, it's so it's such an I like the word unspeakable. It's such an unspeakable atrocity, unspeakable acts of aggression. And yet, this is not the first time that humans do this to each other. No, it's happened before, and it's happening other places in the world. And now it's happening with you. And you could say, well, it's not you could say, and it's also happening in this country, United States has its own atrocities that are happening every day. So in the face of that, and I'm curious, your arena. You talked about what you'd be learning what you said, you said, you you admire the president for having grown into that he listened to the call. Right? So what's the call that you've been hearing, maybe you can say more about that, let's the call you've been hearing through this time, or maybe, and maybe it's been changing.

Yaryna Klyuchkovska 21:52

It has been it's been a long time. The first goal is to survive, for the sake of the people you love. When something like that happens, it's sort of like when you get asked this question on a beat sometimes, if your house is on fire, what will you take what you first. And that's what we've been learning. Since that first day, what are the most important things in our lives? To me, that was my family, I love the city left the city where I've been working, I left my team, they were all made it out of that city, I was from outside, I didn't have any family, I didn't have any support network, I left where my home is I left to be with my mother, my grandmother, my son took a different route I hadn't seen my son in over a year now. He goes to university in the UK. And he can't come back men are not allowed to come back



unless they want to stand up fight. And of course, we want to prioritize his education. At this point, he's volunteering as a translator for the Ukrainian army in the UK. And all of us have been finding ways to be useful to the defense effort in any way. And you'll learn to cope by doing because that's how you'll regain the measure of control over events that normally you don't have any control over. A lot of people spend time in bomb shelters, we didn't have a chance to do that my grandmother was not able to walk fast enough to get to the bomb shelter on time. So we just basically stayed at home and hoped for the best, which is a bad strategy. And then not encouraging anybody else to follow that. But that's a decision. You make these decisions based on the circumstances and you learn to live with them. We all contributed financially to the army. I have this rule that every time the air raid alert goes off, which used to happen several times a day, I would make a donation to the foundation supporting the Ukrainian army, or to one of the volunteer efforts. There's a lot of private citizens started to raise funds, and sort of help equipped Ukrainian soldiers or to help people in the occupied regions or people whose houses have been destroyed. Civil society really pulled together and you hear a lot of that when you hear experts talk about Ukraine these days. But what's important to remember the civil society is such an abstract notion. But this is just people and people do what they can. I'm not brave enough to go and fight a lot of the people I know a lot of women I know when to volunteer and fight as medics or actually enrolled in the regular army. I'm not brave enough for that. My strength is communication. So I started with my family. And I started with my team. And then I helped spread the story to people outside Ukraine because we understood that information war was as real and as impactful as the actual physical war, it was very important to get the story out. And then there was a moment that tested my values a lot. I used to work for a company, an international company, at the beginning of the war, they stopped all business relations with Russia, as many other companies did, so that not to help fund their war efforts through taxes and things. And I found out from the media that the company I worked for, and was really committed to, had renewed their business relationships with Russia and started selling steel to Russia, steel, after, after learning of the tanks, who basically drove over cars with families, destroyed cities and villages and brought soldiers who killed and raped and plundered that was not acceptable to me. So in the middle of the war, the economy is of course, barely holding on, I had to quit my job. As a communications person, I could not be the face of that decision to the society at war is the country at war and they quit. And that was, that was a very easy decision. It's only later that I started thinking, okay, what are, am I going to find a job like that? In the country at war, when the economy is crashing, for obvious reasons, all the money goes to, to fund defense. But that was such an easy decision. And it's moments like that, that you actually know where your red lines are, and what your true values are. I don't remember who said that values are sayings you have to pay for. It's not a value if it doesn't have a cost, right? It's very easy to say, integrity is one of my values. Are you ready to sacrifice for that? Well, I learned that love from my country, is something I'm ready to sacrifice for, I'm not ready to go and fight. I don't know how to handle a gun. I would not be of much use on the frontline. But I can be a fuse, where I can contribute my knowledge, and my expertise. And that's what the what's been holding on what's been holding me up on propping me up all these months. And I'm looking at other people, I'm looking at my family, looking at my brother who works to make sure that Russia pays for reparation. And he works with governments around the world and for the United Nations to help to make that happen. One day, he's a lawyer, he could go to the front line, but just something that nobody



else can do in this country, just him his knowledge, his expertise, his connections, enable him to do that. And I'm so proud of him, no less than if you were at the front lines. And everybody's helping you see grandmothers, you know, sending what remains of their little government pensions to help fund the war. And that inspires you every day. And before. Before we can talk about how you get connected to your true self. What we feel is how we get connected to each other. And I'm sure one is not possible without the other. You cannot really be connected to other people if you're not in touch with yourself that you're not rooted that you're not standing firmly on on the ground and your moral ground on your values on your principles. And then you can be a fuse, and then you can help others and others can help you. And these things go just hand in hand with one another. And you know, people like Alanna, I know a lot of people part of my family left, they face their own challenges, to be away from home to have lost their family connection. It's a whole different way of surviving the war. That's not easier than whatever we're going through here. Each of us has made a difficult choice, there was no no easy choice. And I'm just hoping that they can feel part of this big community and sort of feel this heartbeat that helps us survive. It's been longer than anybody thought. A year ago, all we heard about was you will be you will be destroyed in three days. Russia will take over Ukraine in three days. The company I worked for was actually working on that scenario, what will we do? How will we work with the occupiers? That didn't happen? That didn't happen because people have been sort of holding to each other and holding to yourself and going through this ring of fire. The only way you can survive if you know who you are. And that just sounds a bit you know who did duty but that's the actual learning from from this past year it will survive if you know who you are.

Hylke Faber 30:00

You will survive if you know who you are adding together in that integrity, that's not free.

Yaryna Klyuchkovska 30:11

Crossing is free again, nothing is free. The question is, do you have enough to spend on staying true to your values? Yes. How much are you willing to lose? To stay true to your values? That's the real question. I'm so proud to say that, as a country, as a nation, we are we lost so many of our own, you're still losing people every day on the front line, in the cities where the missiles fall, children are being stolen from the occupied cities being sent to Russia for forceful sort of free education, along the Russian ideology, lines, all of that is still happening every day. So on the individual level, tragedies happen all the time. As a country, as a nation, we are surviving, because we finally learned who we are.

Hylke Faber 31:07

Thank you for saying that. Lena, before we take a break, maybe you can reflect a little bit about this theme that Irina was talking about standing in our integrity and values. And maybe you even want to talk a little bit about your saying, you know, losing a sense of meaning, and how that's related to maybe finding meaning again, I don't know. I don't know. I don't know, how you how you about your experiences. But that's what struck me as I was listening to both of you.

Olena Sergeeva 31:44



I just want to say, you know, how privileged I feel ungrateful for just listening to your inner and inspirational, you know, pieces from from from her life and life of other people. And I think something that's an I, I talked to many people also in Ukraine, and outside of Ukraine, those who left and those who stayed. And something I guess I want to comment on is these individual choices that everyone has to make, like I said, you know, my nephew, and his dad joined the army, right, someone else didn't, me leaving Ukraine before the war and talking to my daughter, for example, you know, let's go with me. And we'll just spend some time here and we'll come back and she making a different decision than her coming all the way here when Russia was trying to insert encircle the capital. So she fled key of when the war started and came all the way to Seattle spend months here and then decided she, she doesn't feel happy or comfortable here, went to Europe, spent two months there, then went back to give and said, that's where I want to be. And that's where she is my sister and her. My sister and her daughter, they they undertook a journey all the way to Israel, standing on foot, kind of crossing the border to Romania, in severe cold, and then living in Israel was France for commands and going to Germany, then from Germany going and all of these movements around it's not like you live in a five star hotel, right? So it's, it's a lot of it's a lot of interesting woman's there. And again, my aunt and my sister ended up coming all the way back to Ukraine. So you know, I want to be home I want to be there, me making a different choice and many other people too. So and, and these choices, every every single choice of that is kind of brings to surface this question. Why? What, you know, what's important, and, and, and, and how to how to act right in that view. And that also creates like the necessity to look at these internal dilemmas and conflict right conflicting ideas. And and that's not easy, some of them I would say just like crisis or Uranus at something about crisis, bringing to the surface the best and the worst may be in us. I think this whole big life determining choices. They also sort of forced you to look at some unresolved issues in your life that may be you know, going on from from an end some intentions that you might have had long ago to write. So to me this year, big Amen, interesting work in terms of kind of losing the identity, not not entirely, but kind of like break that got fragmented. And then we re putting those pieces back together, in which, which is still going on, in terms of like, who am I what they want to do with my life next? And where do I see my me fitting into the world around me. And that's, that's a significant and in, its developmental, but it's also painful, like local kind of development type of work. You you have to lose things in the process and, and embrace things. And that's, that's not an easy process.

Hylke Faber 36:01

Thank you, Elena. Thank you, we're gonna take a break in a moment. I'm just struck by the true humanity of, of both Elena and Karina that that you're sharing today. And the wrongness that you're bringing to bear and how honest you are about what your own processes and really owning that process in it, that's one of the things I'm taking away from that is that, in the face of crisis, we're really invited to own our own process, our own inner process, our own inner choices, how we respond to this, and there's no prescription. I always want a prescription. There's no prescription. It sounds like this is something that has to come from a different place. So let's take a break in a moment when we come back. I also want to go a little deeper into one of the comments you made Elena about it, crisis brings to the surface some of the things that are unresolved in us and it can be an opportunity to shed some light on that. So back to back to after the break we're talking with your Nikolas Goska and Elena Sergei are



both from Kyiv, Ukraine, talking about how do we stay connected to the choices that we need to make an eye in the face of a four Thank you.

Presenter 37:31

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.

Hylke Faber 37:56

Welcome back to return wavering we've been having a conversation with Elena Sergei Eva and yurina stickle Casca about what is it like to be living through a year off? Maybe even years of war? And how do we work with that? And whether the choices that we come face to face with one of the things you mentioned Elena, before the break was that this year has been brought up for you uh, needing to look at some of those things that weren't resolved. Can you say a bit more about that?

Olena Sergeeva 38:34

Um I think for me this this this is the question of like, where is my own paths? You know, where that path leads me and what's what are the things I want to do experience in my own life and then there are these bigger bigger broader levels right there is family and your connections there there is country there are other bigger groups right which also you know, in terms of crisis or in terms of war war is so much bigger than crisis there are many crisis is wasn't that I think that's going on in some ways people come closer right uniting around defending the right cause against pure aggression, right. And you have to stand up to that and I have tremendous respect for everyone who who is actually fighting and standing up for it in a very direct way right with with like, my like my nephew. For example, I took a lot of leadership lessons from him just listening to his audios from Bach mode, where he spent two and a half months and And that, that I have, but also uniting around that right cause is one thing. And that was this all the different choices people are making, there is a whole reorganization of these groups and connections in society, and so on. And finding your own place in terms of what's important for your life sometimes comes into conflict with some of your previous connections or relationships are very, so my whole I'd say network of friendship, relationship support got sort of, into move, like I lost two relationships all together last year, because we we sort of went in a bit different direction. And those were close relationships and so on, then naturally, just because my family is there, I'm here we have a different manner of communication and so on. And again, my nephew, who could be students at the university, just like some other people, His age is actually killing people and seeing people being killed in front of him right, and dealing with the dead bodies, rather than with matters of how to apply some some so which is very different from some others. So I found centering for myself, happenings through the body. So I do a lot of things related to exercising, walking, meditation, because that helps me stay within my boundaries and kind of center, you know, in in my life, because I found it very difficult not to be totally sucked in into, you know, bigger level, sayings, emotions, and so on, and just kind of become something that just just goes was the wind, let's say, there, wherever the wind is going. So that's been



a complicated process for me this year to just go back to my life. And remember that I also have life and, and, and needs and desires. And so

Hylke Faber 42:31

thank you for sharing that sense of Center, which is so needed. And I can imagine, you know, part of my might be thinking, No, I need to completely give myself and not take care. And what I'm hearing from you, Elena, and what she what you're both demonstrating today is being centered in the face of it, making your own choices in a way that way. So, the arena, say a bit more about the moments where you meet may have fallen out of your center, and how you found yourself back.

Yaryna Klyuchkovska 43:19

May many, many times what you're doing is you're running cross country, and you're falling a lot because the ground is incredibly uneven and dangerous and unpredictable. And one thing you'll learn quickly, in peaceful time, I'm sort of a perfectionist. I rarely give myself permission to fail. And when I do, I spend a lot of time going over my mistakes and the circumstances to learn from it to not fail again. It's been my firm belief that, you know, failing ones can happen to anybody failing twice and the same thing. It's my fault already. Well, the war has robbed me of that process. Because you get up and you run and you don't have time to think a lot. The only good thing is that people lived through this war in a very different way. They experienced their ability to cope. They do it at a different pace. Even within our family. There have been days where I've been down, my family would help me up. There were days when somebody else would be down and I will help them up. And that was measured in days. And that was measured in weeks. And there were days when I was charged and effective. And I could do things like three jobs at a time. And then there were weeks when I couldn't get out of bed. And you know what I had to learn to let it go and let myself permit myself. give myself permission to fail and then get up and not waste energy going over But how and why I'll do that later. But just focus my energy on getting up and running. Let me just give you an example. We've had Russians attack our energy infrastructure since October through January, they will take our power grid or power plants, which means the darkest months of the year, we basically spent in darkness, there was no lights, no heat, no running water sometimes. And that was hard. You spend your life in literal darkness, you have, you know, you have a, like a small power bank or something, and that lasts a few hours. And then you're in the cold and in the dark, literally. And that was the hardest thing for me. It really planned, I was working a lot, I was in the middle of a project that kept me busy all the time. And there was a day when I couldn't do it anymore. And you know, what, I called my boss or the person who hired me and I said, I'm declaring a false Majah, I need a break. I just can't do it anymore, I will keep making mistakes, I'm not productive, I need to, I need to take a break. And you know what that time, because different people take these breaks at a different at different times, and we support each other. But if you punish yourself, and sort of do focus, and you sort of start going into yourself, that's the worst, the worst thing you could do under the circumstances, and I'm telling myself that there will be time for me to work through this later. But now I just need to focus on the task at hand, do whatever I can, at this moment, if I can't do that, that's fine. You know, if I needed to survive, I will do it. Everything else, I mean, I can do without. And that's a big thing for someone like me, who's who's grown, you could call my, you know, career more or less



successful. And that doesn't come from letting your safe yourself file it all the time. So that's a huge difference. For me. I don't spend a lot of time sort of reflecting and thinking, I spend time resting. It's such an important thing. And they see and I see people around me, who sort of tried to push through, and there comes a diver you have to stop or you fall and it's okay, it's better to stop than to fall down.

Hylke Faber 47:38

I love this wisdom of things happen. And I get myself up, and I am doing and I'm I'm doing what do what I need to do. And then when I need to rest I rest. But I'm not going to analyze, soak in or any of that. Because I really need to rest. My sense is there's some freedom in that arena and what you're saying that you're allowing yourself after maybe some years of being perfectionist, like that takes a lot of energy, loving yourself like Oh, well. This is where I am today, allowing yourself to rest and I'm relating that back to people all over the world in our current society. You know, productivity is such a high quote unquote, value. And rest is so under appreciated. And I don't know about you, but I sometimes feel guilty about actually taking a nap or resting

Yaryna Klyuchkovska 48:45

all the time healthcare, especially when I know that a lot of people cannot do they don't have that luxury. When you're on the front line, you don't have that luxury. When you're on a you know, you have to be on guard for shift. You have to do it no matter how tired you are. I'm so lucky. I'm actually one of the luckiest people in this country right now. Because I have the luxury of sitting here and talking to you about these things. All the while knowing that so many people can't. So many people lost their homes. So many people lost their limbs. So many people lost their love. Love the one so many people lost their lives. But you know what guilt is not a productive emotion I learned guilts makes you angry at other people and that's not what you want. You don't want to be angry at the people in your group. Guess what the word does? It shows you this is my tribe and these are the others and and you're ours you're as strong as the weakest person in your in group right? And you don't want to be the weakest person in your in group. You want to help and if that takes a break, while others I can, and you can afford it. It's your job to take that break, because you know that so many people cannot do that, and they will need to support cider.

Hylke Faber 50:09

That's great. So I dissents of taking a break to recharge, I related back to what you're thinking about the Lena as well, this taking care of yourself, you're doing it, maybe also through resting and I see physical exercise. What do you want to say to people who may not be in the crisis? Directly that you're in? Right? People like me? Who are listening. And I tell you, my experience of listening to you is, I want to help. Part of me says, oh, while I'm lucky that I don't need to be there. At the same time, I also feel sad that I'm not there. And at the same time, I'm thinking so what can we learn from this? What do you want to say to people who are not in this situation? What do you want them to hear?

Olena Sergeeva 51:12



Well, one thing, I want to comment on something that you're in the third, and this is the big, big, big learning, for me this year is empathy for myself. Because of this sense of guilt, when you are in a more comfortable or safe or healthy situation than than someone you care about, or someone you barely know, it's, it's really a real thing I want to say. And I think that empathy for yourself starts first. And then you learn to be more empathetic towards others also, and find the right way of of supporting them the right way of contributing, like I found with my nephew, for example, that just been able to talk about things he goes through, came as a as a big, big kind of breakthrough, like he was not talking to people in a peaceful life, you know, because he felt like, those people don't understand. So he started losing connections was was them, it didn't make any sense for him to share. So we had quite a few conversations, where he was able to share and I realized that the support that was needed, not something else at the time, but that that fine tuning the support comes from you being able to actually be in contact with yourself and empathetic to yourself. So that's, that's one learning, for those who are not in, in a situation of war. I think empathy. That's, you know, empathy. And, and, and, yeah, and some direct help, like, like, donations, and, you know, being aware or spreading the word or supporting the rally or, you know, just reading about this. And, and talking about this, this, the attention that that's also very meaningful, besides, you know, direct forms of help, which are available.

Hylke Faber 53:33

Thank you, Elena. What would you want to say to that question arena, to people that are not where you're at?

Yaryna Klyuchkovska 53:41

A war is an extreme example, with regards to crisis all the time. Just recently, COVID, that was a huge crisis for everybody. I think people go through crises all the time. Unfortunately, there's more and more of them for some reason. So empathy is a big one. I just don't know how to learn to be empathetic. I find three things, a very important. One is forgiveness towards other people learning not to judge it's so easy to judge tempers are quick, we are all going through trauma. We are all focusing in differences. You know, some people left some people stay some people helps other people sort of go to restaurants and have good food and, you know, enjoy life. Other people sort of stay at home and mourn. Everybody has a different way of coping. And it's important to accept those differences and forgive people for not being like you. It's okay for people not to be like you are not to, not to do or not to process things in the same way as you. So pause your judgment and forgive people for being different. That's one thing that's extremely important also for the cohesion of whatever a nation, a company organization doesn't matter. That's important to recognize differences, accept them and forgive people for what you believe are mistakes. The second is gratitude. Gratitude keeps me going. Gratitude to the people towards the people around me gratitude toward the soldiers for defending me gratitude towards the people who support us who provide financial support, who donate money, who lobby who provide tanks, hopefully, military planes soon, they're looking forward to that to sort of help us protect our skies. Gratitude is a big thing. It also sort of refocuses you a lot. And the third thing is the best way to cope with anxiety is to do something, something like when you don't control, like what I learned, every time, I worry that a missile is going to hit my city, I take my phone, and I sort of push a couple of buttons and they send



money towards the army that feel that makes me feel like I did something. It's not a lot. You know, it's not a lot, but it's something whatever, however little, there's no, there's no little thing in the crisis. If you can do a lot, do a little Get out, you know, drink a glass of water, you're survived, you helped. If you left the country and you feel guilty, you left the country, you made it easier for people to defend your city because you're not underway, you helped. If you stay, and you continue consumption, you know, you go to stores and restaurants and spend money to fuel the economy, you're helping, you know, if you stay at home, whatever you're doing, you're helping just you know, do it. Just do it every little piece of action, it helps. And that's how we think about things. We don't enjoy stuff, we fuel the economy, or we support the army or we support the arts or, you know, everybody, everything has a different meaning. And one of the first books I reread I had a lot of I still have a lot of trouble reading. It's hard to focus in a situation like this. But Viktor Frankl and his story of surviving in a concentration camp, and man in search of meaning. That was an incredibly helpful book to me in the beginning. It taught me It reminded me not to explain, expect a quick victory and not to despair. But just go day by day, survive a day, that's fine. survive the next day, that's fine. So before a crisis hits, I would suggest people read that book. It's not a big book. It's a short book, it was written, I think in English. It's a great book. It helped me a lot. So I would say forgiveness, and gratitude, and action. However little there is no too little inaction.

Hylke Faber 58:06

On this becoming quiet. That was so beautiful. But you both said, empathy, forgiveness, gratitude, and action as some things that you've learned in this unspeakable year that you're speaking about, which to me is one action that you're taking already, that you're taking today, which I'm grateful for. And also what you said your Rena about. We can't afford not forgiving. Like what you said, Elena, we can't really afford guilt. Not in crisis, but also not when we're not in crisis, because it takes so much energy, we don't have that. We're getting to the final minutes of our time together. And I realized I could talk to you for hours. So I'm going to ask you each for one minute to say whatever you want to say to close our conversation today. So whatever you want to say for one minute, each of you, whatever you want to say and doesn't have to be in any particular phrase form or context, whatever you want to say now would be very welcome. And whoever wants to go first goes first.

Yaryna Klyuchkovska 59:26

Okay, can I go first? Something that I've learned that we haven't touched on, we live in a world that you know, 50 Shades of Grey all the time or 150 Shades of Grey, you learn in business and whatever in life, there are no right or wrong, that these are all the relative notions will the war shows you that there are not there are things that are right and there are things that are wrong. And you know what they are we all know what they are And it's best to learn that lesson and remember that before it comes to a war, it helps to learn that there are things that are absolute evil, and there is no no excuse for them, like attacking another country like killing indiscriminately, like taking what doesn't belong to you, that's wrong, and whatever happens, but there are also things that are good. And most of other people outside, around circle, contrary to what we believe they're good. And I think if we all learn that lesson, there will be less conflict, there will be less armed conflict, less polarization, we will learn to sort of, I mean, deep inside, all of us know, right from wrong, really, it's not about politics, right? It's not about



business, it's not about justifying, whatever means do whatever and you're trying to work through, there are things that are right, and there are things that are wrong, and we should not let go of that notion. Not everything is gray, there are things that are clearly white, and clearly black. And if you help if you increase the amount of lights in the world, and if you decrease the amount of darkness in the world, that's what life is about. That's what I learned.

Olena Sergeeva 1:01:25

And it's surprising to me, but I was thinking about very similar things also you're in. So my message, I guess would be there is evil, and there is darkness in this world. And and there are bad things in this world. The choice you make is what do you in your heart in your soul, sort of connect you, right? Lean to end, it's your choice. And there may be dark days and bad things happening in everyone's life. Life is not the, you know, happy journey, there will be things happening. But then you do have a choice. Where are you going? Are you going into the hope and joy and optimism while recognizing all these things that they do exist? Or do you connect to that and let yourself be drawn into that more and more and more? Because then you're one of the Dark Knights so to speak. So be aware and you know, and make the choice intentionally, consciously every single moment of your day.

Hylke Faber 1:02:52

Thank you both Elena. And Irina. What a conversation what a wisdom you shared today. I'm struck by the honesty with which you are able to name that which is evil, black. And the heart with which you're able to talk about your choice fullness in the face of that, and how you work with it. That's a lesson for all for for me, and I've been speaking today with with both of you are getting to the close of this conversation. If you're listening, I hope you heard something that helps you with your choice. fullness. It definitely did for me. And I want to thank both Irina and Elena, both speaking us as people from the Ukraine, both very accomplished leaders in their own right, who are sharing with us their story about being honest, to us full and resilient. So thank you for listening to this podcast. In two weeks. We'll be here with Karen Nicki, who is the founder of Phoenix Business Radio X, and also a trauma coach. And we'll be diving in with her about actually how we deal with some of the difficulties that you Rena and Elena were talking about. And that will be in two weeks. And you can also subscribe in the meantime to this podcast via Spotify Apple podcast on other places. You can also join us on growth leaders network on LinkedIn for community conversations that we have. And for now, I just say thank you for listening. You've been listening to crude and wavering, where we help people connect more deeply to their innate potential. I'm your host Ahsoka Faber, and I'll see you next time. Thank you.

Presenter 1:04:59

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