Transcription - Dr Maria Nemeth Part 3

Welcome back, I'm Kim Baillie, he's Jamie Wadley, and this is Inside Exec. This week we're continuing our discussion with Dr. Maria Nemeth, and we're going to learn about how, as leaders, we see people through the red lens or the green lens, how we adjust to that in terms of our teams. And also about the theory that I've lived with for all of my recruitment days, about three complete changes of your career in any given time.

One of the questions that we sent you Jamie and I had a discussion over yesterday in preparation, we disagreed over. Well, we had different views about what it meant. So the question was, workplaces have changed dramatically in the past decade. How do we, as leaders, show and create and foster trust in our teams? And my take on it was that because so much of what we do now is done remotely in terms of meetings and interacting with people, that we are having to change the way we communicate or the signals that we pick up on. My example was that I have, in the past, had meetings where there's been up to a dozen people on the call. I find it difficult to keep track of everyone the way I might do in a physical meeting room. (Oh sure, sure, sure.) Just to see their reactions and to see if someone's pushing themselves further and further back in the chair and crossing their arms and all of the body language that I guess my career trained me to look for. And Jamie didn't think that the remote working environment made very much difference, that you could still pick up those signals, you can still see those things.
Are we looking at that as an influence in terms of our communication of these principles or doesn't matter really?

Well, I think it's this is a "both and" situation. What I've discovered is that it's more important and we get better results in terms of trust, when a leader learns how to view who they're talking with in a different way.
And we typically, especially when we're tired or hungry, stressed out, we typically say to ourselves, especially if this is going on forever, we typically say, "what's wrong with this person"? You know, come on, what's wrong with them? And then we'll say, I know what's wrong with them. And it's really up to me to fix them. And sometimes I kind of that, you know, wonder about their commitment, you know, I question whether they are really committed. I call that seeing someone through a red lens, that you're pulling for that kind of information. And when you pull for that kind of information, you will get it.

However, is that what creates trust? And the answer, of course, is no. In what way can I view the other person, which in seeing them that way, changes how I behave to them or toward them? For example, what if I were to see that this person is a hero in their own lives, you know, just like we all are. Joseph Campbell wrote, you know, all about the hero, hero with a thousand faces. And it was influential to George Lucas, you know, George actually said if it weren't for Joe Campbell, the Star Wars would never have gotten off the shelf. And they have gotten off the shelf because he taught me how to see people as being on a hero's journey. What if I were to see that the person I'm talking with right now, they do have goals and dreams. And a desire to make a difference. What if I were to see this person has an internal voice of wisdom? Whether or not they're using it right now is one thing,

but basically they really do have all their own answers if they're supported to seeing them. What if I were to see that this person right now is contributing to me? Well, look for ways in which this person in this interaction is contributing to you and am I willing to treat this person with dignity and respect. For example, leaders who have created incredible trust like Nelson Mandela. He was always more interested in looking at the contribution of the person facing him. That's why this one part of this movie about him where he's congratulating the soccer team for, you know, South Africa and instead of him, you know, accepting all their, you know, their joy and adulations, whatever, he started telling them what a difference they were making to him as well as the country. What if, and this is what the Dalai Lama does, what if I were to treat the person I'm talking with, with dignity and respect.
Can I imagine how the conversation may shift? Can I imagine the conversation when I'm seeing the person in this way, because people can read us, people know, they know if you don't respect them. They know if you think there's something wrong with them. Come on, we're very attuned to each other. What if they see in that experience that I'm treating them differently with dignity and respect. Do you think that that might engender some trust? (Definitely.) I call it the green lens.

And when I work with people, I show them how I developed the green lens as compared to the red lens when we say, what the heck is wrong with this person and you know, that kind of stuff. Because when I interact with someone in that way, of course, there's no trust. You know, they don't say, oh gee, Dr. Maria is just treating me with no dignity and respect and I love it. They say, no, wait, I better run for the hills. So people are exquisitely tuned into how we treat them and how we see them. And I've worked with so many leaders. I know I'm talking like a broken record, but I just want you to know that whether it was in Turkey, Costa Rica, the UK, Sweden, Finland, all over the US, I mean, wherever it is, people somehow catch on, people catch on. If I were to practice seeing you in this way, maybe some trust might come about, because it does. Does that make sense?

Oh, yes, it does indeed. I think we're just sort of thinking through what we need to process as well, because it's just so reassuring to hear those words and to know that that is a path that people could find.

Just before this escapes me, I don't think you sound like a broken record because I think what it is, it's the truth and the truth is the truth. And it doesn't matter if it comes up here, there or in the middle, it's still the truth. So no it's not a broken record. It's just the truth.

I was just worried that I was saying so much about all the people that I've worked with because I've been doing this for 50 years. So as you can imagine, I've seen one or two people. So thank you very much, Jamie. You're very reassuring. I appreciate it.

Just reflecting back, I've enjoyed every minute, and I've got plenty to think about it I can assure you.

Thank you.

If we circle back to talking about careers and in my long experience of recruitment and outsourcing as well, we talked about three complete changes of career in someone's life. So completely, not just taking the skills that they learned at one and going to a different organization, but a complete change and often used to use myself as an example when we were talking about it because I trained as an architect and I did that for a while. Then I was with an organization that discovered I was very skilled at public speaking. They then developed that and I worked at that for a long, long time. But in the back of my head, there was still something that was saying, be creative.
And so, in the past 10 years, my focus has been floral art, which is art with plant material, competitively because I just couldn't do it for myself, I still enjoy that pressure of competition and I recognized that. What I recognized in that time is that what I like is the planning and the preparation. I don't particularly enjoy the competition itself. And yes, I like to get a good result, but it's almost second to the preparation and the planning and all the excitement, the buildup.

Tell me again what it is that you do.

It's generally known as floral art or floral design. We get the title and we have to interpret that with plant material, not just with flowers. (Very good.) So, I thought, whilst we were researching and then listening to you today, is that three complete changes of your career, there's still internally things that you're recognising that you want to bring to the fore or that you enjoy doing or that there are skills or qualities that you want to be who you are and you're finding different environments to put them in. But are we also able to change the priorities of them? So, say initially in the architectural career, the creativity was the thing that was most important to me. I wasn't really looking for anything other than the opportunity to be creative, to think, creating, didn't want to be a part of a team, didn't want to be a leader, didn't want to do any of those things. But an opportunity arose where an organisation saw in me skills that I wasn't recognising in myself. And they said, no, we want to use these skills. So, are we able to have others recognise them in us and that allows us to bring them to the fore?

Well, yes. Now I would say that you love to be creative, right? And I wish I would have seen some of the work that you've done as an architect because I think architecture is fascinating. But that could be a whole other hour of talk. Then I would imagine that you brought creativity to public speaking. And then finally, that you've been very creative in floral art. So, although the expression of your creativity has shifted, the thing that brings you the most pleasure is to be creative. I would say probably, and I don't know you that well, but hearing you, I would say that whenever you get the opportunity to be creative, you flourish. And that's what really is important. The outward manifestation of that is not as important as that you get the opportunity to demonstrate what you value.

It's also about a yearning for it because I've stepped away from the competition side of floral art, the last couple of years and I do find that I get to a point where I think, is there a competition happening somewhere?

Sure, absolutely. Absolutely. That's the result of your creativity, you see, to

have it acknowledged by others.
But I think deep in your heart and soul to be creative is one of the things that you're here to express in your lifetime if I may be so bold.

We still do have some things we discussed with Dr. Maria Nemeth so, we're going to take a break now and follow up with the final part of the conversation next time. For now, I'm Kim Baillie, he's Jamie Wadley, we're talking with Dr. Maria Nemeth, and this is Inside Exec.