

E45 - Rooted & Unwavering – August 9 - Hylke Faber & Tuula Ryttila

Diana Belluomini 00:02

Music. 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 hylke fauber, 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 00:42

Welcome to Ruth and unwavering episode 45 today in Phoenix and Finland, where we connect people more deeply to their innate potential. I'm your host, hylke Faber, and I'm here today with Tula ritual. Tula, how are you today?

Tuula Ryttila 00:59

Hylke, I'm great. I'm excited to be on the show with you, and very curious about you know where this conversation will lead us.

Hylke Faber 01:07

Me too. I'm looking forward to it. Before we have the conversation, I'll introduce a little bit about the podcast and also about Tula. So the root and unwavering podcast is to help us to connect more deeply to ourselves, to each other and to our purpose. And I was in India last week working with leaders and teams, and what I noticed was how similar we are, similar in our magnificence and our strength and our wisdom and our potential, and also similar in the ways in which we limit ourselves into our with our fears and our limiting beliefs. Somebody talked to me on the way home about the state of the world, and the person said, Fear always wins. And I paused and I thought about that, and I think fear often wins if we let it root and unwavering, is about taking a stand to actually transform those fearful thoughts and come from a place of courage, of values, you could say, Love and practice that at work as leaders in all aspects of our lives. And I speak from personal experience, that that is a daily practice, because part of our nervous system, definitely part of my nervous system, is not having that, and is is always wanting to go back to the the tried and true, you could say, the limiting parts. And this podcast is about learning from people about what is it like to actually make that journey from being a wind vane almost to our conditioning and being more rooted in what's actually true for us, who we actually want to be run this planet for such a short amount of time. Who do we want to be? What's most important to us? Well, what's most important to Tula, from the way I know her, a little bit about hers. She's She's a very inspiring values based role model, positive change leader. She comes to us today as currently a board member of various corporations, including Bang and Olufsen. I was actually so happy to know about that because that was my first luxury item that I that I possess that like my husband always says, oh,

that's say that CD player that you could not let go of, that beautiful piece of equipment. It's a beautiful, beautiful equipment that they make, amongst amongst other things. And she was, she's also, was also a leader, recently, a corporate vice president at Microsoft. He is a person that is all about positive change, and she believes this happens when everyone feels empowered to achieve their full potential, and that our sum is far greater than the parts. She is recognized as a change maker, a force for good, and she loves challenge, whether it's to grow a business, transform a trajectory, change culture, improve performance doesn't matter. She's got so much experience as a business builder, PNL, leader, Chief Marketing Officer, transformation leader globally. She actually speaks six languages. She's operated and scaled direct go to market strategies and drives new business models. She's known for so many things, excelling in operations and increasing revenue, and she does that through business model innovation, improved customer experience, data driven operations, intelligent tooling and automation and enhanced business policies. She is at home in the world, both in the US and in Europe, sees a sought after mentor and coach, and her passion is advising and giving back, focusing on psychological safety and the business case of inclusion. And besides all of these things, I have gotten to know Tula as a person who is deeply. Introspective and is very curious about life and how to help us to make the very best of that. Tula tell us more about your experience and your What have you learned in your life and leadership? About connectedness? Let's start our conversation there today.

Tuula Rytala 05:19

Right? Connectedness. I love that topic for your series here, hylke, and of course, you know what comes to mind immediately is how connected Am I to myself and how easy it is to lose that connection. You know, every every moment is an opportunity to somehow, you know, thrive away from who you are. So staying centered, you know, is very important and and I use various practices for that. So, so if I'm connected to myself, then I feel I can have a connection with others as well. And I think that, to me, is foundational when it comes to connection. And I love that. You know, in your intro, you took us to India and fear, because I think this fear of connection is so present in a lot of human interaction, and at the same time, we long for that connection, and we're afraid of it, so it's kind of like a big paradox. So I think every time, if I've overcome that fear and reached out, let's say, in a conflict or in a situation that's challenging, I can't remember a single incident where that would not have been rewarding, people respond to connection, but often you have to be the one to take the first step. And I, I think that you know, if you realize that here's a need connection, if you're the one who realizes it first, it's your duty to reach out and do that connection, like don't wait, because the one who realize it is it's first, you know that person is accountable to do it.

Hylke Faber 07:08

I love that the one who realizes it first is accountable. And since we're talking about us, that means us and and think that's actually a very liberating and empowering thought you said something almost by way of passing, which I thought was so important, which is to connect to somebody else. We first have to be connected to ourselves. It is such a simple thing to miss. Yeah, and tell us a little bit about your journey in becoming more connected to Tula that you How did you start off and tell us a little bit about your life, because you've got so much experience behind you, like tell us about that journey.

Tuula Rytala 07:53

Yeah, so I think it's almost like a fundamental question, Who am I? I think it's a really good question to be asking ourselves every now and then, who am I really, you know, we all have very many different roles. Am I one of those roles? Or, you know, in this situation, for example, I feel like I'm also a leader who wants to share the experience, but I think, you know, I've lost the connection to myself sometimes, you know, for shorter periods, sometimes for longer periods, and then that moment of reconnecting, you know, is important. And how does that happen? And it's a little bit like today, I meditate a lot, so so, you know, I do daily meditation, so I have an opportunity to reconnect with myself every day. It wasn't always like that. And, you know, I really started daily meditation only when covid happened. And that for me was a, you know, I had done yoga and things before, but that, to me, was a decisive moment in terms of, you know, facing a lot of fears. I think you know, you know, covid forced us to pause and live in a potential fear for many years. So then somehow, then taking it day by day and really presenting us with a choice, like, how did we want to live through that situation? And for me, I actually, by my daughter's example, I found meditation. And at first it felt like I had been disconnected from myself for a long time, and I connected to somebody inside that maybe was a young girl and was a spirit, and, you know, was something that, well, felt very familiar, and felt like coming home and, and also, you know, felt like, wow, like, you know, where did that person you go, and where did all the time go? And it's not that like I was in a dream state for the past, you know, 20 years or so. But life happens and, and you get busy, and. And, and, and I think you know that that meditation became such a critical tool for me that I now even trained to be a meditation teacher. I mean, I'm not teaching anybody right now, but, but I wanted to deepen my practice, and I to have that. But I think truly being in connection with yourself is something that it's it's not necessarily present in our everyday life and can be gone for a long periods of time. Yes,

Hylke Faber 10:34

yes, yes. I'm very struck by you saying yes, I connected more deeply to myself as I went into meditation practice at the onset of covid. And it's not like I was living in a dream state the 20 years before. So tell us a little bit about we go talk about meditation in a moment before meditation. Tell us about what was your experience of connecting to yourself and being disconnected to yourself, especially as you as a leader, because you've led so many people in your life. So tell us about that. You give us maybe an anecdote or a sense of what you learned about that. Well,

Tuula Ryttila 11:12

you know, I was at Nokia for 15 years, and, of course, as a teen, you know, that was a great place to work. We went through so many interesting technology cycles, and it was all about connecting people. I mean, it was truly everything was about connecting people. You know, we came up this, this idea that instead of calling a room, you could call a person that felt like a big idea at the time. And then we spread the idea that, hey, like many people in the world would appreciate that, and made some forecasts that even 20% of the world's population could have a mobile phone. And, you know, we're laughed at. So that was kind of like early days of technology and and when I joined Nokia, it was truly kind of connecting people. So that was kind of, that was my purpose in the company. And a lot of us, you know, where we're working towards a purpose. So of course, you know, connection was a big part of what I worked for. And I think then, you know, connecting becoming a team leader, connecting with my team, really trying to create these environments where, you know, people could be at their best. And I'm not sure if my early days, if I had that philosophy, and it was maybe more than just you you

kind of, you know, I had great leaders. They, one of them, you know, took me through coaching training, so early on, I become a coach, and I, I learned that it's not powerful to always know the answer, but actually give, you know, the other person, space to come up with the answer. And that, I think that coaching method, you know, learning that was huge. That was somewhere, you know, mid career, where, where, you know, I got access to that tool. And then, you know, Nokia went through hard times. I got more responsibility. There was a lot of there was this feeling of responsibility that was very strong, strongly present, you know, at a company in crisis. And you know, you, you connect with your team for a common goal. And, you know, you create kind of uniformity, energy, action through that common goal and purpose with the team. But I think, you know, at Nokia as well, we had this leadership model, which I think is still relevant today, was, it's really simple. It's, you know, lead your business, lead your team, lead yourself like a triangle. And I don't use so many models necessarily, you know, in my leadership, but that model I loved and and that, you know, that was in 90s, and this idea of also leading yourself that spoke to me. So for sure, I had tools. And I think this kind of self awareness was something that I was trying to catch myself, you know, when I wasn't at my best, or, you know, I was led by fear. So, you know, being self aware already, then was important, and then when we were acquired by Microsoft, was a huge change. And, you know, switch from Nokia brand to Microsoft, and lots of emotions and and, you know, all that thing, I felt like I really needed to be an example for my team. So leading myself in that situation was, you know, getting curious and courageous about reaching out, you know, and the Microsoft side and taking care of the team. So I think in all of this, you know, there was this feeling of responsibility, and that gives you pressure, and not necessarily that relaxed mindset where you connect. Your with yourself from a place of, let's say, no expectations or, you know, possibility or presence. So it's you feel like you, you know, you don't have that space or oxygen.

Hylke Faber 15:12

Yes, yes, yes. So, so what I hear is that at Nokia, and then later on, as you acquired at Microsoft, you got this. You had this model of lead, business, lead, team, lead self Yeah, you became fascinated with this self awareness when I'm at my best, when I'm not at my best, when I'm, you know, driven by fear and then also feeling this sense of responsibility to help your team achieve a purpose. And what I find interesting is that as a leader, we often have to integrate, to straddle the Create the space, like a coach does, like you talked about, yeah, or the connection with that deeper spirit you could say what you talked about the meditation, and at the same time, we're in the fire, you know? So now that you've done some meditation for some years, yeah, and you still have no sizable responsibilities, right? You don't, you don't just show up at board meetings to say, oh man, and everything's great. So how do you integrate that? How do you integrate that meditative awareness, spaciousness and being in the world and having responsibility? How do you do that?

Tuula Rytala 16:35

Well, that is the question, like, how do you do that? And how do you how do you stay present that you remember to do that? Because, like, you know, we all have good intentions that you know we'll do it. We read a wonderful article, and, you know, we think that, you know, now next time I'll show up, great. And then then you kind of forget it, but, but it is kind of some even kind of practical tools about, how do you stay in the moment? How do you, you know, definitely control the crocodile, the ego and and I use techniques like just thinking about 5050, to me, that's a great concept that you know, 50% in myself and

50% in the situation, I love to be 100% in the situation, you know, very engaged. And then here I go. You know, forget to breathe and you know my, you know I, I'm, you know, maybe tensed and just physical signals. You know your your body is not so easy to fall so, you know, like, Why? Why am I trans? You know, like, you know, I, I was supposed to be 5050, here, and breathing, I think, is a really great tool. And, you know, just remind Remembering to breathe, if I remember to breathe. And I'm kind of, you know, part of my attention is focusing on that. Fact, it's really hard for me to not be at my best. It's very simple tool, but we we could use that a lot more.

Hylke Faber 18:08

Yes, somebody taught me it's simple to be difficult and difficult to be simple. So this breathing is such a simple tool that is easy to forget, and yet, when we are paying attention to it, we stay grounded, and maybe we are more at a choice, how much we are in ourselves and how much, what percentage we give to the outside, and how do we balance that?

Tuula Rytala 18:37

So it's a conscious choice versus a reflex, yes,

Hylke Faber 18:41

yes, yes. Like, okay, let's take a moment. It's like when you were speaking, I actually started taking a deeper breath. So it's interesting. Just so hearing somebody else talk about this is is a great tool as well. So tell us in in business, in leadership, in teams, we tend to have conflicts and disagreements. Yeah, so how do you work with that and still practice this 5050, that

Tuula Rytala 19:12

you talked about? Yeah, I think earlier in my career, I avoided conflict. I wasn't comfortable in conflict, and I don't know why, I probably use many techniques to avoid it, which I don't want to teach so but I think it wasn't something that, you know, I enjoyed or looked forward to. It was like a necessary evil of, you know, being an executive and getting more responsibility. There is conflict, you know, often internal within the company, or there's budgets to fight about, or whatnot. I think then I learned the better approach, which was really to embrace the conflict in terms of, you know, wanting to create a better outcome and and it's really important. Separate the people from the topic you're discussing. And there was this, you know, this, I think he's Danish professor in Berkeley who has this concept of fight and unite. And, you know, there are many ways people talk about it like, say it in the room and, you know, outside a line. But in my team, we started to talk about, this was my Microsoft team. We started to talk about fight and unite. So how would I facilitate a conversation where everybody was heard, and especially those people who think differently from me, like it was very important for me to hear them as well. And then, you know, have all cards on the table, or all points expressed, and then jointly, like, look at it and, you know, decide what's the best way to go. So that, I think this kind of fight and unite is, let's make the conflict visible, like it's a good, constructive conflict. If we have different opinions, maybe we're not thinking this the best possible way. Like, how can we make the best decision? Let's hear all the arguments. So I think embracing conflict is one thing. The other one is also like giving in at the right moments. I've noticed that if I show generosity and I can give in, other people mostly respond the same way that, if I can be, let's say, in a budget discussion, I can say, like, Fine, like I'm, you know, I can give in here. People will that generous spirit will catch on. So I'm not actually going to lose. I think

everybody's going to win. So I think this like a true Win. Win can happen in conflict. Creativity can happen in conflict. So we should not be afraid of conflict, I mean, but we should treat each other kindly, but try to look at the things from different perspectives. And that's fine. So maybe we need to find a better word than conflict, because conflict is like war and these horrible things where we're not looking for a common outcome. So the workplace, we need to reframe it in a way that that, what would we call it when? When, actually, you know, different opinions. It's very diversity, isn't it? Yes,

Hylke Faber 22:18

yes, yes, yes. I love that diversity.

Tuula Rytala 22:20

And then it's like, you know, for the best outcome, yes,

Hylke Faber 22:24

yes, I often talk about, with teams is going from conflict to Confluence, okay, together of streams. And yes, I love that you talked about fight and unite like because often, and this was my experience when I started meditating. We know we reach these very peaceful states and this joyful and buoyant and inspiring and everything's so kind and nice in a way, yes, and then, you know, we have to, know, have a budget conversation with somebody, or make a tough decision, or say no, and how do we do that grounded in that deeper energy? And what I hear you say is we do that by creating the space like being that space where we can say it's okay to fight Yes, and we're doing this for a purpose, to unite, to make progress. I also love that you talked about being generous in that, generous in that so you have, you know, I'm, in my view, you've had, and you continue to have so many responsibilities, right? You're also a mom, you live in different countries, you have all these board positions. You contribute to the community. You do so much. How do you keep it all together? Or how do you keep yourself balanced? How do you do this?

Tuula Rytala 24:00

Well, firstly, I'm paranoid that I'm not doing enough, so that I'm not doing enough. I mean, was it, did you say in the opening that you know, or was it in our pre conversation when you said that we have this life, this wonderful gift that you know, at least right now we're here on the planet, and who knows what happened before or after. And you know you, you, you feel paranoid that i Are you? Are you doing what you were supposed to do? And you know, enough and all of those things, so that then, you know the paranoia side, and actually, you know, calming down is important as well, is, you know, I like to plan that's not, you know, that's not going to happen. I mean, like not not happen, I will plan. And I think every working mom who has a carrier and is a great planner, because we all. So, you know, we want to have it I don't know if you can say have it all, but we want to have many things, and our kids are always the first priority. So we become good at planning. But so you know now that I don't have the pressure of, you know, the day to day grind as a corporate executive, I like to leave space for surprises, and I got really good mentoring when I switched from Microsoft a year ago to this more like a portfolio career with boards and other things that you know don't rush into things allow things to happen naturally. So I think things will, things are happening naturally. So some things are coming, and some things are going and and, you know, you kind of like, if you trust the flow, there will be some flow to it. And then there are some things that I want to ensure that I get done. And then, you know, make those a priority. I mean,

prioritization is important because then you don't lose sight of what's important. But today, like my priorities, that I have enough time to, you know, do my yoga or do my meditation or, or, you know, think or go on a walk or or just have created thoughts so that my priorities now includes things like space,

Hylke Faber 26:26

right? Prioritizing space isn't that something? Prioritizing space? Sit with that for a second. Prioritizing space, giving ourselves space

Tuula Rytala 26:37

so like your calendar can't be programmed 24 hours,

Hylke Faber 26:41

yes, yes, giving yourself space. So as you have been doing that, what have you been discovering about yourself in that space you already talked about more flow and things appears. What have you been discovering about yourself as you've created more space and as you think about it, I want to just bring something in, because I can imagine people listening to this thinking, Well, that's an easy thing for her to say, because she's no longer on the treadmill, so she could easily create space. She's not retired, but like that. But how would you think about creating space? What does that give you and maybe, how can that also be useful for somebody who is still, let's say, in the midst of it like that, is still in their corporate careers. They actually have to be in it for financial or for ambition reasons, or

Tuula Rytala 27:32

whatever. Most people, yeah, and I agree that I'm very privileged and that I get to now plan for this space. And that's if they think like that, they should and like, Thank goodness I realized that I can do that, and I'm grateful for it. But I always, you know, like I, I have this fascination into neuroscience when you know, I was working at Microsoft, we did so much work for the culture, and we worked with neuroscientists, you know, to create our leadership principles. And I mean, you have so many wonderful, highly intelligent engineers at Microsoft, so, you know, you better bring some science when you want to drive change and right? So, like I learned a lot about, you know, neuroscience of insights and things like, you know, giving yourself space when you're working on a hard problem, like when you you know, when you've defined the problem, you know, give it a little bit space and time and distance yourself for it. So intuition will come. So I've noticed now that I have, when I have more space, I'm I listen to my intuition more, because intuition is basically, it's weak signals, and it means your neurons, you know, the billions of neurons that are making connections all the time. They haven't made that connection. It's a weak signal. So you know, because it's new, so you have to allow space and attention that you notice them. So we learned that you know, like, and I share this with my team all the time, and would practice it myself that walking under trees is really good for your brain. So people need to take breaks and maybe have walking meetings, or, you know, into the schedules build time where they feel like that their brain has time and space to renew itself because it's short sighted not to take care of your brain. And of course, you know, people are more busy at different life stages. But you know, 20 minutes or or that maybe that's too long, five minutes of meditation. You know, everybody has five minutes, and it makes a big difference. And it won't happen, you know, the day one, so there again. You have to allow it some space, but it will start happening quite quickly that you notice that actually you, you, you, you might have more insights. You might be listening more to your intuition. You. Might be less worried,

or, you know, less anxious. And this, you know, small signals can grow into bigger things. And actually, one thing that I notice is that I am more grateful. It's easier for me to find things that I'm grateful for. And, you know, like, I have all kinds of things happening, you know, in my life right now. So it's not that it's all like wonderful and roses. I mean, the real challenge is I'm aging parents. My, you know, father is in assisted living, and, you know, all kinds of things and, but, but, but I'm more grateful than ever. And I think, you know, my personal situation is maybe in some ways, tougher than ever, but I don't think, I'm not sure if those things are connected or not. Maybe yes, but maybe with you into a tough spot, then one way to, I don't know, survive might be too strong a word, but, but to make the most out of it is to really, you know, be grateful about those things that you can be grateful for.

Hylke Faber 31:07

Thank you for sharing that. Tula, we're going to take a break in a moment. There's so much that you've been sharing that I will take with me the the 5050, self and situation. We always have five minutes create and take care of your brain and create space so you can listen to the weak signals. To the weak signals. After the break, I want to hear more Tula from you about what you've been discovering, maybe from the weaker signals as you've been doing meditation more regularly, and also how that's helping you to face some of the challenges in life, because every human being gets through those, and you alluded that you have some. And I think, you know, welcome to the rest of the 8 billion people in the planet. We we tend to have all challenges, like, how does meditation and how does becoming more present and creating more space actually help with that? We've been listening to Tula ritual, who is a board member of multiple companies, including by an Olson, also a former corporate vice president Microsoft, very much positive change leader, and recently also becoming a meditation teacher. We are going to speak with you and listen more. After the break,

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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 32:56

to welcome back to root within unwavering so happy to be here today with Tula rutula, and we're speaking today about your experience with connecting with self so we can connect with others, and also this prioritizing of space, prioritizing space. And don't wait until you're almost dead or you're retired. Do it right now. Yeah. So, yeah, I'll do that. You know, it's always fun when I walk in a graveyard and I see all these signs Rest in peace, like, Okay, why don't we wait? Why don't we wait until we are under the ground? Well, the body's underground. To think about that. Maybe we want to be in peace already. So whatever. I mean, that's

Tuula Rytila 33:39

so well said. I mean, they will, for sure, rest in peace. You know, we don't need to be worried about that. But what about us?

Hylke Faber 33:46

Right, right? Can we walk in peace no matter what's happening? So question, how have you been listening to the weaker signals in your own life, and what have they been telling you about you and how to be with what's happening in your life? Well,

Tuula Rytla 34:06

firstly, I must say that, like, you know, I have enough of a scientist in me, even though, you know, I studied economics that I needed to understand, like, what the heck these weak signals are. And so I got very interested in neuroscience at Microsoft, and then I did this one certification in neuro leadership recently. And really what I learned about the brain is that we have about 85 billion neurons in our brains, and in that number we can't even imagine, so it's more than you can imagine, and they're constantly making new connections. So, like, for sure, you know, we're all different because, like that, you know, if you think about like, how many ways you can be different, there's quite many. And this weak signal, apparently, is something that it's a new connection that's not been made yet. So, so you have to be. Maybe a little bit like inwardly focused, like in a meditation to spot them, or somehow, you know, walking or whatever is, maybe it's showering or driving, whatever it is, for anybody that they get their brain to be somewhat active, but at the same time, rest and, you know, the psychological safety that we talk about a lot in the workplace now as well. Actually means that your brain is not under strain, like your brain is in this space, you know, a state and what I've learned about myself. Well, it's a good question. I mean, I feel like I am more connected to who I am really, you know, my spirit, you know, I think that's if I, if, if you would ask me, who am I? I would probably, you know, nowadays I'm asking that question quite a lot, you know, from, you know, in my meditation, actually, it's part of my meditation process, like, who am I? And it is an interesting question to be asking yourself like the most basic question, but you you come to the answers of something like, in the end, your spirit and, and I think, you know, if I'm thinking about my purpose, what is my purpose? How can I serve myself and others? I think it's really like being true to that spirit and, and, and, I think you, you said role modeling when you, you know, talked about me, you know, I, I want to be a role model for positive change, and that it's never too late. And, you know, there are always things that we can work on. And somehow there's so many unnecessary things that, yes, the human condition is not simple, and I think the world is in a lot of trouble, and, you know, the fear is definitely there, but I think there's also so much, you know, unwasted potential where we are just not focusing on the right things. We're focusing on the competition between ourselves, or whatever is a problem, and we're just, like, not noticing the things that are so, you know, fundamental, wonderful and important. And like connection and doesn't mean a lot. Like, you can just smile to the person next to you in whatever line you're standing or, you know, say hello. I mean, these things sounds very small, but actually they matter. They can be life changing. I, you know, I've heard many examples where they actually are life changing. So, so how, how can that spirit, if I live my true spirit, it's kind and loving, and how can I let that shine and penetrate everything I do, whether it is in a boardroom, making a tough, you know, prioritization decision in a boardroom, for example. It's not that those decisions are easy, but you can do them in in a way that you know, that you're more aware of what is the right thing to do. Yes, when you are connected to yourself and your spirit and your purpose, I think it's really hard to, I mean, you will make mistakes, and you know, you know God, but you, you have a better sense of, you know, when you're doing the right thing, yeah,

Hylke Faber 38:11

yeah, yeah, that sense of connecting to myself. I'm listening to myself. You we call that you call that listening to my soul, my deeper essence, and that deeper essence is kind and loving, and I want that to permeate everything that I do, and it's like the way I hear that is when you have something very beautiful in your house or in your yard, or in your life, on your book, or in your head, you want to share it. Like if you have a really beautiful piece of music, you want to share it with others. And similar, with the realization of who we are, there's a natural draw to want to share it. That's part of its nature. You could say that, that we want to share it, and the way you spoke about it is, it's like it helps me to be clear or clearer. I love the humility in that, you know, yes, not God so or but the humility in that, humility in that So, what do you do when you're in a space, let's say a meeting, yeah, or situation, or maybe just a situation in your personal life, in your head, that seems very problem oriented, right? We the newspapers are full of problems. Meetings can often be problem one, Problem two, problem three, problem for End of meeting. So how do you work with that? Yeah,

Tuula Rytala 39:50

yeah. I mean, it's really important to recognize that, hey, we are now in the meeting, you know, with the tough topic like recognize where you are, and then think of. Out, like, what's, what's useful or helpful in that moment, and if it's, if it's a kind of a tough situation, you know, needing to, let's say, make difficult decisions. You know, it's, it's the way you do these things matter. I mean, you, you, you still need to do the tough thing, but the way you do it matters, and you can always be kind. I mean, you know, tough and kind are not opposites, actually. You know, sometimes toughness is kindness. You know, when that's needed clarity is kindness, and when it's a clear, no, that's kindness. I mean, those, those two things are not at odd. So, so the how becomes very important in those situations. I think the how is is really important. How do you treat people with respect? You know, everybody wants that, and everybody deserves it like how are you respectful in those situations and and you know that can be kindness?

Hylke Faber 41:08

Mm, yes, yes. So what I hear you do is you intentionally remind yourself what you are and what you're about, which includes being kind. And earlier in the podcast, said being generous, so also Yes, being able to say, Yeah, I I will agree to that, and being clear. All of that bring all of these things. And so what do you notice in yourself? Maybe the contrast that you may notice in yourself when you are maybe an old brain that's called old brain, yeah, old condition brain, which is problem, problem, problem with that, yeah and or, like, very demure can be Right, or frozen can be, versus this soul infused thinking and doing, what's what? What's the contrast for you?

Tuula Rytala 42:07

Well, it's you know, the it's much more creative. And it's not you know this yes or no, situation necessary, like you see more options, you see alternatives, you see maybe a road map, you know, whatever can be helpful in that situation that, you know, this is a tough moment. You know, things will change. It's really funny, like I had this wonderful manager at Nokia at one time, you know, he was a very experienced sales leader, and he told me that somebody had sent him an email, and, you know, he didn't respond yet, and, and then they call and then, like, you know, I sent you that email and you haven't responded. Like, and the person was, you know, very much in panic. And you know, this guy is, like, laid back experience, and I think, you know, kind in a way that makes everybody else relax as well.

And just Yes, yes, I saw your email and, and I think tomorrow I will read it, and then, you know, maybe the day after, I will respond, you know, and I, you know, then to me, you know, the learning was I always say to my team is that, hey, next year, we will have different problems. So most of these, you know, situations that feel that are so life threatening and, you know, difficult, they will change over time. So it's the current situation, you know, we have to deal it with the best way we can, with respect and, you know, not undermining the hardship or, you know, the trade offs we need to make. But it's going to be the end of the journey, because then, you know, next year, we will have different problems. So I think that kind of perspective, you know, perspective is helpful in that situation, yes, yes,

Hylke Faber 43:49

yes. I see you infusing, if I call that as a spacious perspective,

Tuula Ryttila 43:55

yeah, good time. Yes. You know,

Hylke Faber 43:59

it's like you create space for more perspective, which then also takes care of the the survival lizard brain wanting to being in this panic of survival. Why have you not responded to this and, and I suppose, yeah, no, this will this like that. And I think that's a wonderful tool for all of us who may be, may be faced with the challenge, just to notice that energetically, how am I relating to this? Am I relating to it as, Oh, I gotta get through this, and it's going to be good or bad, and there's those two options, and it's going to be painful. That's very like constricted versus, ah, let's, let's bring some space to this and maybe see it more as a discovery. Is what I'm hearing you say, like, see, absolutely

Tuula Ryttila 44:48

I often say that, you know, let's, let's give ourselves a little bit more oxygen. You know that. So the spacious discovery goes well with

Hylke Faber 44:58

that. Yeah. Yeah, but

Tuula Ryttila 45:00

I think the other thing, you know, what comes to my mind is, you know, you you talked about, like, sharing and sharing joy, and you know, hopefully people will catch on. I think the other one is also asking help. And asking for help has not been easy for me, like, I like, that's something that I'm still working on learning that it's okay to ask for help. I think you know seeing seeing leaders vulnerable, is really important for people, and I I've noticed that that when I when I've said, for example, publicly, that I don't know something, people actually have found that inspiring, because it's not necessarily so common that for leader to admit that they don't know something. So I think also, you know, sharing the the hard things you know, and and connecting with each other over I need help. This is hard for me. This is where, you know, I'm really struggling and inviting a connection to that, you know, is really powerful as well. So people respond very well to helping. Actually, if you give them a chance, they might not offer it, but if you request it, people can be very generous.

Hylke Faber 46:19

It's almost reminding people what they're made of when you're asking them for help, like this

Tuula Rytala 46:25

human connection. So it's, it's sharing the great things, but it's also share, sharing the need for help.

Hylke Faber 46:32

Yes, yes. What do you have to overcome in yourself to ask help? What do you have to overcome? You? Tula,

Tuula Rytala 46:42

well, I mean, I wonder it's somehow, maybe this idea of being perfect or being the helper, and I think one of my friends then, you know, once said, or maybe it was my daughter, I learned a lot from her that. But then you, you know, you love to help people. So why do you why don't you give them the opportunity to help you? I mean, you're kind of like, you know, not, you know, not giving them that chance. So, like, you know, isn't that? Isn't that kind of, you know, aren't they allowed to get the joy of helping as well? So I think this, this you know idea of perfection that I definitely don't have, but, you know, also allowing to be weak and vulnerable. I think that somehow it's maybe has to do with trust that you trust, you know, trust the other person with your vulnerability. That

Hylke Faber 47:40

goes back to what you said. I think in the very beginning that we have this innate fear of each other, yes, and then we have to overcome it,

Tuula Rytala 47:48

right? And a person has it too, not only you. And I think yes, I was a surprise,

Hylke Faber 47:56

yes, yes, overcoming that fear of each other by actually asking for help. How does how does meditation or becoming more familiar with who you are, help you in saying I don't know, or asking for help or being more vulnerable? How does that help you?

Tuula Rytala 48:16

I do think you know it. It reduces my ego, for sure. I mean, you know, I think the corporate world ego is a big driver. And it's not that ego is all bad, you know, maybe ambition, you know, it's probably needed. A lot of great things have come out of human ambition. But I think sometimes our egos, you know, get in the way. And I think somehow putting your own ego into perspective and maybe letting go of some of it, and not realizing that can be something that it's very harmful for connection, you know, being more aware of that. And, you know, being able to let go some of it, I think meditation can help with things like that.

Hylke Faber 49:06

Sure, let's stay there for a second, because the thing gets so foundational that as we create more space, which we do with meditation, we become more aware of what we are, who we are, and we

realized that our separate sense of self, which we can call ego, yes, is not all that we think it is, and we are not all that it's a part of our consciousness somewhere. It's a way to call that something, or that separate self, something so as you're on this journey, Tuula about like discovering more of what you are and who you are. What do you wish for?

Tuula Rytala 49:55

Well, I think my first first thought was world peace. And you know, that's. Know, that's kind of like a big thought, but I just, I think, you know, true to this theme of the podcast, probably this human connection, that we could connect with each other as humans, and we are all. None of us is perfect, you know, and then maybe that could be something that unites us, that we can connect in our humanness. I mean, we're designing these almost perfect machines now, so the human role will change, you know, and for us, we will be always emotional, unlike the machines, you know. So connecting on a human level is something that I wish that would happen more and for sure, like I can role model that myself by connecting with myself, and you know, people around me, or even broader, on a on a media like this and and I think you know that kind of human connection is what we need.

Hylke Faber 51:03

What would you say to somebody totally resonates, by the way, what you just said? What would you say to somebody who's just not feeling it today, who might be totally in problem land?

Tuula Rytala 51:16

Yeah.

Hylke Faber 51:17

What would you say to them?

Tuula Rytala 51:19

Well, I would say, learn to be gentle to yourself. You know, so So, so start thinking about what self love would look like. How do you How are you kind to yourself, because all of us, you know, we have good in us, yeah, every everybody, all of us, and all of us, you know, we, we need each other. So it's interesting. I volunteer on this crisis helpline in Finland. I was trained by the Mental Health Foundation that runs it, and people who call there is, you know, we are, of course, professionals who answer these calls as well, but many of the calls are attended by the volunteers and people are many people are lonely. I think that's, that's, you know, the big problem where people who, who call their, you know, the people are lonely. They, they are yearning this human connection and and I noticed that, you know, my, my role is to listen, and the only goal is for the person who calls to be heard. So that's, that's the only thing you know, that we asked to create an environment where a person is heard. And I notice, I often ask them if they have somebody, and you know, when they have somebody, just even one person, you know, it makes a difference. And it's, it's incredible to notice how even one person, you know makes a difference. So I for sure want to be that person you know to anybody that I touch. But if you don't have that person you know, if you can start being that for yourself, that would be huge. And then hopefully, by daring that, maybe they're another connection, because there are people out here who also want to have that connection. Yes,

Hylke Faber 53:26

yeah, absolutely. So start with well, appreciating that you want connection, that there's something good about you, even when you're feeling challenged, remember there's something good about you, and in all of us, that you, that you're, that all of us are good, basically good and and all of us are lonely

Tuula Rytala 53:47

at some level, at

Hylke Faber 53:49

some level, yeah, all of us are good. It's a t shirt, and all of us are basically lonely. Yes, exactly. So let's try to help each other. Let's try to help each other and be and be here for each other, yes, be here for each other. That is maybe also something that meditation helps with meditation, the art of being there for yourself.

Tuula Rytala 54:12

Presence, yeah, absolutely, yeah. Presence, I think, is a big gift of meditation. Yeah, great, wonderful.

Hylke Faber 54:19

So much you've been hearing we're miraculously always coming, coming to the end of our podcast with you today, so many takeaways that the things that strike me very much that I will take with me for the rest of my life are this 5050, what you just said about remember you can always be kind to yourself, and that's very important. And then the power of creating space, for new perspective, for transformation, for new ideas, for creativity, just creating space, and I sense. That that's what also you're doing as you're listening to the people in the helpline in Finland that you're that you're working with, what is your closing thought for today? Tula, what's your closing thought? Would you like to wave closing

Tuula Rytala 55:15

so I think you'll get, I think this podcast you created about connectedness, it's the it's hitting something really relevant, you know, in our time. And I'm I thank you for creating this platform and this space. And I think for me, it was a great reminder, you know, to just foster those connections and and you know, sometimes it might be inconvenient, sometimes it might, you know, cause some fear, but then taking the first step, and you know, daring to be on that journey, it's important, and it matters. And when we do it, when we all do it, it starts to create a critical mass. And I think this critical mass of of people reaching out and being there for each other makes a difference. So I definitely want to be part of creating that critical mass.

Hylke Faber 56:17

Talk about positive change, being there for each other, creating critical mass of people who are there for each other and who are connected and or who value that, and realizing that there's parts of us that might get afraid, and That's okay too, yeah.

Tuula Rytala 56:41

And that's that, I think is part of it. I think, you know, fear, you know it can be, it can be a good ally, but it has, it's not the end state, you know. It can recognizing that, hey, I'm sensing fear now it's a good signal, like, Okay, what's going on here? And that's very interesting. So we don't need to be afraid of fear. You know, we'll, we'll just, you know, we'll need to recognize it, and you know, not, not let it stop us from doing something. Because if, if I'm feeling fear, it's probably I'm on to something.

Hylke Faber 57:12

There's something that's important to me that's calling my attention. Yes, it doesn't mean I should stop right now. No, no, doesn't mean I might create some space to be with that. Might want to create some space to be with that and really let that in. Yeah, Tula, it's been a an honor to sit with you and to actually feel the space that you are creating that you are in your life, and how you're integrating that with all the things you've been learning and now also and sharing that with others as you do so, it's been a true gift to sit with you and learn the lessons of being spacious, prioritizing space and kindness and realizing that space may be kind. Maybe space is much kinder than we think it is. Maybe people are much kinder than we maybe

Tuula Rytala 58:08

that maybe yes, maybe that's true. Maybe that's

Hylke Faber 58:11

true. So thank you. So this is our conversation today with Tula. Tula, who is a very passionate leader, person, positive force for good in this podcast, even I learned some other things he does, besides board roles and previous corporate positions now also working with in mental health volunteering in Finland. But there are so many things. What I took away from today was a lot about spaciousness, and maybe, if you're listening, think about that. What would it mean for you to prioritize some spaciousness in your own way? You don't have to do meditation if you want to do it. Great. I find it very helpful. Not everybody does, and that's okay, too. How would you do that? How would you take a walk, listen to some music. Talk to a friend, take a deep breath, whatever it looks like. Listen to some music or or take Yeah, be in your body. Be in your body. If you like these kinds of conversations and you find them helpful, you can subscribe to this podcast on Apple and Spotify. They're also on LinkedIn, live and on YouTube. This was our 45th episode of grit and unwavering and we will be doing our next one in a couple of weeks. And until then, I hope you found something today that resonated with you that maybe has you feel more spacious on the inside and kinder on the inside and the outside you've been listening to rooted unwavering I'm your host. Hylkel Faber, see you next time.

Diana Belluomini 59:53

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