

E43 - Rooted & Unwavering - Hylke Faber & Filsun Moussa

Diana Belluomini 00:00

Coach, facilitator and award winning author of taming your crocodiles and his guests as they explore leadership greatness in today's episode of rooted and unwavering

Hylke Faber 00:16

Welcome to rooted and unwavering broadcasting, live from Phoenix, Arizona, and also Memphis, Tennessee. I'm very grateful that you are here, and I'm here today with my guest, philson, Filson, how are you today?

Filsum Moussa 00:32

I am doing wonderful and excited about this episode.

Hylke Faber 00:38

I'm really happy that you're here, and what a treat to be speaking with you today. Before we introduce you a little bit more, I want to say just a little bit more about this podcast, as I do at the beginning of all the rooted and wavering podcasts, this is number 43 and then we'll say a bit more about Matt Filson. So rooted and wavering was born with from the idea that it takes as a human and as a leader quite a bit of intentionality to choose who we want to be, and parts of us are pulling us in directions that may not be how we want to be and who we want to be, you could say points to potential who we want to be, that is just magnificent, and we can be distracted from that by what's happening inside of us. Now, of course, life doesn't fit into a box, so these conversations that we're having here are meant to guide people and to help people be inspired by the stories that they hear. And so philson is today our guest, and I'm so grateful for that. Filson comes to us with a very large and long season of experience. He's a seasoned leader in regulatory affairs, and currently serves as a senior manager of Medtronic cranial and spinal technologies operating unit. She has 14 years of experience, and she specializes in global strategy, regulatory operations and data analytics. She works a lot with data and utilizes advanced techniques to drive informed decision making processes within her organizations. She has a Bachelors of Science and Biology and also a Masters of Business Administration, in addition to a Project Management Professional certification, and she brings so much to her work. She's also a passionate advocate for empowerment diversity in the workplace, and she's a podcast host and a trained facilitator for hashtag I am remarkable workshops. We're going to learn more about those today as well. I'm very curious about those where she empowers individuals, particularly underrepresented groups, to celebrate their achievements and challenge societal norms surrounding self promotion, she has a deep commitment to service, and her endeavors also include her belief in the power of storytelling to inspire and connect communities. So when I first talked with Filson, I was just so struck by how incredibly open



she is and how clear she is in what she stands for. So Filson, welcome. First question for you today is tell us more about what you've learned about connectedness in your life and leadership.

Filsum Moussa 03:47

This is a very deep question, and I love deep questions because it makes you think, and I love to analyze things, if you can tell from what you read in my bio before I kind of share what I believe connectedness means to me. I want to share a little bit about how I grew up in a sense of why I've always been seeking a way to feel connected. I moved every two years from when I was eight to 21 the joke I tell people is my dad forgot we're not in Somalia anymore. I didn't have to be a nomad. So I would move, get connected, you know, make some friends, and then move again, and then move again. And I quickly learned how to kind of read a room, how to introduce, how to introduce myself, and really wanted to learn how to Sorry, got a little bit distracted. But in general, when I moved around a lot, I really I. Knew what it felt like to be unconnected, right? You go into a community, you don't know anyone, and you're not new, you're not part of that community yet. So I've always thought how to be connected, and then what I did learn is how to be welcoming. So that's kind of when I, you know, spoke to my passion for service. It is rooted in knowing what it feels like to be not part of something. And, you know, first generation American. And then I decided to wear a scarf very early in my life. So I then every time I moved, there was also some thing that people hadn't seen before. So learning how to navigate, establishing relationships with, you know, when someone's different and you don't know, you haven't seen, there's a little bit of fear there. So I kind of built that skill of, you know, helping people dissolve their walls, and I felt by me sharing and being open and welcoming, people became more welcoming to me. So that's kind of my focus on. That connection is, how can we solve these complex problems we have in the world? The only way we can do it is by coming together, bringing our minds together without those barriers.

Hylke Faber 06:23

Beautiful, beautiful. So I'm very struck Pilsen, by you're saying, you know, I decided to wear the scarf and tell us a little bit about the process of doing so, and what that means, and meant for you.

Filsum Moussa 06:41

For me, I can't say I know exactly where that spark of inspiration and love for the hijab came from, but I do know faith for me is very important. It's something that has grounded me, and we have a very clear and simple framework in Islamic faith around why we do things. And one of those things is living up to some examples in the Quranic texts, like Mary, the mother of Jesus, and, you know, people of the time of the Prophet. So those stories, I grew up with, those stories. And the one thing that kept consistent in all my moves was this connection to faith and finding a Muslim community wherever I went. And so the love of hijab came, I believe, very early in my life. And it's quite funny, because my mom wasn't wearing it either. So I remember one year, the first year I actually moved outside of the US and moved to Egypt, and my I had a summer class to get prepared to kind of learn Arabic. And the teacher that was teaching me didn't speak English and I didn't speak Arabic. I misunderstood his instruction. I thought that he was going to require he said, You need to bring a scarf. I understood you have to wear to school. Muslim



country, I guess I get to have to wear it. So I came home to my mom and they laughed at her, like, Haha, I have to wear it. She was really concerned when we're in the States, and she never, she was like, Yeah, you can wear but it's not mandatory. And in our faith, it's not mandatory to reach puberty. So I work even before it was required. And I was, you know, I felt empowered. I felt like with my decision, people saw me for my intellect, not as someone, you know, just how you know, that's the it's not the first thing you see about me. Now, you can kind of see my opinions and my point of view, but it's really important to me, from a faith perspective,

Hylke Faber 08:42

so beautiful I hear in that a sense of commitment and a sense of empowerment like this is who I am, and it's so interesting, because that is what to me this podcast, and this whole way of working, of connectedness, is about to get very clear about Throughout it all, what do I stand for? And hijab? Do I say that correctly to hijab? Yeah, hijab, you be for you being a symbol for that, that you own, of being yourself and some it sounds like it's a connection to your community, to your faith, to your love for God, for what, what, what's important to you. Is that correct? That

Filsum Moussa 09:26

is yes. Beautifully. Some summarized, thank you. Yeah,

Hylke Faber 09:30

that's beautiful. So, so tell us a little bit about that. This experience of discovering for you how this sense of connectedness with what you are about, how that has informed your life and your leadership

Filsum Moussa 09:52

in my life. So one of the key tenets of my faith is that everything's about. The intention behind it, right? If you set upon a path with the intention to do good, and that's rewarded, right? And say you wanted to do something good and something thwarted it that was outside of your control, there's this concept of reward, even though you didn't accomplish what you intended to do, but there's this inherent intention of good, and if you intend to do something that's not so good and you happen to be thwarted, it's a more civil faith that that won't be a counted negative side on you. But you know, if you do end up in that intention, a negative intention, there is always room for repentance. So that's kind of like the framework that I kind of live in my in my face. So that's so that, how does that inform me in my personal life? Many people who have children can understand when kids are in the stage where they're finding their voice or exerting their voice with you, and sometimes in their studies, they do it more for them, on the mom than the dad, because I face because they feel psychologically more safe with us exactly what they want to say. So for me, from a personal perspective, I'm always thinking about, what is my intention? How am I supporting how I'm going to give room for that growth? Because I know that my intention matters, not just the action, right? You can say, Oh, I did this, or I made it like this, but my intention also matters, and then how the my child or the person I'm interacting with is feeling. So it's not just how what I intended to do, but what I intend to do. Has it been effective? Is it effective? So if I intended to kind of provide guidance, but in the My daughter seeing it more as me dictating, how do I shift my approach to



really at the mark of my intention? So that's kind of on the personal side, but also thinking on a leadership side. I don't this authoritative leadership style. Never was attracted to me. Attractive to me. I actually never really thought I was a leader, a more of an influencer and a coach to to influence folks to see what the big picture is of what we're trying to accomplish, and then understanding what is the goals of the individual I'm on my team, and how can I coach them, influence them to get to that state where they can accomplish what they want to accomplish, or what we need to accomplish as a team or as an organization.

Hylke Faber 12:34

So very strong focus on intention now as a leader and as a mom and I would say those words are probably somewhat interchangeable in some areas, a lot of Venn diagram space in between those two. How do you set your intentions? Maybe you can give an example of your in your life where you've where you've really had to be conscious about setting your intentions and maybe even revisiting them, which I can imagine as well.

Filsum Moussa 13:01

Yes, I am an avid reader, and I love this concept of introspection and understanding, what are my true aspirations, visions and then and goals, right? So there's goal setting, there's vision setting. I think they're two different things. So I've been a avid student under discover you. It's an organization that is kind of like that, professional development, self help development, but within the framework of Islam. So that's an organization, and they do these sessions of Visionnaire. So it's like visualization. A lot of people do a vision boarding visualization. What are the things that you want to work on? But also tying it, because of my faith, to prayer. So we would, we select? So I've been doing it annually since 2000 Oh, I'd say 2013 every year I would set kind of, actually, when I did my first visualization, the reason I did it is the love of my life took a very long time for us to live in one place. It took us five and a half years. So I had this big prayer goal, focus, one, one thing I wanted was God to make it happen that we could live in one the same city. He was in Europe. I was in the US and immigration. It took us five and a half years for this to happen. So a year into it, I took this class, and when I went to my teachers, we only have one goal. I don't have six goals. No, you have a whole life, your whole human being. Yeah, so I went to six so and that. That started the trajectory of that setting, that goal, that vision, and then it went from that vision to and then that prayer, and then and there, there's supposed to be something aspirational, very. Her. And then that went to some micro goals and assessing how I'm going to get to where I need to be. So it's been something a muscle that I've been exercising for a really long time.

Hylke Faber 15:12

Beautiful, beautiful. I want to know more about what happens within you when you engage with intention and prayer. What happens within you? What is that experience for you to when you do that, when you set yourself intention, what? How does that impact your being? Maybe you can think of a recent time that you did that, and how does it impact how you think and how you act and like? How does it impact you tell tell us about what that experience is like.



Filsum Moussa 15:47

I think it's easier to kind of seek out that feeling of calm and prayer when you're in a very difficult situation, but it's more powerful when you do it intentionally, regularly, right? So when I first, when you first asked me that question, the first thing that comes to mind is when I actually quiet my mind and focus in deep prayer. There's a calm that watches over me. There's an understanding that no matter what's going on, that I will get through it, it will get better, or whatever I'm working towards, whatever is best. You know, I have a one of my mentors will always say, Don't be tied to the outcome, right? Don't be tied to how it's going to result, but do all the effort that you can with what you know, to execute on your whether it's, you know, something for your family, a home, you know, you know, we manage. My daughter has type one diabetes, so there's a lot of goals around, you know, getting her numbers in the right area. So there's a lot of practical things, emotional things, spiritual things, but it all comes down to wanting that calm and relief. And we have a tradition in the faith. We pray five times a day, but sometimes you're going through the motion, and I can tell the difference when I paused and calmed myself down, and how in between those prayers, life is just so much. It just seems calmer. You feel more relaxed, you're more grateful, versus when, okay, I'm just doing my duty, and I feel like faith and life is very cyclical. There'll be moments where there you're really up here, and you're actually doing the things that you set out to do, and then you have those valleys. And they, I feel like they, you get those valleys to kind of maybe reassess, readjust, and then it can come back up. And life is not linear. In my belief,

Hylke Faber 17:57

yes, yes. Beautiful, how you describe this, it's gonna play some of that back, because that was really resonant for me, and important, I think, for us as listeners to you, to hear that when you set yourself in intention, and you know, in prayer, and I I associate prayer with deep contemplation. However you do that, right? There's prayer has some baggage for some people, so maybe like deep contemplation, or prayer, or whatever it is for you, right? And, and I heard you say, then, then, then calm washes over me, and I start to see things will be what they need to be. I'm not as attached to the outcome things will work out. I'm relating that to as I'm part of a bigger picture. So my mind may not completely understand exactly right now how it's all going to work out, and I'm part of this thing. And then the other thing I heard from you, it's not stopping there. It's then also the full devotion to the act that needs to happen there in whatever part of your life, and I can only imagine philson with being a leader and a mother and a wife and a daughter and hood and friend and many other roles you play in your role, not in your life, how that can lead to a very full day. And what I hear from you is when you do so with that intentionality, grounded in that six times a day. I think it was six times a day contemplation and prayer that gives you this maybe in in management, speak the sense of flow. Would that be okay to say it like that?

Filsum Moussa 19:43

Yes, yes, and don't make a new prayer for me. It's five. No, I'm just kidding, 560, you can make it six. I think there's any time that you want to connect. You should connect those. Are just kind of those frameworks. So I do, but what I will say, when I think about flow, I love process flow. So you said the word flow, I think about all the process mapping and things like that to try to see where we can have



some efficiencies and things like that. But it's like building that routine, and how do you set yourself up for success? And you know, one of the things that I kind of always think about, you know, there's this book, what got you here wouldn't get you there. But there are some things in your life that that you know, calm you down, that get you through some there's some routines that are very critical for your homeostasis, right, to keep you even, and maybe something major shifts in your life. And I think that's where you can do that introspection to understand all right, do I need to adjust that routine to get me to a better homeostasis? So thinking about how, and I think going back to the internal knowing who you are, knowing how you're responding, sometimes we just react versus thinking about how to respond in in the scenario, in the situation. And maybe to give a more personal example is, you know, becoming a parent, it completely throws off your homeostasis, right? You're now responsible for this whole human being. So I have to, don't if my kids ever listen to the federal window, my son to think early talk about my daughter. He's the second so we got the first disruption to our human homeostasis. We got through it, and we I wouldn't imagine life without it, without my daughter, then my son came shortly, two years later, and he completely disrupted it. We didn't know what's going on. Ended up knowing he had food allergies. And through that, navigating that and establishing a better way of living and eating for him, and transforming how we do things for all of us. It was so shocking when my daughter was later diagnosed with type one diabetes, but also reassuring what she felt, what she said to me when we told her that, Hey, we gotta watch what you're eating and things like that. She's like, Oh, I'm just liking stuff. I He has food allergies. I have diabetes. So you think, Oh, I had this disruption, these things going on, but even this lifelong thing that she has to manage with her life, it's I could never have planned that outcome. You would never wish any challenge on your children. But I know that they have a close bond, because they both have some challenges and look out for each other. So my son was saying, How is O's numbers? And my daughter will say, did you read the label? Are you eating this? So they have this and they're six and eight, and they they they're older in their mind, because they have to be careful. But I wouldn't change it for for them to have that relationship.

Hylke Faber 23:14

I hear so much thoughtfulness and compassion and care in your household for each other. This disruption that rattles our homeostasis and then refining it. So tell us a bit about how did you learn? How have you been learning to find homeostasis, this sense of stability after disruption, either at home or at work.

Filsum Moussa 23:44

I think it's that constant belief in understanding that I can't understand the way the world works, right? You know you meet people that you know they've done everything right. They've done all the things that was asked of them, and major car accident happens, or we're in tornado Ali, a tornado happens. Life will happen around you, right? It will happen to you, but understanding what who you are and what you want to accomplish in the short time that we're here, and being clear on that, and living in that, in the moment. There's a quote, I think it's by Hassan navastri. You know, today is here yesterday. It's gone. We don't know if we have tomorrow. So not you don't plan, you don't have intention, you don't have long sided goals. But you have to put them out there. Think about them, but enjoy the moment



that you're in. And how do you do that is by reflection, by understanding and say today was say today you chose to use your energy to complain about something that happened yesterday, or that happened. Hour ago, you have the same amount of energy that you woke up, you can either increase the energy, or you can decrease energy, or you you know you're going to decrease and increase anyway. There's certain things that you choose to do with your time that can deplete versus filling it up. And I think every day that you make the choice to reframe a situation towards something that fills you up versus the negative things. And just to be completely frank, it's not easy to walk this world as a black Muslim woman. There are people who have assumptions about you you may have to tackle how you present this to that leader? Because, you know, maybe they're not hearing it from you, because there might be some unconscious bias whether it is true or not, you might have to think strategically. How do you utilize your network to get something done that you know is critical for the business? And 9080, 90% of time. It feels totally unfair, and it's true. What am I going to do with it? The system wasn't designed for me. I'm questioned why even belong here a lot of the time, but I know I belong here, and I'm confident that I'm here to provide solutions. There's a reason why I was created and why I'm standing why I was born in Texas, why I live in Tennessee, why am I there's a reason that I'm here, and no one can take that away from me, and I'm not going to allow others perception or insecurities to do to take away from my energy.

Hylke Faber 26:41

There's a reason that I'm here, and nobody can take that away from me. Like that is very clear, like a clarion call, I think for all of us, I hear you saying, I was born in Texas, and for a woman like me, the system wasn't designed for me, and I can give energy to that that depletes me, or I can work with it differently and reframe that situation. So tell us about that a little bit more. Maybe tell us about a specific situation, about where you intentionally had to, well, you never have to when you felt called to reframe and use your energy differently from maybe the way that your mind was tugging you to go given who you are.

Filsum Moussa 27:35

Okay, that's, that's a really good question, so the one that comes to mind immediately was maybe where I don't know if I completely reframed it, but I saw the writing on the wall right. I remember I was sent on a project and we were putting together. It was a new system that we were using early on our career, before, you know, even a manager. And I am one of those people who learn pretty quickly, and I have a I do have a and I good at explaining things to people the way we will understand. So I'll tailor my training. I've done this early on. I'm an oldest sibling. I think it's something I did since I was a child, how can I ensure that you understand what you need to understand based on what you need to do in the system? Right? So there was two of us who were sent on that training. I was a little bit more seasoned, and when I came back, we were supposed to divide how we were training the team, but do it together, and I was supposed to be this expert on this part of the process, this other person was supposed to be the expert of the other part of the process. And I saw that person struggling with the presentation of that process, and I took it upon myself to kind of be helpful and share it alone in that presentation. I was called to the office, and was, it wasn't very explicit, it was very indirect, but it was



but I got the message, you are to only present on this, and this person is to present on this. So the message I received was, don't use your voice dim. How smart you are because they're uncomfortable with how smart you are. So I was a bit frustrated, but I'm again, that core service is like, Oh, they don't want me to serve this way. But I didn't realize for several years. Is it was very hesitant to just take that charge to just so it affected me for a long time, because I was given that direction of, you know, I was very energized and excited to support and I said, Oh, I need to read the room and understand where I fit and how I should present myself in order for everyone to be okay. I don't do that anymore, by the way, but it was kind of that moment. That's why I said. It's not quite the same answer. But what I do is I think about all right, regardless of what everyone in the room wants or assumes is my role? What is the overall problem we try to solve, or the opportunity you're supposed to take over? How do I present it? Am I the right person to present it to be effective in that change? Because my goal is not necessarily I need to be the one who's seen, but I need to make sure if I have the right idea, or I've heard the right idea from others. How do I amplify it so I don't allow someone's uncomfortableness of potentially outshining someone to hinder me anymore?

Hylke Faber 31:14

Great. Well, we're going to take a short break. In a moment, we're going to, after the break, go a little deeper in how you make a transition like that, from basically being told, nah, your brilliance, your brightness, is not welcome here. Doesn't fit right here, to maybe being more of yourself, and at the same time doing it in a way that still helps you to achieve your objectives, being aware of the context, not being context blind at the same time, not being a slave to the context either. So we've been talking with with philson Musa, a seasoned leader at Medtronic at the moment, and a person who, to me, amplifies and exemplifies this very clear view of and commitment to this is who I am, and this is what I'm here to do with this short span of life that I have to meet I was a real clarion call from the first bit of the conversation we had already today. So maybe you've been listening through it and unwavering. We're going to take a short break and see you after the break.

32:24

You are listening to rooted and unwavering presented by growth Leaders Network, the leadership team and culture development company. If you would like to learn more about working on connectedness for yourself, your team or organization, please contact growth leaders network on LinkedIn, and now back to the show.

Hylke Faber 32:49

Welcome back to Ruther and wavering. Welcome back. Filson. Filson, tell us about you. This, this process that you went through. You said it took me a few years. Tell us about this process you went through to find more balance in this paradox of being yourself and at the same time being aware of context.

Filsum Moussa 33:14



I will say it really opened up for me around when the whole world kind of could not, you know, during covid, couldn't turn away from what was happening about with George Floyd, like we had this big, you know, Medtronic is a huge organization. It's always been invested in diversity, equity and inclusion, but it seemed like there were conversations we never had in the workplace. We were starting to have in the workplace in 2020 and at that time, I'd taken on leadership alongside several others in our employee resource group for African descent network, and we started at that time sharing the story of what it's like, the personal story of what it's like to navigate the workplace and our concerns, because a lot of things were coming out in the news, on the media. So we went on this kind of speaking tour throughout the organization, and I remember, I recall we're putting together this presentation with all employee meeting for our business and with all people leaders. Or I think it was maybe the entire team was like over 500 people on Zoom, and as the leaders were getting together with two groups, I basically said, Oh, I'm I'm not that great at speaking. I'm not going to do that, so I and I have someone. So what do you mean? You know, you're not good at speaking. And so I'm going to shorten this a little bit, but essentially, that's kind of where I had this. Aha, that, Oh. I can do this. I had that support. And then I did it over and over and over again. And then I realized I brought, you know, that service piece of myself I was able to serve better by being myself versus saying what people would like to hear. And I came and it also I realize a lot of people try it kind of rubs off on others. So if you doing it, you'll see more people doing it, and I feel like the more that we show up with ourselves authentically. And find it may not be speaking for you. Maybe it's, you know, you saw some issue that you wanted to go up the normal chain of command, but you you know, it may not get there. You find a way, creatively, without burning bridges, to get it there, because it's going to solve the problem, you know, and in the product, we're here to solve the problem of alleviating people's pain, extending their life. So it's so critical that if you have a solution, to get it to someone who's going to take action or to discern it's not the right one. But we all should speak up. Regardless what organization you're in, you should speak up. And you won't be comfortable to speak up until you've done the work to understand who you are, where you want to go, and how you can contribute to this society, this community that we live in.

Hylke Faber 36:22

You won't be comfortable speaking up unless you've clarified who you are, what you're about, where you want to go, and how you can be of service. This really, this deep orientation of service I hear on our conversation over and over. Tell us more about how you have learned, maybe in your life, and in your life, how you've learned about service, and what happens in you when you think about being of service, whether some as opposed to something else.

Filsum Moussa 36:59

I you know, some people feel like, oh, I helped this person. I'm so great. I feel like, wow, I've been given this opportunity to serve this person. And I get energized by that, that I was somehow like, I just remember, like, thinking I was on I remember I got Tiktok in Italy once I had no money, no ID, nothing, and someone we didn't know very well, he helped us in that moment. It wouldn't take anything so that relief that he was able to give me in my time of need, that's a powerful thing that you can do for someone. So I see when I'm serving is I'm allowed, I'm being given the opportunity to ease somebody



else's life. And then turn. My grandmother always said to me, whatever, whatever good you do, the fruits of it will help your children. So in that moment when I didn't have anything, I really felt that that's the good my mom does for others and seeing the fruits of it when I'm in need. And my grandmother said, Whatever good I did for my neighbors and other people when my mom was a refugee in this country and she when she came here, she was sponsored by Baptist preacher in the suburbs of Austin, Texas, from Ethiopia to there, and she said, God gave me a father when I came to America. And I firmly believe it's the good that my grandmother sowed in the goodness and my grandfather, what they used to do in their community, that your children and your offspring and your legacy will be those who come after you will get, will get those fruits of your labor. So if it's maybe someone a little bit selfish or not, but I think the more that we give and serve as a community, the better the holistic community gets, and everyone in the community benefits.

Hylke Faber 38:57

I love this idea of service as something that actually serves your future generation, that, in a way, is also so selfless. I love what your grandmother said, that your your children will gather the fruits of that. You can, of course, define children as a very wide concept, because we're all could say that next generation are our children. I personally don't have any children. That's how I think about children. I think everybody that comes after us are our children, and so whatever we serve now will actually benefit them. And as you talk about that, I sense a really deep sense of energy that comes through. It's like, it's almost like an alignment with reality. It's like, Ah, yes, of course, that's what we need to do. So tell us about how that situate, that that orientation of service then shows up in your day to day at work, because you have, you have a lot of responsibility at work. So tell us about how that shows up, how that. Shows up in meetings. How that shows up in how you think about what you need to be doing in a day. So how does that translate?

Filsum Moussa 40:08

So, you know, we're in a lot of zoom meetings lately, and a lot of the times when you go into these new meetings, you lose that initial Hey, how's it go? Sometimes it's a very superficial Hey, how are you? And what I do in every setting is say, for example, and I work within a very international organization. So if I'm talking to someone in France, I will see Bonjour. If I'm talking to someone from this other part, I will find something that brings that human connection into the conversation, and that's not superficial, and it doesn't take a long time. So I don't like long meetings that are waste time. I can get what I need to get done in a meeting, probably, probably in 15 to 20 minutes by asking good questions and preparing, ensuring there's an agenda, right? So we should be meeting for a purpose, because we all have a goal and to execute. We may not be tied to the outcomes, but we want to know, have we made the impact that we need to make. So in order to do that, I think it's all done by relationships and connections that people are you can create the best process. You can create the best machine. But if you don't have the right people talking to each other and understanding and aligning on the goal. It's nothing. Nothing is going to work. So how do you get that connection? Is you build that trust. You build that trust by being genuinely curious. So finding something to be curious about. If I go on a meeting in it's a lot of people who I say hello, I ask a question, and then I and I'm blessed with a good memory, so



typically I don't have to take too many notes, but I can keep that connection going around with that if I meet with them very regularly. If not, you know, I think about, I try to think of, okay, you're in this part of the world. Oh, I heard this part of like this, or I might do a quick Google search. Just even in that middle of the conversation is everyone's saying hi, or I'll put something in the chat, I think, making sure that touch, that connection that you're building with whoever you're working with, one on one in a group, setting, offline, when you're connecting an email, bring the humanness back to the conversation. You'll solve whatever problem you're trying to solve. You'll capitalize on whatever opportunity that you see in front of you, and you will deliver on the things that you've committed to deliver if you make those right connections.

Hylke Faber 42:31

So start with building that human connection that is one way to be of service by starting off with a sense of like, okay, what are you about? And however that shows up. And it can show up in your greeting. It can show up driven by this guided by this orientation to like, being curious about where they are, being curious about where they are. How do you bring this orientation of service, Wilson, when things get a little hairy, like when people are disagreeing with you, or maybe somebody says something to you that may be actually somewhat triggering or maybe even insulting. How do you work with that orientation Service

Filsum Moussa 43:16

First, don't lead with exactly how, like, sure you've calmed yourself down before you say something. You know, you're not going to serve anybody by going into situation hot. And sometimes you don't have a lot of room to calm yourself down, because it might be a critical thing. You know, there are times where we need to solve this thing, because there's a surgery in 24 hours, right? We are in less sometimes in 24 hours. So it's going back to asking the right question. I remember we were on this call. We've been trying to solve this problem. We've been going ping pong all over the place, and the tone I joined five minutes late, the entire conversation, the tone was very accusatory. Things are flying you. You know you can feel the tension. It's a zoom, but you can feel it. You can feel like you just, you throw someone didn't take out their cigarette button, put it in there. The whole thing was going to explode, right? You can feel it. So I said, and I was and I was on mute. I was like, really fuming. And I said, Okay, Filson, you're going to, you're going to be the one the match, who's going to light it all up, or you're going to be the sense of calm that's going to bring us back to reality. So I used the fact that I joined a little bit late. I said, Hold on everyone. I joined a little bit late I might have missed kind of what we're focusing on. So it's kind of more de escalating situation, placing a little blame on myself, you know, sorry, running late. I need to make sure we understand, and I don't think we're going in the right direction. So I made it very clear, the direction that I'm hearing right now is not going well. We're all here. What's our purpose at this organization to support the patient? I know you're trying your best. I. Everyone in this room is trying their best, but we're not aligned. So then I then I ask questions, because if you instead of saying you should vote, it's curious, what are the questions I need to ask to make sure we're on the right path? And I'm not going to say that that meeting ended with all our solutions, but it progressed more effectively, because I chose to disrupt what was that energy that was cracking, you



know, and just insert some questions and asking for clarity and reminding us why we're here in the organization in the first place,

Hylke Faber 45:35

so a service towards a purpose, like, why are we here? And you didn't put the accused or a finger to these people. You could have easily said, Oh, why guys having this, beating this, not make No, you didn't do any of that. What I see did was you notice what was going on, and you made a conscious choice to either be the in the master in flight, inflammator, or the one that was causing a deeper conversation to happen. So as you think about that, I was thinking about, well, how does Filson bring this orientation of service into the bigger world? And so much is going on, it seems to be always right, and then maybe in our generation, maybe more is going on, less is going on. It's kind of hard to say, but when you when you do, you watch the news.

Filsum Moussa 46:31

I do not a lot. I didn't get a recap. The News gives me a lot of anxiety, but I have and watch it, I will say, when I watch the news and I see some rhetoric that dehumanizes, I feel dehumanized by watching the news. I feel as if there are people on this earth that would be happy if I didn't exist when I watched the news. So I try not to do it too often. What I choose to do is make myself available for those who want to have honest conversation, to meet someone that they probably don't meet in their local community. I'm not Palestinian, but we have this concept in Islam that when one, when our community, our broader Muslim community, when one, it's like a human body. So one part of the organ is in pain. The whole body is in pain. And I will take that even a level further. We're here on this earth to take care of humanity when one part of our humanity, whether it's in Congo, Sudan, Palestine, you know, Flint, Michigan, still doesn't have clean water right here in the United States, when one part of our community is in pain, we should all be in pain. We should all be reacting to say, How can I be the best person to solve the problem and serve the community? And I don't think I have the answer to how to navigate the time that we're in. But what I do choose is not to bring the energy of the ignition, but bring the energy of let's have curiosity, conversation, connection, and I, I firmly believe there's goodness in everyone. Some people choose to amplify negativity, think in that scarcity mindset, and I will not put myself in the position to be harmed by folks like that, but I won't fall into the narrative that I believe everyone is like that.

Hylke Faber 48:59

Let's ground ourselves in connection, conversation, curiosity, and also, I hear you say, I feel it. It's not that I'm denying it, and I really appreciate that about what you're sharing today. Phyllis and I, I see throughout this whole conversation, being very real, like I feel what's going on the meeting, I feel what's going on the world, like we're all part of one body, whatever's going on. Yes, I feel it. And then make a choice. I'm not going to be part of the ignition or the negativity or the ongoing downward spiral. I'm going to choose to be something else in that and and I see you do that with such commitment. What I really curious about, Phil so with you is I feel such strength in you. How do you fuel your commitment? Us to be what you are and staying committed and true to your vision. How do you fuel that



Filsum Moussa 50:10

gratitude being forever grateful for the opportunities I have. I know that I'm Somali. I could have been born there. I could have not had access to the education that I had access to. I could not have had the parents that I had, like the foresight and the commitment and encouragement. I know that I am privileged to have what I have. So with this privilege, I have a responsibility. I'm in rooms that people who look like me are not typically in. Have opport I have the responsibility and sometimes the heaviness of being the only Muslim woman, black woman, even if I take the scarf off, black woman in a room that anyone has ever had a personal connection with huge responsibility. But I take gratitude that I have that responsibility, and I take gratitude that I've been given the foresight to know that I am privileged in this and and I would also add, all of us have a responsibility to reflect on what privilege we have and how we can make our country, our community, our world better, and I share who I am more frequently with the hopes that someone is inspired to do something, because if we have small groups of people changing every part, every zip code, that will have some real change. And I think what I'm doing is quite easy, but what students are doing right now to say that they want a change in this world. It's way bigger than what I'm doing. They are saying their entire future and livelihood does not matter to them and to we as humanity. Change what we're doing because they see that. I see them as the children that I should be serving, and they're teaching us a message on service, and I'm a firm believer. How can I ensure that I'm supporting them in the spaces that I'm in?

Hylke Faber 52:33

How can I be supportive in the spaces that I am in with the students taking a stand for saying no more. This is not working. And I also hear in what you're saying a tremendous sense of gratitude, and I know you're involved in an organization where your facilitator, we're getting towards the final minutes of our time together today, tell us, maybe briefly, about how you infuse this orientation of service in your work as a facilitator. There,

Filsum Moussa 53:12

I will say quickly, it's not natural for me to boast about myself my faith tradition and most faith traditions teach humble, but if you want to survive the corporate landscape, you have to learn how to be very clear on showcasing what you bring to the table and what I feel like I bring unique to the hashtag I am remarkable framework is helping people practice doing that in a way that they feel is authentic to them, it will never feel authentic to me to say I but how do I get the right balance, knowing the statistics that if I don't do that, I will be passed up for promotion, but I'm not going to do it in a way, and so the best way that I learn is by teaching. So I signed up for me to learn and then to further serve others and give them permission to do it in a way that means and resonates to them. Because you don't need to take a course or a workshop and just copycase Exactly what you see. You need to take it, understand it, digest it, and say, How is this tool? Will it serve me or will it not?

Hylke Faber 54:24



Hashtag, I am remarkable, and I think you are, and you know that, that you are, and I think everyone This world is what you're teaching us, I think is to say that that's true so much I want to ask you, what would you say to somebody who is just not feeling it today, who might be closer towards the ignition switch? I.

Filsum Moussa 55:04

Yeah, that's okay. Sometimes we have to do it in this industry. You're not going to always be the calm. And there are going to be moments where you are going to want to be the one who likes it, but be sure it's not in a place that you can't come back from it and know that it's better not to be but if you do, what are the lessons you can learn and dissect so you don't do it again?

Hylke Faber 55:31

Beautiful. Thank you for that. My final reflections, I heard so much in this conversation, Wilson about being committed and focused on who we are owning that about being in an orientation that comes from that of service, of claiming our own privilege by being of service, seeing service as something that benefits not only us but the people that come after us and the people around us, and also a very deep commitment to not be the ignition, but actually be the person that helps to Bring more wisdom into the situation, more connectedness, more conversation, more curiosity, also when you're starting from a place that you're starting from, where you know, as a Muslim, African American or not African, you're an African American woman. Would you call yourself that?

Filsum Moussa 56:37

Well, in America, we have so many boxes, so I'm a Somali American, because I don't believe I have the experience of those who didn't have a choice of coming here, but I'm so proud.

Hylke Faber 56:50

Thank you so yeah, thank you for that. So as a Muslim, black woman and all these things, and I love that you're talking today, not about having all the answers. I feel such humility in the way which you're speaking. So final words that you'd like to share with the listeners today,

Filsum Moussa 57:14

final words, you are enough. You know what you need to do internally. You just need to ask yourself the right question, no one is better than you. No one knows more than you. But you have to take the time from the screen, from the noise, from the negative thoughts, to really understand who you are, to figure out where you want to be.

Hylke Faber 57:42

Thank you, Filson, where you want to be, where you want to be. That is a beautiful way to end. If you have been enjoying this conversation like I have, you may feel actually slight, quite moved. I felt quite moved in this conversation. Thank you for sharing with us, Filson so clearly, authentically and with so much hard won wisdom, I would call that. We are getting to the end of our episode today. Who do you



want to be? Claim that Today we've been talking with Filson Musa, who is a senior leader in Medtronic and also an advocate for hashtag, I am remarkable with a lot of humility and a lot of service. If you like these kind of conversations in religion and wavering, you can subscribe to us on Apple Spotify and other places. We do these conversations twice a month. This was episode 43 next time, we'll be with another remarkable leader called seeds rinks from the Netherlands, who is a very senior leader, who is also a leader in the positive psychology movement and a wonderful coach and mediator, and I look forward to our conversation with him as well. For now, I hope you take something from this conversation today. For me, it's all about becoming more intentional, about claiming what I'm here for. Thank you for listening. You've been listening to root and unwavering where we help all of us connect more deeply to our innate potential. I'm your host, hylke Faber, and see you next time.

Diana Belluomini 59:41

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