

# Disrupt Yourself Podcast

## EPISODE 138: DAVE ULRICH

Welcome to the Disrupt Yourself Podcast. I'm Whitney Johnson. I think, write, speak and live all things disruption, providing you with tools to move up the S Curve of Learning in your career and life.

We're now at the beginning of year four of the Disrupt Yourself podcast, our first episode aired back in September of 2016. And as I look back at the people we've had a chance to talk to and the lessons learned, I just wanted to take a moment and express my gratitude to you. Our reach has expanded significantly, these ideas have spread, thanks to your talking about the podcast with friends and colleagues, sharing it on social media, and most of all, your leaving 5-star ratings and reviews so other like-minded disruptors can find the podcast too. So, again, thank you, thank you! We are so appreciative!

When your business is small, it's relatively simple to disrupt, to be innovative. But what about large organizations? Our guest today is talking with me about that, and much more.

Today I'm talking with Dave Ulrich. Dave is a professor at the Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan and a partner at the consulting firm RBL Group. He has published over 200 articles, and over 30 books, including his recent book with Arthur Yeung, *Reinventing the Organization*.

WHITNEY     Dave Ulrich, welcome to the Disrupt Yourself podcast.

DAVE         Great to be on with you. I am so, uh, so grateful to have a conversation.

WHITNEY     Well I'm delighted you're here as well. And I want to start by asking you, where did you grow up? And what did you want to be when you grew up?

DAVE         Great question. Uh, so long ago I hope I can remember. All-

WHITNEY Mm-hmm (affirmative).

DAVE All, uh, when I grew up, I wanted to be an attorney.

WHITNEY Okay.

DAVE And, uh, not sure why but did some legwork in young years and teenage years in attorney's offices. And I ended up taking a course in college from a professor who's still a mentor; in fact, he's meeting with my wife and daughter today, he called Organizational Behavior, OB. I had no idea what it was, but somebody recommended it, and it literally captured my imagination. He said, "There's nothing due. You have no papers due, no tests, show me what you learn about the organizations where you live, where you work, where you play, where you learn."

WHITNEY Hmm.

DAVE And I started getting enamored, and, uh, so I'd go to a movie and I do an organizational assessment. I was an English major, and I read Beowulf and so I, my first paper in English was Beowulf, The Ideal Organization Man. And I turned it into English and I turned it into him. Uh, the English teacher thought, "That's a weird topic." He said, "This is great, do another one." So Paradise Lost and the uses of power in chapter, uh, two of Paradise Lost and how Satan used power, and how organizations use it. I wrote, I think 14, 10-page papers for him. And he called me and he said, "You're weird, but you had-

WHITNEY (laughing)

DAVE To do another class, uh, 'cause you've got a bug." And I had a bug. Uh, later my wife said I had OCD, she's a pretty good psychologist, and I thought, "Wha- what's OCD? I'm not compulsive." And she said, "You have organization compulsive disorder." (laughs) "Uh, you just love to think about and study organizations."

Uh, that led me in a pursuit of a ma-, some of a master's degree; I didn't finish, I went off and did my PhD. And I'm still compulsive about organizations. When I, uh, go to dinner, I'm a horrible dinner companion because I call the, the head chef over, the restaurant owner and say, "You know, if you reorganize the restaurant in these five ways, you would increase your productivity 10 percent." And, uh, he-

WHITNEY No.

DAVE Just said, "You-"

WHITNEY You really to do that?

DAVE I, I do it all the time. I've done it with airlines, I've done it with, uh, restaurants I've done it with hotels. I, decades later, I still have this OCD bug, and, uh, now I've learned a little bit about research, and theory, and, and not just casually looking at organizations, but a little more rigorous. So that got me into the field and, uh, did my, uh, private-

WHITNEY Wow.

DAVE Work and, and still do that kind of work.

WHITNEY Okay, so a couple of questions. One is, um, who is, what was the name of the professor so that we can give the professor a-

DAVE Oh-

WHITNEY Shout out?

DAVE Give him huge credit. Bonner Richie.

WHITNEY Bonner Richie?

DAVE Uh-

WHITNEY Okay.

DAVE I'm not sure if you've run into him or not. He, uh, iconoclast class professor and still a, a, a mentor who, uh, as I said, my wife and daughter are meeting with him today. He, uh, has a great sense of humor, and he continues to, uh, pound on me when I meet with him as a mentor and say, "Dave, what are you doing with your life to serve the world? Uh, I know you've written books but you've got to do more." And, uh, I ... In a spirit of love. So I'm curious how you got into this field. Your listeners may not have heard your story.

WHITNEY Oh, well, um, how I got into this field? That's such a great question. Um, I want to pick up on something you said and then I'll answer the question. Because it was fascinating to me, one of the things I love to ask people is, "What do you think about when you have nothing of impact you have to think about?"

And you made the comment of, you know, you go into restaurants, and you go to the airline and you have nothing that you have to think about, but you just can't help yourself of saying, "Okay, I think that, uh, you could reorganize sort of this space, and the system of this and be more productive." Like that is something it sounds like you think about when you don't have to think about it, but you just can't help to do it; like you said, the, the OCD idea.

DAVE My wife and I were in a restaurant, last week, uh, a couple days ago actually. Um, empty restaurant, uh, we hadn't been in this city very often, and they sat us right next to another couple when we wanted to have a little bit of private time to talk. And I thought, "You know it's a stupid thing to say, 'Give people space.' Don't put people next to somebody else. That's easier for the waiter or waitress, so then they don't have to move as much, but move us over a table, we'll have a better experience, we're more likely to come back."

WHITNEY Right.

DAVE I said to, I said that to my wife and I said, "I'm going to go tell the manager." And she said, "Oh, Dave, please don't do that."

WHITNEY (laughing)

DAVE (laughs) uh, please don't do that. Just leave a bigger tip and walk out, it's okay. You know it, the restaurant's been around for years and it will, it will be okay, please don't do that." And I thought, "Oh, uh, okay." So against my better judgment, that restaurant will have two percent fewer customers because I didn't share my ... no-

WHITNEY Because-

DAVE I'm joking.

WHITNEY Because, because they didn't get to the, the benefit of your wisdom.

DAVE Yeah, well that's-

WHITNEY So-

DAVE A joke, that's not ... So how did-

WHITNEY Well so that-

DAVE How did you get here?

WHITNEY Yeah so that's it. So to answer that question, one of the things that I discovered is that I was working on Wall Street, and I was an equity analyst, and I was picking stocks and, you know, America Movil to buy, to sell, to buy to sell. Doing that, turns out I'm a really good stock picker 'cause I, I was good at spotting momentum and you know, "Is this stock going to go up or down, etc.?"

But one of the things, discoveries that I made when I was about, um ... since like 2003, 2004. We're doing this training session for all my fellow analysts, and it, about that time two other things happen.

I've read Tom Peters' article called "A Brand Called You," and it, American Idol is at its zenith. And so, I go into this training meeting and I think, "Okay so what brand are all of you analysts?" American Idol, we got these contestants, they all have a brand. There's the comeback kid, there's the, you know, the dark horse; there're all these different brands that these singers have. So let's look at this brands that the singers have, and let's analyze that.

And then let's look at each one of you as analysts and figure out what kind of, what's your brand? Are you a forensic analyst, where you tear apart their balance sheet? Are you an earnings estimates guru? Are you an industry expert? So all these different things.

And I analyzed that and I said, "Okay, now each one of you, based on that, that's your brand and if you will use that brand, and leverage that brand you are going to be more successful as an analyst in the marketplace."

I spent hours, and hours, and hours on this. They weren't paying me to do it, there was no reason why I had to do this. And that was the beginning of this idea of, "Okay, I'm, I'm really interested in momentum, but what I, I'm not so interested in momentum in stocks, what I'm really interested in is momentum in people."

And so that was the beginning of me recognizing that I really wanted to do this. And, similar to you, where you go into a restaurant and say, "Why don't you, you know, reconfigure your space and you'll be more productive?" I find myself, if someone, if I'm talking to someone and asking them, within very short order, "What's your dream? What do you want to do?"

I go into this sort of coaching mode very, very quickly and it's something that I love to do, and I sort of can't help but doing it. Um, and, uh, and I, like you've, had people say to me, "I don't actually want to be coached right now."

Um, but that's, that's something that I love to do as well, and so that wou-, that sort of began that process. 2004, 2005 I left Wall Street 2005, started blogging about dreams and, you know, dare to dream this idea, and that began this journey that, you know, this pivot that I did fully I

should say in 2012 when I sold my stake at Rose Park Advisors with Clayton and, uh, and his son Matt, and started becoming, focusing on this idea of personal disruption.

So that's how I got here. Uh, but in many ways very similarly of realizing, "Oh there's this thing that I just can't stop thinking about it, I do it even when I don't have to etc." So that's, that's that story. Thank you for asking.

DAVE I love it, I love it. I have OCD, obsessive com-, organization compulsive. You have BM, you have brand momentum compulsive.

WHITNEY Oh-

DAVE Uh-

WHITNEY I love it.

DAVE So-

WHITNEY [inaudible 00:08:43]

DAVE You have BMC, uh-

WHITNEY Okay.

DAVE Uh-

WHITNEY Oh I love it. So, so you have, you've just published a brand new book, and, um, it's called *Reinventing the Organization*. And you have a co-author, Arthur Yeung, I'm hope I'm pronouncing his name correctly. And there're two sections in here that really caught my, um, attention, in part because I'm thinking about momentum and the S curve of learning, etc.

And one section you talk about performance accountability, and how do you make people accountable for results and motivate them. And I'd love to just talk for a minute or two about, about your, your thoughts about accountability within an organization.

So you've got this organization that you want to be more effective and more efficient, could you just share with us your thoughts on accountability and some, some suggestions for people who are listening who want to look at having their people be more accountable, and, and how did they do that?

DAVE Accountability, generally, has a very simple purpose. (laughs) I've tried to lose weight without weighing. Um, if you've seen me it's not working very well. Uh, there has to be some form of accountability. Uh, without accountability, you don't make progress.

But the traditional form ... Well I'll, I'll do by a story because I know you like stories. We were called into a company in the, in the Mid-East and they said, "We have tried all kinds of performance systems to drive accountability and increase performance; they don't work. We tried management by objectives, we tried, uh, behavioral anchored rating scales, we tried ... Uh, the one I loved was key results area programs; it stood for the KRAP system. We've tried the nine box, none of this is working."

And it finally hit me as I listened to try to learn, "It's not about the system." Uh, you can have any system in the world, but if there's not a relationship between the manager, who's responsible for accountability, and the employee, the system is not gonna work.

And so we begun to put the words around it, uh, how do you create positive accountability? And, and there's a whole lot of streams go into this work. It's some of the David Rock work on neurology and the brain cells and, and you overcome threat, you focus on opportunity.

We've looked at all kinds of work on goals, and standards, and setting goals. And the message we've come up with is, "There has to be a system of accountability." Now what does that mean? Let me put it into four steps. There's got to be a clear sense of purpose ... five steps. What is it, what is you're trying to accomplish? What do you want, what's your purpose, vision, mission, goal; whatever.

Number two, there has to be some objectives that I'm accountable for. What am I accountable for in those objectives? What, what's expected of me? Number ... And so the leader says, "I have an aspiration, number one, I have a purpose. I have some objectors, or goals, or targets with indicators that we can track, that you track.

Number three, I have actions I take. Look at my calendar, look at my relationships. Who do I meet with? When do I need with them? What do I talk about when I meet with those people in a positive way?

And number four. I want to make sure that I have some mechanism to learn and reflect, that the growth mindset stuff is real. So I look through that, there's a purpose, do I have that in my company, an aspiration, a big, hairy, audacious goal? Whatever you want to call it.

I have objectives, things I'm trying to accomplish in measurable, tangible ways. I, number three, I have actions I take: my calendar, my time, my relationship, my resources, and I act against those. Number four, I have a process of growth mindset of learning.

And number five is the most critical and it cuts through those first four; I can have a positive conversation. Because without a positive conversation about purpose, goals, or purpose objectives, actions and, and reflections, the accountability doesn't work.

And a positive conversation is saying, "Focus on what's right not what's wrong. Focus on the effort, not just the outcome. Link your effort to the outcomes you want." Uh, one of the tests that I give leaders who I coach is, "What percent of the time do people leave an interaction with you, particularly a, an accountability interaction feeling better about themselves?"

WHITNEY Mm.

DAVE Because that's the goal. If, if you leave people demoralized, they're not going to be accountable. So, that's the broad kind of steps in building that positive accountability. And then the most critical step is a positive conversation.

In the last couple of years, in, in the field of organization and HR, every, every few years there's a, there's a new fad that gets attention. And people, a few years ago, "Do away with, uh, performance appraisal, do it with performance appraisal; that's just stupid." It, there has to be accountability. Again, I don't lose weight by not weighing.

Uh, most people don't wash their rent a car before they turn it in, uh, because, because there's no so-, reason for that, but we do fill it up with gas. The issue is how do you create a

conversation about purpose, objectives, actions, and reflections that enable that positive accountability to occur?

WHITNEY You know, one, one data point that you shared in your book that I thought was fascinating is that you said, you know, you've been teaching for I think 25 or 30 years, as a professor, and, and said that, "Not once, in your entire 25 years, has there been a student who audited a class, finish the class." And that, to me, was a very-

DAVE Right.

WHITNEY Striking data point around this idea of accountability.

DAVE You, you realize tha-, there's another explanation; is it's not worth tending. (laughs)

WHITNEY (laughing)

DAVE Uh, huh, I, I mean, it's like bowling, if you don't keep score in bowling, who's going to continue to bowl?

WHITNEY Yeah.

DAVE I mean, there has to be some mechanism and, uh, absolutely. And, and I think that's an interesting paradox, and I love the concept right now of paradox. It, how do you navigate formal accountability, where people are responsible? Absent responsibility, we don't change, and still give people a lot of autonomy. So that control autonomy paradox plays out dramatically in accountability.

WHITNEY So what are you finding is working?

DAVE Uh, in accountability? Those five steps, uh-

WHITNEY Well to solve that paradox though?

DAVE Yeah, oh the ... Uh, actually I think that's the wrong question. I think you don't wanna solve a paradox. I think, in my mind, a paradox is like driving down a road with two guardrails. And if you solve a paradox, you pick one or the other guardrail. I think what you do is you navigate a paradox, you live in a world of ambiguity and uncertainty and you say, "You know, if I'm leaning too far to the top down command and control guardrail, I've got to come back to the middle."

It's kind of like, uh, an airplane that would travel from, uh, (laughs) I'm trying to think where you travel from. From Chicago to New York City, and if I had a string from Chicago to New York City, the airplane's almost never on that string; it's to the left, to the right.

I don't think we solve paradoxes, I think we have to become comfortable navigating and living with 'em. And it's the ability to navigate that tension that creates change, because if I'm, if I solve a paradox, I got it, "Go do this." If I navigate paradox, I'm constantly debating within myself, "Should I move this way a little bit? Should I move that way?" And I think that's where innovation, uh-

WHITNEY Mm-hmm (affirmative).

DAVE Innovation comes out of that tension.

WHITNEY Mm, I love that. Is the tension of navigating the paradox is where the innovation and change comes. Oh I love that mental image, especially 'cause you provided that road and those, those guardrails; fascinating. So, so what do you think is happening, 'cause you, you outlined this formula, it's five step formula, very straightforward, uh, for a-, achieving accountability, you've got to have this conversation.

I love your suggestion of when someone finishes ... A, a great metric for you, as a manager or a leader, is when the person walks out of my office do they feel better about themselves or worse? Like that is a great metric. Now the question I would ask for you is when a manager is not holding people accountable, what's happening? 'Cause it's so logical right? "Of course I'm going to hold people accountable." Um, but, but oftentimes we don't. So what are you seeing there?

DAVE I was coaching an exceptional leader yesterday, one of the best leaders I've ever, ever worked with and. And, um, and she's probably in a position to have to let an employee go.

WHITNEY Mm-hmm (affirmative).

DAVE It's tough, it's hard, I think we've all been there. And she said, "I've been putting it off, and putting it off, and up sleepless nights." My first comment to here is, "Thank you. If you're not having sleepless nights about letting somebody go, you shouldn't be a manager. This should be hard, this should be difficult, this should be heart-wrenching.

But on the other hand, if you don't do it, you not only hurt that employee, and what he or she is feeling. Because they're not able to do the job the way they want, you're also hurting all the other employees who need to respect your ability to make hard decisions. So let's walk through why, uh, your mindset about how you have those accountable discussions."

"What's the fear you have? And to get behind some of those fears. Uh, who are you doing this for?" "For the employee." "What's your intent in doing it?" "To help this employee find a job where she or he may fit better. They have great skills, but they don't have skills for this job."

"So how are you going to share that with them, and how are you going to frame the conversation?" "I'm here as, as a leader, as somebody who is a leader, who has to navigate that paradox of making hard decisions in, and, and still being warm and attentive. I want to help you find a place that works for you. This one's not working. How can we make this better and share that data, uh, in a positive way?"

Now. I said to her, uh, and she said, "I'm still scared." And I said, "That's fine. The, the fear is okay, but you still have to move, because if you don't move, you send a signal that you're walking away from your stewardship as a, as a leader or, or, manager."

WHITNEY Mm-hmm (affirmative).

DAVE And, and I think sometimes leaders think that they're doing employees a service by not sharing the information. I mean I'm- ... I was out, yea-, uh, sounds like I'm out for dinner a lot, I've talked about weight four or five times.

But I was out for dinner, uh, last night even and, and my wife said, "You know, you've got some stuff on your chin." And I rubbed it. And she said, "It's still there." Thank you. I'd rather have my wife tell me I have a little crust on my chin, then walk around and her saying, "Oh I don't want to offend you." Just make it real.



WHITNEY Right.

DAVE And-

WHITNEY [inaudible 00:20:25]

DAVE Make it, make it positive. In fact, I, I'll go one step further, 'cause I hope your listeners like specific. So this company we worked with in the Mid-East, what makes a good conversation? And there's dozens of great books out there, Vital Smarts, have done great books. I love to boil down, really simple things.

When you have a conversation with the employee say three things: Number one, "Help me understand. I'm here to coach you, I'm here to help you, I'm not here to punish you, I'm not here to judge. I need your help understand."

Two, the data, here's the data. "You've missed these deadlines." "Uh, Dave, you've got some crust on your cheek." Here's the data here's the evidence. Number one, "Help me understand." Number two, "Here's the data." Number three, "So that we could improve the program."

I, if I coach somebody, they sit down, say ... positive conversation, "Help me understand the data to improve." And, and following those three very basic, uh, steps will help a leader become a coach, not a controller. And, and that's what we've tried to do to, to build that accountability.

WHITNEY Mm, okay, fantastic. And I really appreciate your giving people really concrete, um, suggestions because our listeners find that incredibly helpful. Um, okay so, one other question from your latest book and I, I suspect this weaves its way throughout all the work that you do, not just in your latest book. But you talk about your talent, your formula for talent. And I'll just mention it briefly and then would love for you to, to riff on this for a minute. Talent is equal to competence times commitment times contribution. Love to hear you-

DAVE Sure.

WHITNEY Tell a story or, or just-

DAVE Uh-huh (affirmative).

WHITNEY Talk about it.

DAVE Let me, uh, first of all and it, it may become evident from what I've done. My, my graduate training ... 'member I'm obsessed, I'm consumed about organizations. I was so lucky to have a faculty advisory team who taught me, uh, uh, to get rigorous about my thinking.

And so my PhD is in numerical taxonomy, uh, statistics and math, and the theory of taxonomy is to take complex things and make them simple. So you've seen me do that already in this conversation around accountability; there's four steps around, uh, conversations that are positive, there's three, three steps.

In talent, there's just so many books and it's a broad issue. How do you simplify that so that a leader, or an organization, can improve their talent and help 'em win? Competence. Do we have the right people, with the right skills, in the right job, at the right time? Have we brought 'em in, have we moved 'em through, have we moved 'em out?

We've identified specific things in each of those three domains of competence. Getting the right people in, if you hire the right people, a lot of the business challenges are done. Do you match people the job. Do you set criteria, you orient people, do you move 'em through?

Do you do training, do you do coaching, do you do performance reviews? Are we giving people experiences in, in, in ability to move through? And then do you appropriately move people out, as I just talked about the coaching I did yesterday?

I think, uh, people have said a-, and I studied organization talent in HR for a while, "Is there one magic pill?" And, and people are shocked when I say, "Yes there is." They say, "What is it?" And I say, "Take your lowest performing employee and place him or her in a competitor. And then say to that employee, 'Stay there for a long time, just keep doing exactly what you're doing now.'" And actually somebody took me seriously, uh, that's a complete joke but, but it's true.

WHITNEY (laughing)

DAVE We have to retain and remove people. So competence is getting the right people inside the tent. Number two, are they committed, are they giving their best energy? Uh, there's so much work out there around, uh, engagement and commitment and, and the Gallup 12 items, the engagement stuff that ... How do we make sure people are having the commitment that they need to have? Do they, do they work hard? Uh, showing up is the hands and feet, commitment is the head, in the mindset. And then what we found is contribution. Sometimes people are 'committed' behaviorally, they show up, but they're not showing up emotionally.

WHITNEY Mm.

DAVE They don't have your commitment do, somebody, I ... You've done a lot of brand workshops. I'm assuming you've had people show up to the brand workshop, they go through the motions, they do a, a, a storyboard or something; but you can tell that their heart and soul is not into it. So competence, hands and feet, am I there? Commitment, my head I, I, I'm there, and my head's there, my behaviorally there. Um, and then contribution is my heart and soul.

WHITNEY Mm.

DAVE And how do we capture all three of those? I think the field is ... If I, uh, I, uh, I, I know somebody who loves S curves, probably even more than me, and I love it; that's you by the way. I, I love S curves. I think on the competence S curve, how do you find people, how do you train 'em, how do you develop 'em? I think we're 70 to 80 percent of that curve. We have a lot of tools, we a lot of history, a lot of research.

On the commitment curve, I think we're pretty good at that curve. How do you get people to show up? On the contribution piece, how do you get people to give their heart and soul? I think we're moving up that curve, but we have a long way to go.

So, we've written a book called *The Why of Work*, which is about contribution; I've been working on that. I'm not doing books, although we're talking about a book. I'm, I'm finding posting on LinkedIn lately gets me to get ideas out a little quicker, but I keep working. What do we do to give employees ... And the buzzword today is experience, that help them feel an emotional connection to their firm?

And so those are the three pieces, uh, in the stuff you can find on things we've written lately. We have 18 specific practices in those three areas that a, that a le-, leader can look at to try to improve in those three areas.

WHITNEY Mm. I love that you broke that down into the S curves of the 70 or 78 percent of it the way they're on the competence, 70-80 percent on the commitment, but only maybe 30 or 40 percent on [inaudible 00:26:37]-

DAVE Would you agree with that?

WHITNEY Um-

DAVE So the question went, "How do I get the right people-

WHITNEY Yeah.

DAVE In the company?

WHITNEY Yeah-

DAVE Comma.

WHITNEY Yeah, yeah there's a lot of tools to get the right people in; I agree with that and then-

DAVE And-

WHITNEY Thinking about the commitment-

DAVE I-

WHITNEY Yeah-

DAVE Would not put that at 70, 80, I'd probably put that at 50, 60.

WHITNEY Yeah, 'cause, I mean, if we look at the engagement scores for most companies they're, they're not super high. But I think people start out committed, but I think the question is ... And this is, this is why I think we pull back into maybe the 20, 30 percent level for the contribution. Is that once they get in, they realize that there's, potentially, a mismatch between what they thought they were going to do, or there're not mechanisms-

DAVE [inaudible 00:27:16]

WHITNEY In place for them to-

DAVE Great point.

WHITNEY Deal with it to gain that momentum. So the, the contribution, their ability to contribute, um, is not there and so then the commitment starts to wane. Um, so I love that you, you brought that up, and, and you also raise something interesting. Which is, uh, you wrote a book called The Why of Work, you co-authored it with your wife. Wendy Ulrich, who is a psychologist, she's written a number of books herself, they're excellent, um, truly excellent books. What's it like co-authoring a book with your partner/wife?

DAVE Uh, how long have you been in a relationship with your partner?

WHITNEY Um, for several decades.

DAVE Have you ever tried to wallpaper together?

WHITNEY (laughs) No, we have not. (laughing)

DAVE Uh, Wendy and I have been together 44 years, so it's a long time.

WHITNEY Uh-huh (affirmative).

DAVE And we have, we have, we have tried to wallpaper together and it was not easy (laughs), 'cause it requires an incredible coordination of glue.

WHITNEY [inaudible 00:28:20]

DAVE And, um, uh, we have very different styles. Uh, uh, the good news is my wife is a whole lot smarter than me, and she writes books at the intersection of psychology and spirituality. She has an MBA, and then she has her, uh, PhD in psychology.

Um, that book came out of a shared set of experiences we had, and we wanted to share my more focus on business, Wendy's more focused on meaning and psychology; and it was a delight to write. Uh, although it was difficult, because I start with structure and logic, she starts with beautiful words and images.

Uh, one of my friends came up said, "Dave you've written a lot of books. I've read the first paragraph, This book is very different, it's actually interesting to read."

And I said, "You know my wife wrote that." And, uh, anyway. Um, we love working together, I, I just published a thing on LinkedIn yesterday, on Tuesday, uh, and I quoted Astrid Tuminez a wonderful thoughtful colleague who she said, "Marriage is a good conversation." Wendy and I have good conversations-

WHITNEY Mm.

DAVE And, uh ... By the way, I think an organization is a good conversation. How does an organization have good conversations about your area, which is dreams and brand? About daily routines, about oppor-, opportunities, about challenges? Wendy and I have good conversations.

Some of those turned up with children and grandchildren, which is the highlight of our life. Some of those turn up with wallpaper not done very well (laughs). And some of those turn up in books that we work together. And some of those turn up with projects where we team, team up.

WHITNEY Mm, very fun. Okay, so, um, question for you. Uh, you know, in my parlance if I think about this idea of high growth individuals, um, and, uh, the S curve of learning, you in many ways, um, you've been in, in this field for, uh, a couple of decades, are at the top of your S curve of learning. And so, what do you do to allow yourself to stay engaged and continually excited about these ideas? How do you, how do you, what's your, your protocol for staying fresh and, and not getting to that point where it's so easy to do when we get to the top of an S curve and say, "Well, we've already tried that?" So or it's been-

DAVE I-

WHITNEY Done before?

DAVE Yeah-

WHITNEY What-

DAVE It's a-

WHITNEY Do you do-

DAVE Great question.

WHITNEY To stay fresh?

DAVE Well, as I said, I think I hope my brand is to continue to learn. And I operational I, I mean that's my purpose, that's an accountability. I wanna be known for somebody who learns, who stays fresh. So, um, uh, uh, what are the objectives?

I try to write books in multiple areas, I don't want to write the same book. So I've written books in HR, leadership, talent, organization, and I try to force myself to stay fresh. I and, and now ... let me link it to S curves. I think S curves are, are not linear lines, I think at the beginning of an S curve you have a lot of variance.

So at the beginning of the bottom left of an S curve, it's, uh, it's two lines that are quite wide apart. As you move up the S curve, they begin to come together, and you begin to get some sense of standardization. That's the beauty of an S curve is the variance, or this paradox, whatever you want to call it, is wide at the beginning, and then as you move up, it begins to standardize; so that's my view of an S curve. It's not a linear ... It's not one line, it starts just two lines that then become one at the top.

Second, I think there's a challenge for me of not staying on an S curve. I think the challenge is about 60 to 70 percent up an S curve around, for example, talent, how do we find good people? Once I'm up there, personally, 60 to 70 percent, I like to start the next S curve.

WHITNEY Mm.

DAVE I like to say, "What's the phenomena I see?" For example this book, uh, and, and we found a story that captured that, it's the first story of the book is that ... Um, I'll tell the story and then it got me ... I'm 60 per-, 70 percent I'm ... Actually at 70, 80 percent up the S curve in organizations, around building organizations, around capability, and culture, outside in; I think I've got that.

And that I think, "Is there a phenomena out there ..." My compulsion with organization, "That forces me to think differently?" Here's the quick story: woman's on the beach, um, happens to be in the United States, in Florida, with her two of her sons, eight and 10 year old boys, and her mother.

The boys go out, they're a riptide, they're scared to death, they're screaming, big riptide. The mother jumps in, the grandmother jumps in, five other people from the beach jump in, and a strong riptide is pulling everyone out to the ocean. Within about two minutes, about 80 people join arms, and they form a chain 300 meters long. I mean, what an incredible visualization, and they save these nine people.

WHITNEY Mm-hmm.

DAVE You know-

WHITNEY Mm-hmm (affirmative).

DAVE That hit me, and I've been-

WHITNEY Yeah.

DAVE Looking in my compulsion about organizations. How do organizations reinvent themselves? And there's, a-, a-, again at the beginning of the S curve there's all kinds of new ideas: exponential organization, uh, ambidextrous, wholeocracy; I think we're at the beginning of an S curve, or organizational reinvention; anti-bureaucracy.

But as you move up the S curve, there's a need for those diverse ideas to begin to coalesce, to come together. So Arthur Yeung, my co-author in China, and I began to say, "Where are the ..." You take that, that incredible beach story that Michael Phelps could not have saved those nine people, the best swimmer in the world, they needed a team, they needed an organization.

And then we go out and say, "There's a lot of innovation going on. How do we take the spirit of taxonomy and try to move that up the S curve?" And we find out there's incredible innovation in China with large companies Ayer, Huawei, Alibaba, Tencent, JD.com, and in the U.S. with Amazon, with, uh, Apple, with, uh, Facebook, with Google; let's go study 'em.

What do these companies seem to have in common? Now we're not claiming that we're going to do the In Search of Excellence, 62 Great Companies or Good to Great. We just want to distill out of these companies how did they take that swimming story of the incredible people, which is teamwork, peo- ... I know somebody's written a great book on teamwork; that's a great piece of the puzzle. But how do you pull all those pieces together to reinvent large monolithic companies?

WHITNEY Mm.

DAVE And that's what we went out and studied, and, uh, we saw some patterns, uh, in that process and I think what we're trying to do is to take this issue of organizational renewal, reinvention, whatever metaphor you want, and move it from a high variance at the beginning of an S curve, maybe 40 to 50 percent up it, so we're beginning to get some principles.

So you say, "How do I do that?" I go look at questions, and I know you do this because I've seen you present with such wisdom. You go look for a phenomena that doesn't fit; I call it a wrinkle on a shirt. You were in the investment community, I did a whole bunch of work on, on intangibles. Why do two companies in the same industry, with the same earnings, have a different market valuation? That's a wrinkle. Two companies with the same earnings should have the same market value.

Here's an insight: it's not about your earnings, it's about your intangibles. That led us on a stream of four or five years of writing and research to explain a simple question, and now our question with this book, "How do some companies that are big, not small, renew and reinvent themselves to move forward in a new way?"

And I think we've got a few ideas about that, we don't have definitive answers, we're not going to get to the 90 percent of an S curve, but we've moved up an S curve. And then I hope there'll be another S curve, I've, I'm, I'm beginning to explore what's that next S curve that's going to help people-

WHITNEY (laughing)

DAVE And organizations?

WHITNEY Right. What are you going to jump to next? So on that book as, uh, as be-, be-, be-, before we start to wrap up for this mo-, more, most recent book *Reinventing the Organization*, what are one or two just teasers that you can give to us of things that you found for, for people who are inside of an organization trying to think, "Okay, we've got to reinvent?" What are one or two teasers, or suggestions, that you would have for our listeners?

DAVE Great question. Outside in. Um, reinvention is not who we are and what we do, it's what others get from who we are. Uh, for example, if you're trying to be a more effective leader, and you do a 360, and you get your competency score about vision, engagement, and all this stuff, I think that's 20 percent useful.

How do my competencies help me win with customers, with investors outside the company? And so the whole goal of reinvention is not to reinvent, its reinvent so that we win. HR, in the area I spent some time at, is not about HR, it's about HR so that we win in the marketplace. And so we often think value is what we do and, in fact, value is not what we do, it's what others get from what we do.

WHITNEY Mm.

DAVE And, and that outside in logic ... It's not that we have a good team, it's not that we have, you know, here's five characteristics of a great team. Will that team help us succeed at serving our stakeholders? And I love to go to outsiders, customers, investors.

Um, and, and, I, I won't go too long to bore your readers, but I, uh, the question I've been asking lately, "What's the best thing leaders and HR professionals can give an employee in the company?" And the answers are wonderful, they're, "Give employees vision, opportunity and, and in-, incentives, rewards, relationships." And I go, "Yes, yes, yes, yes."

This is the best thing HR, or leaders can give an employee, and it's an organization that wins in the market. If we don't win in the marketplace, all of those wonderful things are mute. And so the issue is how do we tie the things we do inside a company, agility, why do we do agility? So that we win in the marketplace, so that our customers today and tomorrow, our investors today and tomorrow, are willing to put their, their energy with us.

And that is such a simple idea: value's not defined by what we do, it's defined by the receiver and what they get. And, and that outside in filter in everything we do ... We just had a staff meeting today, hypothetically. If a customer, or an investor, debt or equity, maybe somebody from, uh, from Rose Park, a great advisory firm ... That was a shout out ... If they sat in and watched this meeting, would a customer be more or less likely to buy our product? Would Rose Park, an advi-, investment advisor be more likely to give us a buy versus a hold? If what we're doing inside isn't creating that value, we're in trouble.

And, and final caveat. The, the Business Roundtable in United States, 180 executives signed a thing: it's profit and purpose or people; the P words. I think it's wrong, I think it's profits through purpose, it's profit through people.

That, those things are not two guardrails disconnected, they're paradoxes that you have to navigate. And, and in our work, what we found is if you can connect what we do inside in all the

internal organizational systems, to the outside value of customers and investors, then it's, it's a filter that tweaks a little bit what we do.

So if we have 10 leadership competencies, the question I love to raise is not, "How did you score versus a national or global sample." It's, "Which two or three of those 10 are going to have the biggest impact on the stakeholders you care about?" Now one is, obvious-, is employees-

WHITNEY Mm.

DAVE To increase their-

WHITNEY Right.

DAVE Engagement.

WHITNEY Yeah.

DAVE And, and that's a key one. But it's not employee experience that matters, alone, it's the experience that drives customer experience. So which of those 10 competencies gave our customers a better experience? Which ones gave our investors a better experience, so that the organization is stable enough to enable employees to create a virtuous cycle? Profits through people, not profits and people; it's through people. And, and people become the antecedent, or the lead indicator, of creating that sustainable profit.

WHITNEY No.

DAVE Well you didn't expect that, I just court-

WHITNEY That was good.

DAVE Now you see my organizational compulsive-

WHITNEY Yeah-

DAVE [inaudible 00:40:49]

WHITNEY I love it, that's so, I love that profits through people, um, profits through purpose; very powerful. Okay, couple of final questions. For those people who are listening, intrigued, um, you've got this vast body of work, they need to start somewhere, um, would, is a good starting place to follow you on LinkedIn, or is there some other suggestion, or in addition to that, what would you say for people want, who want to get more familiar with, with your work who don't already know you?

DAVE Really simple, [LinkedIn](#). I've decided about two years ago, I've written a whole bunch of books they take, and you know this, hey for you it's probably quicker than me, I'm s-, take forever to get books at it, it'd take a year, year and a half. I post a new article every Tuesday on LinkedIn.

WHITNEY Okay.

DAVE And so-

WHITNEY So that's the best place.



DAVE Every Tuesday at LinkedIn, there's a new pla-, new piece.

WHITNEY Got it. So of all that you teach, and, um, and, and work with organizations, corporations, individuals, um, uh, a-, a-, across HR, across talent, across organizations, what ideas or principles have been the most challenging for you to implement in your own organization/business?

DAVE That's a great question. I'd love to ask you the same, but we'll go too long on that. Uh, I think this concept value is defined by the receiver more than the giver, outside in, it's not what I do, it's what somebody gets from what I do.

That sounds so easy, but you talked about Wendy, my wife, when, when I give Wendy a gift, who defines the value of the gift? It's her, it's the receiver. I don't often have that unconscious bias in my head I say, "Oh, I'm going to get her this, that's really cool, and, and I'm going to get her tickets to a sporting event." And, uh, the that doesn't go over very well. Um, I think that outside in logic is really tricky.

Number two. I think there's got to be, and I hope my brand, my identity, is creating value, that's it. My second I hope is learning. The, the, the present is not the past, and the, and the present will have to change for the future. And so what's next? What's the next I, I'm not very good at going the last 20 points of an S curve; I'm pretty good at jumping S curves.

What's the next S curve? What's the issue out there that I hear executives having a lot of variance the beginning of the S curve. What are they wrestling with? Is it organization renewal, is it experience of employees, is a retaining employee, what's the issue?

Is a digital economy? That's one that's getting so much press that I think we need to begin to get some, some movement up the S curve on. What's the issue out there I hear people kind of musing about? And so me it's two: one, outside in, value defined by receiver, two, learning growth mindset, willing to fail and fail forward. Those would be the two that I think that we-

WHITNEY How, how hard is to, to grapple with inside the organization?

DAVE Yep.

WHITNEY Okay.

DAVE Yep.

WHITNEY All right. So you mentioned earlier Bonner Richie, who as a person who's been really influential for you and your work. Who are one or two other people that you have, that you really feel you stand on their shoulders, as you-

DAVE Is, is, is-

WHITNEY Do this body of work?

DAVE Is this where I'm supposed to say, "Whitney Johnson?" (laughs)

WHITNEY (laughing)

DAVE No, I, uh-

WHITNEY No-

DAVE I-

WHITNEY The reverse, but-

DAVE (laughing)

WHITNEY Yes.

DAVE Um, I, I, people often say, "What's the best book you've read?" I don't like to read books, I like to read authors.

WHITNEY Mm-hmm (affirmative).

DAVE Um, and, and, I as soon as I say this, I'm gonna miss people. I really like Ed Lawler, uh, because the authors have a sustainable stream of work that changes. Ed has just evolved his work over decades. Um, Jeff Pfeffer-

WHITNEY Right.

DAVE A lot of people have one author, and they do the same book six times with different titles. Boy, Jeff has influence, to people, to systems, and he is just such a thought leader. Linda Gratton -

WHITNEY Okay.

DAVE Has moved her work in some remarkable ways. Rahm Sharon, um, I, I, I can't, uh, begin to believe the life he lived with no, no home, and travels. But he constantly reinvents himself-

WHITNEY [inaudible 00:45:00]

DAVE Trying to become new and different, and. Uh, an incredible thinker. Uh, I like Gary Hamel.

WHITNEY Okay.

DAVE The, the Gary's mentor was C. K. Prahalad, and I can't, uh, say enough. C.K. was my mentor when I went to the University of Michigan 30 years ago, and, uh, tragically I think passed aw-, tragically passed away at 69. And, uh, he was one of the, the most poignant and powerful, uh, mentors for me in what I was doing.

WHITNEY Wow, okay. Love it. Thank you.

DAVE Who, who, who would be on your list just real quick? I know we're at the end of our-

WHITNEY Uh-

DAVE Our time.

WHITNEY People who have really influenced my work, I mean, absolutely Clayton Christensen, I mean, hands down. Um, he is right at the top of that list in terms of influencing my thinking. Um, I would say, uh, uh, Marshall Goldsmith has been a great mentor. Uh, Bob Proctor has been a

great mentor. Um, I would say Liz Wiseman has definitely influenced my thinking, as has Brené Brown. So those are-

DAVE Wow.

WHITNEY The people that immediately come to mind in-

DAVE Great.

WHITNEY Terms of-

DAVE Boy I-

WHITNEY Of, how I think.

DAVE I'd be happy to change my list with yours, those are all great people.

WHITNEY (laughing)

DAVE [inaudible 00:46:09]

WHITNEY Yeah.

DAVE And I gotta say, to be really honest, the person who influences my thinking the most, um, my wife, who with whom we have incredible conversation.

WHITNEY Yeah.

DAVE And probably my parents who taught me the value of serving others, that's my first principle, the value of value, and the commitment to learn. I think I was privileged to learn that from, from crib up, and, uh, I'm, I'm indebted forever to those folks.

WHITNEY Oh, what a lovely tribute to, to Wendy, your wife, as well as your parents. Um, so I guess I, I wanna ask you this very last, actually, a penultimate question is ... And you've kind of circled around this, but I, I wanna ask you that question more directly is what's your why? Why do you do what you do every single day?

DAVE Well I've got to round it out, uh, and I'm going to be a little repetitive because I spend an enormous amount of time thinking about that. I mean, I'm at an age, in a position in life where if we chose, we could probably 'retire'. I'm not going to do it. Why? I want to create value for others. I just I know that sounds sappy, it sounds silly, but it is so exciting.

And you've had this, I'm sure, to see your ideas get picked up and used in a company that helps the company or the people in the company be successful, and they have no idea where the, the ideas came from and.

And, and I don't, I don't, I'm at a stage in my life, I hope I haven't always been there probably, where I don't need the credit, but I want the impact, I want to create value. And, and organizational settings is where I was compulsive 40 years ago; I'm still there. And, and the other is I want to learn.

WHITNEY Mm.

DAVE I don't want, I, uh, we just did a class and everybody had to share their pet peeve; I'd love to hear what of yours. But one of mine is I'm so frustrated in this field when people repackage old ideas, "Oh, HR should get to the table." And I go, "Oh my goodness, I have to wear a leisure suit when I say that, 'cause that's right out of the 80s." I mean, move on, move on, get off this S curve, you know?

WHITNEY Mm.

DAVE And, and I really want to jump to that next S curve. Even at the risk of, perhaps, not having full knowledge and, uh, Indiana Jones, a, a visual in one of his movies walked across this cavern and didn't know where the next step was. I want to create value by reframing, and recreating, and envisioning what a future can be.

WHITNEY Oh, that's so good. Okay, any final thoughts that you would like to share today?

DAVE What's your why? I love learning from you-

WHITNEY (laughs)

DAVE By the way, that's ... I'm trying to model my passion, I mean-

WHITNEY (laughing)

DAVE When I say, "I wanna learn." I'm really ser-

WHITNEY Right, right. That's a fair point, touché. Okay, so my why is that I, um, I believe that people will be happy if we're willing to change. And yet I know that one of the scariest things, if possibly the scariest thing that any of us ever do, is to change.

And so if I can, through the frameworks, the S curve of learning framework, through the framework of personal disruption, and any other future work I do, make it so that people feel a little bit less scared and, therefore, a little bit more inclined to do things differently, to disrupt who they are today, for who they could be tomorrow because they will be happier, that's my why.

DAVE Yeah, I really love that. And, and I love the idea of disrupting, and I won't ask you any more questions. I'd love to ask you how do you continually disrupt yourself? Let me give an example of what I try to do to do that. And I know we've got past penultimate question.

When I used to teach talent, I'd say, "Here's the case study, here's the 10 steps." What I now love to do when I teach talent, or organization, or leadership is go into room and say, "Take out a sheet of paper. What's the biggest talent challenge you're running into as a leader, or your organization is running into?" Thirty people in the room, "Super over the next five hours, I guarantee you're going to get a solution to your challenge. Who's got one that's troublesome?" By the way, that's, that's, uh, teaching without a safety net. I have no clue where they're going to go. And that's the disruption for me, that's where I discovered the next S curve becau-

WHITNEY I love it.

DAVE And it's-

WHITNEY I love it.

DAVE I, uh, I just talked to some of my colleagues who are professors, and they looked at me and their eyes go big and wide and they go, "Are you nuts? You don't know where they're going to go." And I go, "I have no clue." You know, how do we pay people in China? I have no clue. And so I say, "Good we're a class of 30, let's go discover the principles." And, and, uh, for me, I find that force disruption-

WHITNEY Oh yeah.

DAVE Actually kind of scary, even today. But so we talk about chan-, what's the biggest struggle in change your company is facing, or you're facing today? We now have half a day, who's got one that's really critical they've got to manage? Go, that's the case study, we're not going to use Harvard cases, we're not going to learn about a company you don't care about. We're going to learn about you and solving your problem, I call that learning solutions. It scares the heck out of me, and I think it's good to be scared.

WHITNEY That is-

DAVE And it forces me-

WHITNEY Fantastic. So you ask the question, you pick the hardest one and you don't say, "Oh, by the end of the day, once I present this material, you'll have some ideas of how you can answer that question?"

DAVE Oh no.

WHITNEY You actually live-

DAVE [inaudible 00:51:41]

WHITNEY Action work through that problem?

DAVE Absolutely. So why is that a pro-, outside in. How-

WHITNEY That is-

DAVE We'll fixing-

WHITNEY Fantastic.

DAVE That problem help you win in the marketplace? What have you tried? And by the way, in four or five hours ... And, and we're trying to do almost speed teaching which been-

WHITNEY Yeah.

DAVE [inaudible 00:51:54] who's gonna, uh, who's got a problem similar to that? Because-

WHITNEY Yeah.

DAVE Of cluster, people they cluster.

WHITNEY Yeah.

DAVE Um, we can go through five or six mini cases and, and people stop and they go, "Wow, that wasn't kind of sitting back of the recipient of somebody who knows something." And by the way, for me, I sit down at the end of the day and I go, "Wow, I just learned something." I, this OCD, this organization com-

WHITNEY No-

DAVE And by the way that helps me, that forces me to be fresh because-

WHITNEY Oh yeah.

DAVE You say-

WHITNEY Yeah.

DAVE "Well, I've seen people teach the same case study 30 times, and they've got the solution before anybody has a question." I, yeah that doesn't always work, and by the way when it doesn't work, I go, "You know, I don't think we ... It's not me, it's the class of 30 people, gave you a very good answer to that."

WHITNEY Mm.

DAVE You know? We outta, we outta keep thinking about it, get a hold of us. Let's keep working it, 'cause ... Now generally with it, and, and that's called the collective, learning that's the, the, the, dare to dream, that's the work you've done is you have, uh, an intact team, the, the 80 people who saved the swimmers collaborating on a problem. And, I anyway, I just to me that's-

WHITNEY Oh yeah, that is definitely a personal disruption, because you don't know what you're going to get.

DAVE No.

WHITNEY You have no idea what you're going to get. I love that, that's fantastic. Which okay so very last question for you and then you can have the final word. So given that you're so focused on, on, uh, the structure and where people, you know, sort of sit in a, in a system and what that looks like. When you walk into a room and you're setting up for a meeting, how do you have people sit?

DAVE Uh, what I love to do, when I walk into a room, if there's a ... And you do a lot of these. I love to walk in the room and sit in the back and observe; so that's my first. I just love to sit in the back of the room, unobtrusive if possible, and observe. How do I like to have people sit? Uh, I generally let people sit at tables, and then get up and move around a lot.

WHITNEY Mm-hmm (affirmative).

DAVE I find sometimes people are uncom- ... I mean, I grew up in the [T-group 00:54:07] era, which you're not old enough to appreciate, where you'd have to sit in a circle, and you'd have to share what animal, mineral, or vegetable are you, and we can't go on until you self-declare. I want people to be comfortable-

WHITNEY Mm-hmm (affirmative).

DAVE           Where they sit. I don't like straight lines, that's not comfortable. I don't really like a circle where people feel sometimes too exposed too quickly. So I generally have tables and then I say, "How many of..." Uh, what I just said, "How many of you are working on a challenge in talent of finding new people?" Got it.

                  You're sitting at ... We have six at a table, we have five tables, "Could those of you who are wrestling on that issue go stand with each other for three minutes, and define that problem?" So you're at a table where you feel connected to a group, but you stand up in a four hour training session-

WHITNEY       Mm-hmm (affirmative)

DAVE           Probably four or five times in small subgroups around topics; so there's a lot of movement.

WHITNEY       Yeah.

DAVE           But I really enjoy the, the collaboration from teams.

WHITNEY       Yeah. Fantastic. Okay, like, like the, the swimmers who saved the person who was drowning in the riptide. Okay, final words, any final thoughts that you'd like to share with us?

DAVE           By the way, this is gonna be a funny place to end. Um, (laughs) but I believe it when I coach, and I believe it in organizations, and I believe it with you. Whitney thank you for what you're doing. Uh, as an observer of your work, we have not spent a lot of time together, I appreciate your willing to disrupt yourself, and to have your brand of building momentum in others. And I want to thank you for what you do.

WHITNEY       Oh, thank you, Dave, that is an unusual ending, but I will take it. (laughs) Thank you so much for, for being on the podcast and best of luck to you as you get to the 70 percent on this S curve and get ready to jump to your next one. Thanks again for being here.

DAVE           Have a good day.

---

It's fun to have a conversation that keeps me on my toes. I did a bit more talking than I normally do in an interview, but it was good to mix things up and have a back and forth conversation. A few things I learned from Dave are:

First, I love the idea of embracing a paradox. Instead of solving them, learning to live with them and the tension they create because navigating that tension is what allows us to innovate. Accelerant #3 in our personal disruption framework is embrace constraints. The paradox of having constraints is what gives you the tension needed to move up your current S Curve. It's the same here--navigating paradox is where the innovation and change comes.

Second, and my biggest takeaway boiled down to this: value is not defined by what we do or offer. It's defined by what the receiver gets. We could create what feels like the most valuable thing in the world, but if the receiver doesn't care, it has no value to them. If you've ever heard of love languages. It's like that. What's your receiver's love language? So, when we think about creating value for our stakeholders, whether our employees, co-workers or family members, we need to think about what will be valuable to them.

Practical Tip:

You heard both Dave and I talk about what we think about and care about when we have nothing else we have to think about, what is that thing for you? Once you've identified it, make time each week to give it space. Whether it's doing research, reading or writing about that thing. I'd love to hear what you discover.

Thank you again to Dave Ulrich for being our guest, thank you to sound engineer Whitney Jobe, manager / editor Macy Robison, content contributors Emilie Davis and Nancy Wilson, and art director Brandon Jameson.

I'm Whitney Johnson

And this is Disrupt Yourself.