

# S01 - E11 - Rooted & Unwavering - Dec 16 - Hylke Faber & Pradeep U.N.

**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 hosts 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** 00:42

Welcome to rooted and unwavering This is already the 11th episode. We're broadcasting live again from Phoenix Business Radio x in Arizona, where we help leaders connect more deeply to their innate potential. Your host Hoka Farber, and I'm here today with Pradeep Yuen Pradeep, how are you today?

**Pradeep U.N.** 01:04

I'm great, Hilda. Good morning.

**Hylke Faber** 01:07

Good morning. So glad that you're here. In a moment, I'm going to tell more about you. And then we'll get into a conversation about courageous connectedness. And as a way into that. I'm also going to say a little bit about this podcast and also a little bit about you, including that you commune with droids but about that a little bit later, more. So this podcast route, and unwavering is about helping us all of us connect more deeply to what's true about us. What we found is that in our work coaching and developing others, there's this theme of I'm at my best, oh, I'm not at my best, how do I find my way back to my best and actually, as I do dislike a good place or good meal or good friend, we get to know more and more and more about that what that at our best really is and how exciting that is, how was exploration of can be. So that's what this is. We are talking to different leaders from different walks of life that we find inspiring, that help us to understand their stories, to become inspired about what becomes possible for us. So with that intention, let's move to our guest for today for our 11th episode of Ruta unwavering Pradeep Yuen, who is currently a senior director at Microsoft. He is also the inventor and director of truths and insights, which is a digital platform to enable leaders to engage their teams and customers in courageous conversations. He's been in tech for 23 years, he's founded startups that bring also cinematic storytelling to business, create movies with AI in under 90 seconds, I need to know more about that. He's held leadership roles at Microsoft for first generation innovations such as collaboration, data analytics, entertainment and AI technologies. He's also an avid champion for the inclusive workplace. And he lives at home because he has a direct family from three continents. Now,



here's the community in the community, but droids from Alien star systems and colludes with imaginary monsters, and this all can manage and entertain his five year old twin girls, which are quite central in his life, as I understand. Before the girls, he used to be passionate, at least he told me about tennis, photography, traveling and storytelling. But now he's more focused on French braiding, and that jokes. He also has an MBA from Carnegie Mellon, and a Bachelors of Engineering in electrical and electronics from Nanyang Technological University. In Singapore, man with so many gifts, so much background, so much inclusion, also, we got to know each other Pradeep about a year ago now, maybe a little bit less when somebody introduced me and he said, you know, you need to talk to Pradeep because what he does and what you do, are a perfect fit, because he has invented something that I think you would really enjoy as you think about bringing what you do into the last mile of organizations really have people click with the evolution in the day to day. And then I thought, well, that's kind of interesting, I hear these things a lot. And then I met Pradeep and there was an instant resonance, and also an instant and admiration for for this humility, and his humanity that he brings together with all his gifts. So with all of that Pradeep let's step into our conversation. So tell me a little bit about yourself and in your journey. Knee with connectedness and doing what you truly love.

**Pradeep U.N. 05:06**

Yeah, and thank you for that introduction, Hilda and and also, it's been a fascinating 13 months since we got introduced by email. And it's been great working with you have been exploring this. So you have told me it told a lot about myself already, to people. But specifically, I'll go into a couple of pivots that helps people maybe understand, I did my undergraduate in Singapore. But then before that, I grew up in Chennai, South India, and, and then Pittsburgh, eventually moving, and then making Seattle, my home. And in that context, constant narrative that's been with me is, is always felt like, I am not in the majority. And with that comes in completely different culture that you're trying to assimilate into. And that means many things. So you're trying to like, be somebody else, while trying to maintain your own identity. And while making that juxtaposition work, you'll figure out that your inner self starts expanding, and transforming. And you just have to let it and being an immigrant, and a minority in Singapore, and then not even having the language there, because I don't speak Mandarin, or hotkey and or Cantonese, or Malay, for that matter. And then coming to America, where I understand the language, obviously, but the culture is still different one and doing that a few times, then suddenly starts realizing that you know, your inner you can evolve can transform can be something new. So my journey has been through these kinds of pivots, cultural pivots, and as a result, actively embracing learning at every single point and failures or frustrations, with the view of learning has been the one tangent that I always maintain. So you're not always going in towards the center with the linear views, like, again, tangential is totally fine. directionally Am I in the right place. And that's core, I think, towards how I've approached, trying to find out myself and being connected to myself. And to me, it comes from having been connected to vision, environment, the sounds, place ambience, texture people and then having different circles wherever you go, and not letting go of any circles that you might have before they say circles people's circles. And, and also having a sense of connectedness across time, past present future, just because you're the president doesn't mean your past doesn't count. And because you're in the present doesn't mean your future is not something you're setting up for. So all of that feels like a lot. But it's actually not that



difficult when you really put your mind to it and just focus on I'm just trying to be here and have fun with people that matter. Like that's the summary that I get back to.

**Hylke Faber** 08:25

Yes, yes. I get that. And I can see that in your eyes like these, these little lights of pleasure, curiosity, amusement, and like fierceness, I hear that then you and I also hear it in your story, something about expansion, you always allow things to expand you now, my sense is that is a conscious choice. Because things can also shrink you. Right? So you're telling, you know, it's it sounds like such a beautiful journey. I'm imagining somebody from India, going to Singapore, and being in school there. So what did you learn about letting not letting yourself shrink, but actually letting yourself expand? Because I'm sure you had lots of reasons that you could have found to say, I'm gonna, I'm gonna go smaller now.

**Pradeep U.N.** 09:22

Yeah, and the environment can do that too. Like, specifically let me bring up an experience from from Singapore. So I was 16 when when I was invited in to Singapore, so it was a national scholarship. They picked about half a dozen actually a dozen kids from all over India who did who were doing some really good things and then said, hey, we'll pay we'll pay you for your entire ride and here's a statement. So very powerful statement to make to your parents and then say like, Hey, I got it from here on And you actually leave the country and 16 My mom was bawling, obviously sending sending to another country and they like call me every weekend, I'm like, Mom, I don't have my kid. This is, you know, mid 90s. Internet was not there yet. So these are expensive phone calls. And they're, suddenly you realize that all the superpowers that you are known for, because we weren't actually national scholars. So you come with a sense of, hey, we are, we are great at what we're doing. And this was all my entire cohort of people, then you realize what you consider that breakfast does not exist here anymore. And I say that because there is a fundamental, you take for granted about food, but it's sustenance, that helps you think and suddenly you don't have breakfast, like you used to lunch looks very different. It smells very different. And at that point, you almost feel like, this is not smell or even food, like you start questioning some basics. And this is all biased based on grew up, where I grew up with. And of course, now when I go back to Singapore, all those smells, brings me nostalgia and goes with like, this is awesome food that I miss, because over seven years there, you you're you're you have expanded, which was the point that you're you're making. So those basics of sustenance itself initially was just like, This is not food. And once you start cutting down nutrition because of choice, your mind acts in very different ways. But when he started going up, let's say the hierarchy, my muscles pyramid, and then start looking through a sense of leadership. And that was part of what we were growing up because I was leading so many things. Even at school. Here, it was very different. There was a place for camels, which is which is the ethnography that'll be part of like Tamar is my language. In Singapore, historically, that was a minority, yes, it's a national language. But that was the fourth fourth in the hierarchy socio economic hierarchy that they had. But how it played out in practice for kids was when example when we were standing for a student leadership at the University in one of the student groups, they lit an ice and they asked me, What are you gonna stand firm like, President by the time in my first year, so vice president? Because I shall learn and they ended like, Yeah, but your people? Here's two roles, that it's



good for these door taken by the Chinese. And I'm like, What? No, let's never debate isn't this open? Like, yeah, but the outcome is this. So let me actually help you. So they were trying to help me, in terms of this is the outcome. So why don't you go for these roles where the outcome is going to be positive to you, which did not make sense for me when India's all about unity within diversity. And then we have multiple languages and we make sense of it in our own complex, crazy ways. And here, they are going for harmony. So intent is still there. But it came down to literally no, you cannot do that even though I haven't seen your capabilities, skills intent. Because of just your background, you're so that is, as you define it, a potential shrinking moment. I fought that I lost that election. So the outcome was not what I wanted. And and then next time, I realized I could fight this environment and then comply, which which was going against my grain. But I also had this logical brain in terms of if I did the same thing and stood I would have the same outcome. And I did not like that outcome. So very, and I came up with I didn't have a last name, because we have metronomic names in the mode. So my last name became UN. And then I instead of saying vote for pretty much in the previous year, when to do like, Oh, that's not for this role. And then I got voted out. It was vote for the UN. And I didn't even show up to the debates. I didn't put any images because it was like using that leads to bias and an outcome I don't want. But something of neutrality leads with intrigue and, and intrigue should not hurt me. But let's see where it goes. So it was my hypothesis, like it can't get worse. Let's see what happens. And I got the outcome I wanted and it stayed. So there's nothing I could change with the environment. But then I was so deterministic in terms of like here's the outcome. I wanted to figure out how you can work through it. And that's an example of like, is it contraction expansion? I Don't know how it goes very outcome focused without giving identity out. At that point,

**Hylke Faber 15:06**

I love this, it's like I hear you talk about, I'm very focused on the goal, like I'm very focused on what I want to have achieve and what I want to achieve. And then like, my brain would go to, let's try a little harder, let's make it better. Like I'll make a better speech, you'll have better campaign materials or you know, whatever, I'll listen better to the the audience, or whatever it needs to be with a sense of like her head first. And what I see you do, is you have that firmness of conviction, and then give you give you give yourself the space of exploration, and saying, Ha, what are some alternative ways that I can reach the goal. And so I'll have people vote for the UN and sense of unity, and the intrigue of that. So tell us a little bit about how you got to creating this platform truths and insights, maybe related to the story you're just telling. In an environment where I don't think anybody was saying to you Pradeep go create truths and insights. I don't think that was on anybody's thinking besides yours. So how did that come about?

**Pradeep U.N. 16:20**

If there are two more pivots in my life that led to it? I mean, the short answer in terms of fruits and insights would get me into Microsoft hackathon very inherently here. And but you know that there is this thing around, you don't just come up with a finished painting, I don't want to use the word masterpiece, but finished painting with like big brushes, but then you have to figure out color. And that's something you learn much earlier in life, the actual painting work might have taken a week. But to put off that first color, make those choices that takes years. So I'm going to share a couple of pivots if that's okay with you to like how rooted inside scanner



**Hylke Faber** 17:00

as you do in a deep way you'll find your own way, also in this conversation, which is one of the things I love about you, so go ahead.

**Pradeep U.N.** 17:08

So the first one is, is actually in 2007. And it was two years or three years into microsoft 2007 2008. There was this. It was it was it was the last lecture by Randy Pausch. So Doctor pouch professor at Carnegie Mellon, but in his case, it was the last lecture he had pancreatic cancer. And then he was actually talking about here is and this whole talk was about following your dreams which which is how I was always backed on and we shared an actual here's what we want to do. His was about Disney Imagineering and I was similar like growing up. In my case, I was also about, I wanted to train to be a Jedi and traveled with Han Solo not to actually be a Jedi and fight but actually traveled with Han Solo, but it was still it was too cool. And that gets me into the whole drive thing. But the sharing of the Disney Imagineering was something I had with Andy, I've stood in lines for his classes back in Pittsburgh at Carnegie Mellon. But at the end, he had a couple of head fakes. So a head fake in sports is where you know, it's called a head fake. parents send their kids to play football or tennis. It's not so much learn tennis and be a great football player. It's so that you know how to deal with failure. It's know how to work with a team, the discipline to show up every day. And if you learn a sport, excellent outcome, but that's not the goal. So it's a head fake. So his head fake for the lecture. The last lecture was all about. The first head fake was was that you're talking about following your dreams, and then great, but while he was sharing his story, but the real head fake was that this isn't a message for his kids. It was his legacy. And that was pivotal to me, because I realized that here was an absolutely brilliant professor I loved in school, in his last lecture, coming up with this biggest message and any in any pest pest anything about a year or two after that. And and I always felt like, why do that? At the end of once you have it once once you have a mortality just in front of you. Why did you start doing that? And focus on legacy and everything in terms of any milestone for a quarter or, or the year is completely different to the exact goal. So that was my first pivot. The aspect of I have to figure out what my legacy is, and what that was going to be around and around the same time I was also in some high potential kind of training where it was all about ethos, finding yourself and writing it and sharing it with others and most others had, like, you know, I want to be a director, I want to be a GM. I know that kind of role and mine never went anywhere close. I almost felt like, yeah, that will be a milestone. Like, I don't want to be that I wanted to be a Jedi with Han Solo. And everything else felt like something in the middle. But what I really realized was, it was not just figuring out my legacy, but my legacy was about what's going to be about others figuring out there's the aspect of raising the tide for all ships when the ships are figuring out there on voyages. And that was like, oh, that's what it is. And the Randy power show last lecture when I heard it. And then this was happening within a few weeks, very different things. But it started connecting to me here afterwards. Because it did you need those kinds of experiences to get there. That was one of the first pivots that I had. The second one was one of my biggest. If you look from professional terms, one of my biggest failures, it's my startup called Zero Flix. And this was around AI, where you can tell your stories, and the vision was at least 15 years ahead, technology was at least 10 years ahead of where it was. Where it could be that Sierra flicks was around, the insight around your



past is somebody else's future. And that means you'll probably live your present with a lot more thoughtfulness, because you know, every step you're taking, somebody else is going to follow it. And therefore be very clear. Integrity is important, because somebody's not watching somebody's looking up to you. And that also means your future is somebody's past. So you're not alone. Why have the trepidation and scare or fear around it? somebody's done this before? You just don't know who and this aspect of how do you connect people from the past? With the people in the present, it feels like mentoring coaching goal setting. But that's where we're at. And it was all about narrative arcs. So in that work in my startup, we were exploring, like, how do we do this? This was before Facebook had timeline. And I had actually worked enough timeline and written on like a time is that that's the thing here. And then Facebook timeline, so we had to have a few pivots. But the core there was around the narrative arcs that are life if you bring it down to narrative arcs. And now it goes back to Randy Pausch his lecture, because he was describing his entire life as narratives, and then closing out with two head fakes on how he is giving guidance to his kids. So these narrative arcs are emotional journeys, whereas most marketing stories are very linear, nothing emotional. It's just like, here's a problem. Here's a solution. Here's the KPI buy from us, and nobody's going to watch that video again. But the same movie, if it's a good narrative arc, you'll cry, you'll you'll, you'll feel euphoria, you'll you'll, you'll struggle, and you'll watch it two or three times again. So the narrative arcs and the story trope, the fact that there's only a finite list of story tropes, then realize, like, wow, of your life, and it's described, comes down to a few set templates. So SEER flicks was around. You can use templates with these arcs with the status standard set of characters. And because it's all standard, and rules based, I can automate it with AI. That was the whole thing around zero flex, but the vision was, like I said, 15 years before, ahead of its time, Tech was nowhere close to what we could do. But I did take a chance at it. But that aspect of narrative works finite story tropes, along with the legacy of raising the tide for everybody in their narrative story. Trump's your past past is somebody's future. You can see how that would lead to fruits and insects. The only thing I changed was my two things. Basically, a change change was I was trying to do it all based on AI and automation. Yeah, they took all of the data and threw it out and they just said like people should just tell their stories however they want however, they might need a few prompts. get there. And then we went a bit deeper. So that's two pivots leading towards thoughts and insights over a 15 year period.

**Hylke Faber 25:08**

Love. And so your past became your future. And also, and so I love that you're saying this phrase, like our past will become somebody else's future actually is somebody else, somebody else, you're very clear, that's a very strong assertion. And I can feel in myself the lift that comes to the sense of responsibility, the inspiration, also the sense of connectedness, like I'm not here by myself, out here, you know, whatever, right? There's, there's not whatever, it's everyone goes from whatever to everyone. And I'm part of everyone. And one bit one way and part of everyone is by connecting my present to somebody else's future, my past is somebody else's future. So I know what Toots and insights is. I think many people that are listening will not know what Tuten Insight is, I love that the name of it. So it's to say a bit more about how truths and insights works, and how it helps people to connect to debt, their stories, and by extension, to themselves.



**Pradeep U.N. 26:20**

Again, I'll give you some context and get into the mechanics very quickly, the context, I gave the long term of how thoughts and insights came about the really short story that I normally say in a business setting for truths and insights is, we were trying to solve for customer discovery, for transformation. But then, the big pivot there was the pandemic. But very soon after, that was when George Floyd, an African American gotten murdered in the Midwest in America. And that leading to people around the world saying enough is enough. We're This is not done anymore. And and people raising at Microsoft, this was a pause in business that we saw in meetings where people now we're talking about how do you feel? I have not heard that question. In a business meeting, having worked here for more than a decade and a half, where business meetings are paused for a few days, in this case, it was almost a week even. We're like, where are you at? How do you feel how is it hurt or hurt and discussion. But the follow up from that was was not seeing it. However, the intent was we need to talk to each other, we need to listen to each other, and they're just talking is not enough. We need action. Those to lead me to like, realize that we do not have a construct to have this discussion. Because it brings in different people with different emotions, different backgrounds, and have a very tough conversation, where there's clear education on many sides, but also maybe a collective understanding without blame. That's a lot of things to take on. So I didn't take on all of that at all. Instead, what we went down was just like the core of people want to share their story. So truths and insights starts with that. And they want to take turns to share their stories in towards a specific, let's just say a prompt, almost like a campfire. So you if a conversation at a campfire or a bar, gonna start it's about a seed of a prompt or a discussion, then everybody starts saying, Hey, here's where I'm at, here's where I'm at. And then others react to that. That's the design ethos in truths and insights. On one side, it is a card game. It's a digital card game, there is a prompt, and the prompt, could be as simple as I feel great when blank. Then all of us just like in any card game, who are playing that game, and typically played in groups of six to eight because card games get played in groups of six to eight. If you're playing poker, or then you start having your cards and your cards could be something that says budget surplus budget, one could say like lack of resources, or great sleep. So meaning in these choices, I could finish the sentence which said, I feel great when and I could say when I have surplus budget when I have great sleep. Now at that point, I can choose any one of the cards in my hand and tell a story so I could say great sleep. And then I have to tell a story. That's true for me if I played that card, for example, I could tell a story about my twin girls, and how for the first two, three years, all I wanted was sleep while I couldn't get asleep It's a parenting thing, but you're trying to, he's literally functional, while actively not having sleep at home, because one or the two is awake. And, and one, and then letting go letting us know that we're there awake. So that would be the story I would take. Instead, if I actually pick the card around surplus budget, which is a myth, I don't know who has surplus budget. But let's say I played that card, I feel great. And I had a surplus budget that I tell a fantasy story, but surplus budget leading to great project outcomes. And then how that could be interesting. So you can see how suddenly, your life metaphor shows up your life is the cards that you're dealt with, it's dealt to you, you do have to do nothing about it. But then it's what you do with the cards, you play a card in the situation, which is the prompt, and then you just say, here's where I met, and here's how I'm dealing this card, and you're sharing your past. So you've done that act, now others around you because you're not living your life alone. If you think you are, then you think again, because there's



others for every action, there's reactions, and others also get to react and inspire, get get inspired. So they hear your story. And typically they mirror it, their emotions come to bear their, you reminded them of something, some feeling. And then we give those folks ways to react in a way that the conversation moves forward. So you have reaction icons, like me to you changed my perception, or you need, I need to investigate this, or you have inspired me to act. And they choose one of these icons. And in real time AI gives you the feedback in terms of you just told this story. And there are three meters, meaning people are meeting you there, you're not on a ledge all by yourself, or you've inspired me to act, that story is so powerful, I'm going to do that. And there's a feedback loop for yourself, you tell a story, you get a feedback loop, and you can double down on it. But also for the others, as they actively choose one of these reactions, some of the dots that they might have had in their life gets connected. And then it's brought to the surface a bit more. And it helps them feel connected to you. So eventually, the goal is belonging in intimate group settings at workplaces, at scale, this starts getting down to bonded groups, it leads to collaboration, it leads to better value resonance. So that's the essence and then how the gameplay works of thoughts and insights, there is another side of the platform in real time using AI we aggregate the information so leaders can see how their organization is currently culturally using sentiment analysis coming from stories. And if you do that over time, again, the past present future, in this case, just past and present, you can have a sense of here's where we were at in q1, here's how we shall be into VR in q3. Here's first year was the second year. So I was taking the art form of figuring out yourself, and figuring out your team and leadership with the management signs of trends, AI data analytics, because that's how we are taught to run organizations.

**Hylke Faber** 33:27

Thank you so much. Well, we're gonna take a break in a moment, what I want to just replay the essence of the tools and insights, quote, unquote, game is this white card, for example, I feel inspired when, and then three black cards, which could be and in this case, I'm going to paraphrase in what my mind said over the last half hour when I felt inspired. And I would need many more than three cards. One was when you said my past becomes somebody else's future. That was very important for me to hear. The second thing that was in the very beginning of our conversation was when you talked about how you weren't shrinking, and you actually chose a different last name, or actually chose a last name U N, that by itself did its work for you. And I heard in that a the approach of trust and trusting in something of community that would take you not being alone and somehow taking care of this thing that you wanted to achieve which was helping me to think more broadly. So that will be the second card about choosing expansion and choosing the collective. I feel inspired when I choose the collective. And then this third one was when when you talked about your little girls, you know I feel inspired I heard when I hear you talk about your little girls and not sleeping and still standing and still creating. So thank you so much. We've been listening to Pradeep Yuen, from Microsoft, He's the inventor and leader of truths and insights. We're going to take a short break now. And then after the break, we'll continue this exploration in terms of living our passion, and being very conscious of how our past becomes somebody else's future and that we're all connected. Thank you see you soon.

**Presenter** 35:32





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 35:57**

Thank you, everyone for listening. And thank you Pradeep for being with us. Pradeep is a senior director at Microsoft and the inventor of truths and insights, which is all about connectedness, courageous conversations play. And we've been talking about he's been teaching us about how our future becomes somebody else's past and how the narrative of ourselves is something that tells us about ourselves, but also connects us to others and how there's templates for those and different, you could say archetypes almost that we can fall into. So Pradeep I want to go a little deeper with you into playing truths and insight. So I'm going to actually pretend that we're playing tweets and insights. So I'm going to give you a first a white card, and then three black cards. And I'm going to ask you just to choose and tell us a story. Okay? All right. So, first card is the white card says, I feel at my best when, okay. And the three, the three black cards are getting challenged. Number one, number two, when I have a big vision number three, is when somebody disagrees with me. So which one do you choose? I feel at my best when I get challenged when I have a big vision or when somebody disagrees with me.

**Pradeep U.N. 37:31**

Okay. I would go with the first one. i They the last one is you know, I It's not how I would approach it, it's something that I would work with. Challenges for for for a designer is the constraints that you need to create something because immediately a challenge says is somebody putting their hand up and saying I have pain. I don't know how to do this or this is a struggle and and your immediate reaction, at least for me, it tends to be like I'm here to help. Tell me more. And then I'm on listening mode completely. And probing trying to understand the field and get a sense of where they're coming from. Are there more people like this having a sense of the enormity of this problem. And, and for me, consistently, I met my best when I understand this example would have been the truths and insights, the story that I gave just before around the George Floyd incident leading towards enabling conversations. The specific narrative allowed a little story to this is we worked with Bom Bom as blacks at Microsoft, and you're trying to explore this. And they helped us learn many things. But one of the things they said at the end was just like I don't think you bought built this for African Americans. And I almost upset me. I was like, I've been working with you for the last few weeks trying to design this. How can you say that? Mike, don't get us wrong, it's like, this is great. We love it, we got to play it. But I think you can you should try this with gleam and gleam is our LGBTQ employee resource group. And and and in fact, you should talk to all employee resource group because this is very inclusive. And that when when we actually worked with our gleam community, they took it so far within such a short period of time that within a week of me sending the email, there were GMs and VPS. On the call as we were demoing every single day, they would bring in more people like 2050 eventually 100 people by end of the week, we're done and I had VPS on the call who are playing I didn't know they were VP still I looked them up later on. Because on the game you don't know you just see a name and a photograph. And they're just engaging and we were exploring. And the reason I bring that up in terms of I feel at my best was as like



this was a challenge that No one put their hand up and said we are in pain. I could sense it. And then you started working with not going to say personas, but groups on us like these are groups, and they start under helping us understand. I have a problem, or here's my problem. But here's another one who might see it even though your solution was directed towards us it, it works there as well a lot better than if I was sitting in a corner saying I have a vision. I'm not that's why it's easier to work with a challenge because there is a person with pain. And you just ask the question, what's going on? They'll give you essays and point you in so many different directions. So I'm at my best to chat with people who have challenges, and then they're willing to share.

**Hylke Faber** 40:47

Thank you for that. So I can't resist. What is your challenge then today?

**Pradeep U.N.** 40:56

On what dimensions I have challenges on every single dimension. So parenting lots of challenges. With everybody there is it's there is the transient transactional thing, right? Which is operational. Like today, I'm here on the podcast, which means I'm not actually braiding my kid's hair, and therefore, I have to make sure the weekend is great for my wife, because she's taken up in the cast that I normally do with my kids. That's a here now challenge. But even yesterday, Avantika was this my elder by two minutes, twin daughter, she was bawling about and mom came and asked still what's going on? And she was like, I can't figure out the name for my company. And I was like, what, your five year old? Yeah, daddy said we're gonna build, you know, to be grid, we need to build something that nobody has built. And then I figured out what that is. And the answer was some unicorn shop with which throws in glitter, which everybody wants. And then now I can't figure out the company name, and I can't and this was there. But the sense of identity and creation, and then what you're trying to do like something I was just saying in passing, like, what's value and I was like, hey, it's about product creation for people. She took it to heart, and then started following up on it as a five year old absolutely does. And now I feel like, okay, I have to make sure that she's not first boxed. But if she does want to really do that, then we help. But then is she also doing other things and exploring herself instead of just taking that push me here, and then I'm on it. And that's a huge responsibility. And I would say like, that's one of the biggest challenges for me, like what the setting of the right platform for my kids work related challenges. There's enough people on the team that I can work with to solve it for the real big journeys for me is like, you know, things I definitely cannot hand off to somebody, which is parenting family related. So that immediately came up to me,

**Hylke Faber** 43:11

I totally, I totally understand what you're saying. And I love that you are sort of thinking about how can you actually be the best person and the best version of yourself in the midst of that challenge and actually being very open to that challenge. I'm also thinking about the braiding of the kids and how she had this problem of like, okay, so how do we actually get to somebody really being what we need, what we need them to be? Yes. So Pradeep say a little bit more about how you actually approach this sense of trust that I feel in you, okay, because I feel a sense of trust in you, you have an idea. And then it starts to take form, right? You have an idea and it takes form. So you create it, you this new last name



created for me took care of it. You created truths and insights, and then people started doing stuff with it. And, you know, your parenting that's an other act of letting go say a bit more about how you are finding that sense of trust within yourself.

**Pradeep U.N. 44:35**

It's, so if I think in terms of those terms, it gets very hard for me because then I have to find the trust and then you start questioning. What I've found that works for me is not taking myself too seriously. But also making sure that I keep the values together like my natural state is like a very natural mind state to me is like if Very excited monkey. And most people go with like, Okay, we have to rein the monkey, whereas my approach is just like, let's just watch the monkey. Look because, again, this one from from India, monkeys are worshipped. Monkeys are everywhere. And they're fun, they're notorious. But if you just watch them, there's group dynamics, there's all kinds of other things, they start doing that, in my case, my monkeys jump on multiple trees, where they're exploring music, they're exploring art forms, technology, business, and social psychology, psychologies spaces, Daya, let them be that and then that requires a lot of patience to just let that be. And then there is this just fundamental way of approach on how I'm you know, as an entrepreneur, you understand that life and excellence happens in the moment. But if you push it too much, you can't be excellently immediately. In fact, you've never are. But life and excellence happens in the moment because you're pursuing it right at every single time you're pursuing it. And therefore, you have to have discovery and an active sense of prioritization. So they are very conflicting states. But I don't try to force it. So the milestones and monthly milestones quarterly milestones that the environment throws at me, I tried to disassociate myself from it, or be very clear on the communication of here's what's gonna happen this milestone and keep it very simple, so that the environment is saturated. But because if I actually share literally, my, if people knew that I was letting monkeys run in my head all the time, or multiple movies running is just multiple, it's, it doesn't give people a sense of linear progress. Yes. And that I just pick on finance, finance likes to see every quarter that you'd happen there, what's 10% More, whereas my approach is, like, yeah, it'll be 300% Within eight months, kind of what's my probability on it, you know, buying for, as, but that's, you can't give those kind of exponential with probabilistic answers in a linear world. So I, I completely just take that inside, know that there's going to be huge variances, but the discovery is, is where I put myself in. Now the team I bring together all around to make sure there's operational rigor and together that will look always like a well oiled unit. So that it's that balance that I constantly go with. And that that to me, it helps. The other thing is I focus a lot on recovery. Not just being doing the do more do excellent and all of it because so I actually you probably have this chat with you like I talk in terms of Sleep Number like here, I had 83 score on my Fitbit. And then I hit 87 today and I'm like I actually feel that so I actually tried to get more sleep, get more water. You're gonna see my gallon water jug. In a few calls to and then I and then one part where I fail is more veggies because if I actually do gets more sleep, more water, more veggies, life just looks better for those times and recovery is something how to actively do that when I put my mind to that the other things seem to fit into place.

**Hylke Faber 48:41**

So I see you sensing I sent you connecting to your creative genius. And I would say that creative genius because I also see you sort of open up to it, you take the seed of discovery, and you have all



these different movies running simultaneously which for some of us might feel overwhelming and I see you actually enjoying it. And and seeing the potential and not letting go of your actual intention in it. Not like a free for all. You also mentioned that your shop will be a well oiled machine when it needs to be. And in those moments of truth, so excellent. You really value and then I love I love I love I love the sense of and recovery. And the three ingredients that I heard you talk about sleep, water and veggies. So that and then life looks better than life looks better. I I really appreciate that now. I see you as being unconsciously skilled in the art of creation. You do it you talk about it as if it's second nature. It seems to be almost second nature for you and I can imagine people listening to this saying, Okay, that's great that I'm inspired. Right? I feel inspired when I listened to Pradeep Yuen talk about his story, and how future my future becomes somebody else's past. Yes. Okay. Where do we start? Like, how do you help somebody? How would you what would you say to somebody? Where would do things like? Well, yes, but I am actually not feeling connected to my creativity. And yeah, I'm, I'm feeling very attached to the linear paths, I have to decide this to deliver today, and then distinct, distinct to do and that thing to do, and then this meeting, and and then that deliverable. And if that doesn't happen, then I'm going to be upset. And if that happens, I'll get happy. So how do you help? How would you help all of us who have that also running? Or maybe that primarily running in ourselves?

**Pradeep U.N. 51:02**

Huge question. I don't know how I can help others. But I should I can tell you what I have done for myself and what has worked, which is all the external stimulus, I started looking and this is going back to Randy Pausch last lecture, which is like, and to what end? And, and if you start asking that question a few times you realize, you know, the team you're working on the project you're working on, the company you're working on, might not be true statement in a month, especially in the current situation, we'll be doing all of that in a month, we don't know. So then, what are you doing now? Does it add value to yourself and so forth? And if the answer is no, then you have the clear direction in terms of why am I doing this. So I've done that a few times. Because I've had a few pivots, I've done my startups. And because of being literally leaving countries going to another and then starting afresh, you get into this this immigrant nature of like I'm not fitting in, but I want to, and I want to stand out while fitting in a these set of contrasting fields, this is what I get played. But very tactically speaking, I always speak things that I do not know what to do. But I always work curious about and then commit to sucking for a long period of time, in pursuit of mastery, I'll be very specific. I picked up I was trying to have my kids get into music, I play drums, and then got Anishka my second, like two minutes, twin girl on the piano. And then I want to go like, Well, I'm not going to touch that I'm a rock star, I want to guitar. So I bought her a guitar. While doing that, I realized, well, I can pick up a quarter tool. And then I started doing that, and then played, downloaded an app and then started learning it. And then now I'm committed to sucking at guitar every day for for about 20 minutes. I can play three songs now. In the demo that I prevent into YouTube, just like I learned reading, like YouTube, I can start doing this. But if I did not commit to sucking for two, three months that I've done that I would not have may have just said like I can play a song. It's actually pretty decent when I do it. My wife actually came like Where was that? I've never heard that before. And then I played her the actual song on Spotify. And then she was like, Wow, that's so close. I'm like, Yeah, I picked up the guitar two months ago, I can only do that I can't do anything else. But I still continue to commit to sucking for a while. That is what I just described is a daily



kind of an endeavor for my kids on anything. They're five years old. They're learning new things all the time. But they're doing that with open eyes and then committing to sucking for a while. And then they start learning so many things so quickly. Like their language and grammar structure. By the by the time they're doing fine. They do intensive. They don't know they're doing tenses. But they're using sentences in the right form. And it's remarkable when I start on this realizing like how are they learning this, I'm not teaching them any structure, but they're just learning it. So that's what I would say like just pick up something that I'll while later you'll be like I'm I'm going to be happy that I tried doing that. And then commit to sucking every single day for a short period of time. If it's 10 minutes a time and everybody has 10 minutes to figure it out, pick something and then you do that for multiple things. Over a period of time. He'll suck at a lot more things, but the die for me, there's more dots that show up that I feel like I can connect.

**Hylke Faber 54:49**

Yes. So if I summarize that I hear you talk about ask yourself, does this add to me? And I don't hear ego me. I Hear my sense of joy, a sense of peace, a sense of fulfillment sense of meaning. What Professor Pausch was asking you basically follow your joy. How is this? Adding to my joy? How is this adding to who I aspire to be? What truly matters to me? Like, that's a professor pouch basically moment, it's like, okay, is this adding to my life or not? And, and then I can start looking at Ha, here's something that I might find. Joyful gives me meaning. You talked about picking up the guitar, right. And this can be something at work, that you do like a project, you start an initiative, you start a conversation, you start to have a book, you start reading, you record something, you start learning, whatever it is, right. And then I love that you say, come up, commit to the suck, like commit to suck in it for a while, I find it hard to say that word. Because my upbringing says, No, you can't say that. But commit, like I can tell, this is something for me to learn, like, commit to suck, really commit to suck for a while. And, and then stick with it, and then stick with it. That That sounds very, very doable. To me, even though not always easy. And then the last thing I heard you talk about is also and then start watching the dots, how they start how the dots start appearing. That's the ACT part of the act of creation. But if I could talk to you for hours, which I actually do, because I talk to you at least one hour, a week, and often more, as we think about truths and insights together. As we are getting towards the last few minutes of this route and wavering conversation, what would you like to say, Leave listeners with by closing.

**Pradeep U.N. 57:00**

So I this is me, quoting an English philosopher, now stated, and you know, the philosophy yourself. But in every job that must be done, there is an element of fun, you find the fun. And then the jobs again, right? It's Mary Poppins. But really, that aspect of anything you do, you have to enjoy it, there has to be some fun if not change the job, or you're not looking hard enough for the fun. And, and then it's not a job anymore. It's and. And that's how they close it like every task you undertake becomes a piece of cake. And then how much cake will you have as much as you want, because doing something like this is not going to add to calories or have any bad elements. And this is the other side of commit to suck. But the Mary Poppins is a much better illustration of stating it. So that's my last last one that I'll leave with. Have fun,



**Hylke Faber 58:00**

have fun and find the joy, find the joy commit to it. And I love how you are helping to reframe our mindset about what joy is because I can imagine many of us including me, when I'm sucking at something like playing the guitar for the first few weeks or few months, I might not have as much fun and I can see in my mind's eye now Pradeep committing to the socket actually having fun, and that particular part of his life. We've been talking with Pradeep Yuen today, I found this conversation so enlightening actually mind expanding and some of the things that I took away from it, were that my future and our future is somebody else's past whether we know it or not, that we need to be conscious about finding our joy. And this is not something that may always be easy. And if we can't find it, keep looking. I also heard that I also heard you talk about the commitment to being completely in the moment with your experience being very present with your experience and allowing multiple inputs play at the same time. And, and not get scared of the complexities, which you would probably talk about all the adventures of life, which you then model so well and then allow yourself to to keep inventing and reinventing your life. You've been listening to root and unwavering next week, we'll be here again. We will be here with Rick Gage, my colleague and I will be reviewing the last five podcasts of Ruden, unwavering and high looking at some of the highlights. If you want to know more and actually continue this conversation, we have monthly growth Leaders Network dialogues on LinkedIn. And also I invite you of course to subscribe to this podcast who is unwavering Pradeep Thank you so much for sharing yourself so beautifully courageously clearly. And with so much fun. I really felt like I was with a Jedi today. And for all of us who are listening, thank you for listening. I hope you've heard something you liked, or that you found helpful. You've been listening to root and unwavering where we help leaders connect more deeply to their innate potential, and I add joy in that. My host name is Helga Farber, I see you next time.

**Presenter 1:00:36**

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