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2018 RECAP - LEARNINGS & INSIGHTS

**LEADERSHIP MOMENTS PODCAST TRANSCRIPT**



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**EPISODE 35**



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[Start of Transcription]

**MURRAY:** (00:00) You sometimes wonder, “Am I making a difference? Do I matter?” And then it hit home to me. It’s about making a difference in some small way. We sometimes look at those bigger pieces. We want to achieve the big thing. But just by turning up to run a couple of simple workshops, I was making a difference. And that’s what it’s all about. In whatever we do, making a difference and it’s the small things that add up to something greater.

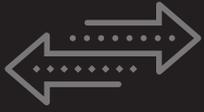
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(00:31) Welcome to my podcast. I’m Murray Wright and this is Leadership Moments, real people stories about the people and the moments that have influenced and shaped their leadership.

(00:47) Happy New Year and welcome to the first Leadership Moments of 2019. I hope you had a great end of year celebration and it has started well for you. I can’t believe it but it’s been a year since I started Leadership Moments, so a big thank you to you for listening and of course to all my guests who have given their time and shared their leadership moments, insight and knowledge with us.

(01:11) Now December, January, it’s a pretty reflective time of year. We look back on the past year. We set our goals for 2019 and we say our affirmations, if you like, and we make those resolutions on how we’re going to go. So in this episode I thought I would share my leadership moments from 2018, what I’ve learned, and talk a bit about how that’s shaping my 2019. I also wanted to share a few excerpts from past episodes and in those excerpts, to give you some great reminders not only about leadership but also caring for ourselves. And that’s all about helping you to be at your best so you can have the impact you want in 2019. I really believe we have to start with ourselves, look after ourselves before we can look after others and really do what we want to do. Okay. Let’s get into it.

(02:12) So the first Leadership Moment question is, “Who has influenced you the most?” Well for me it’s actually a fellow podcaster. Let me explain. When I started the Leadership Moments I had no idea what I was doing. I had not really defined the purpose. All I knew was, “Well, I can’t do blogs. Someone suggested doing a podcast. Let me do it, create some content.” And it also was a great excuse to actually play with a bit of technology. Get new microphones, etc., etc. So that’s all good fun. Then someone suggested listening to Pat Flynn and his Smart Passive Income Podcast. And that was when my perspective and understanding of podcasts changed. How



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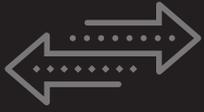


has that influenced me? Well, it's given me ideas of how to structure and use a podcast. There's lots of tips in his shows on the technical side of podcasting, but more importantly he helped me see how to connect the podcast to my bigger purpose, if you like, and to give the whole thing of doing podcasts more meaning. I now understand how the podcasting can be a real driver to support my business. I wouldn't have had that without listening to Pat Flynn's podcast.

(03:32) There's another aspect to this and this whole influence. He's also actually been my cheerleader. Like all of us I can get caught up in the daily grind of work and business and really start to lose sight of the why, the purpose, and what happens is, I focus on the problems and the obstacles and it can all get a bit much. I lose total perspective. So my cure was to get busy. So I would be... I'd do the housework, the gardening, put on the headset and listen to a few of Pat's shows. And that really got me out of the funk of the problems and it got me looking at the bigger picture and what can be... And it really fires me up and fills me with enthusiasm, gives me great ideas. I'm off again back on track. So what's the learning? We all need a cheerleader. So as you look ahead to 2019 my question to you is, "Who do you have in your corner?" "Is it a friend, a boss, a colleague, a mentor, a coach or a podcaster?" "Who is going to help you stay connected to that bigger picture as well as give you the insights, tips and ideas to really get you fired up?" And as I speak this it makes me think about how I can do this more explicitly in Leadership Moments? A great little tip I picked up from Pat was to keep a thank you file. So whenever someone sends or gives you a note of thanks where you've made a difference, print it. Save it in a file and when you get lost, a bit down, a bit hard on yourself, pull out the file and remind yourself about the impact you actually have on others and how they appreciate it.

(05:15) So let's move on to question two, my 'aha' moment, the moment when I understood what leadership was all about. Like my guests I find this difficult to answer because there's quite a few through the year, but for me it actually happened in January 2018 when I was awarded a Most Valuable Partner Award at the CareerTrackers Annual Awards Dinner. You may remember I interviewed Michael Coombs, the CEO in Episode 17 paying it forward. If you've not listened to it, I recommend you do. Here's Michael talking about what CareerTrackers do:

(05:54) "So CareerTrackers is a non-profit organization in Australia that supports aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander university students as they make their way through university and into professional careers. It's an internship program where these students undertake paid internships at different organizations during their



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summer holidays with the aspiration of returning to that organization each year of their university degree and then graduating and going on to full-time employment. And the program is very much a program and not a placement. It's not an approach where we think we can take someone, put them in an organization and hope for the best. It's about preparing the individual and the organization as they embark together in this sort of new path of employment."

(06:49) I've worked with CareerTrackers doing pro bono facilitation work as part of their programs also doing some basic design work probably for about eight/nine years now. At the dinner when I was called up to receive the MPV award it was, first of all, a great surprise and a great honor. But it was then that it really hit home to me what it was all about. I sometimes question if there's any value in what I do. You sometimes wonder, "Am I making a difference? Do I matter?" And then it hit home to me. It's about making a difference in some small way. We sometimes look at those bigger pieces. We want to achieve the big thing but just by turning up to run a couple of simple workshops, I was making a difference. And that's what it's all about. In whatever we do making a difference and it's the small things that add up to something greater. So that recognition and affirmation from CareerTrackers, it really started my year well. It was an affirmation of my worth and really lifted me and gave me a great deal of confidence and focus through the year. It also helped me... Rather it also gave me the confidence to evolve my purpose and get a bit clearer and expand it. So I was all about supporting leaders, helping leaders, make change, etc., but that helped me understand it's about better leadership that will then have a bigger and more positive impact. So create a better world and in that allow people to live a better life.

(08:28) And that brings me to the third question. As you may well know the third question I ask leaders in the Leadership Moments is, "What has been your biggest failure and how does that inform you your leadership today?" And the whole purpose of that question is not about dwelling on failure and digging into that. It's just to understand how people learn from it. And it's important we recognize our failures, reflect and use them to learn. That is a key leadership principle. So as I look back at 2018, what was my biggest failure? And I find that quite a hard one but I ended up thinking about... There was a job I was doing as an associate and I was working on the design and then ultimately what would be delivery of a program? It was one of those jobs that was on a tight timeline and I was trying to squeeze it in amongst a load of other things before going on holiday and the job itself had a lot of moving parts and different people involved. Now I was excited by the job. I wanted to be part of it because it looked like a good pipeline of business for the next six months. Come back



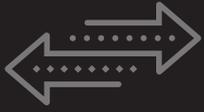
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after a holiday, etc. It was also an opportunity to prove myself, do this bit of work. Anyway I got my brief and went to it. Well, my first effort I missed the mark. I got the feedback from the client and then I went again. Well, I was even further off. There's a bit more detail to it but at the end of the day basically I missed the mark and didn't do a very good job. In my rush I had not read the information and more significantly I did not go back and ask questions. I got caught up in that rush of the situation. I got caught up in my desire to show what I could do and instead of going slow, to go fast. One of my rules I try and follow an old part of me came up, the part that did not want to look stupid, the part that insisted on trying to work it out myself and put a lot of pressure on myself. It's the part that makes me critical of myself and others and of course in the end, as I said, I did a really poor job. So that was my failure.

(10:54) Now what I should have done is say, "I was too busy. I don't have the capacity. Could we talk about maybe getting involved later when I'm back from my holiday?" It would have been a sensible discussion, saved myself a lot of grief, giving someone else an opportunity to do the work and probably been a better outcome for the group I was working with as well as the client. Well guess what? My desire to please, the fear of missing out, it did not serve me well. I'm not involved in that job at all now. So you see, even when you're perfect like me, we all have our moments and things to work on. Of course I say that with tongue in cheek. I think what it does show us is that although we work hard to overcome certain mindsets and behaviours, to develop new stories, we can when we least expect it be triggered and thrown back into our old ways. And the main thing at that point is to be able to recognize it and use it as a learning to then reinforce the preferred way. It's always going to happen. It's all about learning and falling off that bike less often. The main thing is 'get back on the bike'.

(12:01) Okay. Those are a few of my moments for 2018. They've certainly given me pause for reflection and helped me think about the year ahead and work out not only what I want to achieve and why it's important but also I've reflected on the how and what am I going to stop? What will I start and what do I continue? So what were your moments in 2018? And how did they inform your 2019? Was there many things that will frustrate us? At the end of the day it's the conscious choices we make that determine the impact we have as leaders. As Gandhi said, "Be the change that you want to see in the world." As you're in that space here are a few excerpts from previous episodes that I hope spark your thinking, reflection and help you towards a successful 2019. On purpose Lee Williams looks backwards to look forward in Episode 23:



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**LEE:** So I think the first step is to look backwards, to look forwards. So to reflect on people, events, times in your life. First step is just to map that out and then to kind of zoom out and look at that life history and think about, "So how has that shaped the way I view the world today and my place in it? How am I showing up? What are the natural gifts that I have that are emerging from this? What are the examples in there that I just don't want to be that kind of person or have that kind of impact and therefore what is it the impact that I'd like to have then?" So a combination of strengths and impact I think is a good way to think about purpose.

**MURRAY:** Yeah.

**LEE:** What are the goods that I've got? Okay. Let's have a look at that and try and surface some of the gifts from all of that.

**MURRAY:** Yeah. Nice. I think the piece about this as well for everyone is to understand it takes time. You know, some people sort of want to sit down and will do a day and work out a purpose, but for myself personally, I mean it takes a long time. In a sense it never ends. You're always refining and adjusting. So I think the other piece about this is not to put pressure on yourself to actually to come up with an answer.

**LEE:** I agree completely. Yeah. Eight years it took me to arrive at the statement that I have for myself now, which is to enrich as many lives as I can in my lifetime and have fun doing it.

**MURRAY:** Yeah.

**LEE:** It's taken eight years.

(14:34) Part of looking into the future is setting goals. In Episode 12 Rob Metcalf shared the three questions for leaders:

"So if I go to leaders in my business experience first, there was a lady called Sheena Porter, and I will name her, who said on day one of my work at The Oxford Group, "My job is to liberate you of me as quickly as I can and then liberating you of me, the way I will do that is to ask you three questions and the three questions are: Where are you going and why? Where are you now and what are you going to do next?" And then she did ask me those questions every time I saw her. So it beheld me well to think through



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the answers before she asked them. And in thinking through the answers ahead of seeing her, she profoundly influenced, actually the whole evolution of LIW and my current thinking, which is around those three questions. So at the international level, "Where are we going and why?" At the organizational level, "Where are we going and why?" At the team level, "Where are we going and why?" At the personal level, "Where are we going and why?" So I think they are the most powerful questions that a leader can ask."

(15:42) Looking ahead you've no doubt been asking that first question, "Where are you going and why?" Rob talked about the different levels that this can be asked and it's important to remember all aspects of our life and think about what we want to achieve in all of them. It shouldn't all be about work as Pia Lee reminded us in Episode 19:

**PIA:** So the purpose I guess... You know, I jokingly say to some of my clients, you know, could you imagine the scenario where you're visiting your own gravestone and, you know, you'd dedicated a life's work and so the word manager is placed on your tombstone.

**MURRAY:** Yes.

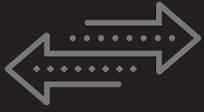
**PIA:** How good...

**MURRAY:** How does that feel?

**PIA:** How does it feel?

**MURRAY:** Covey's 'begin with the end in mind'.

**PIA:** Well, we're not jumping out of our skin at that one. And so that is a little bit of a stark realization that there is more to this than the level that you're seeking. So I think really asking, you know, "Why am I here and what am I trying to achieve?" is a fundamentally important question. But it's very thought provoking and it might take some time to be able to answer that. But asking it, is the fundamental leadership question."



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(16:56) Sometimes we work hard as leaders to have all the answers. A reminder that our job as a leader is about creating the conditions for success. Pia Lee again:

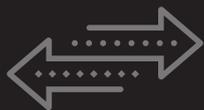
“So again I think simplicity is really key here. So leaders are in the firing line. There’s a lot of complexity going on and so they need something simple to be able to guide them in their leadership actions. So three conditions, three things that leaders need to create as the conditions for themselves and for others and for their team or organization to be successful.

The first one is ‘clarity’ and we should never underestimate how hard clarity is to develop and also to sustain. So this is clarity of information that you send out, but also understanding. So really getting clear about what you’re trying to do, why you’re trying to do it and how you’re going to do it and who’s responsible. Those simple elements are fundamental, an alignment of strategy and vision and purpose for an organization, a team or an individual.

Second one is ‘climate’ and this is structures and processes, the hard stuff, because sometimes we have unwieldy structures and processes that make it really hard to enact. But the softer stuff is the cultural element and that’s absolutely key. So what type of high performing culture do you have inside your team or your organization that enable you to deliver on the vision of the organization?

The final bit is ‘competence’ and that’s two parts, knowledge and skill. So it’s a bit more of the technical knowledge, the expertise that are required, different elements of those. But the behaviour and attitude is the undoing of many teams and organizations. So what do you want to have in terms of the behaviours and attitude of the people that are in your team? And how do you nurture and develop that? It’s actually much easier to develop technical knowledge than it is behaviour and attitude. So it’s better if you get somebody that might be slightly under-baked on the skills side but is really incredibly willing to develop them. Those behaviours and attitude impacts the climate that impacts the clarity. There may be multiple facets that sit under that, but they’re your three main conditions that you’re looking at.”

(19:19) Let’s shift a bit and think about ourselves. John Felton talked to us about resilience in Episode 16. Here is what he said about sleep and some tips to help us get good recovery to really help us be at our best:



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“This is one of the... I guess one of the problems with sleep deprivation. One, we’d wear it as a bit of a badge of honor when we tell people well we only need to sleep five hours or six hours a night. But the other side of it is because we don’t realize how impaired we are... We don’t even realize as an organization or as a country, the impact that that is actually having on one, our productivity, but also how it’s actually increasing the risk within the organization. You know, you get much more rushed decisions when you’re tired. You reduce your empathy. I don’t think we all know that, but when we’re tired, our fuse is a little bit shorter and we don’t have the capacity to take in, I guess, a number of disparate views that we can actually sync together in and make a decision from. And so there’s a bit of a, I guess, a misunderstanding that getting good sleep is about length of sleep. You know, if you have alcohol later in the evening after sort of eight o’clock, then you’re going to lose up to an hour for every unit of alcohol you have of deep sleep. So be very really careful that you don’t use alcohol as a stress reduction tool when you come home. By doing that, by making sure you don’t use your computer and being dark at about eight thirty, nine o’clock at the latest at night. Don’t eat after nine o’clock at night. Don’t do hard exercise after nine o’clock at night. Have a period where you can slow down before you go to bed and whether that means reading or some other sort of relaxing thing. I mean television is not too bad as long as it’s not too exciting.”

(21:23) And still on our health here is Nicole McAuliffe in Episode 33 talking about nutrition and giving us some great tips about what foods to eat.

**NICOLE:** As you were saying earlier, it’s about the choices and choosing to pause and doing a reflection and going, “How am I today and what’s one really small step that’s going to make a big difference?” One of the simplest things we can do is try that whole five veg, two fruit a day.

**MURRAY:** Yeah.

**NICOLE:** If we do that, and that’s kind of the minimum for basic health, you would notice such a difference.

**MURRAY:** Yeah.

**NICOLE:** You know, eat the healthy fats. They’re anti-inflammatory, so we’re talking about the omega-3, fish oils there as well. Nuts or seeds, they’re fantastic for



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serotonin and feel good chemicals. For some people it's sleep and water. That's the basis. And then you just add your fruit and veggies into that. I think you're on a winning combo. We do know a couple of things that are really great out there at the moment and that's mushrooms. Really great for the immune system. And the other thing is the probiotic containing foods that help your gut respond to stress. So things like sauerkraut and kombucha and kimchi and kefir and fiber which actually feed the probiotic.

**MURRAY:** I think we have to make a commitment to ourselves. It's something for me. I think about it. It's about, "Well how am I..." And you talked about it earlier, being the best so I can show up at work. Be the best at work but also be the best at home and... It's really understanding you can have the energy. You can flourish. You just have to make some simple choices.

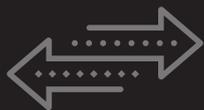
**NICOLE:** Absolutely. And I think that making those simple changes incrementally over time and this is... None of this is rocket science.

**MURRAY:** No.

**NICOLE:** And knowing that food does impact your mood and how you show up during the day I think sometimes that surprise the people.

(23:24) As you think about your own well-being I'll take you back to Episode 9 for further confirmation about the benefits that mindfulness can bring. Here is Gillian Coutts:

"I had a period... What are we now? But about seven years ago now where I was in that role as head of operations and I had gone off on maternity leave to have my son and as I came back to work, he was about ten months old, I was diagnosed with breast cancer literally that week. So I had this kind of double slap to the head experience of one, becoming a mum, which was kind of mind rocking enough and then the second was having this cancer diagnosis and treatment. And when I came back to work following the chemo, I was trying to juggle, you know, a senior role, a new baby or really a toddler at that time and still really exhausted from the chemo. Someone said to me, "You should try mindfulness." And it would be pretty fair to say that I swore at them at the time. They could just bugger off. But I was pretty desperate and so I started doing ten minutes a day. It was focus training and breath and after a couple of weeks I started feeling more calm, which was interesting and



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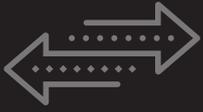
good, beneficial and then a couple more weeks later, my husband said to me, "Do you realize you're easier to live with." "But that is so funny because so are you." So it was just like a mutual kind of spirit arising there. I was feeling more in control but apparently I was being less controlling, which is interesting. And then a couple more months later... I sit on a couple of boards and one of the board members leaned over to me after a meeting and said, "I don't know what's going on with you, but it's like you're suddenly smarter." That is so not a compliment, but what he was actually calling out is that I'm starting to show up differently."

(25:17) Well I could go on. Look through the podcast episodes and remind yourself of the great information that there is so generously given by our guests. You'll get that at [murraywright.com.au/podcast](https://murraywright.com.au/podcast) and remember there are also the leadership questions taken from the guests. They give you great questions to ask if you are in this reflective mode. There are questions there for building connection and understanding, general reflection, coaching and developing others or if you want, thinking more strategically. You'll find them under the Resources tab at [murraywright.com.au](https://murraywright.com.au).

(25:55) I hope you find this episode useful. Be sure to share it with the people around you. Thank you again for listening and a big shout out to the Leadership Moments production team, Adam, Jennina and Sarah who really make it all happen.

(26:09) Wishing you a successful 2019. I really look forward to bringing you more leadership moments in the coming year with insights and hopefully inspiration to support you to be a better leader, make a better world and live a better life.

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(26:25) That's it for this episode. Thanks for listening. Head to [murraywright.com](https://murraywright.com) for the transcripts, key learnings and resources from today's and past episodes. Once you're there, why not subscribe to the Leadership Moments Podcast. That way, you never have to miss one. Until the next time.

[End of Transcription]



## PLANNING A CHANGE?

In the middle of, or planning change for yourself or team and want to get it right? Talk with Murray to discuss options on building clarity, setting expectations and creating the culture that will engage people and bring success.

Either call +61 407 262 475 or via the website.  
Look forward to hearing from you.