

Decoding Disruptors: Leaders Navigating the Unfolding, Unpredictable Unknown

Marc Randolph:

There is nothing like seeing 100% of your revenue disappear in a single week to focus your mind on the fact that you may have to do things a little bit differently in the future.

Jan Singer:

I've been working harder than I've been working out of the office, planning for a business that's closed. I am creating items people may not ever want

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**for a consumer who might not be
here.**

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Jim DiMatteo:

Never before in my life has something happened that's affected every human being I know.

Nancy Lublin:

We think that this mental health echo is going to last a long time.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

We are in a unique moment in world's history, from the devastating loss of life, to the financial fallout, the closing

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of borders, businesses, industries and schools. We are collectively confronted by a reality few of us could have ever imagined. Decision making leans on past experiences and guiding principles. But how do leaders respond when there are no precedents to follow?

Jim DiMatteo:

As fighter pilots in the whole TOPGUN world, the way you get through the toughest times is as a team, not as an individual. In a

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scenario like this virus, well, my wing men are my family, my wife and my children. My coworkers, my neighbors, my friends, they're my wing men in this dog fight.

Jan Singer:

The more transparent I am with the relationships I have, the more at peace I can be with the decisions I make.

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Nancy Lublin:

I believe that no decision is worse than making the wrong decision. I'm okay with failure. That's when I learn. That's when people around me learn. I think it's worse not to try.

Cindy Eckert:

You've got to make a bet on the good, and I think that if you can surround yourself with others making that similar bet, you'd power through these situations.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

I had a series of conversations with friends inside our community to better understand the approach of those who effectively lead during moments of great stress and strain and uncertainty. Crisis reveals leadership. I wanted to distill insights about leadership while we're in the middle of this crisis, while it's raw. During crisis, leaders are called upon to rely on their preparation, to respond in the moment, and to reimagine the opportunity in a future

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that has not yet arrived. They have to do all of these at once with limited information with the well-being of others hanging in the balance. I'm honored to be doing this project in partnership with Microsoft and Compete to Create. I hope you appreciate the applied insights of these extraordinary leaders as much as I do.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

I want to share a bit of a backstory on my relationship with Microsoft. For

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the past eight years, Compete to Create and I, we've had the privilege of working with them, beginning with their CEO, Satya Nadella, and his executive team, and then an additional 30,000 people across the company. Microsoft, they have radically transformed under Satya's leadership, with his emphasis on building a culture around mindset, inclusion and diversity to empower every person in every organization on the planet to achieve more. Microsoft thrives on diverse voices, and they engage their employees and

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consumers' experiences and different points of view to inform them, to challenge and stretch the company's thinking. It is at the center of how they innovate. So it's no surprise that Microsoft wanted to partner with us to capture the voices and insights of a wide spectrum of leaders on leadership. This organization, they truly care about people and the psychological skills that they need to flourish. So I am incredibly honored and excited to partner with Microsoft in bringing this podcast to life.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

Jan Singer is the CEO of J. Crew. She was previously the CEO of Victoria's Secret Lingerie Company, and before that the CEO of Spanx, Sara Blakely's iconic apparel company. Jan and I first met when she was a VP at Nike, and the clarity of her thinking and the quality of her emotional intelligence is remarkable. Jan started at J. Crew in February of 2020. Six weeks later J. Crew closed all of their stores and factory to support our national effort to social

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distance. Twelve weeks after starting, the company is preparing to file for bankruptcy, one of several large retail chains who are feeling the tremendous pressure of this pandemic. Against that backdrop, Jan agreed to come on Finding Mastery because, well, that's who she is. She immediately talked about the silver lining inside of this crisis.

Jan Singer:

Well, this is going to sound really odd, but it's pretty energizing on

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some level for me. I didn't expect that. I don't know if that's because I went into this role ... It's day 71 for me in this role, day 71. I went into the role knowing that change needed to happen and transformation, so that was good. I was most concerned about how as a leader I was going to come in and take this team who's been through a bit of a rollercoaster on that journey, not that COVID or any of the health and wellness of the citizens is energizing at all. But it was a call to action on so many levels, and that's energizing to me. So it hit

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me sideways that I didn't expect to have that response. I have a heightened sense of concern for the humanity of it. My team, we lost somebody. It's terrible, my parents, all of that. But I like change, and I like innovation, and I like forward motion, and it provides some level of purpose to help solve this problem. Retail is the number-one employer in this country, and I think it's predicated on the leadership of retail to keep it alive and keep people in the game of working, for the dignity of work, for the paycheck it provides, for some

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purpose of themselves. So there's an odd part of it for me that I found odd to be energized about it.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

Can we go upstream for just a moment and better understand your purpose, like your life purpose, if we could be so bold? We could also thin slice it and talk about your purpose during this phase of life, this pandemic. But if we go upstream to life purpose, how do you articulate that?

Jan Singer:

It's a huge question. It's always evolving. I don't think there's one answer. In this moment I feel like it's to provide. I don't know if that's as a mom, as a woman, as a leader, as a person who is tall in stature. It's always been a bit of you will take care of me. You will provide. So I think that's what it comes down to is I've always wanted to be able to do that, and whatever that looks like, provide support or relief or an

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answer or a hope or a dream or
sometimes just lunch.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

How tall are you, Jan?

Jan Singer:

5'10".

Dr. Michael Gervais:

There you go, so there's the stature
piece in there. So in your
preparation, you've met crises before.
You've met adversity. You've met real

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pressure, consequences. You know uncertainty, right? So this is different. It's heightened because we're all in it together, and there's some pushback on that phrase, that we're in it together. I've seen some stuff online that people are becoming nauseated with that thought. I find it invigorating. I find this idea that we're flying in formation globally to be so rare that it's so stimulating. But I do want to understand how have you and how do you prepare ... Psychologically, mentally, how do you prepare for this

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level of uncertainty or challenging times?

Jan Singer:

I try to ... I love human behavior, so I obsess kind of .. how people are behaving in this mom- ... How were they behaving? What do I think they will do? What is this moment doing? I really take in the curiosity I have about how people behave, and I find energy in that. It's curious to me how families behave, how couples behave. When I walk, and I walk a lot, I see

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siblings behaving differently in the yard because they can't get out. I kind of bear witness to human behavior. That provides energy, but it also provides inspiration. I think about what in this moment will be things that I will want to think about as they relate to my family, my life, the business, how people will, in my world, wear clothes, buy clothes, want to shop. What about the behavior is going to have long-term sustainable effects on the proposition and therefore the economy and therefore us as a globe?

Jan Singer:

So I get pretty in my head about that, and as a leader it manifests into what I hope is a very simple path forward. It's complicated. There's a lot of stuff coming. I think, as a leader, my job is to synthesize that and develop a very clear vision forward with probably 60% of the data and to be able to take that into a philosophy and therefore a strategy or a hypothesis and therefore a strategy that helps people get out of afraid and stuck and get moving as a group to next.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

Marc Randolph has a similar orientation to find the silver lining. Marc is a veteran to Silicon Valley as an entrepreneur, advisor, investor. As cofounder and founding CEO of Netflix, he laid much of the groundwork for a service that's grown to 150 million subscribers and, more importantly, has fundamentally altered how the world experiences media.

Marc Randolph:

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I am absolutely a silver lining guy. I've always been the person, when I'm hunkered down in some horrible situation, maybe it's in the mountains, and just saying, ah, this is fantastic. It is raging outside, but I'm in my sleeping bag. I'm warm and dry. Peace is here. I do see silver linings everywhere. I mean, I'm home right now. I have my family with me, all three of my kids and a girlfriend. There's six adults in the house. Every dinner is like Thanksgiving dinner. Even though there's terrible things going on, including in a lot of the

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businesses I'm involved in, I go, this part is wonderful. I'm traveling so much less, and then I'm going, I really like this. How do I preserve this in the future? I've been given this gift of being shown what my life can be like, and I have control of that. How do I hold on to that? From where I'm sitting [inaudible 00:11:46] I can see the ocean, and I can't see the ocean all the time. I'm going, wow, how can we as a world recognize we're getting a glimpse of what the future could look like in terms of air quality if we

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really want it to be? I see those as great things to take away from this.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

So you are a disruptive creator. So you saw Netflix and a version of it, early days, and then it turned into something incredibly powerful. If you think about the future ... And let's do a 36-month future ... from a business standpoint, what are you seeing?

Marc Randolph:

Business disruption, in some ways, is like erosion in that 95% of it takes place about 1% of the time. There's nothing like seeing 100% of your revenue disappear in a single week to focus your mind on the fact that you may have to do things a little bit differently in the future. I think we're going to see a lot of businesses reevaluating themselves. Certainly in the category that I'm perhaps more fluent in, which is the entertainment and the streaming business, we're

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seeing a whole transformation in how people watch television and how they watch movies and realizing this works really well. We're seeing ... The fact that you and I are conducting this discussion virtually, we're all kind of realizing this works really well. I think that we're going to see a lot of the things that are being forced to happen stay with us. I think companies are going to be required to break free of these old models.

Marc Randolph:

Listen, I'm sorry, I'm jumping into something as it came into my mind right now. There's a silver lining in the layoffs that are taking place. They're tragic, and people losing their jobs and people's businesses shrinking. But a lot of people realized, I have to restructure, but it's so hard. I have all these people, and they're all locked in their positions. When all of a sudden your business shrinks to a third of the size it was before the crisis, it gives you an

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opportunity to rethink how you want it to look going forward. So I think we're going to see things tremendously different 18 months, 36 months from now.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

I checked in Nancy Lublin, the cofounder and CEO of Crisis Text Line. It's the nation's first free 24 by 7 text line for people in crisis. At age 23 she launched Dress for Success, and that was a global entity that provides interviews, suits and career

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development training to women in need. Then in 2003 she transformed DoSomething.org into one of the largest youth organizations in the world with more than 6 million members. She's a pioneer in using big data for social good and has detected a silver lining in the data during the pandemic. It's about connection.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

Describe your business from a machine learning standpoint, large

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data that you're making sense of, and then the applied insights that are coming from that.

Nancy Lublin:

Crisis Text Line is 24/7 mental health support at your fingertips. If it's a crisis to you, it's a crisis to us. You just text 741741 in the US or Canada. Then on the other side you're actually connected with three lines of support, so first an algorithm that looks at the messages and ranks the queue based on severity. So we

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take the most imminent risk cases first. That's very important. Then you're connected immediately after that with a trained empathetic crisis counselor, so somebody who's going to validate your pain and go through this with you, collaborative problem solving. There are supervisors who are watching all these conversations in real time, and they have a master's degree in a relevant field. They are the people who step in if they need to who sometimes have to make tough calls.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

So then let's double click. What are you learning right now about humans in North America that are independent?

Nancy Lublin:

So, gosh, we've been learning a lot for the last six weeks. So we've seen volume increase, not surprising, as people are feeling a lot of feels, and their regular routines have been disrupted. So the place that you [inaudible 00:16:20] turn to for help

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might not be available to you. So the first wave that we saw was anxiety. 78% of our conversations indicate anxiety, and most of that volume has mirrored where the virus itself is showing up. So the 15 states with the most COVID positive cases are the 15 states with the most anxiety, and it's people texting in about symptoms, worrying if they've got it, worried if their family members have it.

Nancy Lublin:

The second wave of volume has been related to the virus itself in that we've started to see some grief in the impact of the virus, but mostly it's been the impact of the quarantines. So it's life disrupted, people being trapped at home with abusive people, so an increase in sexual abuse and domestic violence, an increase in financial stress as their work has been disrupted. So we see a lot more people texting in worried about financial ruin, about homelessness,

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about paying bills, about being laid off. We think that the second wave, the impact of the economy, the disrupted economy, may last longer than the impact of the physical virus itself. So we think that this mental health echo is going to last a long time, and we're here for people.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

Then how has this impacted your family and your most important relationships that you have, both

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business and otherwise, your family
[crosstalk 00:17:54]

Nancy Lublin:

So, yeah, with my family I think ... And we're seeing this bear out in the data from Crisis Text Line. With my family, I think it's made my unit, my four-person unit, me, my husband and my two kids, closer because we are together all day long with no other people. I think we've seen in the data that people have really reached out for family, friends and pets. We're

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seeing that bear out too. So family ... I've been talking to my parents more than usual. The kids have been in touch with their grandparents more often and on FaceTime. I've been talking to my sister almost every day which is unusual for us. I've been reaching out to old friends, hearing from old friends. It's kind of nice, and I hope that never stops. We don't have a pet, but if we did, we'd be all over that pet right now. We see that in the data, and I'm experiencing that personally too, which it's kind of a funny thing to find that you see things

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in the data, and then you go, yeah, I'm just a cliché. I completely ... I am just like everybody else in America.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

In fact, we, all of us, are more alike than different. We breathe the same air. We walk the same planet. We share more than 99% of the same genome, and we also share the same basic dreams for our children, and yet we are each uniquely different. There is no one else in the world like you, like me, like Nancy. It's what

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makes humans so remarkable. In that light there is no one quite like Deepak Chopra. He is a renowned author and expert in mind-body healing. He removes the judgment from things that happen, and he looks at all of the moments, including this one, as an opportunity to make a better life for ourselves.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

Deepak, how has the current condition, the current crisis that we're under ... In any way has it knocked

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you sideways? Have you had any challenge that's come from this current condition?

Deepak Chopra:

Actually, no. I found this as an opportunity. I think it's a waste to not take advantage of an adversity for a better life for yourself and others [inaudible 00:20:13] have the time to reflect and, as I like to say, [inaudible 00:20:20] my body [inaudible 00:20:23]. I'm enjoying this period of whatever you want to call it,

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physically distancing, quarantine,
whatever. In fact I do take a week or
two of silence every year, so when
this quarantine started I did that
again. I took a week of silence.

[inaudible 00:20:45]

Dr. Michael Gervais:

You are very practiced. You're very
skilled at embracing uncertainty. I
would imagine you might even say
that's kind of the nature of all things,
right? It's an unfolding-

Deepak Chopra:

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It is, it is.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

... unpredictable-

Deepak Chopra:

One of my ... Yeah, it is. One of my favorite earlier books is Freedom From the Known by J. Krishnamurti. I realized that the uncertain, the unpredictable and the unknown is where we live, pretending all the time that it's predictable, known, but all that's predictable and known is the

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past. Anything henceforth is unpredictable. Embracing the wisdom of uncertainty is actually the doorway to creativity. If everything-

Dr. Michael Gervais:

[crosstalk 00:21:30]

Deepak Chopra:

... there's no creativity.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

Oh, brilliant. It's hard for people. It's a hard thing to embrace.

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Deepak Chopra:

It's programming.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

So when the programming is I need a job to feed my family and I need a job to be able to whatever, survive in this world, and now that that is uncertain from an economic standpoint, what would you hope for people? What would you want them to-

Deepak Chopra:

First of all, don't take anything for granted [inaudible 00:21:57] take their existence for granted. Second, be grateful. Third, this is the time to ask those questions, what am I? What do I want? What's my purpose? What am I grateful for? Fourth, put some love into action. Love without action is meaningless. Action without love is irrelevant. Love in action. However, through the internet, donate some money to a good cause. Right now a lot of people are suffering, maybe to

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a [inaudible 00:22:23] or to frontline workers, first responders, if you can. Otherwise [inaudible 00:22:32] listen to people. Tell them that you care about them. Show them your affection, your appreciation, your acceptance. Start to bond, physically, emotionally and spiritually, and at some point this should be over. Hopefully you'll come out stronger and saner, because right now everything we do is totally insane. We just call it normal.

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Dr. Michael Gervais:

Everything we do is insane, but we
call it normal.

Deepak Chopra:

[crosstalk 00:23:01]

Dr. Michael Gervais:

So this an opportunity-

Deepak Chopra:

Biological warfare, internet hacking,
cyber warfare, terrorism, war, eco

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destruction, extinction of species. We call it normal. It's the psychopathology of the average that we call normal. We get so bamboozled by it that this we take for granted. Now don't take anything for granted. Make a difference.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

How can you practice that, one simple practice? You just mentioned putting love in action.

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Deepak Chopra:

That's it.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

That's it, love in action.

Deepak Chopra:

[crosstalk 00:23:36] love in action,
whatever that means to you.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

Judson Althoff, one of the senior
leaders at Microsoft, he has an

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incredible ability to manage complex, interrelated and dynamic variables. At the same time he has the ability to connect from a place of empathy and compassion and curiosity. As the executive vice president of worldwide commercial business, he is tasked with massive responsibilities at Microsoft. Listen how he approaches life, relationships and uncertainty.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

How has this pandemic disrupted you personally in your life? Has it

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knocked you sideways in any way?
Have you felt energized by the real
challenge at hand?

Judson Althoff:

[crosstalk 00:24:23]

Dr. Michael Gervais:

How are you thinking and
experiencing?

Judson Althoff:

It's interesting. I mean, personally, it's
exhausting. I'll be honest with you.

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Work from home can translate into work always, pretty linearly. I talked to a CEO of one of our large customers the other day, and he said, "I can't tell whether I'm working from home or sleeping at work these days because it all just sort of blends." But I think, overall, Mike, what the global pandemic has taught us is that no business is 100% resilient. Even Microsoft, with the impact [inaudible 00:25:00] just shared our earnings last week and talked about much of the same. But what is true is that digital businesses

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and businesses that are somehow fortified with digital capability are going to be better off, whether it's AI-driven health bots to help diagnose people that feel like they may have COVID-related symptoms or to the NBA rethinking their season and the digital engagement and how they may connect with fans better in this day and age. Then, of course, the NFL draft being the first virtual one ever in history.

Judson Althoff:

Everybody's starting to think about now just how they navigate now, but frankly how they plan for the comeback and shape the new normal. So in many ways that aspect of work has actually been pretty inspiring in these times. The number of customers you talk to, even in super distressed industries like travel, transportation and entertainment, that are asking how do they play for the comeback because

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they know there will be one. It's super inspiring and great to see.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

So you're a leader in one of the most significant high-tech companies on the planet right now who is leading the industry in many ways. So what is your personal relationship with uncertainty when there is no map, when the terrain has not yet been cut? What is your relationship with uncertainty?

Judson Althoff:

It's probably best captured by saying you've got to lean into it. It comes back to some fundamental things, Mike, that you yourself profess and teach around mindfulness and being grounded in the things you can control and letting go of the things you can't. You can't control uncertainty. It's going to be around us. You just have to embrace it. You can't control everything that's around you. You can't control yourself. You can't control your attitude. I always

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say, look, make sure that, in the notion that your attitudes are always contagious, that yours is actually worth catching. So tough times, for sure, but you've got to let go of the things you can't control.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

When you feel anxiousness, how do you avoid getting swallowed by it?
How do you manage that moment?

Judson Althoff:

It's perspective for me. Everybody gets to perspective differently. You've taught many people getting there through breathing and mindfulness, and recentering or refocusing helps for sure. But for me not only do I do those things, but I always try to put it in the context of first things first, health and human safety above all. It makes some of the anxious decisions seem somehow less stressful. If I just sort of maybe put it into context, I grew up in a household where my

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father was a surgeon. He'd come home from work and talk about real life and death scenarios all the time. I always thought in the technology world that I was insulated from that. But the here and now of who we support and how we support them, who comes first and what kind of decisions we make to make sure that critical infrastructure is provided to those that need it, it does take on that life and death connotation. Somehow all the other decisions that you have to make in a day just become that much more easy

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because you have that grounded perspective that, hey, look, if you're healthy and those around you are healthy, life is good. Everything else is just a business problem we have to endure. We have to endure it together.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

In the spirit of togetherness, Michelle Avary, who leads the charge on autonomous vehicles for the World Economic Forum, she looks across the empty streets during the

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pandemic, and she sees possibility for a potential better way of living for all of us. Of all the mental skills, which ones are most important to you?

Michelle Avary:

I think a positive outlook is really important, believing that things actually can get better and that we're actually capable of making it better. I don't need someone to tell me or give me the authority to make the world better. I know I can actually do it, and

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I know those people that I work with, they don't need me to give them the authority. They actually have that capacity. They might need a little space, a little direction, a little advice, but I think being very, very positive is probably the most important thing particularly now [crosstalk 00:29:57]

Dr. Michael Gervais:

How do you develop that? My hair's standing up right now. How do you develop that? Some people are ... They have a pessimistic, cynical,

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protective mechanism that they've created, and some don't. I don't have that. So I did at one time, and it was protective. I didn't know it, but it was a protective mechanism. So how do you cultivate, build that within yourself, a positive outlook, a positive approach of the future?

Michelle Avary:

A lot of it is who I choose to surround myself with, without a doubt. Also, I choose my personal intimate relationships very carefully. I do not

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avail myself to anyone at any time for any reason, so definitely choosy.

Those people who are in my most intimate circle are very positive people. They are people of action.

They tend to be very creative and tend to have a great love and zest of life

Dr. Michael Gervais:

If we could embody what you've come to hold to be true, how would we get through this crisis of uncertainty?

Michelle Avary:

I'm an economist by training, and I look at this from an economic perspective, and I think, this is a big one. This is a fundamentally ... This is a really big one. How fragile are we? But then I also have to balance that with the resiliency as well and realize that we do have that ability to bounce back and to pull it all together and to just kind of stop and take a deep breath and say, okay, the world actually might not be ending. So what do we want it to look like? What

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should we really do? How can we take advantage of this? So I look at something like ... I am very, very passionate about autonomous vehicles, and I really believe that having a different way in which we operate these vehicles, in letting the robots operate them, will ultimately be safer. I look at that and I think, well, how does that apply going forward? How can we reimagine? Right now, I'm sure in LA you're seeing it, streets are empty. Our streets are empty. Everyone is out walking their dogs, riding their

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bicycles, being out. If you get really comfortable, do it fast.

Michelle Avary:

So now we know what the future could look like when our roads are not dominated by vehicles. So how do we take advantage of that and still allow people to get back to work, get to schools, get to grocery stores, get to hospitals, wherever they need to go, but still do it safer and better for everyone? That is what I keep clinging to and saying we're going to

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go there. As long as I'm here right now and breathing and can do this, that's what I want to go to. I want to go to that future, and I want to make it real.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

One of our unique responsibilities in life is the way that we think about the future. We can choose to focus on what could be amazing or focus on what might not pan out, either an optimistic framework or a pessimistic one. I asked Cindy Eckert, health

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care disruptor and founder of two companies that she sold for a billion and a half dollars, where her optimism comes from.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

Optimism is a fundamental belief that the future is going to work out. How did you come by that?

Cindy Eckert:

Trial and error. I think, from maybe a very young age, I think you show up, and you make a choice. Every single

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day we wake up we make a choice on how we're going through that day. We have good days. We have bad days, but you fundamentally have a choice. What a terrible choice to be pessimistic? Why would you be pessimistic? Choosing that optimistic point of view, I think, opens up the world of possibilities as opposed to shutting them down.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

There's no such thing as a born leader. A title does not warrant

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leadership. It is a position though. It's a position of trust that is given and entrusted by those who find vibrance in the vision of what could become and the clarity and the path of how to get there, especially when challenged. While it might look like it's natural for these leaders to find the positives in the midst of crisis, it's actually a skill. Optimists tend to believe that events that don't go according to plan are a function of a temporary occurrence with a very specific reason why it didn't work out. Rather than it being something

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permanent or something pervasive, some sort of personal flaw about themselves, they don't see it that way. They don't let the poor outcomes or the unintended outcomes bleed into other areas of their life. They quite literally attribute success to their skills and their abilities and their team's skills and abilities. Then they cordon off failures to temporary external functions. Then the best of the best, they're able to take an honest inventory of the skills that they want to get better at. Then they

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develop and commit to a plan to sharpen their sword.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

Now Crisis Text Line founder Nancy Lublin trained her optimism. Listen how she captures it. How do you train or condition your mind to be able to do well?

Nancy Lublin:

This literally was something that I had to train. I don't think I was born this way. I think I got this from someone

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who I worked with at Do Something. She's the CEO of Do Something now. Her name's Aria. She's just an inherently positive and kind person. I'm not sure that I was. I'm not sure that I started off life being raised to just treat everyone with kindness. I learned from her, watching her and working side by side, that you really can't go wrong if you start with kindness. So that is the baseline of, I guess, what you would call my craft is I start every conversation, every new relationship believing that there's something good there in that other

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person, that they have good intention, they're motivated by something positive. So I start with kindness. Sometimes I catch myself not, and I have to say, nope, believe the best. I think that's part of my baseline.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

So when I hear you say that, that is the science of optimism.

Nancy Lublin:

Yeah.

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Dr. Michael Gervais:

The practice of optimism. Something good is about to happen. Something is good inside of others. [crosstalk 00:37:15]

Nancy Lublin:

Well, it may not always be good, but if you start with kindness for other humans, you have a better shot of getting there.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

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Leaders are tested not during calm seas, but when the ocean is raging. In the purest of ways, the true test is one of authenticity. Are they fundamentally the same person when it's easy and when it's hard? Or do they fold in the face of pressure to a lower version of themselves? Do they have the skills to think critically and creatively, to pivot and adjust, and all the while maintain the harmony between the collective mission and the individual needs of teammates? No one does it alone, and no one certainly does the extraordinary

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alone. We need each other. In that light can leaders trust both themselves and their teammates when the pressure is on? To do that requires an investment in the internal, the psychological skills that allow us to be poised when the seas rage. The real work, it's done ahead of time, preparing and front loading the required skills to meet the demands of the environment.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

Former TOPGUN Adversary commander, Captain Jim DiMatteo, acutely understands the value of front loading. When you are landing a supersonic jet on a 500-foot flight deck in rough seas when it's pitch black and there's only a tail hook between your F-18 and the deep blue sea, you better be prepared. One of the top pilots in America, Jim shared his thoughts on preparation. Would you capture yourself as being a risk taker or risk mitigator? Maybe there's

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another variation in there. But can you talk about that approach to risk?

Jim DiMatteo:

Sure. So as fighter pilots in general, we deal with risk every day. I mean, this is what we do. The way that we deal with significant risk that actually is your life on the line is we control what we control. So we mitigate everything that we can, from a risk perspective. We have procedures and policies and guidelines to do everything we can to address

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whatever risk we've identified. Then we take that risk. So it's kind of like we do both. We mitigate, but then we have to take that risk. We are confident. I think a big part of this is preparation. How do you prepare for these risks that you have to take? So we're confident that we have prepared properly and we have mitigated properly. So conscientiously, I'm not taking off and thinking, oh, my gosh, are we going to make it? For me, in my mind, I'm taking off with full confidence that we've mitigated everything possible,

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and we've minimized the risk. We haven't eliminated the risk, but we've minimized the risk. Now it's in a place that we can take off, literally, and go do our job.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

On the preparation side, there's technical training and preparation. There's physical preparation. There's also mental preparation. What are some of the ways that you prepare from a psychological perspective to be able to navigate uncertainty?

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Really, because as soon as you take off, there's so much uncertainty in a dog fight, so to speak. So how do you prepare psychologically?

Jim DiMatteo:

We're going to prepare. We're going to over prepare. We're going to brief. We're going to over brief. We'll go back and prepare again and make sure that we know everything we can to address whatever the risks that we've identified. So from a mental preparation, the fact that you've done

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all this other stuff to mitigate it gives me self-confidence when I jump in the jet that, when I close the canopy, I've got this.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

As a leader how do you think about or define leadership? Then what is your style of leadership?

Jim DiMatteo:

There's times to lead from the front, and there's times to lead from the back. When things are going well, to

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me, a good leader kind of steps back and lets his young guys go out in front. When things are tough and dangerous or risky or scary and there's nervousness and anxiety, to me that's when the leader, the good leader, the warrior, goes in the front.

Jim DiMatteo:

I'll never forget I had a commanding officer when I was on the aircraft carrier, [Nemmet 00:42:13], an F-14 fighter squadron. I was a younger guy, and it was a black night and

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really bad weather. Internally you're nervous. You're anxious. You're afraid. But you have to do it, and you want to do it, and you want to do well. You don't want to show any weakness. I had my skipper come up, the maintenance officer, gives me the book. He says, "Ah, this system is intermittent, and hope it works for you," type of thing. The skipper was flying with me as well, and he just grabs me. He's like, "Guido," which is my call sign. He's like, "Guido, I'll take that jet." At that point it just was that instant ... That's being a good

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leader. He was not going to assign anything to a junior subordinate person that he couldn't handle himself, and so I loved that. I mean, here it is years later, and I still remember it vividly. But to me that was a really strong leadership role to play and said, "I'm going to take the toughest, hardest thing to do."

Dr. Michael Gervais:

If we knew what you knew, how would we move through this crisis that we're in right now?

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Jim DiMatteo:

As fighter pilots in the whole TOPGUN world, the way you get through the toughest times is as a team, not as an individual. In a scenario like this virus, well, my wing men are my family, my wife and my children. My coworkers, my neighbors, my friends, they're my wing men in this dogfight.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

It's evident that Jim embodies world class preparation. His psychological

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skills are strong. His commitment to learning and improvement are fundamental first principles in his life. He's not looking for shortcuts or hacks. He's committed to building a durable set of skills that can weather some of the most intense pressure-packed conditions. He's also organized his life efforts towards a larger purpose. Hear how Nancy has also aligned her life towards purpose. I want to understand what your purpose is, your life purpose. Can you articulate that in a way that really

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captures the center of what you're
doing?

Nancy Lublin:

I've thought about this. To most people my life makes sense because I have gone from one charity to the next. They've all been not for profits, but they're actually really different not for profits. I was in the welfare to work space with Dress for Success. Then I was in the youth organizing space to do something. Now I'm in mental health. That's pretty different.

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The one, I think, consistent thread that goes through them is I think my purpose is to help people be the best version of themselves, whatever that is. At Dress for Success it was reclaiming your destiny and going back to work. At Do Something it was finding your voice and having an impact on the world. Here's it's reminding you how strong you are. I think that's my purpose is to help people be the best version of themselves, whatever that is.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

I'm nodding my head because you wouldn't notice, but it's also much of my same purpose as well. For a long time it was doing it one person at a time, and that still is the case because we are human that have relationships, and then seeing if we can put some technology on it and some scale to it to help people using the technology and the insights that we have.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

The science of purpose have three main components. It has to have personal meaning. Nobody can give you your purpose. It has to matter to you. The second, it needs to be bigger than you. The third, it's future-oriented, meaning that there's a clear goal in mind that is down the road. For that last part, one way to think about it is what is the vision of what it could be? It being your future, it being the collective future of your team or your community or your

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business. Having a clear vision of what you'd like to see and experience in the future is a big time skill. So I asked Jan Singer, CEO of J. Crew, about how she shapes her vision and how to unlock the imagination of others. How do you create a vision with all of the disparate pieces of information that are coming in? You don't even have all the information. Nobody has all the information. So how do you create a vision? Then I want to double click on that and say, when you don't have all the information but

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you've got this idea of what could be, how do you embody it in a way where you're able to lead knowing that you don't have all the information? Nobody ever does, by the way.

Jan Singer:

No one ever does. I mean, I've been at a world class \$50 billion company, and no one ever really knows. They don't really know what money they made that day. They never really know the answer. So you've got to

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know that first of all, that no one really knows. Therefore there really is ... The notion of failure takes on a whole different complexity because no one really knows. Who's to say you're right or wrong? So there's that. I'll click up a notch. I think the thing I hold on to every day ... And we've talked about in the past, even when times for me health wise were really challenging, and even when I faced, in work, other crises or leaders or struggles, the fact is that the sun always comes up another day.

Jan Singer:

I'll tell you what, and I don't want to get political on this. But what I listen to at 4:00 in the morning, if not Finding Mastery, plug, is whether you hate or love Democrats, Republicans, when I listened to Adam Schiff close that speech in the Senate ... It's midnight in Washington, and he lands on, "And the truth is that the Sun will come up, and there will be another day." I don't care what side of the fence you live on. I don't care what you're facing. If you know and you

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believe ... and you can't know that because it's a fact. It's the only thing we do know. The Sun will come up another day. If I'm here to see that sun come up another day, I have a choice to make about what I do during that day. So it starts, first of all, with what motivates, as I know that this too shall pass. At 4:00 in the morning when I can't sleep and it's not adding up to me and I don't have an answer, that if I can close my eyes, and in a few hours the sun is going to come up. I have a chance to take it on.

Jan Singer:

As a leader what I try to do is take in all of those inputs and ideas and envision what's possible, the slices. I try to connect them for my team to the reality. So if you keep it too ethereal, like the Sun will come up, it's great, just trust me, that doesn't work. Or if we could jump out of a rocket ship, for most people, that doesn't work. But if you can connect what you're witnessing to what they know to be true and show them, therefore, here's what can be next,

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they usually will build on it for you. If you open that door, they usually walk through. I get goosebumps because they start riffing. They think it's a blue sky dream, but they realize that very quickly there are pieces of that dream we can do tomorrow. So when the sun comes up tomorrow, they feel a sense of purpose. They have a path and a plan. I know, for me, when I have a plan, I'm at my best.

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Dr. Michael Gervais:

Why do you think people struggle with anxiety when they struggle with the uncertainty and they say, oh, my gosh, I don't know how to do this, this is overwhelming? [crosstalk 00:50:10]

Jan Singer:

Well, I can't speak to ... The medical condition of anxiety is real, and I have witnessed people who have that real physiological effect of anxiety, which I don't have, knock on wood.

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But the form of anxiety, like the worrying and the stress at 4:00 in the morning ... Literally this past couple of weeks, it's me at 4:00 in the morning. I think, I've been working harder than I've been working out of the office, planning for a business that's closed. I am creating items people may not ever want for a consumer who might not be here. I'm like, what am I doing? I can go down that very vicious cycle. This is insane. Maybe I should just count my blessings and go bake bread and be done. Maybe I should.

Jan Singer:

But I think we all have to recognize that we can get into that spiral, and I think that what I try to tell myself and my friends, when we help each other ... Sometimes someone's up.

Someone's down ... is that none of any real decision has to be made in that moment, zero. If I kind of take that out of it ... Because I can go to ...

We were moving to New York. I was three blocks from the office, and my kids have to go to school. Where are we going to live? This can go on for

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me. My parents are in assisted living. Three people have COVID. Oh, my God, I can't get to them. I have all reasons in the world to go there.

Jan Singer:

But when I take a deep breath and I'm like, okay, what do I really have to decide today ... And I used to be ... I have to know a month, six months of my schedule. I don't. I really only have to know today. I kind of have to know through Monday maybe, but I really don't have to make decisions

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about where I'm going to live today. Also, second, accept that whatever decision I make won't be perfect, because I probably right now have 10% of the information versus 60 that I like. It won't be perfect, and I probably can course correct if it's not. I have to. So if I kind of get to that ... And I have to be reminded by my husband, by my friends. I remind my friends who spiral out too. We have to talk it out, and then we have to remind each other that, you know what, right now, what do you need? What do you need? I actually need a

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drink of water. Okay, great. And move on. That's as much as we can really get to, because it's otherwise paralyzing.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

Marc Randolph taps into 40 years of navigating uncertainty as an entrepreneur. Now he helps early stage investors not get swallowed up in their fear, and Marc has an incredible insight on how purpose and potential flow together. What is your life purpose?

Marc Randolph:

It's funny. I didn't think I really realized my purpose until only a few years ago, which means I wasted an awful lot of time. Part of it came after I stopped working full-time, once I left Netflix. Then I spent a bunch of time working with other early-stage companies as a mentor, working with university students, working with high school students. There was this revelation that all of these same tips and tricks and secrets that I'd learned over my 40, God, 40 years

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as an entrepreneur were broadly applicable, that anybody could use these things, not just to start a business, but to take any crazy dream they had and make it real.

Marc Randolph:

I think at that point I kind of realized my purpose is to help unlock people, to make them realize that the key to unlocking the dreams they have within them they already have. They don't need an MBA or they don't need to graduate yet or raise money

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or have a cofounder. It's in their own hands.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

How has this crisis that we're in now tested and/or amplified your purpose?

Marc Randolph:

I think it's amplified it and tested it a little bit, but one of the things that most of my experience has come from, most of my expertise, is navigating uncertainty. It's living in a

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world where you just don't know what's around the next corner, and certainly over the last 40 years I've not only gotten used to making decisions in situations like that, I've come to love it. I love that feeling of walking down the path and not knowing what's around the corner. But, of course, a lot of people are now doing that in a very uncomfortable way. They're not used to that. So part of what I'm really trying to do is let people know it's possible that even though you don't know, ... Certainly, being more

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specific with the COVID-19 situation, we don't know when it's going to ease up. More importantly, we don't know what that ease up is going to look like or be like. When will business recover? When will people want to spend money again? That just requires putting yourself in a position where you can respond. You can't make a plan for what will happen. You have to make a plan for how can I be prepared for what might happen.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

Oh, nice. So there's so much to learn from entrepreneurs, from athletes that are professional, coaches in the same vein, because they are very practiced at preparing themselves for uncertainty, testing themselves in uncertain environments, because nobody knows the outcomes of an entrepreneur venture, let alone a game in professional sport. So there's so much to learn from entrepreneurs and athletes. That's why I really wanted to have you on

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this. How have you not been swallowed up by the anxiety that so many people are struggling with?

Marc Randolph:

I'm actually using this time to try and calm people down, rather than letting myself get swallowed up. I do have four to five companies that I'm actively involved as a mentor, and in those roles it's not an advisor role. I literally spend a lot of time getting to know this founder or CEO so that, exactly in times like this, I can be

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counsel. Part of it is one of the things you coach a CEO to do is say this is not about success or failure. This is about demonstrating that you have your hands on the wheel, that you know there's going to be bumps in the road. There's going to be trees across it. There's going to be cliffs you come to. What people want to see from a leader is that they're prepared. They're looking a little bit ahead, and they'll navigate their way cleanly through this. Calm. Take it easy. Don't overreact.

Marc Randolph:

One of the things I ... I have been thinking about you because you mentioned athletes. But one of the better examples are professional outdoor athletes, in other words, climbers, expeditioners, because what they're doing all the time is under extreme conditions, under duress, being forced to make decisions on the fly, when to hunker down and when to move. Part of it with mountaineering is you've got to be willing to sit in your portaledge for

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two or three days waiting for the storm to blow over. I think that's a really good analogy for what's happening now.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

Then how do you make choices when you don't have all the information and you're trying to figure out whether I need to stay hunkered down or I need to strike aggressively? How do you help people, and how do you personally make choices when you don't have

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all the information? The question is a bit challenging because we never have all the information. But in the best way you can, how do you deal with making choices?

Marc Randolph:

So here's a weird one. In some ways this is a good crisis for things like that because there's something very knowable here. What's knowable is that it's unknowable. A lot of times people struggle with, oh, how can I get more data? How can I figure out

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when something is going to happen?

I've now convinced myself it is unknowable. This is a situation without any historic predecessor.

There's nothing that can tell us when this will ease up and what it will look like when it does, which makes it easy. You cannot plan for what to do then. This is all about figuring out what your posture can be, but there's several types of postures.

Marc Randolph:

The one analogy I've been using ...
And this is from the old nature videos
that I watched as I kid. There was, I
guess, some kind of a desert shrimp.
Basically it lives in these brine
puddles in the desert. The water
evaporates completely, and these
things go dormant. They can live no
water, extreme conditions for years.
But then the rain comes, and they
instantly spring to life, reproduce,
feed. Then the puddle dries up, and it
repeats itself. So part of what we

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have to be is be brine shrimp. We have to tell ourselves, how do we put ourselves in a position where we can last, sustain ourselves for who knows how long? Then the trick is measuring how quickly you want your response time to be. That requires evaluating what the resources are required to respond. You may say I'm willing to hold in reserve, fill in the blanks, enough employees, enough resources, that I can be back in business in six weeks. But you may say, well, there's no real difference between being in a position ... I can

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be back in business in seven days or seven months, and that's independent to the circumstance.

Marc Randolph:

So most of the coaching that I'm doing is helping people figure out not what will it look like in the future, but let's figure out what a crouching, waiting position looks like. How do we make sure that, if we're going to be hunkered down in the storm, back to my mountaineering analogy, we're rationing our food appropriately that

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we can wait for as long as it might take?

Dr. Michael Gervais:

I love it. It's a great analogy for right now. How do you help people move in the direction, as a leader, that you're wanting them to potentially take that next step? When their levels of uncertainty are high, you're grounded. You've got your hands on the wheel, to use your analogy, and you've thought deeply about the scenario. How do you help your

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team take the next step? Because part of leadership is getting the noses lined up in the same direction, and the energy to move forward. So how do you go about doing that?

Marc Randolph:

I'm certainly no expert on it, but the people that I am coaching, it really is giving them confidence that no one knows this better than they do, that they're not going to make a mistake, that everybody is in the same boat and that there's a responsibility for

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them to take the responsibility and move. So many people ... And this is perhaps not professional entrepreneurs, but certainly younger people who have this feeling like I'm going to make a mistake if I do something, and that paralyzes them. I have to wait for something. I need some prerequisite. I've realized that those just aren't true. We're all doing the best we can. You can make decisions. It's not going to be the wrong one.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

When purpose is clear, the choices and micro choices we make become easier. If you don't have your purpose ironed out, it's no problem. You can declare one right now, like, "My purpose during the pandemic is," or, "My purpose for the next three months is," or even, "My purpose for the year is." The point is to try to get your arms wrapped around your purpose. Nobody can give it to you, but you can declare it. It's okay if you don't know it. Just start that path right

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now, maybe writing or talking or sorting it out about what you want your purpose to be. We all have the power and the responsibility to choose how we think, to determine our purpose and the steps that we take in our life. Listen how clear Jan Singer makes it.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

How do you practice, and how have you created this level of internal efficacy, another big fancy word, but this ability of having self-power? I

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don't mean power over others in this weird kind of way, but you just have a sense of vulnerability, honesty that merges with a sense of power. What do you do to create this state?

Jan Singer:

I think when I study leadership in others, it's a similar trend. If you faced adversity and you've chosen to go through and not lay down and let it take you down, you choose, you're choosing ... It's very empowering. Actually, that's a mental choice in my

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head that I just made, and I can make more of those choices. It's actually in my head. It's not being done to me. Short of things you can't control, which there's no doubt you can't control illness. There's genetics you can't control. But when you have the power of choice, I think that's very empowering, and everybody has that opportunity on some part of their life. I remember that. I just try to remember that.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

Listen how Nancy Lublin has a similar take to how she frames events in her life? She's eloquently describing the science behind having an internal locus of control, which means that she attributes her experiences in life squarely to her ability to respond, and she ultimately is in control of how she responds. Here's how Nancy says it.

Nancy Lublin:

I don't think things happen to you. Other things happen. There are always externalities. It's up to you on how you respond to them. Look, the only things that we control in life are our own words and actions, and that's true of everybody, not just an entrepreneur or a CEO. It's true of everybody. So I don't believe things happen to me. I think things happen. News happens. Life happens. The real question is how am I reacting

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with my words and actions, and that I can control.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

Then I'm imagining you map those thoughts and words and actions. You map them up against your purpose.

Nancy Lublin:

I do. I mean, what's easy for me is it's instinct. It's not like I've made a life change to say I now want a life of purpose. I was doing one thing and I've switched to this. I've always been

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driven this way. It's to my core. I've never really optimized for anything other than my purpose. So to me this is instinct. As easy as it is for me to reach for Girl Scout cookies to munch on, I choose purpose. In fact, Michael, for real, if I stopped and thought, okay, what should I optimize for here, I probably would make other choices, because I would maybe choose some healthier foods. I would maybe sometimes choose to optimize for money or my own personal health or time with my family, things like that, but that's not how I roll.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

We've covered some incredible territory, purpose, confidence, optimism, preparation, trust, authenticity, locus of control. Let's now turn our gaze to empathy, to being available and skilled at working with emotions, to the courage of being vulnerable, to being attuned to your feelings and the feelings of others. This is at the center of being human, of being gritty, of creating and being part of something that is tender and special and strong and

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fragile, and therefore cherished and regarded and loved. Jan Singer was an early adopter of empathy-based leadership. It's very popular to say, oh, yeah, vulnerability and empathy are really important. It's popular, but you have embodied it since I've known it, before it was popular.

Jan Singer:

It was unpopular, actually.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

It was very unpopular. You probably got run out of places that we both know about for being a little too open and learner and not being bang your fists on the desk. I'm making that up. You don't need to nod your head or not. But on those four variables, strength, vulnerability, empathy, and then creating a challenge environment for people, because there are real things that have to get done and done well.

Jan Singer:

I think you and I both know that it was not favorable. In fact I had someone tell me way early in my career, "You'll never make a good CEO, ever. You care too much." That's literally what was said to me, "You care too much. You're never going to make it." But then what happened was the workforce cared too much, and I was like, oh, my gosh, my natural setpoint and their need are in sync. It's like weight loss. I always talk about it this way. I can

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diet. I was born on a diet. I don't diet anymore, but we grew up in that culture. The fact is that your body has a natural setpoint in its weight, and it just does. So I have a natural setpoint called I care. I do care. So the workforce needed that. I brought that, and also I'm a middle child. I have the need to include people. I'm an extrovert. I love optimism and energy. I get my energy from the people. Being isolated for me, I mean, thank God for Zoom, it's not good for me.

Jan Singer:

So I think it's about being real, which means putting yourself in a situation that's a natural fit so you don't have to pretend. I applaud [inaudible 01:08:19] showing who you are to the NFL, not who they are, who you are. That's why I have such admiration and respect for the work you guys do, because you're just doing you. That's such an overused thing, but when you can figure out what your natural setpoint is with a place that needs it, then all you've

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got to do is show up and lead. So I, first of all, make sure I can do that, don't put myself in a place that doesn't want me in there. Because trying to change a culture of that sometimes is really, for me, not worth the time anymore. It's just not. There are plenty of places that want that. Then, secondly, being very clear about the path forward and the expectations so people know this is what we're ... Where are we going is a culmination of what I've heard, what you've told me, what I'm seeing. We

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agreed, path forward. So here's what we need to get done. Keep it simple.

Jan Singer:

Then lastly tell them when it's hard. Listen, I lost an associate last week. I lost an associate who was with the company for 20 years. She was not well one week. She was gone the next week. That's shattering, and no one could say goodbye, and no one could go to their funeral. The people that went to the funeral had to stay in their cars. They've known this woman

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for decades. She was energy and joy to the organization. I don't know her as well as they know here. I need to recognize that and be with them where they are in their grief, isolated in their houses. So recognize that when things are not normal or okay or you're struggling as a leader, share that. Share that. Why not? Why would you not share that? It helps you heal. It helps them heal. It brings people together.

Jan Singer:

So there's a lot of elements to it, but the trap is people mistaking the humanity or empathy for easy. Oh, she's our friend. She won't care if I don't do that work. I care, and we talk about that, the coaching. But I think having you fit your natural setpoint, what you prefer as a leader, your style, with a culture and a business or a product or an organization that wants that is the key.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

Then as an applied question, how have you developed the clarity of your natural setpoint? I'm happy to add to it on ways that I've seen people be successful at it, and it's hard. The responsibility of declaring or understanding that is incredibly high because you're matched up against what you think maybe people think you should be versus what is real to you. How have you developed some clarity about it? It might be

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super simple for you, and that's why
[crosstalk 01:11:19]

Jan Singer:

No. I think as a kid I was hyper curious about human behavior and my own behavior. We've talked about it. In high school I just stopped eating. I had a severe eating disorder. I don't know why. Why was this happening to my brain? Why, why, why, why, why? So I was very curious about why this was happening for myself? Who was I?

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Why was I doing this? What did it mean? So that just became the curiosity of does everybody have this? Do I have this? How do people behave? So if you're willing to look at it, if you're willing to look at it and own it, then I think you can go do a lot with it.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

But how do you look at it? What do you do? Do you meditate? Do you [crosstalk 01:12:03]

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Jan Singer:

You hear what people are saying. If you see a pattern, take the feedback, like, oh, that always happens. Why does that always happen? Oh, I must be this. Or ask. Get feedback, coaching. I have a coach. I've had a coach for a gazillion years. It's the purpose of the process. I'm hitting a wall here, and she said, "Yeah. We've talked about that [crosstalk 01:12:32]"

Dr. Michael Gervais:

A lot.

Jan Singer:

So I think you have to be willing to ...
Nothing will change if you don't
choose change. Choosing to change
is the first major step. I don't care if
you have addiction issues or you
have leadership issues or family
issues, marriage issues, parenting.
You first have to recognize that
something's not working. So if you
can first do that, that's the hardest
part. Hey, this isn't working. All right,
then you become curious and open
to why. But if you can't get to, oh, I'm

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not doing so well here, then no one can tell you. When I wasn't eating, a million people a day would tell me in my family, "You've got to eat, you've got to eat, you've got to eat." "Okay." I didn't think I had to eat, so, all right, look at you, you're heavy. You don't know. I don't need to eat. I'm good at this. I'm professional at this, until I realized I was going to die. Then I realized I had a problem. I had to change.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

Some of my favorite people on the planet are those that have touched the depths of despair of the human condition, through addiction or deep pain. They've invested, and they've learned, and they've faced their dragon. They have a relationship with the hard side, the dark side, the powerful side and that nature, and they come through. To overuse a metaphor, they have that relationship with a dragon. It's not afraid of it. It's not like they don't know it, but they've

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done that real work to understand the humanness of being on the planet right now. So you've done that work, and it's evident to me.

Jan Singer:

[crosstalk 01:14:16] very much about being a provider versus being a savior. I can't save anybody. I can't save my parents from COVID. I cannot save my brothers or my friends from whatever haunts them. Only they can save themselves. I can't save them. I don't feel sad

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about that. I feel very clear about that. I cannot save you. I can support you. I can provide pathways for you. I can provide tools and love, and I can provide a lot of things. But I can't save you. Sad.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

If we knew what you knew, if we understood what you've come to understand, how would we work through this next phase of our crisis, of the level of uncertainty that's in our world? How would we do it?

Jan Singer:

I think about things like we would do it one day at a time, for sure. We would do it making some tradeoffs. We would do it making ... This is a moment for us. I think about ... I was talking to my dad for a good hour and a half about depression versus recession economically and about pandemics in the past. The question for this country is, when we've been faced with this, the grit and tenacity has been in place for this country to push through, not entitlement. What

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does it mean right now. The unemployment rates are going through the roof. They're going to go higher. I worry about when that hits a moment where resources dry up and people are really struggling. In a way we have never seen, this will happen. How will we respond?

Jan Singer:

Through a grit lens, as in I know what hard work is. I'll do whatever it takes. We're going to get through this together. Your comment, it's true. We

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will work through this. We aren't that society right now. We are a society of I used to have three cars. I used to fly all the time. I've charged up my credit cards. Why don't I have this? I'm hoping that my kids and the kids of the future never lose the grit. I hope, as a provider, that I don't over provide to remove that grit. So if you knew what I knew, I don't know enough, but I would think about this one day at a time-ish. I like what [inaudible 01:16:47] are doing in the Midwest recently, that the collective intellectual capability of those leaders

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are coming together and making tradeoffs. I like that. But I would also say that I would come through this knowing that there will be no perfect, only progress, no perfect.

Dr. Michael Gervais:

With that, my hope is, that through this experience of hearing how extraordinary leaders are thinking and feeling and acting, that you too will be reminded that the quality of your life is a reflection of your inner skills. You can engineer yourself by

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investing, by discovering who you are, what your purpose is, what your core values are and your first principles, by investing in the psychological skills to think clearly and critically, to generate a sense of calmness in any environment, on how to be calm under any condition, under any circumstance, and how to be able to be connected to what matters most and who matters most. These are not functions of the external conditions. I hope you'll be reminded that everything you need is already inside of you, and that

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sometimes you just need a bit of dusting off, maybe a bit of practice, or perhaps it's time for some serious significant upgrades. Either way, I'm wishing you the absolute best on your unique adventure of life.