



**Season Three Episode Four – released March 2023**

**A conversation hosted by Jeff Dewing, with Manley Hopkinson**

Jeff and Manley discuss what it takes to be a good leader and how. Being a good leader is about enabling people, inspiring them and creating an environment where they want to stay and thrive.

***Leading teams through compassion, understanding and listening***

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Hi, and welcome to **Doing the Opposite Business Disruptors**, the podcast where you get to meet leaders who have swung against the tide, thrown out the rule book, and changed the way their sector does business.*

*I'm **Jeff Dewing** and I'm the founder and **CEO of Cloudfm**, a business where we thrive on taking risk so our clients don't have to.*

*Today you're gonna meet **Manley Hopkinson**. Manley is an ex naval officer, Hong Kong police officer, Arctic Explorer, and now an inspirational speaker. Manley has travelled all over the world with the Navy, and more importantly, he also ran the biggest yacht race in*

*the world, the BT challenge, where if you look at some of the stuff that he shows on YouTube, the seas and the challenge that that brought alone has created an environment of living like you wouldn't believe. An inspirational story. A man that has no fear other than to enjoy the joy of life.*

*So, hi Manley, and thank you so much for taking the time to speak to us today. I'm absolutely fascinated about the subject matter we're gonna be talking about, and more importantly some of those things where we're perhaps gonna be a little bit potentially controversial to some with the view to saying there's always a different way or a better way. So thanks again for joining me and I'd like, if you wouldn't mind, pressure, set the scene and give us a little bit of background on Manley.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Yeah, Jeff, it's great to be here. Thanks for inviting me to start with. Yeah doing things the awkward way or the different way, basically sums up my life. Dodgy background. I won't give you a chronology cause I do that. You, I basically can't keep a job for very Long Navy, the Navy, and then I actually was gonna transfer to the Royal Marines, but ended up in the Hong Kong Marine instead. So I was out in Hong Kong a number of years ago now. That was the mid eighties. Then I had a boat building business out there. Ended up rejoining the Navy for the first Gulf War. Left the Navy the second time in '93, became a professional sailor and skippered dodgy boats, beautiful boats all over the world, crossing oceans and staying afloat mostly. And that culminated in me Skippering in a race around the world called the World's Toughest Yacht race, which is the BT Global Challenge.

That was a complete game changer in my life, as you can imagine. In fact, that's really what got me going in the place I am now which is as a speaker and consultant on leadership and transformation and performance. Also did a race to the magnetic North Pole. Some cracking lessons from that too, as you can imagine. That was actually around putting a marker in the ice, and put in the winning performance.

And then over the years I've had the joy and pleasure of meeting people like yourself and all sorts of exciting people and thought leaders and business leaders and community

leaders and just normal, incredible folk all over the world and all the time learning from them. And my whole bag now is around the concept of compassionate leadership. I've got a book out there, second edition came out last year. And my online, my whole Compassion Leadership Academy we launched in 2019 as well. So, so yeah, that, that's me in a nutshell, Jeff.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Wow. So when you sort of lay on your bed on chosen evenings and looking up you, you're not gonna sit and say, I've had a boring life, are you?*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

<Laugh>? I think, I think one of the important things in life is that when you draw your last breath and you, you let the air go over your vocal calls at the very last time, you've gotta say, that was fun. You gotta say you've filled it full, haven't you?

**Jeff Dewing:**

*It's fantastic. So listen, before we get into perhaps you know, one or two stories that brings this, this whole purpose of this podcast to life, there's one thing I just wanted to pick up on, which is something you've said.*

*If you go into our office now, reception on the wall, there are the biggest words you can imagine. And it says 'there is no such thing as work life balance. There is only life.' And of course I've read that that's a viewpoint you share as well. And it's ironic, isn't it, that people that honestly go through life because they are, I dunno, educated if that's the right word that, that this is the buzzword we need to, when we're upset, we need to talk about work/life balance. But in actual fact, it's just life and it's about how you choose to manage your life. And where those barriers occur is, is in your control.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Totally. Right, Jeff? I I just call it life balance. You know, forget about the work bit.

Obviously work is part of life. We have to earn our way. We have to add value to society. We can't just sponge off it. And so it's all the balance you have. And, and I actually was running a whole session down in South Africa just last week about helping people find their sense of purpose. And I looked at it in three areas. And I do help people distinguish between work, their community, their friends and families and themselves. Because the danger is you forget about that as well. We actually don't look after ourself. We, we, if you ask somebody, oh, you know, who are you? They'll describe their job or their role as opposed to, well, who am I? 'I'm, I'm Manley', 'I'm Jeff', 'this is passionate to me. These are my values, these are my beliefs'. And I think we've forgotten to actually really look in the mirror and deeply see who we are. And as you say, you know, words on the wall in the offices are pretty meaningless, really. They've gotta come off the wall, they've gotta come into your heart, into your belief system, into your everyday action. And, and then it's gotta be real, isn't it? And I find it really sad when I see people who just so totally separate the work and themselves because you know, in the average week, you're generally in work about five days outta seven. And isn't that sad? If the work isn't you, isn't the real you, it's just something you are pretending to be. And I think that that is massively draining. So all my encouragement is to people - there's a lovely expression from Noel Coward I think it was, he said, 'Be yourself. Everyone else is taken'. And I love that as an expression,

**Jeff Dewing:**

*<Laugh>. And that's, and again, that's... It's music to my ears because I guess, you know, this is something that you've been clearly focused on for, for some time yet. And I'm using COVID as not something that changed my view of the world. But Covid accelerated the outcome of my views. And I think one of the things that is interesting and you've used a few terms in, in some of the things you've written, but I reference ikigai, which brings us back to 'what is your sense of purpose' and ikigai being something similar to what you talked about in Buddhism. But it's about the meaning of life. You know, what does it mean*

*to any of us? And none of us stop and ask that question. We just amble from stone to stone, from job to job, seeking what we think will make us happy. Which as you've referenced, you know, it's not the fancy car, it's not the fancy house. It never has been, never will be. They are just symptoms and, and sticky plasters to then realise that's not what you wanted at all. But you didn't know it until you knew it.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

The way I help bring that home to people that everyone generally knows about Maslow's Hierarchy of needs that, you know, there's the core needs at the bottom. This whole concept of self-actualization sits at the top. The way I say to them, it's not a big house on the top of the pyramid, it's you. The big house or the smart car isn't in the pyramid at all. It's not represented there in one single bit. And, and the danger is, if you like the system and even many of the speakers are out there, motivational speakers say, you know, 'put a picture of a Ferrari on the wall and that's your purpose'. No, it's not. That's your trap! That is your trap.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*That's your distraction.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Totally. There's nothing wrong with enjoying the spoils. There's a lovely expression saying, you have no right to the spoils, you just have a right to the action. What comes from it will come from it. And this is the whole philosophy, but it's all about the journey, not the destination. And I think if you think about life, right? The destination life is death. It doesn't sound like fun to me. It might be, I dunno, it doesn't sound like it, but let's focus on the journey. Let's worry less about where it's off to, where it's heading, and just live in the moment and present.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Of course.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Yeah. So one, the realities is, is that the only real moment in our life is now you and me chatting here now, Jeff, sorry, sorry about that mate! This is the only real thing you've got. And likewise, if people are listening to this, this is the only real moment as well. Because what's gone is gone! It's history. What's, what's hasn't happened yet, hasn't happened by definition. But we forget to be present. You know, we're on our phones, we worry about the past, we get concerned about what might happen. We forget to just be, I think that's critical.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*And I think there's a few things that I've learned in the journey because yeah, I, I I have a slightly different view that the destination isn't death, the destination is fulfilment, and then comes death because that's inevitable. And the question is, as you establish fulfilment, and that isn't necessarily contentment, it's not even happiness, it's fulfilment. You know, when do you wake up every day feeling glad to be alive and, and, and so on and so on? And it's, and it's never about money. But of course we need money to live and to eat that goes without saying. But the, if you then come back and you ask people, and this is the bit I've learned most, cause again, I'll have strong values and someone will say to me, okay, 'who's Jeff?' And I'll tell them and they'll say, 'oh, well, you know, I'm Steven and I'm nothing like that. I don't believe in any of those things.' My job used to be, I believed to convince Steven that he was wrong and I was right.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Okay?

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Whereas now there's that maturity that says, 'no, learn from Steven. Learn the nuggets, learn the bits that perhaps you've missed. And accept people are different' because that is*

*the way the world is. And it's, it's been a fascinating journey when you change that mindset that it's not about convincing people to think differently. It's about putting your story forward, your view forward. And if that influences somebody, then great. If it doesn't, it doesn't. But in the meantime, it's not about what you can do, it's about what you can learn from the conversations you're having.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Yeah. And there's a lovely thing about don't try and change the universe. Change yourself.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Exactly. Absolutely. Yeah.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Steven May be quite content on, on his journey, or, or he may not, in which case, by sharing our story, potentially we can help him on the journey that he should be on. And I think this is the thing, it's saving judgement .

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Of course. Yeah. And I, I, but again, it's, it's fascinating just, and this is where I get fascinated by people. I've learned, it's taken a few years and it's taken a bit of maturity and a bit of coaching from, from my peers, but I've learned that there isn't a right and a wrong. There's only, there's only your approach and your view of the world and, and you, and the only thing I've learned, well, the big, the biggest thing I've learned is just to listen, to listen to. Everybody has got a story. Everybody's got an incredible story. Even the ones that don't think they've got a story, have got a story. And when you are curious and fascinated, it's amazing how relationships even develop. But more importantly, how much knowledge you gain just from that simplistic conversation.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Totally. And that, that's why over the years, my whole philosophy has moved into the principle of compassion. And if I quickly explain, I use the Dalai Llama's definition of compassion, cause there's lots of rot out there that compassion's all about trauma and suffering and stuff, I disagree. I'd say the Dalai Llama is may well be a bit of an expert on it – spent his whole life meditating on it. And he says that if empathy is to understand then compassion is to work with that knowledge, with positive intent. And that I think is really exciting. So basically, Jeff, its understanding the problem of action, which comes down to your first point there. But first thing you gotta do is shut up and listen. And if we shut up and listen, then, and only then can we even start to try to understand. Then once you start to understand, then we've got an option. They've got an option to act positively or to act from a different aspect. But everything I talk about is if we can have a greater sense of compassion in the world, a greater extent, people dropping judgement, dropping bias, being prepared to listen and understand, to then act positively.

And as I say, away that judgement what we hear now, forget about just leadership, but that if we did that, then even did it to the planet, let's understand and then be positive. Now let's stop beating it up. It's our only survival mechanism. You know, I was doing some astronomical maths the day counting all the number of habitable planets within easy reach. And I just got the one, I'm afraid, and that's the one we're on. So compassion is a bigger principle to me. And, and then once you start it, it's a whole philosophy, which, which means you widen your peripheral vision, you even drive differently, Jeff. You know, you actually let people in. You see someone trying to cross the road. Your whole attitude approaches. And you know what, it makes you feel bloody good because you think 'I've just let that person in. I've made their journey better'. And, and you smile inwardly. And we forget about that. We get so trapped up on our own journey that we forget other people's journey. I think that's why, you know, if we can spread the principle of this, you know, dropping judgement or of being compassionate or looking out not just your fellow humankind, but fellow sentient beings on the planet and think, 'come on, lemme be good to it. Let me understand it and then lemme be good with what I understand'.

And it starts with you.



**Jeff Dewing:**

*Of course. It, it always does. And I think what, what we're back to every action creates a reaction, right? You know, I love a couple of these little formulas that are great to express a meaning and stuff where you've got  $E+R=O$ ? So an event occurs, whatever that event is, your response will dictate the outcome. So what outcomes you want, and then formulate your response. Because essentially, if you respond in a, in an aggressive way, you'll get an aggressive outcome. If responding a compassionate way, you'll get a compassionate outcome.*

*It's all about how you make people feel in the moment. And another question that, that I'd like to ask, which is a question I often ask, if you talk to people generally, whether it be the barman in the bar or the local CEO or even the local counsellor or any sort of group of people, you say, you know, 'you've got your life, you've got your work. You know, what, what is it, what is it you are doing?' And they're saying, well, 'I'm, I'm, I'm earning a good salary. I'm looking to get promoted. I'm looking to...'; very few people would say, 'I'm here to serve the community. I'm here to serve other people.' That's the reason I'm here.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Yeah. And you mentioned a little Covid effect earlier just then, Jeff, that that one of the things that has enabled much of society to do is to stop and reflect. And I've seen the impact of that now people had a moment of pause. And some have forgotten it and just moved straight back in. But many have thought, 'actually, no, I don't wanna be like that. I do wanna create a sense of meaning. I do want create a sense of purpose. I wanna feel valued, I want add value'. And, and there's definitely a, a shift that happened in many areas of society, of this, this need and recognition that it isn't just about my salary, it's not just about the job or whatever it may be, actually I feel I wanna add value. I wanna be valued, I wanna feel good.

And I think one of the biggest tragedies or the waste of energies is the human energy. There's so many people that wake up on a Monday morning and have a knot in their stomach as if you're a kid. If you've gotten to do your homework before school and you

think, oh, how awful is that? And that's leadership. That's leadership, Jeff. Cause it's the leaders that create that environment.

And I, I was just writing a piece today for a magazine and just talking about surely that the outcome of leadership is meant to be commitment. That's the purpose, isn't it? That that it, if we can gain commitment, then the rest happens. We've got resilience, you've got ownership, you have engagement, you have performance and, and you have happiness of all these things. If our job is to gain commitment, then how do we do that? Understanding the positive action. The first thing to do as leader, instead of burst into room and start speaking, it's to burst into room and shut up.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Yeah. Be the last person in the room to speak, because that way you've then heard everybody else's view. So, and again, it's all, it's all, it's all leadership stuff that is, is absolutely right and proper.*

*But it is about, you know, those from, you know, the baby boomers if you like, and, and those that have been educated, that command control is the way forward with strength and, and, and action and so on. And, and those days for me are just dead and buried. They're gone. The key now is - one of the things I learned in Covid where our business suffered like most businesses did, where there was incredible uncertainty, uncertainty of survival, let alone anything else. And I'll never forget, my exec team said to me on our first emergency call, 'right Jeff, you are the CEO, we've got this problem, we've just lost 95% of our revenues just fallen off a cliff and we've got 400 mouths to feed what we gonna do?'*

*And for the first time my entire career, I said, 'I've got no idea.' I'm absolutely on the floor. I don't know where to turn. I can't sleep, I can't, this, that's the first time without purpose. I didn't do it on purpose. It was a, it was an honest reaction - I showed total and utter vulnerability.*

*And the moment after that call I had a text message from my, one of my exec members saying, 'Jeff, take a couple days away. Get your, get your head together. We'll do all the work we've talked about.' Anyway, the point behind the story is with, without going into the*

*detail, is every one of my exec team stepped up 17 levels. Because they knew I needed help.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Too right! And, and that, that element of of saying, I don't know is absolutely critical. I find one of the biggest pressures leaders put themselves under is that they set an expectation that they have to have all the answers for everything. Which is absolutely crazy. Because you've only had one life in this life. The point is, the brilliance of your business isn't you's your whole exec team. It's whole people beneath them. It's the whole ideas coming up from the four hundred people. It's the feedback from your customers, from your suppliers, from your partners. And, and where leaders go wrong is they think they've gotta have the idea. And I think that puts them under incredible pressure.

Whereas if a leader can say, 'look, I don't know I'm not here for the idea, but I'll tell you what, between us, I bet we'll get there' then. It's a different field, isn't it? You're suddenly in a different space. Yeah. And that's the excitement.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Saying, 'I don't know', is a, is a demonstration by default of vulnerability. Right. And vulnerability brings out the best in people around you. And I think, whereas when you've got this sort of stiff upper lip, you're also, and if you're, if you're giving the answers all the time, you are, you are, you are removing accountability from anybody. Because it was your answer.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

<Laugh>. Yeah. If you are, if you are giving the answers, it's from one perspective and then who's learning, there's no sense of collective brilliance or difference either, which is a key thing. So, and, and even this principle of, you know, the command and control bit, what we perceive it as is fundamentally flawed in the context that it is just a flow in one direction as opposed to a dialogue where a dialogue is we both learn. And so, you know, that's the principle of it. And it's interesting even from, cause obviously my background's a military

background and I learned so much leadership and there's one of the things you forget about at the time that you're 18 or 19 and leadership is on the agenda, on the table every single day. And you are trained, you're exposed, you're tested, you're given brutal feedback. <Laugh> But people think that military leadership is all about shouting and command and control, but it isn't. Yeah. And even Nelson was head of the day over 200 years ago because my first ship was an aircraft carrier. I was a weapons section officer and had one thin stripe in my shoulder as sub lieutenant. I was responsible for 178 sailors. Some of them been in the navy longer, than I'd been alive. I didn't know their job and I didn't need to know their job.

When leaders realise that you don't need to know everything, you're not there to tell people what to do. You're there to gain their commitment, muster their energy, keep it all in the right direction, make sure it aligns to the bigger picture and inspire them and really get them firing, then it's a different thing. Then it actually's quite fun.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Of course. And then what you do is, it's not only fun and inspiring, it, it just takes you to a whole new level. It's that fantastic book, that fantastic book – Covey, Turn the Ship Around. When he went in exactly with that attitude. Now I'm the captain, but I haven't got a fraction of the knowledge that you have on those nuclear those nuclear shafts that we are using or the nuclear reactor you do. I'm not gonna tell you what to do. How can I tell you what to do? You know, far better than I do. So all you are gonna do is let me know what you are intending to do, just so I'm aware. And he turned the worst performing submarine into the best performing submarine because he empowered the people with the knowledge they had and they felt they was making a difference. And suddenly these people will give you a thousand percent more.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Because what we've got is their commitment. Because they know that the captain has got their back. The captain is there to look after them. That's precisely what he said. My role is

enable you to be brilliant. How do you feel when someone tells you that you feel like a million dollars, don't you?

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Of course. It's, and that's, and that's why when people talk about salary and bonus and and time off and stuff, you know, one of the things that we've learned and I've learned over the years of, of listening to people as well is that acknowledgement and, and praise perhaps probably the wrong word. I mean praise comes into it, but people just being acknowledged for what they're doing ignites them more than a pay increase will.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Yeah, totally.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*And especially if it's done in the right way and, and, and repetitively enough because you give somebody a pay rise, they're, they're elated for the next 24 hours. They've forgotten about it 48 hours later.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Yeah. Cause it's all gone. Yeah. And it just moves into another tax bracket.

And this is the difference between a transaction, if you like. And then this principal of compliance and commitment. We, we've created a transaction. You do that, and I'll give you this and I, I did a lot of research when I was working with a number of the police forces in the UK and overseas on power and influence. There's some brilliant stuff from a couple of social scientists in the sixties called French and Raven. And I write about it in my book cause it's so profound. And a couple of things that we need to understand is that you can only influence people if they let you. In other words, if I want to influence you, Jeff, you've got to let, you've gotta, you have to give me the power base to, to influence you as opposed to me having it. And my rank or position I might be, the CEO is not a base in its own right.

But the potential to reward and coerce is. 'Do that Jeff and I'll pay you', 'do that Jeff and I'll give you a Chinese burn'.

And you know, and, and all it does is create a compliance. We've created a whole society based on compliance, even heaven and hell, you think about it is a compliant mechanism. Do that and you get to heaven and do that and you get to hell - as opposed to you shouldn't be doing that anyway. And, and, and so what we need to do as leaders, when we look at the whole societies that we serve, not just the businesses, industries and the people, is let's forget about creating a transaction. Even as a parent with teenagers, you know, you get to the stage where you say, 'well if you do that, you can't go out'. Or 'if you do that, I'll give you extra pocket money'. And it's just bribery and it's just compliance. Whereas if we can tap into people's sense of self worth, if we can shut up and listen, make them feel valued. If I genuinely have your best interest at heart, we've moved away from compliance and we can use a reward and coercion bit. But that's not the important part. Important part is you'll have a belief in me that I've got your best interest and then that gives us a different relationship. It gives us different ability to influence each other. It gives a different level of trust and bonding and understanding.

So the moment when you stand up in front of your team and say, 'guys, I haven't got the single idea', they get it. And they know where it's come from and they're there to support you back you, which is the whole thing.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*And when you're working with people and you, you just mentioned children there and of course we're all, none of us are trained to be parents. We all do what we think is right and we measure it on how we were treated, I guess. And the one thing that we all do of, of, and we've all learned, it's one's, one of the things I refer to in, in my book and that is that we're trying to protect our kids, right? So we say to them, 'no, you can't do that. If you do do that, then you're gonna be grounded because that was the wrong thing to do'. What we're actually frightened of, we're frightened of them being hurt, we're frightened of them failing. We're frightened of them getting it wrong. We're frightened of all these things. And we say to*

*them when they're first riding their bike and you've taken the stabilisers off. So right 'now be very, very careful because if you fall off or if you're, if you're not careful, you'll fall off and you'll hurt yourself. And we don't want you to hurt you'. The reality is we have to learn very quickly that they will not learn that lesson until they fall off. Right. They have to fall off. And we're back to the issue when we're talking about kids or people around us. You have to have this environment where failure is a positive word and not a negative word. Failure is learning, right?*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

It always was when you were growing up. So for kids to grow up, you think about how they learn, how they learn to walk, how they learn to speak, how they learn to even go to the toilet. Everything is experimentation and everything starts with failure and failure and failure and failure until we get it. When we get older - I've worked this out, this through all the, the research and stuff we've done. It isn't a fear of failure per se, it's a fear of judgement of failure.

When we're about eight years old, it's the first time we start realising we're being judged and other people looking at it and setting an expectation. And that's when that fear starts to creep in. Up to that point, a child has no fear of failure at all. And it comes as an adult construct. And then you think about what we do at school. When you pass your exams or you fail, you go down a grade, you give a class, you, you're a, you're the back of the classroom. You are, you're the ones who get all the As are brought to the front and the assembly and are lauded. And then you think what happens in work, you have two teams working really hard and two different projects. One gets it over the line. The other one doesn't, what did we do? We celebrate the one that got over the line, but which teams did we learned most from? But we actually learned most from the team that failed. Which team worked harder? I reckon these guys did, but we ignored them. And the danger with that is that, well, aren't they gonna try again? What happens the next time? And and how do we encourage them? Say 'it's alright, please try again'.

'Well, I'm not going to, because last time I didn't get it and you beat me up'. And, and even in business, everything we do, we've, we forget about the need to recognise the effort and intent and the learning. And as a leader, did we set them up to fail? If they failed, what have I done to create the environment which enabled failure to happen? Was it not enough time, not enough resources, not enough support, not enough. What was it? But as opposed to beating the team up or beating the individual, we should thank them and say, 'look, brilliant learning'. And the danger with success is we get complacent and arrogant and the danger with failure is that we get despondent and stop trying. Whereas actually what we should do is celebrate both. Recognise both. Learn from both and be humble enough to recognise that all just lessons as all part of the journey.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*It's all knowledge.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Yeah. And maybe I was successful because, you know, all the ships were rising cause the tide was coming in and so maybe it wasn't my success at all. And, and you know, we, I learned this a lot. We had a whole load on my race around the world, you know, we didn't do well at times and we did very well at other times. And the stories around it were - and there's a lovely video of us arriving into Boston having just raced across the Atlantic Ocean and we're the last ones in. But you didn't see a despondent team. You saw a team celebrating and that was in the documentary. This team was on fire. We just crossed an ocean, we're amazing <laugh>. And our turnaround was compared to the other teams in the race, we are now the most experienced team in the race cause we've been out on the water longer than anybody else. <Laugh>. It's about looking at the positives too and always thinking that way. And recognising, 'okay, so, so that wasn't the result we wanted. What do we learn? What do we take away? What do we do? Let's celebrate effort and intent, celebrate all the things we did well and then move on'.



**Jeff Dewing:**

*And I think that's why I think, you know, the focus in the next generation and beyond is not trying to focus on educating, on getting things right first time and, and diligence. There should be educating on how to have the right mindset, right? Giving people the freedom of mindset. And the one thing we also don't do, which is another saying I love from Henry Ford is 'thinking is very difficult which is why so few choose to do it' and having the time to reflect. And one of the things again that I was lucky enough, and it's all by chance not because of my sense of understanding or belief, it was that during Covid I was lucky enough to be stuck in Portugal. Every single night, five o'clock I would sit on my balcony, I could see the sea and I'd reflect for two hours, watch the sun go down. And I didn't have to, I didn't have a, a purpose, I didn't have to solve problems necessarily. But I solved a thousand problems because I actually sat and reflected - stuff we don't afford ourselves the time to do because we're just going from pillar to pillar to pillar to pillar. And we are not stopping and thinking.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

We're not stopping, we're not, we're not even stopping and not thinking. An example that is saying thinking is hard. So what's two plus two four? What's 119 divided by 70?

**Jeff Dewing:**

*No idea without sitting there thinking about it. Yeah.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

So two things happened here which just demonstrate your point. And I use this a lot to help people understand about how we follow patterns of behaviour, how we actually don't think we're following hard wire. Two plus two is beaten into your subconscious as a young kid doing your times tables. It was a chart, it was a song, wasn't it? And your amygdala, which is this little filter in your brain if you read the book called The Chimp Paradox, which is brilliant book now that's, that's your chimp. That is thinking, you know, do I know it, is it new

or is it a threat? And it's two plus two. It heard it. Yeah, I got that one and it just picked it up, threw it into your conscious and you shared it.

The hundred 19 divide 17 isn't in your subconscious. It's not beaten into you as a pattern as a kid unless you had a particular background. The answer was actually 7. So what happened was your amygdala goes, 'do I know it? No I don't. Right? Immediate threat, I don't know it - conscious brain get involved'. Conscious brain thought, 'oh what 119 divide 17. Well that's roughly...'. And and and it took effort and intent to do it and there was a concern. So your amygdala's now firing off saying, 'actually what if I get it wrong? You know, is Manley trying make me look stupid or, or it sounds stupid, whatever'. It's, this happens to us all the time. And so it, for people over about 35 years old, the danger is you spend 95% of every day just going through subconscious patterns of behaviour.

And this is one of things we started our conversation, you know, about people just following a pattern, people just getting into a trap and not consciously making a difference. Now there's a brilliant book, which I'm sure you know, 'Man Search for Meaning' by Victor Frankl who was a Holocaust survivor. And he talks about the fact that the only thing they couldn't take away from him was him. And that we spoke earlier about, you know, there's an event and reaction was outcome. And his premise is that between stimulus and response, if we make a gap and we make it a conscious gap, then we have a choice of our response. If there's no gap, we have no choice.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*And again, we're back to you. Yeah. And on the same subject where you talked about the Ferrari on the wall, you know, the, the other prisoners of wars were sitting there saying, we'll be out by Christmas. And then Christmas came and went and they weren't, we'll be out by Easter. Easter came and weren't. And then the following Christmas we'll be out by Christmas. Christmas came and they all died of a broken heart. Whereas the guy said, 'I've got no idea when I'll get out, but I know I'll get out'. So he managed his own emotional intent.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

And I'll be me. That's the only thing they can't take away. It's who I am. And it's a really powerful stuff, isn't it? Really is.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*It's a huge subject and you can go into all the minutia in detail about the different things you can and can't do. But the reality comes back to the same thing when we was in Covid, air quality rose 80% and the noise of birds increased 60%. And people were saying, 'why the birds singing louder'? And we were saying, 'the birds are not singing louder. The background noise has dropped'. Right? and air quality is of a level now that we should be enjoying every single day. The million dollar question is when we're all allowed out of our houses, what are we going to do? And of course, the sad thing or the fearful thing is we're gonna go back to doing exactly the same thing. And that's exactly what we've done. And the, it's leading me into the bigger point about the only way that I believe we are going to enjoy a totally different way of life is when the community of leaders, whether it be corporates, SMEs in-between a are really truly saying, 'guys, we've been getting this wrong .We've got to do this differently'. And at the moment you've now got, you know, my town where, where I used to live in in Essex, in Colchester was always gridlocked at five o'clock on a Friday, right? Well our post covid, it's gridlocked again. So I'm going, 'why are people doing this'? Then you listen to various, you know, people were at the Elon Musk or less famous people saying, 'no, we need to be in the office. We need to be in the office'. And, and I'm sitting again, what, what an earth is going on. And then you listen to people say, 'oh, I think we can improve wellbeing and quality of life by reducing from five day week to a four day week'. And I'm sitting here saying, 'you're all away with a fairies because whether it's a five day or four day or three day, it's constrained function. The moment you constrain you lose the ability for people to be their best selves'. And all you have to do, and it sounds easy and it is easy if you have the right mindset, is when you agree with the people around you, what it is we are gonna achieve as an outcome. I don't care how you do it, I don't care*

*when you do it, and I don't care where you do it, but we've agreed that's gonna be the outcome. You create accountability and you create drive.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

And this is, this is what's been exposed enormously in particularly at the beginning of Covid. It was fascinating. It's exposed bad and lazy leadership. When everyone was in the office at the same time? You actually didn't need to delegate properly, didn't need to set objectives. Everyone was busy, open, laptop responded, three emails. And I can look over your shoulder, check what you're doing, I can nudge you. I can say, 'oh by the way, Jeff, just go and do that, will you?' And it all happens. When we are remote. You can't do that. And so, so the, the businesses and the people that succeeded, well the people who weren't lazy leaders to begin with, who actually as you said, set out what it is we want to do and achieve. I always say that delegation isn't you telling me what to do with me telling you delegation's an agreement. If you wanna delegate something to me, we agree the delegation, we agree what's gonna be done by when and potentially some elements on how and stuff.

But that's it. And then how I do it precisely is up to me. And you're quite right, the things we are, things like the casual conversation, if I bump into you in the corridor, 'oh, oh, just one more thing Jeff, I forgot to say'. So there is a, there is definitely a need to connect and be together, but you're quite right to put a constraint and say, we insisted three days. You know, Elon Musk may be visionary, but I wouldn't quote him as a leader. And therefore a lot of his practices I I don't think are Well whatever they are, what they're Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's definitely visionary, no doubt about that.

And, and so the danger is, I, I work with businesses now they're saying how do we do it? People don't wanna come back in. I can't blame them cause all we gotta do, get them to come back in, have that two hour rush hour in the morning, two hour rush hour in the evening, they've still gonna open up their laptops and not speak to anybody else and send emails. What's the point? So let's change the office. Let's make an office, the space to meet, to relate, to share ideas, to get to know people, to build a relationship, to make some big

decisions. And then - how we do the bits in between? Well let's make sure we just do it so that it all happens. And you're quite right. And we're seeing a shift that way. And the businesses that get it, the leaders that get it, will, will roar away from the old fashioned ones who insist you've got to sit in the office and look busy. Cause they're own incompetence, they're own poor leadership and poor delegation.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*They're the people that are losing people, right? Because the people are saying, this is not what I want and therefore they're labelling it as a great resignation. I'm saying the great resignation's always been there. What's happened is you've now highlighted it because people have realised what it is they want outta life and they're now gonna go get it.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

And they've realised you can do it another way. And this is the thing that Covid taught as well actually. Cause the world didn't stop. Lot of businesses, I've been involved in lots of businesses and all the ones all did brilliantly. Some were incredible. Even a local restaurant on an island not far from where I live in Lymington in the new forest in the South of England. The restaurant couldn't open. So, but people could go out in the boats, but they prepared hampers. They were doing a hundred hampers a day.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*<Laugh>*

*Brilliant. Yeah. And that's about pivoting, right? You know, that's re-imagining. And, and that's, that's a creative mind and that's a positive mindset and all the things.*

*But coming back to what you just said a little while ago - I'm only doing this because one of the things I love to do is I, I like to talk about stuff that I've learned, not stuff that I guess is going to be right. So one of the things that I did as a, as a thing, you mentioned something there about, you know, 'we'll always need to have that chat on the coffee machine'. And I've, I have a slightly different view by saying, 'no one's ever enjoyed a chat of coffee machine.*

*They just didn't think they did. It's something they, they they don't do and therefore we must miss it.' And one of the reasons I say that is that the amount of times I watch people go up to someone of the coffee machine and say, 'hello John, how was your weekend'? Well actually what happened was my mum turned up, 'sorry John, I've got a call I'll catch you later.'*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

No authenticity.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*There was no meaning there. There was no, yeah, there was no authenticity. That's the word I was looking for. Yeah. What's happened. But what happened in Covid when everyone went remote when everyone sort of said, no, I don't like this because it was unfamiliar territory. But then four months later on said, we absolutely love it. Every manager bar none in my organisation said to me six months later, 'I know more about my team now than I've known in the last five years'. Because what happened was they were having, because of the wellbeing thing, we were keeping in touch, not about 'have you done your work', but about how are you, how are you coping, how you worry, are you dealing with the anxiety, etc etc'. And they were having deep, intimate one-on-one conversations. And because it was on teams or Zoom and it was in front of a pc, you had 100% attention and you were present.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Yeah.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*And essentially we knew more about our teams and our people than we'd ever known in the five years at the coffee machine, which meant the coffee machine was valueless. It*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

It was indeed

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Indeed. But coming back to what you said, the hybrid element. So what we did was we refitted our offices from a typical conventional of those very posh and very nice and fancy white desks and big screens everywhere. We ripped it all out and we filled it with couches and bookcases and beanbags, right? And we said, you, 'you do not come to the office to transact. You do that at home. You come to the office to have fun, be creative and solve problems. And that's the only reason you come to the office.'*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

So the office space has changed. There's a different need for it. And, but the casual conversation is that is a key element key. Also, we looking at each other's screen, you can see what's in the background. You can see what's on people's bookshelves, you can see the cat walks across the shoulders, dog comes in. There's an element of humanity about it as well.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*There is and the kids turn up when you're trying to have a conversation and that's ok. Right?*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Exactly. Let's be human. If forgot about the humanity forcing people to sit in their car for two hours every morning and every evening. That's not human.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Look at the stresses of parents young or otherwise where you know, the kids are ill. Well they can't go to school because the school shut or whatever. And they going, oh my god, I'm stressed now. Cause what we're gonna say to my governor in our world, now you can go into our offices and there's three or four kids there playing on the pool table because their*

*parents have had to bring them in. And that's okay. Right? Because at the end of the day, we're only there collaborating.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

This is the point again about being human, isn't it? So this compassionate leadership understanding and positive action. So the schools are shut, so the trains aren't working. 'You know what I understand that so let's be positive. So rather than beat you up or trying to get you to hide it, let's recognise it and, and be open. Take away bias or judgement. This a reality of life. We have to value family because without family, there's no future for the whole species anyway. But somehow we created a mechanism which only values productivity. It doesn't value family doesn't value, community doesn't relationships. And, and so we need to change that.

I do sense there's a sea change though, Jeff. Definitely things are happening. We're not tipping point yet. But things are definitely shifting, but only doubt.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*It's like everything else, the only thing that influences change of behaviour is consequence, right? And if you've got these companies that feel command and control is right. Or be back in the office is right, and they're struggling to get people or they're losing people and they can't replace them, eventually they're gonna say, what, what do we do differently? Yeah. And then they're gonna start asking exactly. They're gonna start asking, well, who are the companies that are actually employing these people, these people are having to go to? And how are they behaving? It's, the sad thing is, is like you've got the earlier adopters and you've got the laggards. The problem I've, or the concern I've got is I'm just scared by the amount of laggards.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

The laggards will, will fall off. You know, I mean they're dinosaurs and, and, and it'll, it'll change. You know, but I also think that there's two elements. Cause we hear a lot of conversation about the, the leadership has a duty of care of welfare stuff with the, the, the



workers. But there's a duty works both ways. They also have a duty which is to, to make sure that, that they're adding value and doing this sort of stuff. And, and the newspapers are full of how the CEOs are or are not doing this. And when I work with businesses, I say, well, the whole thing is about a relationship and the dialogue and a two way process. I look after you, you look after me, you know. I look after your family. You helped me look after my family, which is actually the bigger family.

And so I think we need to create that, that two-way... 'contract's' the wrong word. It's just, it's just that recognition. It's just that understanding of, yeah, okay, I'm gonna work differently. But I'll tell you what, you and I, Jeff, we agreed what work's gotta be done, we agreed it's gotta be done by a week Tuesday. I'll make sure it's done. And we'll honour each other.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Yeah. So I call that, I call that a contract between two people. And the reality is sometimes things happen that you're outta your control and that's okay, which means you can't do it Tuesday. But what you can't do is tell me on Tuesday you haven't done it. Yeah, exactly. Right. On Friday, when you realise you can't do it, you have to renegotiate this contract <laugh>. Right? So so we're all aware and we are informed.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

And I think there's lots of things out there outside our control at the moment. So <laugh>.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Oh, abso, absolutely, absolutely. Absolutely. But again, coming back to the, the, the Stephen Covey thing, and also back to what we've both been saying at different times, and that is that when you sort of create this environment that says, 'our job is to look after the person on the right and the person on the left before we look after ourselves', the byproduct is those two people will look after you. You've just got to trust in that fact. But it's gotta be genuine, it's gotta be authentic. So one of the examples we use that's helped me tell this story is we have a thing called Stop the Floor. Which is once a month in our business where everyone dials in and we have an update on what's happening with the business, the good,*

*the bad, the ugly, all the things that are going on. So everyone's completely involved in a very transparent way where it be financial or it'd be new clients, clients lost, whatever. And we do an update. It's a 40 minute thing. And one of the things we do is pre that actual stop the floor, there's a facility we have where you can nominate somebody that's gone the extra mile, done something great. Now it could be they've helped you, it could be they helped somebody on the side of, of the road who's car had broken down. It could be anything at all, right? It's just simple recognition. And what we used to do is we used to have, you know, 20 nominations and we just read out who we'd selected was the top three. But of course the other 17 never got heard of. So what we now do is we do a thing called Spin the wheel.*

*So what we do is up comes the wheel and it's got everybody's name on it that has been nominated and everyone gets to see their name before, whether they've won or not. And they're already winners. Whether the wheel stops or not, they don't care. They saw their name. And what was fascinating is when we started that just as we came outta Covid two years ago, and we do it every month now we have got two thirds of our company individuals being nominated every single month where people are now going out of their way to help their colleagues and their peers. And when you can create that environment, you become a powerhouse.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Yeah, you do. You do. And that's the key thing as well, to understand, isn't it? Which, which is great

I mentioned earlier about the joy of it, that's the title, my next book, the Joy of Leadership. Cause you know, it's an absolute joy. It's a responsibility.

I remember when I first met my crew for around world. And you know, it's, it's a longer story, but cutting it short, I didn't select them. They came from all walks of life. You know, they weren't professional sailors, 8 had never sailed in their life. And the first time we did big event, a big hall, 300 crew volunteers, 12 skippers around the room. I was one of the captains, one of the skippers and the organisers - his whole premise was this attitude of

ability. And I hundred percent believe that when he announced the last crew, and then the crews migrated toward the captains, when the crew stood in front of me for the very first time, that's when I realised what the first responsibility for leadership is. Cause they've given you the biggest gift, ultimate gift, which is their time, their life. And I worked out. But my responsibility as a leader is a give them return of that investment. That's the first responsibility.

And then think about relationships, think about teams, think about collaboration. It's not just a leader's responsibility. It's everyone's responsibility. Give return on the investment made in you by the people around you. And then, yeah, again, we just, we just end up in a different place. Cause you're thinking differently. And, and then it's, you know, really exciting and a real joy.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*And that's how you wake up. And there's, there's, there's a lovely phrase I use as well. The word, you know, the word enjoy has two meanings. You know, you can enjoy something or are you in joy?*

*<Laugh> And, and that's about a, that's about a mindset. And that mindset is the most powerful thing on the planet. Listen, Manley, this is, we have gone off on a tangent, but what a fantastic discussion.*

*We're gonna wrap it up now. I guess one of the things that, of course, from your experience, this is gonna be a bit of a challenging question, which I love because you can only say one thing. So if there was one thing - what would you say you were most grateful for?*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Gosh, actually it's not that hard. I'm, I'm most grateful for the love of the people around me.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Great. Because that's what energises you, right?*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

It is. You know, you feel honoured for that. And you know, it's it's a beautiful feeling that by, by whatever I've done, I've earned that love. I've earned that trust, whatever it would be. And they've decided to give it to me. And that's God, that's a real, so much I'm grateful for of course. But that is such a, such a joy and a pleasure.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*And then finally, if there was one message based upon the subject matter we've been talking about, for those that might be interested in the content and the viewpoints. If there was one message you would wanna end this on, what would that message be?*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Enjoy the journey. Definitely. Sometimes we worry too much about where we are going, but if we just stop and enjoy the journey, enjoy the moment, stick to the path, which is our path, you know, stick to your core values and just enjoy, enjoy the moment.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Brilliant. Well, Manley, it's been an absolute joy. I thank you so much for your time. I thank you for the real deep discussion and debate, which I've enjoyed every minute of, hopefully it'll bring some joy and inspirations, golden nuggets to some others. And I hope at some point in the future, our paths will cross again.*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

It's been a real pleasure. And yeah, let's set an intent out there to make sure that ours do cross. Cause that'd be a good thing.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*<Laugh>. Fantastic. Fantastic. Cheers. Manley,*

**Manley Hopkinson:**

Keep well.

**Jeff Dewing:**

*Well, a big thank you to Manley for that. What an incredible, incredible discussion. Normally we keep these podcasts to 20 or 30 minutes, but I couldn't stop the conversation. I was embroiled in this incredible insight, this incredible alignment of the new type of leadership, the compassionate leader that Manley talks about so passionately. And more importantly, by his own learnings and his own experiences in all areas. You know, not only just the Navy, but as he says, you know, huge chunks of his understanding of compassionate leadership was when you're trying to lead and skipper, you know, a huge lot, a, a huge yacht across, you know, the most violent of oceans with unskilled and inexperienced crew.*

*Leadership is where, you know, you bring that together because if you've got people that have the right attitude and the right intent, and they can manage the environment, enjoy the environment in which they're operating, these people could become superhuman! And invariably they do. And leadership of today, especially when you look at the old command and control style and some of the leadership that are still stuck back in the seventies and the eighties, could learn an awful lot from the new type of leadership because they're missing out on having people around them that will push those boundaries that will reach for the stars, not because they're doing it for you, but because they're doing it to make a difference.*

*Compassionate leaders are the ones that will have unstoppable workforces. They'll have unstoppable groups of people that know no boundaries, which is why the new type of leadership that was accelerated during Covid is going to be game-changing, not only in terms of commerce and revenue and, and growth. It's gonna be game-changing in terms of the ecosystem of saving the planet because people are desperate for purpose and great leaders and great leadership will help those people find that purpose and then they're unstoppable.*

*I'm **Jeff Dewing**, author of the bestselling book, **Doing the Opposite**, and **CEO of Cloudfm**. You can also find out more about this podcast and my incredible guests at [podcast.cloudfmgroup.com](http://podcast.cloudfmgroup.com). And finally, a big thank you to my team, Nichola Crawshaw at Cloudfm, Thinking Hat PR and of course, my production team What Goes On Media who have helped me launch this incredible new season that is creating a huge amount of head turning. I hope you enjoy it, and please feel free to listen back to previous podcasts that again, are just simply inspirational.*

*Thanks for listening.*