

## S01 - E34 -Rooted & Unwavering - Nov 17 - Hylke Faber.

# Unconditional Gratitude: How Can I Thank This Setback for its Lesson?

### **Presenter** 00:02

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 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

Well, welcome to Rutan wavering broadcasting live from Phoenix, Arizona today, this is our 34th episode. And this is where we help leaders to connect more deeply to their innate potential. I'm your host Hilco Faber. And today, I was going to be here with Patricia Obermeyer senior leader at Microsoft. And unfortunately, she had a fell ill this week, not seriously, I don't think but it's difficult. And so she's not able to join us today. And so we thought about what we're going to do with this episode. And because it's the week before Thanksgiving, we thought, what is not a better way to use this episode, than to focus this hour on the power of gratitude. And we look forward to having having Patti on a future episode of Rhodes and unwavering. So the power of gratitude, that's what we're going to talk about. And just a little bit of context for this podcast, as we talk about in every podcast rooted unwavering, is a series of conversations with leaders from all walks of life, to learn about, how do we stay more connected to who we want to be? What's true about us, our highest self, that which feels Talat on the insight that what brings the best out in us in any situation, in particular, at work, and in particular, in our life, as leaders, like how do we do that? That is the podcast focus. And we hear stories from all walks of life to basically get inspired and see are like, what can I learn from this leader about being a little bit more in my seat today? How do I take a little bit more responsibility for the energy that I bring to the situation, and if you're anything like me, you need these conversations, I need these conversations, to help me rebalance, because so much in life happens to pull me off balance, if I let it. So in this episode, today, we're going to talk about gratitude. And in the first half, it's going to be me, offering some of my reflections that I feel inspired to share today, this week before Thanksgiving in the United States. And then in the second half, I'll be joined by my colleague, Rick Gates, who will together unpack this a little bit more. So gratitude, let's talk about gratitude. So much is packed into that. Let me start by saying is



that there's something that happens in us. And we all know this, when we choose to be grateful, as opposed to resentful, or worried or anxious about something even when we're anxious, we can choose to be grateful. And we all know what happens within us, something in us opens up to you could say bigger perspective. What this the mini example, when I got the news this morning, that even though Patti, and I've been emailing for a while this week to hear about how she was doing. My, my initial, say, your reptilian reaction to her not being able to be here was like, Oh, no. And then when I choose gratitude, it's like, ha, ha, ha, interesting. What's this an opportunity for? How can I be grateful for what's here? And gratitude helps me to open up to to what's here this morning. I took a walk in my neighborhood, which I often do, I live in Phoenix these days. And it's been a really hot summer brutally hot. And some of the trees which there are many here in this neighborhood have died. And I walked by one of the trees that people were taking down and I was thinking, like, how do I what what why would I choose gratitude for this? Right? And what happens when I choose gratitude and a part of me feel sad and concerned about the environment and and sad about losing this beautiful tree. And then when I choose gratitude, it doesn't negate these feelings. It opens up something in me that says, Okay. And we're still here. Thank you tree for providing this beautiful shadow and all this beauty that I got to walk by every morning. And now you're not there. I thank you for that. And when I, when I focus on gratitude, I feel bigger, you could say I feel like Okay, today is okay, I can actually be grateful that I'm breathing. I'm grateful for the sky, I'm grateful for the body that's moving, I'm grateful to be here. So there's a, there's an opening that happens. When you think about specific leadership challenges that we may face, like we may get in this, this is the time of year that many companies get their survey results in terms of how their employees are feeling. And sometimes you get good results. And sometimes you get less positive results. Or it's a time of year where we're ready at the end of year where a lot of things have to be done in this like this, this kind of like almost stress, like I need to push through this. And in that stress, you could say our perspective becomes smaller. Oh, are the results, okay? Am I getting the right results. And when I look at these results, whatever they are, even if they're not what I want them to be with gratitude, this, notice what happens when you look at what think about something in your life that you may not like that's happening that's challenging for you. Notice what happens for you, when you you choose to bring an attitude of gratitude to it. I find when I do that, that it opens me up to perspective, a sense of our curiosity. And suddenly, it's not so much anymore about little me little hook that has a specific idea of how things should be. When I teach about connected leadership, one of the topics we often look at is our attachments. And how they get in the way of us actually being connected to ourselves to each other, and to this moment. And you could say gratitude is a way a great way to loosen our attachments and to become open to what actually is important to us, as opposed to the attachment. Think about any challenge you're facing a challenge that I'm facing today is that I have worked with the client. And they are changing the scope of the engagement with me, actually, they're thinking about bringing in another facilitator alongside with me to work with a team. And my reptilian brain, which is fear based, which has an attachment, you could say on what should happen is not happy about this. And when I can map my attachments to make sure that they don't have much hold on me. So I have attachments in three areas on the eye, the Wii and the eighth dimension. And we can always look at their attachments and basically miss anything in life from those three dimensions, the iwi. And yet, so on the eighth dimension, I have an attachment to it being successful through my



methods to team development through my methods to what I do. And even there's a financial component to this. Like, if I do this by myself, I make more money, I think, right? That's so I don't do something about musica that sounds like a crass but that's part of what happens in the mind. So just think about the challenge you're having and think about the attachment that you have with this challenge and what the impact of that is. That's it detachment. So there's something like that said says it this, this should not be happening. I should do this by myself, I should apply my own methods. And I should get all the money in this other professor should not be part of it. By the way, I'm not a professor to Professor as being included in this, this team journey. And then the second on the way dimension. I have an attachment to me having this special relationship with the team where people can see me and it's becoming about me and the team. It's an attachment you could say. And then on the i dimension, there's this attachment to me being the best and the person that provides the answer. So all of these are attachments you could say and and this notice what happens when I'm in the in the claw of these attachments. There's very room for space. There's no gratitude. So A way to work with this is to notice what these attachments do. To my sense of well being, to my relationship with others, and to my effectiveness, again, the I we need. So, the more attached I am to how things should be, the less happy I am, the less, I'm actually focusing on being connected to what I actually value. The more, the less, the more attached I am, the less connected I am to other people. Because it's about me, it's not about what they actually need, my empathy goes down when I'm attached. And when I'm attached, my effectiveness also goes down, because I can only see my little picture of how things should be my expectation, as opposed to opening up to what's here. So you could say, that's the bad news. So as you're listening to this, just do a little map of your what your attachments might be, and how they get in the way of you feeling connected to yourself, your well being to the other your relationships the way and to the other is notice what happens, notice what happens, when we get really into the expectations of how things should be, I should do this, or I should be like this, they should be like this. And it should happen like that. You might find that they should start are very familiar, they're very familiar. And as we will explore in a moment, they have often history and us we can actually make make a history, we make a map of it, we're how they how they've come to be. But before we do that, because that may be a lot of work, we can make it much simpler, and say, Ah, we have these attachments, right? We notice that what instead of choosing to give into my attachment, I choose simply choose gratitude. Simply choose gratitude. Unconditional gratitude, doesn't mean I'm grateful that things are happening the way they should because they're not. Not entirely at least. But at least I'm when I say I'm choosing being unconditionally grateful, it means that I choose to be grateful, no matter what, no matter what's happening. So when I choose to be unconditionally grateful, thinking about this challenge that I just shared. First of all, it puts me back in my seat, it's like the attachment is like hot and like Earth like that. I'm gonna grab it right that right? It's, it's uncomfortable. I actually don't like who I become, actually, when I become grateful. The first thing that happens is for me, I I take a step back, right, I literally back in my seat. I like myself a bit more I start to appreciate something that might be more true about this, then what my little superficial mind made up about this situation. Like, I look beyond the little pictures of my expectations. And I look into what's actually really true about this. So here, you could say I am invited into a collaboration with somebody that I don't know. Hmm. This other person has probably so much to offer, not probably look at my brilliant brain probably I doubt it has a lot to offer, of course.



And it's interesting that this work that I do we call connected teamwork. Well, I get to practice that with anyone. So when I become unconditionally grateful, my perspective opens and I start to see more truth about the situation. My anxiety decreases, because notice that when I'm attached to something part of my mental resources are going to be motivated to making that happen at all cost probably in some part of the mind. And so I can release it I can relax that. Now what happens with the sense of sort on the eye a filmer will blacks on the we dimension. I feel curious about the other people my my gay soft once I become empathetic to the other person, I'm sure the other person may have some similar anxieties that I might have about them about me, they don't know me. Like, so like, think about how you feel when you open the door, you know, somebody knocks on your door, you don't know them. At least 2023. It used to be like when I was a child and looked forward to it, like who was that. But these days, there's, at least for me, there's often a little bit of fear, because that is that safe, is that safe, the other person may have something similar to me going on. And then on the eighth dimension. When I open up to grace, and gratitude, I see that together, we're probably going to be a lot more effective to serve this team, because in this team, there are many people. And these many people have different preferences. And they may like different learning styles and different ways of learning. And this other person might bring some of that, and I might bring some of that. So it's not all like me having to do this by myself. So I'm very grateful for this power of gratitude that has been passed on to us through generations. The power that says, gratitude, unlocks the fullness of life, it helps me to see everything as enough and more stranger becomes a friend house becomes a home problem becomes an opportunity becomes an invitation. So it's interesting how gratitude, the simple act of choosing to be grateful, is such a powerful leadership orientation to connect us more to what is needed now connects us to well being it helps us to be empathetic, it helps to give us perspective, it helps to us to be more of service. Right? And when I think take a step back and say, why is that? Well, what I'm not grateful. I'm probably attached to something. And the attachment has more to do with me, with my small world, what I think should be happening, as opposed to the larger perspective I can do when I'm grateful, I open up to a much larger perspective of what's going on. I think about the holidays. Holidays, can be a beautiful time of togetherness and celebration, and maybe some quiet time to take stock of the year and contemplation and getting closer to what's important to us enjoying things. They can also be a really hard time. And I think that the holidays become hard when and difficult. When we become attached to some picture we have of what should happen, like the family should just suddenly work perfectly. We should all get along. The house should be perfect. The meal should be perfect. You should certainly say certain something to me that had been waiting for you to say to me for years. We should have a really wonderful time playing should plot go on time. We should see each other on Christmas Day or whatever we have all of these expectations that create so much stress. That's why I think so many people are exhausted after the holidays, because it's been like the rat race to fulfill expectations. So what would it be like if we went into the holidays, more with an attitude of unconditional gratitude, which is not something to practice only for the holidays, but something that we can practice all the time to say I am going to be unconditional, granted, grateful, whatever is happening, which doesn't mean that I agree with all that I'm not going to stand for things that I'm going to accept things that are unacceptable. But even when things are happening that are not acceptable to me, I can still be choosing an attitude of gratitude. So let's think about that for a second. We may see around us in the world. Definitely I find



that a lot of things that are happening that are very hard, atrocious Think about the last few years with Ukraine and now with Israel and Gaza in this, just some of the things that are headlines. And I know there's many things that don't even make our radar screen of consciousness. But there's so much going on in the world, there's so much violence in this world, humans in 2023, in his last 100 years seem to have become more violent, rather than less. But I don't know whether that's true. That's just my mind making stuff up. So this let's delete that sentence. Delete that. I'm grateful I get to delete sentences after I said this, it's called making amends. Like, I'm sorry, I said that, I don't know that. But in 2023, in November of 2023, it seems to me there's a lot of islands. My husband is African American. I witness every day micro and bigger violence towards him simply because of his race. I experience violence towards myself, simply because I'm gay, and I have a committed gay relationship. So how could choose unconditional gratitude? What happens when I do that, it doesn't mean that I then simply become a wind vane and accept the unacceptable. But it means that I'm choosing to accept the situation for what it is right now. And I choose to find what I can be grateful for, which in this case, is peel it all back. Simple act that I can be aware of this and that I am alive, and that I get to bring awareness and compassion to it. So when I really peel it down, that's the beautiful thing about challenges they bring us to, like they peel us down to the most essential layers, like even if everything around me goes haywire. What can I be grateful for? Well, that I get to bring to it. What's most important to me, which for me is truth, love and service. So when things really like real, real big challenge I get to be grateful for because it is an invitation for me to wake up more deeply to what I can truly bring to not only this situation that's challenging, but also to any other situation in my life. You may have heard of an Austrian psychologist who wrote a book called Man's Search for Meaning Viktor Frankl. And he wrote that, after having been in concentration camps for poor concentration camps for a long time in the Second World War, he wrote that you can take everything from a human being with one thing, the last of the human freedoms, to choose one's attitude to choose, like, the energy that we bring to this or another way to think about this is that between stimulus and response lies the freedom to choose. That's an odd way to paraphrase him. And what I'm grateful for when I'm in the fire of challenge is that there is this space. I'm grateful for the space in me to choose to bring to it what I am. And when I look at a little bit deeper than that, I'm grateful that it brings me face to face to what I truly find most important. Everybody gets suffering in their lives. You have had your part you've had your your your your things. I have had my things happen in my life. That that weren't healthy, that weren't nourishing. And when I choose unconditional gratitude for to that for that it's not like I wish those that anybody else or I'm happy that they happen. No, it's not like that. But I choose to open to it so that I can become I can find in it. What actually is most important to me, and what's most important to me is to become more and more truthful to who I am and what I can bring to the situation. So maybe that resonates with you to sit with that, if you like, what happens when I bring an attitude of unconditional gratitude to anything that happens in my life, not as a dogma, but as a as discovery like going on a hike or playing a computer game you like, or watching a Netflix series that you really like, or something that you like, I really want to explore this sense of, of gratitude, and then extend that to others and say, okay, even though you may not, give me what I think you should give me, in other words, my attachment is on, I'm choosing to be grateful for you, which isn't gratitude, I think, is an element of love. And what I can always be grateful for, is that the other person is here, whatever they're doing, and



maybe I can be grateful that the other person is giving me an opportunity to practice compassion, or to and to become more real about what I truly value. Like, just like, I can be grateful to a very deep, not the heavy weight in the gym. Like, if my attachment is it's going to be easy. I'm going to be like, resentful to this weight. But if I see it as an opportunity to see to find out more of my power, and I practice unconditional gratitude towards the weights in the gym. I see them as friends that are here to help me to stand more in my in my true power. So I invite you to think about this in the in this upcoming holiday season, if you like maybe you find helpful if you don't leave it okay, that's okay. But what can I be unconditionally grateful? For very simple question. And allow yourself to move from not be in a discussion, let's not like, make a spreadsheet of it. This not like profit and loss statement that's working doesn't know. But go deeper, go deeper in into yourself, it can save you can go deeper into heart, whatever metaphor works for you go deeper into what's really important to me. Like, if and if I don't know how to be unconditional, great credit, great grateful. Maybe the step before could be what happens if I accept more or what's happening today. And I resist less of what's happening when I let go of my attachment of the shirt that I have in my brain of what should happen. So explore that, that possibility, explore that possibility. I hope you and I hope you enjoy that. So we've been talking about unconditional gratitude. We're gonna take a short break. And then after the break, I am grateful that I get to have a conversation with my colleague ribcage about these practices of unconditional gratitude. And I'm also curious to hear from him, what his experience with gratitude is and how that helps him. See you after the break.

28:40

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**Hylke Faber** 29:05

So welcome back to roots and unwavering we're talking about unconditional gratitude and Rick, not to be tongue in cheek, I'm going to say I'm very grateful for you and grateful that you are here today. With me. Rick is a very experienced facilitator and leader who works in a human workplace and growth Leaders Network is a grandfather of six. Is that right? Yes. Six. I think it's probably and counting and many other things. And besides that also a dear friend So, Rick, welcome. Yeah, so any thoughts from you about unconditional gratitude that you want to start off with today?

**Rick Gage** 29:51

Well, I really, really enjoyed what you shared, shared. How can I guess maybe I'll start by reflecting that this is an unconventional way of thinking about granite. To say that most of what we do in gratitude practices is try to notice the things we like about what's going on in the world. And we equate gratitude with what I'm happy about. So it is conditional gratitude, almost by definition, that's what we do. And and I think it's its own useful practice. It's a counterbalance for the brains wiring to find the negative, our brains are wired for survival. And we survived by noticing the things that could hurt us more than



noticing the things that could help us. And so we, you know, our brains work that way, we see that we see all the negative things, and it's a useful practice, to train our brains to notice the things that maybe we were overlooking. But you've been called us into something, I think, much deeper here, that I think is really quite profound. And I think just sitting for a few more minutes with the idea of unconditional gratitude, no matter the condition, gratitude, because my mind quickly begins to imagine conditions in which I don't think I can be grateful in that condition. And I can think of some, some personally, you know, there have been losses in grief. And there are times when I don't know if I can get to gratitude. I appreciate it. Just before the break, what you talked about was maybe I can't get to unconditional gratitude. But can I choose to be more open? Can I choose to resist less happening right now, I think that's a beautiful opening. And I'd love for us maybe both to share a challenging time, when we were able to find some kind of opening to gratitude, you shared one with this with situation with your with your work colleague. But I would invite us each maybe to share another example. And I'll share as I've shared in this in this group, a time or two before, one of the big challenges in my life has been the passing of my wife. And I would have to say that for the first year, I don't know that I got to gratitude. I could get to some acceptance, I could get to I'm so grateful that she was here. I'm grateful that my missing her points to what we had together. I've only begun in the last year, and I have about 14 months now. 15 months since her passing, I can only now begin to get a little bit of a glimmer, to maybe in the arc of my life, having her end losing her was a part of what I needed to become who I meant to be. That's a hard thing to get to, though, because that says like I'm okay. With her passing and at some level. I'm not okay with that. I wanted to still be here. Yeah, I imagine that there are people in trauma in, in, in many kinds of situations, we're being able to get to being grateful for this situation that I'm in, I don't see how I can get there was a time when that's been challenging for you.

**Hylke Faber 33:05**

So I'm going to share that. And I also want to respond to this. We're talking about a word gratitude, right. And it has a lot of baggage and connotation. And, to me words are pointers. And we have to develop, we have to do we don't have to, we are invited to develop our own relationship with words. Because if we take the conditioned understanding of the word, we're invariably going to be confused because we take on all the confusion of the people around us. Right? So if gratitude is I'm grateful that I'm not so wet. So so so it's such a terrible shape as you are like I hear this a lot and I'm grateful I don't live in this war zone. Hmm. Interesting, right. It immediately creates separation. And it's understandable because of course, I prefer and we've honest, I prefer I have preferences to live for example, this summer in Phoenix was brutally hot. I would have preferred if we had a really good monsoon, which we tend to have with a lot of rain if we didn't have I would prefer that. And now I'm grateful that it rains last night, right? It's I have that's that's a level of gratitude. What I'm talking about is real reconceiving of the word grateful as graceful. Like being able to see that but getting to to what's really important here. Not this the things that we are taught are important, which invariably have to do with control, attachment, keeping things The way they are and living ever, ever happily ever after. And we all know that's not going to work, you and I are going to not going to be here in 100 years are going to be dead. Let's just face that everybody listening is going to be dead. But a lot of the companies that are existing right now we're not going to be existing. Some of them will, maybe, I don't know. So when I think about



unconditional gratitude, it is committing to what's most important to me, opening up to the grace of what is here. Even if it's fierce grace, that's what I'm that's what I'm trying to point to. So, and I love that your story that you said that this is this experience with your wife passing as brought you back more to what's real about Rick, even though it's hard, right. And so my my, I'll share an experience, it's interesting that we're having this conversation in the context of a business context, and I am going to share also a personal example. Because I think it it shows more clearly what we're talking about here. The reason one of the reasons I talk about attachments, because it's I've got a PhD in attachments, and it's partly rooted in my growing up Rick where I felt I needed to attach to things to be safe. That has led to really difficult relationships, especially personally romantically, I became very codependent, you could say very attached to how and other make another person in charge of my happiness, like a you should be here. Not only you should be alive, that was not enough, you should smile when I say you should smile, you should do what you you would I think you should do when I say you should do that, you know, you should eat what I added, like a long long list of shoots. And as long as soon as that doesn't happen, I go into action. So that's the context with which the example that I want to share. I'm been married for two years. And I've been together with my husband now for eight years. And that's been a beautiful and also very challenging experience. So in 2019 we had lived together in Seattle for a year. And I did something that was very codependent. And my husband responded with I don't think I can live with you right now. I need to leave. It was Christmas 2019. And I'm so grateful that I had enough training by the time that I didn't go into why you're doing this to me. Poor me, bad you and I got to like get the whole universe together to get this fixed. I didn't do that. I chose unconditional gratitude. And on Christmas Day, it wasn't like I could really feel it. But there was a quiet in me that I never felt before. A sense of ease in myself that there is a less I could hear that the deeper intuition saying there's a lesson here for Hill cuilcagh Don't miss it. Don't miss it this time. Listen. And I'm very grateful for him. Leaving at that time, very grateful. Because it showed me something about the value of to grace through being centered, truly being rooted in what's most important which to me is something about being unconditionally loving. And unconditionally grateful to me is like a derivative of that. And being centered in it in a piece that is goes beyond conditions. And that has helped me so much as a coach as facilitator and as a leader because now when I'm in a room with people and things are not going the way I want them to I can still feel the familiar thought of like ah, I gotta fix this. I have got to fix this now. But there's a memory now in me that's online. It's Is that true and then life becomes a lot simpler. Because as I am not thrown not more dust getting involved in the drama, like I'm able to stand back, I'm able to watch, I'm able to, and then I'm able to say or not say what needs to be said, as opposed to what I say I need to be saved for my attachment, I can speak not from my attachment. But from a place of compassion from a place of true integrity through service, not what I think should happen. Thank you for asking that.

**Rick Gage** 40:32

I think what you shared is so powerful, how can what you described and that that sticks with me as there's that that little sense of quiet that you felt on that Christmas, it isn't yet that I can choose gratitude in some in some and feel it's in some full way. But I can feel that like the seed of that choice, I can feel the I can feel the the little pause in that, that, that Viktor Frankl talks about that, there's this, you can





see that that piece in there. Because it when you started, you talked about how I want to choose gratitude in every situation. Ah, sometimes I don't feel like I can choose it. But that opening that space of I can open a little bit to what might be here for me to learn, I can let go a little bit of my expectations of what I have to be true. I can remember in the, in the two year cancer journey that I had with with my wife, a part of that journey was accepting that she might stay and she might not stay. And and really recognizing that I have no control over that. And I have to let happen, what will happen. And so there's a YouTube just talked about its attachments, I think that's so powerful. I had to let go of my attachment to her staying. Yes, the source of my happiness. Yes. And she's really hard on that with me. Very wise woman, you can't be attached to my saying, that won't work, you're gonna be okay either way. And you need to stay grounded in that, that you're going to be okay either way. So that letting go a little bit of my attachment letting go a little bit of my assumption about how this should be or must be for me to be okay. Is sometimes where we can start a maybe that's all we can get to, in the most difficult moment is that little seed of opening that little little quiet, that can that can make space for more to come.

**Hylke Faber 42:40**

And who knows. Right? And who knows, when I when I sent is in my, the coach that I work with every Saturday at 8:30am always asked me on a scale from one to 10 How much are you choosing unconditional love? Or how much are you choosing unconditional gratitude? Right that. And no matter how hard it is, I may not feel it. Gratitude is not a feeling. It is a choice. It's a choice that I make in terms of how I show up even if I feel really challenged. And I have never I can tell anybody what to feel or how to be and I love what you said Rick about, like the gentleness that you invite with this and you know, maybe all I we can get to this is I love that. Like, I love that saying like, what if I chose just a little bit more gratitude. Just a little bit more, a chose a little bit more opening to This Just allow it to happen. And then life can do the rest. You know, we don't have to even figure out what that means.

**Rick Gage 43:56**

Love your equating gratitude and grace. I think that's really powerful. It's like I want there to be a word grace attitude. That there is this this because we think of grace almost as a skill. I want to have enough skill to be graceful. Right? If I'm a really good dancer, then I'll be a graceful dancer, that it's a real thing. And I think tying that in with gratitude is recognizing that grace is at its core, an attitude thing. Yeah, that it is this this unlocking of in disconnecting the attachments that allows grace to blossom?

**Hylke Faber 44:34**

Yes, and grace is not mine. The only thing my relationship with Grace is it's my job to get out of the way off it so and what the I that needs to get out of the way is the mini me with the shoulds like oh, this should not happen this you should do that. It's Thanksgiving all everybody should arrive at whatever you know Everybody needs to like turkey. Everybody should be vegetarian, I don't know, whatever my mind, the house should be nice and clean. I've got 10 People coming to visit and stay with us. Everybody should put the shoes in the garage, you know, things like that. But when I doesn't mean that I'm not going to exert myself, like, I'm going to be intentional, but I'm going to do that in a space of gratitude where I say, Okay, I'm going to open up to what's here. And really listen. And then to make



the grace is it's, it's, it's only directional grace, it comes from what I consider me. Like, I become more quiet and peaceful, which to me is huge grace, cuz that's hard to come by for me like the serenity My goodness, yes. Like, I sobered up from my attachment. Love that. I also receive the grace of my surroundings, I see that I get to experience the beauty of what's happening here, all these people or whatever is going on, or nobody like that could be the quiet of the day, right. And I also see how life moves. The insights come, right, I could have never, I grew up in a farm in the north of the Netherlands. I could have never in a million years have designed that I'm going to sit here on a podcast in November of 2023. Sitting with my friend from Seattle, Rick, ah, biggest, hardest man that I know, speaking from my home office in Phoenix being married to an African American man doing coach, I mean, it's, it's insane, right? That's a lot of grace, a lot of grace. And it's not in the big moments, it's always

**Rick Gage 47:08**

I love the focus of this as a as a tool in the context of the holidays, because there's so much pressure and challenge. In the holidays, I was with a group last night where we use the process called a TRIZ. To imagine how we could guarantee the worst holiday experience possible. And we strategize, just brainstorm all the crazy things that we could do that would make the holidays just absolutely certain to be horrible. And the powerful thing about this tool, of course, is you do all that work. And then you stare at the things that you have there and you say, one of those things am I actually doing in some way. And you discover it's really a way of discovering your attachments. It's a way of discovering the things that you're that you're holding on to the shoulds that you're holding on to the ways in which you are not unconditional, in how you're approaching something like the holidays, was really a powerful little way to unlock some clues for I think all of us that were participating. What are some of the things we do that make the holidays so much harder than they have to be? Yes,

**Hylke Faber 48:14**

I love that. And and what what are some things that we're doing that make the holiday so much harder, that make work so much harder, that make relationships so much harder, that make our life so much harder. And, and not from a place of, oh, I'm doing this bad, though, it's more like, Oh, I am grateful, right. And this is one of the highlight just a quick other dimension on this. I'm also grateful for my own confusion. Because if I see if I believe that I'm a finite person that dies at whatever age, and that's the end separate. That's horrible. I now need to make sure that I am totally perfect and cleaned up and bla bla bla, but the time I'm dropping dead, that's horrible. It's no fun and that but if I get to see more like of the reality of the situation, which is that we're all connected that I'm not you can put this in so many different ways but right, there's this life that has a name called Hulk and there's a rib cage over there and I read it and there's like your your wife see her her lessons. Pass on leave like live on right so even even at that level we can already appreciate be grateful. I'm gonna be grateful my confusion because these are lessons for me to be less confused and maybe I pass some of that on and maybe one person in the next generation We'll do something a little different that may make a difference. So that that makes that that that that vantage points helps me to stay grateful for to discover more about my how I create mess because it's if it's not fertilized for me at least this will be my this my awareness of that might become fertilizer for somebody else.



**Rick Gage 50:31**

I think your your gratitude for your confusion is a beautiful example of, of how we can see what's underneath. So I wouldn't be confused if there wasn't a part of me that sought clarity. Right? It would be a non experience, right? Yes, there are dissonant things. But I don't care. Something in you cares that there are dissonant things that you're experiencing and finds that confusing, has an uncomfortable experience with that unclarity. And that's super helpful in in helping you find your way to something that is more clear. Yes, and is more peaceful and is more integrated, and whole and real and true. So confusion is a beautiful gift. But initially, we'd have to say that my experience of confusion is unpleasant. I don't like this expert experience, I also don't want to not have that experience, right? It's a little bit of my relationship with my missing, right. So my missing of my wife is a pointer to the deep love that we had. And so even as I'm feeling the missing of her, I'm already beginning to feel the other side of that coin. Even as I'm feeling the confusion, I'm feeling the clarity, that's on the other side of that coin, even as I'm feeling the sadness, I'm feeling the joy that's on the other side.

**Hylke Faber 51:57**

Yeah, I love that. So, for me, that the, the to unconditional gratitude is simply a tool. It's not the only tool, there's many tools to become more connected, and to what's important, and to me, that's the core of it to get to use gratitude, as an as an approach to be restored. And to be renewed, and to be redeemed into what we actually are about. Which if I look at the evolution of humans, you know, we're our survival mechanisms are so strong, and they have a role. And yet they can distract us from our being being aware of that, which includes the survival mechanisms, but which is bigger than that. Right? It it, it can be open to a perspective that's greater that allows us to feel connected to what cannot be said. The same coach that I work with all the time, always gives me this one sentence on the Dow which I love. And you know, I know you know this, this one because I've shared with you many times brick is knowing constancy is insight. Not knowing constancy leads to disaster. And I love that sentence. Because for me, I'm I'm re translating this, because knowing feels very like static. And God I don't. For me, it's like discovering constancy. discovering what's true about me always, when whatever you call that your values, your peace, your love. And even those words, get new meanings as we as we mature is inside. Forgetting about those things that are not that are not constant, that come and go our attachments or expectations are our results the people in our lives that we love, our health, our feelings, pretty much anything that we can experience changes. And if we hang our hat on that, it's a rough ride. That's disaster. That's attachment. Insight. Its meaning seeing inside is grace because we see that we're actually okay.

**Rick Gage 54:56**

A lot that example and what I'm hearing in gratitude is I'm going for both sides of that equation, I'm grateful for what constancy leads to, I'm grateful for what not constancy leads to. Yes, because both those things helped me stay on the right path helped me learn and grow. It's great.

**Hylke Faber 55:21**



Final thoughts from you, Rick, the hours flown by what? What would you like to say by way of closing today?

**Rick Gage** 55:28

I love this deepening view of gratitude. I think there's something really, really powerful here. And I'm drawn back to the to the poem you shared, I'm wondering if maybe you would share that, as a bit of a bit of our closing, you get a poem about, about how gratitude unlocks?

**Hylke Faber** 55:47

Yes, yes, I will. I will share that. So gratitude unlocks the fullness of life, it unlocks everything, into enough and more, it makes a stranger into a friend, a house into a home, probably to an invitation. And it continues, I will post his poem, but with the podcast. My closing reflection is I'm grateful that I got to spend time with you, Rick, and with everybody who's listening now and later in this contemplation of, of gratitude, which is something that's given to us for many generations. And not as a dogma, but as an invitation to just say, Oh, that would be a really beautiful walk to take the walk of gratitude. So thank you all for listening. We've been doing root and unwavering. This was episode 34. We talked about unconditional gratitude. Next time, we will he'll be here with Jill Meyers, who was a leader in the aerospace and other industries. Very beautiful, independent and heartfelt leader and thinker. And also, at some point, we will have the podcast with Patti Obermeyer, a senior leader from Microsoft. And if you're listening, Patti, I hope you're feeling better. And to everybody's listening, I hope you learn something, or maybe you touch something today that connects you more deeply to what you truly value and you get to enjoy that in yourself and everyone around you. You've been listening to rather than wavering. And also if you want to connect to this podcast, you can find us on Apple and Spotify and other places and also on LinkedIn. And you've been listening through it and unwavering where we help leaders connect more deeply to their innate potential. I'm your host Hilco Faber.

**Presenter** 58:12

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