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MBS (00:00):

Here is one of the great tensions, one of the great paradoxes of life, our life, your life, my life. On the one hand, I really think we are but flotsam and jetsam in the universe. Just thinking about how little our eyes, our brain takes in of the reality that surrounds us. I actually tried to look this up, I couldn't find an exact number, but I've heard it's less than 1%. Because to take in more than that would be just overwhelming. And even what we do take in, what we are present to, we can control almost none of it, and we can influence only an iota of it. And at the same time, we know there's a difference between when we're actively engaged in our own lives. When we're taking responsibility for our freedom, as my Mentor Peter Block would put it.

MBS (00:51):

And also when we're opting out or we're playing the victim role, or we're just not making the choices, not having the courage to make the choices perhaps, that are present to us, that are presented to us. But I like the paradox. I find it liberating in a strange way. It is both, I can control nothing and I'm an active participant in my own life. And the question to sit with is, so how do we, how do I, how do you navigate that tension?

MBS (01:23):

Welcome to 2 Pages with MBS. This is the podcast where brilliant people read the best two pages from a favorite book, a book that has moved them, a book that has shaped them. Steve Morrow is a friend of mine. He's an OD learning and development geek, a bit like me. He's got a far better beard than I do. He's a fellow Australian. And his role at Salesforce is very much focused on coaching and effective teams, and effective leadership. But Steve didn't start off in the organizational development and human development world. In fact, he began in sales and marketing, but soon enough, he started looking inside instead of outside at potential clients and customers.

Steve (02:06):

I don't know, I just got really interested in the people side of performance, and it seems so simple. You should be able to get a group of talented people, put them together and it works, but that wasn't my experience in the early parts of my kind of career, and with the sales teams I ran.

MBS (02:22):

This of course is not uncommon. When you step into a management role, you suddenly realize it's way trickier managing people than you thought. I mean in short, people, brilliant and messy, glorious and crazy making. Now some people back away from that, some people figure out how to do the minimum or at least the basics of what's required. But some people really lean into it, and that's

Steve. He really wanted to understand how to best manage people. And I was curious to know what motivated him.

Steve ([02:53](#)):

I think seeing that gap between what I thought people were capable of and what they were achieving just fascinated me. And I think finding really practical ways to help people be successful at what they want was a really nice thing to give, but it was also a really nice thing to get, I really enjoyed it. And so I think that probably cemented my transition into this being the work rather than having leadership as a component of my work.

MBS ([03:24](#)):

So as he watched this unfold, as he watched the river run, Steve began seeing the links between being a better leader, leading a better business, and living a better life. And there were people there that role modeled this for him as well.

Steve ([03:37](#)):

The HR director there, Greg Burke, who was great, wise old soul, it was a very young company. He was a bit like our organizational Yoda. He sort of brought the wisdom, but he just had this knack of seeing into people. And I think he saw into me, and really gave me a lot of the confidence, but also the clarity around where to contribute, how to contribute, how to grow.

MBS ([04:02](#)):

That's an interesting choice of words, an interesting phrase, "being seen into," I wanted to know more about what that means.

Steve ([04:08](#)):

I sometimes joke, when I grow up, I'll work out what I'm really going to do with my life. I've never been one of those people who sort of knew exactly what my career looked like and where it went. But looking back, I can see the red threads,

I know how it all joined together. When I was talking about the confidence he gave me as well as clarity. I think he was able to developmentally show me some of the career experiences and the areas of contribution within organizations. That really played to my strengths.

Steve ([04:38](#)):

And he, like great leaders do, he created opportunities for me to both contribute and be stretched. And the more of those I did, the more opened up. So I think there's definitely areas where I saw him putting me into things and I was like, "Don't you want someone who knows how to do that? There's so many good people, why choose me?" And yeah, I think it's that ability to find someone's place to cast them right. And then know how much or how little to do to help.

MBS ([05:14](#)):

Steve, tell us about the book you've chosen for us.

Steve ([05:17](#)):

Right. Okay. Tonight, Michael, I'll be reading from Fred Kofman's book, Conscious Business: How to Build Value Through Values.

MBS ([05:27](#)):

I love that. Now this is a book I've heard of, but not read. And I know people who know Fred, although I've never met him either. How did you come across this book?

Steve ([05:38](#)):

Well, I first met Fred when we worked together at 3 Mobile, or when I'd mentioned before, Greg had brought him in, we were doing some leadership and culture work there. And we've worked together since, and I've always been an avid follower. He's one of my many leadership in culture crushes, but his work's had a real major impact on me. I talked before around those links

between being a better leader, running a great business, and living a great life. And so I don't know, over the years it's been... Well, firstly, it's been a great source of material for me in the work I do. So I've learned and leveraged a lot, but I don't know, I think career wise, it's really focused me on both the work that I do, but also the style or the approach that I take and that I aspire to.

Steve ([06:22](#)):

That whole period albeit, well, 15 years ago now, is really an inflection point in my career. But when I look back on it most importantly, I think it's the personal aspect. I think what I learned from Fred and many others over that time and since, has really kind of helped me know what it means for me to be a better person and to try and be a better person, not just a better performer at work. So yeah, that's kind of how I came across him and how we've worked since then.

MBS ([06:51](#)):

And how did you pick the two pages to read? Because with good books, it's often quite hard to kind of narrow it down.

Steve ([06:58](#)):

Yeah, I mean, I found it hard enough to pick the book, let alone the pages. In the end, I kind of thought what really crystallizes the impact and the differentiation that I think this brings. And so I'm actually going to read a brief story that he relays in the book and it's about a sort of acceptively simple experiment. I saw him first do live, but it gets to the, for me at least, the heart of how we see the world, how we explain the world, how we show up, and the link then to the outcomes that we get. Whether that's as an individual, as an organization or as a society. So I think it's a really good example of what I call it everyday consciousness, not being lofty, esoteric, lives in a mountain kind of consciousness, but really practical awareness and choice on a daily basis. So yeah, I picked a passage that channels that.

MBS (<u>07:52</u>):

I'm excited to hear it. So Steve Morrow from Salesforce reading from Fred Kofman's book, Conscious Business. Steve, over to you.

Steve (<u>08:02</u>):

Thanks. It's tempting to channel my inner Fred, but I'm sure I wouldn't do the Argentinian accent or his [inaudible 00:08:08] justice. But the section title for this is Why Does the Pen Fall? "In my seminars, I conduct a simple experiment. I pick up a pen and let it fall to the ground, then I asked the group, why did the pen fall? Gravity is usually the first answer. Sometimes people point out that I dropped it. Both answers are correct, both gravity and my releasing of the pen caused it to fall. Most problems have multiple factors as well, but when we analyze them, we don't look at all of the causes.

Steve (<u>08:42</u>):

Normally, we focus on a single reason and look for a simple explanation. The question is though, what explanation is most useful? And in order to assess usefulness, we need to examine our goals. What are we trying to accomplish through the explanation? If we want to prevent the pen from falling again, then pointing out that the pen falls because of gravity won't help, as long as there's gravity, the pen will fall. And according to that explanation, there's nothing you can do about it.

Steve (<u>09:13</u>):

On the other hand, if we want to argue that the falling of the pen isn't my fault, then gravity is the perfect explanation. If you say you dropped the pen, however, there is something you can do about it. Now you have a role in the drama, and you can pursue your goal actively. If you don't want the pen to fall, hold onto it. The gravity explanation places the cause on the uncontrollable. The I dropped it explanation, puts me in control. Of course, most situations are complex, but the example demonstrates an important distinction between self

disempowering explanations and self-empowering ones." It distinguishes between the explanation styles of what Fred calls, the victim and the player.

MBS (10:05):

Steve, great story. And I can just imagine that being demonstrated in front of a room. So he kind of really brings it to life. What's at the heart of this for you?

Steve (10:17):

Well, there's lots of things. I mean, firstly, how we see and explain the world is a pretty central part to how we experience life, right? So these patterns might present at work, but they're really how we live and we just bring those patterns to work. So one of life's great challenges is living up to ourselves. What is it? "Our greatest fear is not that we're powerless. It's that we're so powerful."

MBS (10:41):

Right, right.

Steve (10:41):

And there's so much kind of blame, denial, justification and avoidance in our lives and in our offices, or workplaces or whatever. And it's really just like the fear showing up, and our protective or defensive instincts taking over. And I don't know, when I think about this story, this passage, this idea. Well, first, it's a great story. And so the power of story stands out to me, lessons in our everyday experience. But then there's that knowing doing gap, the story reflects that kind of uncomfortable incongruence between what we know intellectually, and how we actually show up in the world or explain things really practically.

Steve (11:24):

But I don't know. I mean the main thing overarching it is just the deceptive simplicity of it. It takes really powerful concepts, like subjective experience, neurolinguistic patterns, consciousness, defensive behaviors, workplace

dysfunction, human dysfunction, everything, but wraps it up in this really accessible form. And so it's probably an ironically long answer, but it's making the complex simple is what really stands out for me in that passage.

MBS (11:57):

Steve, you had a great phrase, you said, "Really our great challenge in life and in the life we have at work is living up to ourselves," and talked about fear as being one of the ways that we get distracted from that. I'm wondering how you face fear.

Steve (12:21):

The first couple of things that come to mind is a lot, and not as well as I'd like to. But I think that's the human condition, right? That's part of it is that we all have these fears about ourselves. And I think the other person who comes to mind on a lot of this is a lot of Brené Brown's work, and are we enough? Are we good enough, if we are ourselves, what will happen? How terrible will things be if we just be the way we are? So I think they're the kind of things that, for me, is the sort of fear I'm talking about that pops up. Some of it's conscious, some of it's unconscious.

Steve (12:57):

But it's like those patterns of behavior that tend to protect ourselves more than give, that's the pattern that I see both in myself and in organizations every day, that's the drama that plays out in organizations. There's an outer game of whatever business the business is in. But the real game is a whole bunch of people trying to show up in life and work as best they can. And another thing Fred talks about is behaviors at work are two things. One, yes, an attempt to achieve a goal, but they're also a demonstration of something. They're a demonstration of your values, they're a demonstration of who you are.

Steve ():

And sometimes that's the fear, it's like, what should I do here? The thing I think I should do out of productivity, or the thing I think I should do out of conscience and values. And so, yeah, I think my journey in relationship with fear is all around trying to balance those. And I love quotes. I think of the Mark Twain quote, "Of all the terrible things in my life, some of them happened." Most of them happened in my head. And the amount of energy that I put into that, that others put into that, it's astronomic, it's like a whole nother job that everyone's got is managing the mental traffic so that you can just get it out of your way. So yeah, I'm not sure if that answers the question, but it's some of my...

MBS ():

It's an impossible question I think, so I appreciate all you said to it. I mean really, and I think your point is spot on, which is some of the work we do in the world of organizational development and culture, and HR, and learning and development, all that kind of... that part of an organization is trying to bring out the best in people, which therefore means trying to help individuals and the organization as a whole, think about and manage fear. So that they're less reactive to that, and more at choice as to how we choose to show up.

MBS ():

Because we would like to choose to show up in accordance with the values and the culture that we have. I'm curious to know how at Salesforce, you scale at work. Because quite frankly, it's hard enough doing it with yourself, trying to make an organization courageous and less reactive to fear is another level of complexity.

Steve ():

Yeah. Yeah. I think I'm learning it's as much about undoing things for people as it is for doing things for people. We spend our lives growing and creating, and living in personalities and behavioral structures and systems that we think serve

us, and they serve us really well now, but are they serving our long game? And so, I think that really gets to the heart of what you are asking is, yeah, it's hard enough to manage it for yourself, let alone help another person, let alone change a system.

Steve (16:05):

And I think that's where leadership drives culture, drives performance, and those links between leadership and culture are something that just fascinate me. Everyone talks about culture, but being able to manage it with the level of kind of rigor and discipline that you might manage the other components of the business, whether it's your finances or your brand, or your IT systems or whatever. I think that's where it becomes a culture management issue, as much as if not more than a personal development or personal change issue. Because leadership's counter-cultural, right? Otherwise, it's fitting in, but the-

MBS (16:46):

I love that. I've never heard it said like that before, but that's great. Leadership is counter-cultural.

Steve (16:52):

Yeah.

MBS (16:52):

Otherwise, just everybody just do what they would be doing, so I love that.

Steve (16:56):

Yeah, I think that's what defines the leader, right? Is counter-cultural, but counter-cultural in a really positive way, because they're leading there. Anyway. Or as we say at Salesforce, trail blazing. So yeah, I think how you do that in organizations is you've got to work equally hard on the individuals and the system. And a lot of what I've learned from that are leverage from Carolyn

Taylor and her Walking the Talk methodology around making culture doable. It's around, what are the behaviors? What are the systems? What are the symbols? What are the levers that you can adjust? And then how do you put together a program of work that creates the conditions so that the individual changes can happen?

Steve ([17:42](#)):

Because there's lots of skills, resources, ability, and focus on making the individual changes, but it's that connection with the system and creating the conditions so that the changes catch and grow, and get repeated and shared, that's I think how you scale it. And how to do that successfully, at scale across thousands of geographies, tens of thousands of people.

Steve ([18:12](#)):

I'd love to have a set, clear, simple answer for it, but I think it's a consciousness around the individual and the organizational components. And everywhere I go, I just see leadership drives culture, drives performance. I joke sometimes it's like the Sixth Sense, he sees dead people, I see leadership drive culture, drives performance. I see [crosstalk 00:18:32] complexes, I see behavioral patterns linking to cultural norms and repeating patterns in organizations that are either effective or ineffective. Which tends to determine both how positive the experience is to be a part of it, and also how productive it is and how effective it is in achieving goals, whether it's individual or organizational. So again, not sure if that answered your impossibly large question, but hopefully you took a step.

MBS ([18:59](#)):

Well, I guess I'm curious to ask this, and maybe a limit on what you can say here, Steve. But is there a story you can tell us about something that you've tried at Salesforce that had some scale and had some success? And I'd love to hear what the story is. And then I'd love to hear your hypothesis around why that one worked, where others may have worked less well?

Steve ([19:26](#)):

The story that's coming to mind is less one that was specifically me, but definitely part of the work I'm involved in, which was really trying to heighten people's awareness to looking at how they were behaving, not just being in it so to speak. So looking at the business, not just being in the business. And we did this with some of our most senior leaders, a lot of time, reflecting, facilitating uncomfortable conversations, and kind of roughing it up a little bit. Busting some myths around the coping strategies that everyone puts in around, we're crushing this, we're winning this. And heightening people's awareness to the price they're paying.

Steve ([20:14](#)):

In anything from their effectiveness and energy levels, through to, in the more sort of acute versions of that. Where people do burn out and have life challenges where the balance between what they give to work and what they give to their family for example, isn't the balance they'd like. So the work that we do around that is really connecting back to personal values. And simple things like getting people to sit and reflect and be able to name their values. And then to the systems part of it, create ways for them to bring that from the offline experience of, in some workshop, in a nice retreat kind of setting, back to everyday at work.

Steve ([20:58](#)):

How does that become a slide in your slide park, an agenda point in your meeting really practically? How do you literally bring values into the conversation at work? And values have always been a part of the conversation at Salesforce, but more at a company level, very clear on what the values are, incredible work at some promoting, engaging, aligning around that. But all the research around values shows that it's actually clarity of individual values that has the biggest impact on performance, and engagement and productivity. Not

so much the clarity on organizational values. Because if you're clear on your own, you kind of know if you're aligned and [crosstalk 00:21:39]-

MBS ([21:38](#)):

That's interesting.

Steve ([21:38](#)):

... in the place you're in. So yeah, the work was really around that. And then to scale it, it was like, okay, well, we need to create a way then for people who have had this experience to create that experience for their teams. So we need like a team kit, how do you then take this to your team and have a conversation, share your values, introduce some of that honesty? Which becomes vulnerable, but that's not the point of it, that's just the method, not the end. So they talk to their personal values, how that shows up at work. And the thing that always surprises and delights me is when people do that, how you see people around just nodding and you can almost hear that penny dropping of going, "Oh, of course you do it like that there. Oh."

MBS ([22:27](#)):

This explains many things.

Steve ([22:28](#)):

Yeah, maybe you weren't targeting me unfairly on such and such. Maybe it's because whatever, that life experience played into something that's a core value for you. So that's the way you roll, oh, of course. And then there's that sense, particularly when really senior leaders in organizations do it, where people go, "Oh wow, you too. I thought you were fixed. I thought you must have been fixed, and then that's how you got promoted." And it's like, "No, these are the challenges we all have." And it's about managing them well on an ongoing basis. Not resolving them, curing them and stamping them out.

Steve ([23:05](#)):

So yeah, then the process of those team kits develop an app with card activities where people can sort and create that conversation, create momentum around it, so that you not only do the individual change piece of the sort of crucible moment and the reflection that people need to identify on their own, but then support them in the transfer and the change making piece of making it part of the organizational conversation, not just the individual development one.

MBS ([23:35](#)):

How do you navigate the tension between corporate values and individual values? Because they're both important and they're not always going to be in full alignment? How do you help people kind of step through that?

Steve ([23:56](#)):

First thing that comes to mind is actually a conversation I was having with Soph, my wife around organizational values. And some of the provocative language we had was values are supposed to be discriminatory, that's the idea, so that people choose in and choose out, and they're both very important parts of that values. So I think a lot of it as you said is about alignment rather than tension. I mean there's tension within my personal values, right? I've got value one, value two, value three, sometimes I want to do this out of service, but that out of connection.

Steve ([24:31](#)):

I can be in a conversation, and I'm moment to moment making choices around, what do I over index on here? Is it onto the relationship, maintain the connection? How do I do that? And onto the service of helping people for the developmental vegetables, not the developmental chocolate cake, right? Which is generally not as easy or pleasant. So I think that tension exists within our own values because it's a hierarchy.

MBS (24:55):

I agree.

Steve (24:56):

And so I think it's the same with the individual or similar with the individual organizational things. Where, it's not going to be a perfect match. I sometimes joke, we talk about ohana like a feeling of family and an inclusive culture. And I joke it's ohana, not nirvana. It's not about being perfect. It's not about having a 100% match. If you can achieve that, fantastic. My best career experiences have been when there's a really high percentage of match between my own values, the organizational values. And between my kind of values, the way I think of them and the way I behave, and the organization's values the way they describe them, and the way the organization actually rolls. A lot of the time, the disconnect isn't between values and values on a page, it's between personal espoused values and organizational lived values.

MBS (25:57):

Yes.

Steve (25:57):

That's a really big gap a lot of the time.

MBS (26:00):

That's a-

Steve (26:00):

Walking the talk, right?

MBS (26:02):

Yeah. Well, that's a nice subtle... it's obvious as soon as you say it, but I think the walk the talk work possibly has its roots in the edge shine work, which is these

different levels of culture, the artifacts, the espoused values, and then the lived values, the assumptions. And when all three of those are aligned, you have a strong culture. But often, there's this gap between here's what I say is important and here's what I do. And they're different.

Steve ([26:31](#)):

Yeah.

MBS ([26:33](#)):

Steve, what have you left behind in terms of beliefs about leadership? What are kind of old stories or myths that you're like, you know what? I believed it for a while, I just don't believe it now.

Steve ([26:52](#)):

I had it when this happened. The first thing that came up was actually about me, not about leadership. What have I left behind in my leadership? I can still remember the room I was sitting in doing my 360 debrief. And the answer to your question is probably ironically high standards is what I've left behind. Because the way I was doing high standards worked for me for a while, but then it wasn't really working for me. And what this coach said to me in this moment was, "Make sure your high standards are serving you, not ruling you."

Steve ([27:31](#)):

And I was like, 20 years later, I'm still trying to get that. I'd always as a leader, and a performer and everything, I'd be like, pride myself on these high standards and yada yada. And over time, I think that's softened is probably the right word. I know when I'm not at my best, it can err towards being more rigid and dogmatic than I'd like, because it's about those standards. I can feel my body tensing up, I can feel the gestures changing. I can feel the breathing stopping, all that kind of thing.

Steve ([28:11](#)):

I think it's that clinging to high standards, which when I think about it from a self-awareness point of view, I know it is the competitive drive underneath, it's, let me show you how good I am through my work. And the reason that I probably need to do that is because, I'm not confident of it if I can't show it through my work.

Steve ([28:31](#)):

So that's that kind of competitive instinct to show how good I am through the work, through these high standards. Because if my standards are that high, I must be okay. And that's the approval part that comes in as well. So I think that's what I'm trying to leave behind. And then from a leadership point of view, I think everyone's got their version of that. For some people, that pattern will resonate, for some people, that will be alien. And they'll describe exactly the opposite. They'll be like... Yeah, so.

MBS ([29:06](#)):

That's great. Yeah, I love the little aside you had where you're like, "If I'm a bit run down, I'll slip back into having high standards as a kind of a whip hand over myself." And I have something similar. I get kind of entangled in worrying about details if I'm run down. And in fact, these days I use it, I kind of flip it, which is like, if I find myself ignoring over the details, I'm like, "Oh, this tells me I'm a bit run down at the moment. I'm undernourished, underresourced, underslept, whatever it might be. I need to go off and have a nap and have some lunch or something to kind of get back to myself." Because my behavior is a clue to my actual kind of internal state.

Steve ([29:56](#)):

Well, you're right, you're a step ahead of me in self-monitoring it. We also actually connected to that value story I shared. The other thing that we do at Salesforce is operating manuals. You buy a fridge or a computer, they're quite

technical. They come with instructions, humans so much more technical, don't come with instructions. It's more a miracle that sometimes it works, not that a lot of the time it doesn't work. So we have operating manuals, which we create, which are descriptions of our own patterns, and what I'm like at my best, what I'm like under pressure. And importantly, what I need under pressure, what I don't need under pressure, how to help me drag out of that.

Steve ([30:34](#)):

And one of my patterns is the same, right? It's going from big picture expressive kind of thinking to terminal critical detail. And so through the operating manuals, like I've got great stories in this job and in previous ones, where if I can express that right in engaging my team in the conversation through our kind of team formation, they're actually that mirror. And the good thing about that is that they usually catch it before I do.

Steve ([31:01](#)):

Sometimes I get it, but they'll go, "Wow, I asked for a bit of feedback and this is what I got? What's happening for you on that, Steve? You're feeling confident on that one?" And I'm like, "Oh, thank you." Yeah, maybe you don't need 76 pages of written feedback on it. Maybe that's me. That's my stuff, not your need.

MBS ([31:22](#)):

Yes, feedback. So often it tells you about the other person, it doesn't tell you the whole lot about you at all.

Steve ([31:28](#)):

Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's like they say feedback's a gift. People buy gifts they want, not gifts the person they're giving them to wants, right?

MBS ([31:39](#)):

That's great. Steve, this has been such a rich conversation, and I could sit with you for hours actually chatting through this stuff. Because you're graceful and eloquent, and geeky about it all in just the right way. It's fantastic. Look, I've got a final question I'd like to finish conversations with, and it's this, what needs to be said that hasn't yet been said in this conversation between you and me?

Steve ([32:07](#)):

Oh, look. So much we could say, right? Super conscious of being concise after I talked about making the complex simple, but I do think about... When we started and you asked which book, I did find it quite hard to pick one and pick two pages because there's so much. And when I was reflecting on it, I made what was supposed to be a short list and it ended up a long list of what we might cover today. And when I look back on it, that red thread is really the thing, I think about... We talk about Fred does it with consciousness and values, and oh my God, his work on the emotional mastery, that kind of thing.

Steve ([32:44](#)):

I hate to say it, Michael, but your work, one of the things I've really enjoyed in your work is Coaching Habit, Advice Monster, the 5 Questions, even the conversations we've had around Immunity to Change.

MBS ([32:53](#)):

Yep.

Steve ([32:54](#)):

When I think about the two pages or the books or the authors or the work that's had an impact on me, I think that's the red thread, it's making those really profound and complex ideas and concepts really practical and accessible. And I've got this list, we've mentioned a few, Brené Brown. I was thinking of doing... Gervase Bushe has this book called Clear Leadership, which you and I have spoken about before. He talks about the experience cube. And I'm like, "Oh my

God, how much better would the world be if everyone knew that?" Like, it's so cool.

Steve ([33:27](#)):

And when we last worked together, we had the Vega Factor crew, and Total Motivation or Tomo. And then there's just so much. I think mindtraps and mindfulness, and recently discovering the cartoon version of it that Liz Fosslien does on LinkedIn. So if you've not seen that, check it out. There's just so much of it. But for me, it's kind of that ability... It crystallized that the value is the ability to capture those profound concepts in accessible formats.

Steve ([33:56](#)):

And yeah, I think that's probably what's influenced how I do what I do. It's influenced what I do, and hopefully how I lived as well. So I don't know whether that needed to be said, but I said that the thing that does need to be said at the end of it is really thank you. I mean, it's been a fun conversation, but I'm really complimented you asked, I hope it's been of interest and that value for you or the listeners. Clearly, I'm a junkie for this, right?

MBS ([34:23](#)):

You are.

Steve ([34:23](#)):

Looking forward to making some new connections via LinkedIn or however or whatever, and just really appreciate the opportunity to talk with you about it. So that's probably what needs to be said is thank you, Michael.

MBS ([34:42](#)):

So I've got two questions that I'm sitting with from this lovely conversation with Steve, you can tell how much I enjoy his company. The first one is about standards. Steve brought this up, and I'm sitting here going, "So what are my

standards? And in what ways do they pull me forward and lift me up and elevate me? And how might they actually be, being used as a form of punishment, a way of diminishing who I am, or kind of subtly undermining who I am rather than the sense of nurture that I think you want from standards?"

MBS (35:14):

And second, and obviously connected to the first question, whose approval am I still seeking? What am I seeking to prove? And I like how approval and prove are the same word almost. That second question is the harder one for me. There's nobody that comes to mind. I don't think of somebody, oh, I'm trying to show my dad that I'm still a good person or anything like that. But I do feel that there's a sense of wanting to prove myself. So interesting to sit with that and go, well, what's that about? And what's that forcing me to do or not forcing me to do? And is that what I want? How about you? Who are you seeking to prove yourself to?

MBS (35:58):

If you like the conversation with Steve, I hope you did. I've got two other ones that I might suggest for you, Martin Reeves, who works for the consultancy, BCG, and author of a number of books. His conversation with me is called How To Keep Curiosity Alive. He just wrote a book about that. He's a very smart man, very interesting.

MBS (36:19):

And then actually the interview that follows that in the series, Julie Lythcott-Haims, her interview is called How to Resist the Conformity, and also just a fascinating wonderful conversation. So I think those are two conversations that will nicely supplement this chat Steve and I had. Thank you for listening. The podcast grows by attracting the perfect audience, by being people's favorite podcast. That's my goal. I want to be a few people's favorite podcast, or one of

their top seven. Because rumor has it that people can pretty much manage only seven podcasts on their list really, be really committed to them.

MBS ([36:57](#)):

If you think there's somebody in your life who this podcast may be one of their favorite seven, I'd love you to pass the word along, that means a lot, as does writing a review on whatever the podcast platform is that you listen to. Some stars, some nice words, all of that cheers the soul and helps the podcast be found by other people. Thank you so much. You're awesome, and you're doing great.