

Humanizing Growth Series

Marc Pritchard & Frank van den Driest in conversation

June 2021



Marc Pritchard



Frank van den Driest



In this conversation, Frank van den Driest (a co-founder of the Institute for Real Growth) and Marc Pritchard (the Chief Brand Officer of Procter & Gamble) address a variety of topics of relevance for contemporary CMO's.

Pritchard, a 39-year P&G veteran, discusses how seeing the company and its brands as a 'force for good and a force for growth' underpins his philosophy of brand-building. He outlines multiple examples of how P&G has put this philosophy into practice and how he and his teams have dealt with missteps along the way.

The two discuss the value of diversity and how to ensure that diversity efforts successfully impact companies and their operations. Pritchard outlines P&G's re-invented approach to innovation and how he keeps himself fresh by mentally 'firing himself' every 18 months.

The conversation has been edited and condensed for clarity.

F It's 39 years ago that you started at Procter & Gamble? Can you remember that very first day that you walked into one of the P&G offices?

M I remember it like it was yesterday. In fact, I was at a strategy meeting in that same building about a week ago. I started in what was called the paper division at the time, which is our products - Charmin, Bounty, and Puffs, as well as Pampers, Loves, and Always. And I remember the first day because my boss, his name was Stan Boric, he said some things at the very beginning. He said, "We're a company that does the right thing. And we do what's right." It just stuck with me. The values of our company were introduced to me on day one.

It's one of the distinguishing characteristics of our company - we have a purpose to improve the lives of the world's consumers with superior products and services that lead us to leadership results, but that are not only good for our shareholders, but they're good for, first and foremost consumers as well as for our employees and the communities in which we live and work.

I remember that from the very beginning with my boss saying, "We do what's right. We focus on the consumers we serve. We have high integrity." I literally have a badge that has our values on it, of integrity, leadership, ownership, teamwork. That's why I remember it so well.

F Humanized growth is the term that we use at the IRG for multi-stakeholder value creation over the long term. And we focus very specifically on four Cs, as we call them: colleagues, consumers and customers, communities, and capital markets. And what I noticed when you just were talking was that you left out one stakeholder group, the capital markets?

M I should not have, because our superior results do deliver superior shareholder returns. But we tend to start with consumers, employees, retailers or our customers, communities, and shareholders. So, yes, capital markets, which are our shareholders. We're a for-profit business, so it is absolutely in that purpose.

A FORCE FOR GOOD AND A FORCE FOR GROWTH

F One of the indicators that I use to see to what extent people really embrace the multi-stakeholder agenda is look at, for example, town hall meetings. Do you talk only about consumers? only about growth and profit? only about purposeful work? Can you tell us a little bit about how you try to strike a balance?

M The way we balance, is we like to think about what we do as being a force for good and a force for growth. It's important that you do both because as a company that has shareholders, as a public company, if you're a force for good without growth and value creation, then you're a philanthropy. And we're not a philanthropy. We're a for-profit business.

But if you're a force for growth without any good, then the consumers that we serve are increasingly viewing companies like that, as mercenary. So you've got to do both. And that's the way we think about it. You can do good for, obviously, consumers first and foremost. Our job is to make their lives better every day with our household and personal care products and healthcare products. That's job one, and that makes a big difference in people's lives.

And then, beyond that, we then focus on how we do that. And we do that through equality and inclusion. We do that in a way that is sustainable. We do that in a way that helps communities in need. All of those things then lead to growth in value creation, not only for our businesses, but for the economy and for the communities in which we live and work. So that's the way we talk about it. Force for good, force for growth. It's a circular and an iterative approach to how we view humanizing growth.

F It's almost a self-perpetuating system if you get it right?

M It's sustainable then. I remember about 15 years ago, when I was starting to work and starting to get into some of this work. In this case, we have one of our signature programs called 'Children's Safe Drinking Water'.

There's literally still almost a billion people who don't have access to clean water, many of whom are in places where they must walk six miles a day to be able to get water. And often, that water is so dirty, it creates illness. We have these little packets (and have now donated about 16 billion of these packets) that can take horribly dirty and infested water and clean it completely. It literally saves lives.

I remember talking to some of the NGO partners at the beginning, and I said, "Look, let's figure out how we might be able to work with P&G and some of our brands." They're like, "Oh, no, no, no. We can't do that." I said to them, "What do you mean? Why not?" "Well, we're a nonprofit and we don't want to look like we're selling out and being too commercial."

My response was, "Well, that's one way to look at it. The other way to look at it is that if you work with a company like P&G, and you work with our brands, what that can allow us to do is to be able to find a way to make it both a force for good and a force for growth, which will make it far more sustainable than the money that we could donate to you. We may donate \$50,000. But we can help you get millions of dollars of worth of awareness and contribution if we work together." And that's really the way we think about it internally and the way we think about it externally with our partners.

PROFIT CHALLENGES TO HUMANIZED GROWTH

F One of the questions regarding humanized growth that comes up every so often is – We believe it, we want it, but then a crisis happens, or our share price goes down, or whatever it is, and then everything goes out of the window and it's back to, "We've got to make a profit." How do you deal with those kinds of pressures?

M It's such an important point because that's right. If it is viewed as this effort, we call it citizenship, but humanizing growth is a way to think about that. If that is viewed as a separate, bolted-on effort that you do in times of good, it will never last.

Instead, what we focus on is building it in, building it into how we do business. So we do identify, as I mentioned, our core priority areas, equality and inclusion, environmental sustainability, community impact. And then the foundation of that is just ethics and corporate responsibility.



But by building it into how we do business, then it becomes part of the business model. So, sustainability, building in innovations that are superior performing product innovations, that are also sustainable, will make that last.

Tide and cold water are a great example. Most of the carbon emissions in use for laundry detergent come from heating the water for the washing machine. So, when you turn the dial down to 30 degrees Celsius, or even lower, then that allows us to wash and get your clothes clean in a superior way. Which by the way, is better for the clothes because it's less heat, so there's less damage. And it reduces the energy load and the carbon emissions by 80% for that laundry load. So that is an innovation that is built into how we do business. We do the same thing on Cascade and Fairy automatic dishwasher because when you use a dishwasher, it uses less water than when you wash by hand, because the water, the four gallons, are recycled. When you wash by hand, you're pouring out four gallons every two minutes.

So that then leads you to it's a built-in innovation. That's why we do that. Then it's something that's sustainable. If things get rough, then we're already after it and we're already on it.

If you think even about just basic productivity. When you reduce energy, reduce waste, reduce water in your operations, that saves money. That's good for business because you're spending less on resources. So same thing on equality and inclusion. We build equality and inclusion into our everyday advertising. As the world's largest advertiser, our voice in advertising makes a huge difference.

The images in advertising embed memories into people's minds. So how you portray people can create bias, particularly if it's stereotyped, objectified, diminished, or whatever the case may be. Our number one job is to make sure we have the accurate portrayal of every person in our advertising, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or ability, religion, body type, age.

Because when you have the accurate portrayal, it helps eliminate bias, helps promote equality, and by the way, we have demonstrated when you do that, it builds the business. There's a #SeeHer GEM study that was done, a gender equality measure study, that showed when you have the accurate portrayal of women and girls, it increases trust by 10%, and purchase by 20%. So therefore, it becomes part of how you do business.

F 39 years ago, you were told on your very first day, by your boss, that this was a purposeful business. I can tell you many of the people in our program do not work in companies where on their first day, they are told that. They are told what is going to be the turnover and what's going to be the profit. Do you have any advice for these leaders, these CMOs, that work in a company that is really dominated by financial targets, mostly short term?

M Key advice, for me, would be to start with the consumers you serve, or whoever your constituents are, start by understanding what they want. What's really interesting is today, 9 out of 10 consumers feel better about a brand if it supports a social or environmental causes. More than half of consumers now, and it's even higher than that, closer to 70-plus-percent, among millennials and gen-z. More than half, though, expect brands to take a stand, to make a difference, to do something for good for the environment or for equality.

I mean, that really happened in the last year when people, during the pandemic and the racial and social injustice. So start there. And then start to figure out what you can do on your business that makes the most sense to advance your product or service. And then as we have done, as the largest advertiser ask - How do we best do that? Well we can definitely portray people in an accurate way and periodically take a stand against bias. And that makes sense for us. We're a large advertiser.

The environmental examples that I provided to you innovate in such a way that delivers that sustainability, but then you must make the case for growth. As I was describing, it took some time for us, but making the case that if we have the accurate portrayal, if we do that consistently, it'll help drive our business, and then we proved it over and over again. We proved it with Always 'Like A Girl', with Always 'End Period Poverty', with Olay 'Face Anything', with SKII 'Change Destiny', with Ariel 'Share the Load', with Vicks 'Touch of Care'.



When we started proving that you could do humanized growth, and that business grows, then we started to shine the light on those situations. And then people started getting excited about it. And then it became a creative exercise. So you really have to go back to the fundamentals. What do your consumers want? What makes sense for your business? How do you do that in such a way that actually helps grow the brand or the service that you have, and then shine the light on it? And then eventually, it starts to become part of the way you do business. That's my advice.

F Clear advice. You make it sound so easy.

M It's not. It takes time. It really does. The other thing I would say is, it was 1989 when our president at the time, John Pepper, convinced our then CEO, John Smale, to write a diversity policy. And at the time, our company was largely white, cisgender men, particularly in the management ranks. And John Pepper knew that it was going to take a generation to really make good progress on this, not just from a gender standpoint, but also from a race standpoint.

Eventually, we added LGBTQ+. But he knew it was a generation because our company tends to recruit people straight out of university, and then advances them. So, we did a lot of work inside to ensure that we had a foundation that reflected what we were going to say. It wasn't until 2014 that we really went out with our voice. And that was with Always 'Like A Girl', which was the groundbreaking gender equality message. But we had, at the time, made enough internal progress.



In fact, right now, 48% of our managers are women. So we're very close to 50/50 gender equality at every level. And the brand marketing organization that I have responsibility for, it is 50/50 at every level. Actually, maybe five short, five promotions short of getting it 50/50 at the very, very top level. So I say that because what's important is you got to make sure you do the work inside before you start going outside.

F You used a quota inside?

M No. What we do is we set aspirations.

F It's an interesting tension between meritocracy and quota. How do you feel the tension and how do you deal with it?

M What our views are, is that when you set the aspiration and the expectation and set the goal, and then make the case for why it's the right thing to do, both for society and for the business, you'll make more progress and it'll be lasting.

What happened with this CEO statement of diversity, it was three years later that our then CEO Ed Artzt made a statement to include sexual orientation in our EO policy. And then later on, we formed affinity groups for gender and for LGBTQ+. And eventually, over time, for different races, people with disability and what not. But the expectation from leadership was consistent. And while we didn't set quotas, we did set goals, and in some cases, aspirations. We're not there yet. We're shooting for this. And we're very open about it. And then what we have found is that when you do that, people rise to the occasion because they see why it's the right thing to do, they seize the expectation. A quota forces compliance. And what happens then is that something could change in the company and that objective goes out the door.

THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN SETTING HUMANIZED GROWTH AGENDAS

F How do you respond to the people that don't respond in a way you would hope regarding these aspirations? There will always be people that don't come on board. How do you deal with yours?

M That's leadership's job. Our job as leadership is to set the expectations and hold people accountable. Our CEO, David Taylor, set very specific, in this case, goals. And we first set them for 2020. Then he set them for 2025. Now we're setting them for 2030. But the goals were set and broken down by business unit. And then he made that clear, "This is my expectation for what you need to do."

And what we've done then is we put systems in place, and we take action to make the adjustments. At least in this case, I'm talking about for equality and equal representation. If over time, somebody doesn't make it, the first thing you ask is, "Why aren't you making this? Give me the analysis." Like any business goal, why is it happening. Then if over time you see that they're not interested in it... That the cause is their lack of leadership or lack of action, and they don't take remedial action, then they're held accountable for that.

It either holds them back from a promotion, or there's consequences from compensation. There's other consequences. If it's really a problem, then they're removed.

But by and large, we've found that doesn't happen mostly because of what I told you about day one people that come into our company are inculcated with those purpose, values, and principles from the beginning, and it cascades. So by the time you're in a senior leadership position, you live and breathe those principles. By and large, when there's an expectation, people deliver.

F There's one other tension that I find in this same space. You talk about diversity, and we know that more diverse perspectives lead to better decision making. You probably don't need to convince a lot of people of that. On the other hand, you're carrying a badge with the values of the company. So with these values being so dominant, isn't that at odds with diversity of perspective?

M On the contrary. I would say that these values drive respect, and drive respect for differences. And there's also a set of principles around how we operate too.

F Can you give an example?

M The principles around what we're shooting for is in terms of respecting individuals, but also respecting differences. And actually, creating and developing a diverse and inclusive workforce that drives innovation. So those things, diversity, equity, and inclusion, really drive the opportunity to drive more innovation. And we're a company that innovates. We're a company that absolutely has to innovate.

F What you're saying is diversity is part of our values. So it's one, basically.

M It becomes part of how we operate, absolutely correct. And then as I mentioned, those citizenship priorities that I provided you, equality, and inclusion, that we build into how we operate, it becomes part of how you operate. There's always going to be differences of opinion. What's important is differences of opinion are valued, because differences of opinion can drive to better outcomes.

We did some training once around the better third way. It was actually Roger Martin, who's from the University of Toronto. He's been a consultant with us for probably 30 years. He gave us this thing about there's always two ways, and there are two options that people have. And people will gravitate toward this one, or that one. And it's either right or wrong. No. How about there's a third way? And often, when we're at odds on something, and we can't figure something out, we say, "Is there a better third way here? Can we consider just a different way we might be able to do this?" And that's the definition of innovation.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE AS A MARKETING LEADER

F Going back those 39 years, let's talk about interventions that you remember that you feel really made a difference.

M The first one, which was ... I would say it was probably the most profound one for me personally was over 20 years ago, when I was running our Cover Girl business. My wife, Betsy, and I, and our three daughters who were all under the age of 10, were at a spiritual ranch in Colorado.

And at this ranch, the spiritual leader, who was a minister, came up to me. And he said, "I hope you know the good you can do because you're in business. And business will someday be the greatest force for good in the future. It won't be governments. It won't be clergy. It won't be laws. It'll be business. If you choose to do so, you could really do a lot of good."

And it was a blinding moment of clarity for me. I was like, "Whoa. Wow. That's a big point." And at the time, we had just created the 'Easy Breezy Beautiful' Cover Girl campaign, which I'm happy to say is still alive. But we had created it in such a way that we were getting feedback that our spokespeople were too young, too thin, too white. It was a stereotypical, and even somewhat objectified, standard of beauty. And I realized that. And I thought, "We have got to do something about that".

I looked at my three young daughters and I said, "You know what? They cannot grow up thinking that that's the definition of beauty." And we changed. And we changed the whole thing. And we actually went to much more of an inside/outside beauty. We brought in many more diverse spokespeople, like Queen Latifah, ultimately Ellen DeGeneres. It was a transformation. And I realized that has a huge impact on how people see themselves.

The Always team were inspired by that campaign, and they then created 'Like A Girl.' And it literally changed the meaning of the phrase, 'Like a girl' was a negative phrase, and it turned into a positive phrase as a result of that. Again, a profound impact. And that's when we declared, as the world's largest advertiser, we are going to use our voice as a force for good.

Then we had, as I mentioned, 'Face Anything', 'Change Destiny', the Ariel 'Share the Load', which in India and other parts of the world got men to step up and do laundry, because laundry is not just for women. Laundry can be done by men.

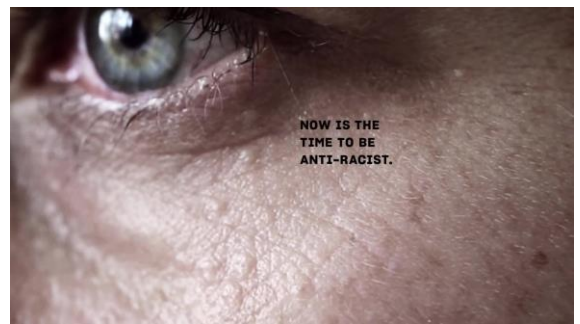
Here in the United States, we did 'The Talk', which shined a light on the talk that Black parents have with their children about the prejudice they'll face.



Then 'The Look', which shined a light on how Black men face racism on a daily basis.



And then last year, 'The Choice', which really, really, after George Floyd was killed, concentrated on getting the white community to step up.



And these were moments that we look at as milestones of making a difference and being that force for good. Last year when the pandemic hit, the expectation of companies stepping up was so, so big. We converted our disaster relief work. Typically, and very quietly for the past 25 years, whenever there's a disaster, a hurricane, a tornado, a flood, an earthquake, we donate products to help people get back on their feet. We converted nearly all of that to help people who had needs during the COVID pandemic. And it was tens of millions of dollars, very quietly, no headlines, just did it to help communities in need.

These are moments that I really look back on and think they were big moments. They made a difference... And they've helped many people around the world, and helped our company.

DEALING WITH SETBACKS

F How have you dealt with strong setbacks, caused by yourself or by others?



M Probably the most profound setback was where we took a lot of heat for Gillette "We Believe". It was the right thing for Gillette to do. Gillette has had a campaign called 'The Best A Man Can Get' since the 80s. And it was very, very stereotypical. It was very masculine. In some cases, the work that they did objectified or even diminished women, not intentionally, but it did over time. And I really encouraged them to evolve, "You guys got to modernize. You got to get a better ... You got to wake up here."

This is right after the #MeToo movement occurred. And they came back with an outstanding film called 'We Believe'. Which basically said - We believe in men, and we believe that men can be the best they can be. And we want to demonstrate that they can be role models, and that it's not enough to just not be a harasser. You have to step up and step in and do things.

They demonstrated this with a 90 second film. The problem was the front half of the film set up the problem and it showed some very bad behavior by men. That turned into a storm of great proportion. It was simultaneously the most liked video and the most disliked. It actually sparked several groups to come out and object to it, and it created this amazing storm. And we spent a lot of time dealing with that.

It turned out 110 million people saw it. The people who objected to it were objecting to some of the words in particular, saying that we were depicting men in a negative way. And it wasn't the intention, but that's the way it came across and that's what they jumped on. So how do we deal with that? Well, we really stepped back and said, "Are our intentions right? Yes. Are we really trying to do the right thing? Yes. Okay, let's keep going."

And we kept going. And we started getting out there and we started getting our narrative out there. And we started demonstrating the good we were actually doing. We were donating money to men's and boys' organizations to help them. And we kept going. And we made some modifications to the next generations of that work.

But I look back on that, and what I would say the lessons of it as well were - first of all, it did change the mindset of people about Gillette. It did spark some great conversations, and it actually built our business among the millennial consumers. But what it helped us do is look back and say, "Now, what did we do wrong? What could we have done differently?" Number one, what we could have done is we didn't have to spend as much time showing the negative in the film. We could have just gone right into the better part. That's one thing.

Two, we need to recognize there are trigger words. 'Toxic masculinity' and the 'Me Too movement' focused on men are trigger words. We needed to be sensitive to that.

Third, at first, we were like, "We're just rejecting all those people who reject this." And we said, "No, no, no, no. We need to listen to all those people who are rejecting this and understand." And that was, for me, one of the best learnings I've ever had which is, "No, no, no. Always listen to someone who has a different point of view and learn something from that."

So, I am far more respectful now of all views. And I really think about that with everything we do now. Because what this was saying is, many men, particularly Caucasian men were saying, "Hey you know what, we don't want to be shown this way. We're not all like that." And you know what? You're right. You're not. So, let's not depict them in that way.

F I like your learning of facing the negative and starting the conversation. I think then all of a sudden a negative can turn into an opportunity.

M And the advice I give to people is; when you've got something that you think might be controversial, go and think about, and listen to people for whom you think it might be controversial so they can give input.

THE LONELINESS OF LEADERSHIP

F One thing that I've noticed over the decades is that it can be lonely to be a leader. Do you recognize that?

M I think it's what happens throughout your career as you move into increasing levels of responsibility, you can become further and further removed from other people. And it's called 'position power'. You have power just by virtue of your position. Whether you really have any power or not doesn't matter. The position carries weight with it. And recognizing that is important.

I can remember when I first took this job, my predecessor was Jim Stengel, who's a remarkable leader and a fantastic CMO. And the person who I was working with was concerned about that, "How are you going to fill his shoes?" And I said, "Well, okay, I'll do my best." But she said, "It's going to be a tough act to follow." And I said, "Yeah, it is, but also recognize something, that this position is what's important. The individual in it is important, of course, but you're going to respect the position, and recognize that it's also fleeting." So, I always try to never make it about me.

You're only going to be in the job for a certain period. And so the key that I like to think about to help deal with this, because they say it can be lonely, is actually turn it the other way around. And actually make my job about being useful to other people. It's in service of the people in the organization. It's not about me. And I have this conversation with some of our leaders in our company - that we should never make either the success or failure of anything, or their company, about an individual.

And certainly, don't do that as a CMO. You're going to be in this position for a certain period of time. You're in the chair, and that matters. And with that in mind, recognize that you have an obligation to serve others. Because they're the ones that do everything - they're the ones that do the work. I view this role as just an incredible privilege to be able to represent the work of the 5,000 brand builders around the company, and our partners as well. A coping mechanism I would suggest is flip it. Flip it and focus on others.

F You never make it about you.

M No. And others will try to make it about you because it's just a natural, the way humans work. But if you can just try to never let that come ... Never read your own headlines, for example, and just focus on how you can help serve the people in your organization, you'll be able to deal with it more effectively.

INNOVATING INNOVATION

F We're now at a very, interesting moment in time. If we think about how things are different now, isn't it time that we start innovating innovation itself?

M Yes. We call it constructive disruption. There's so much disruption in the world. And you see it through digital continuing to grow, but then privacy starting to come in. You see linear TV declining and over the top streaming increasing, data analytics and technology coming, expectations of consumers, brand building and marketing merging with commerce for eCommerce. So massive disruption. And the best way to deal with that disruption is to lead it but lead it in a constructive way that creates growth and value. You can disrupt and destroy value, or you can disrupt and create value and try to build markets. And that requires a level of innovation on everything we do. So we focus on trying to reinvent brand building, and that means innovation. It's innovating in media to ensure that we can get mass reach of a lot of people, but we want to do it with precision. And so that requires data analytics and technology. If you think about reinventing advertising, the way we're now thinking about how content is going to be driving commerce as one example, how we work with our agencies.

And innovation, we've tried to focus on product innovation to take all the advantages that we have of the knowledge of our 180 years of knowledge about our products and operate more like a startup. And so we went out about five years ago and started to adopt lean startup and lean innovation capabilities. We now have about 180 startups that are operating. It's a different way of innovating that is allowing us to move on a much faster cycle than we did before. And iterate, and then fail, and pivot, and fail, and pivot, and then eventually scale. It's a totally different way of operating. And I think we're just scratching the surface. I think the last year probably accelerated things by five years. And I think the next five years is just going to be exponential in the amount of change that's going to occur.

F How do you innovate yourself as a person? I don't mean just in terms of skills, but as a person.

M I adopted a mindset several years ago because I'd been a CMO for a while. And I said, "I got to keep fresh." And so, the mindset was

"I pretended to fire myself every 18 months and then start over again"

I chose 18 months, because that's Moore's Law, as you know, which is that computing power doubles every 18 months. So given the exponential changes that occur, I thought, "Okay, better be every 18 months." But by firing yourself, because what I noticed is when you come in fresh to a job, you are not encumbered by the past. You just look at where things are. You look at what's happening, you look at where things are, and you try to look at what's going. And so I said, "That's a good mindset to have, because then I don't fall in love with whatever I worked on before. And I don't view that as being sacred."

And just instead said, "Okay, I'm going to look at where are we now and where do we need to go?" And then look at the past and honor the past, but also be objective about and discerning about what's working, what's not working. But then really spend a lot of time figuring out how you go forward. And then I adopted with my team, two things. Our job is to win today and invent tomorrow. So, we constantly think about what do we have to do to win now? And there's some fundamentals about brand building that are enduring. They're like the laws of nature, and especially in our business. We constantly talk about these. It's irresistible superiority, and product package, communications, retail execution and value. It's productivity to fuel growth. It's who our consumer is, what our brand stands for, and how we execute across those five vectors. These are foundational. And they don't change, but how you do them changes.

These are foundational. And they don't change, but how you do them changes. So we're constantly looking about how we need to invent that future. And that's a way to keep fresh, then it's a constant. The mode that I'm in along with my team, and frankly, we really try to make this with every brand builder, is you're in a constant learning mode. Every day is a new day. And that's what I love about this job is that today, I'm learning as much as I learned on the day I started, back on May 17th, 1982. I'm probably learning more. That's a way to stay fresh. And it's pretty invigorating because then you know that it's always going to change, and you just get accustomed to that. And that becomes part of the way you operate.

SELF-CARE AS A MARKETING LEADER

F Have you ever gone back to that spiritual ranch?

M No, but I want to. It was such an amazing experience because it was people from all walks of life. And I was raised Catholic. My wife is Jewish. I'm very, very open to different perspectives. I'll give you a personal story. My father was a recovering alcoholic, so he focused on a higher power. If you've ever studied the "12 steps", there's a higher power. And it's really more a higher power of your understanding as opposed to any one denomination, which is again, a mind-opening view of spirituality.

And so that there are many paths up the mountain, and that leaves you with a sense of openness around how the universe is going to unfold. And I can't remember who, Toni Morrison or Maya Angelou said the universe will unfold as it should. And when you have those kinds of experiences, which by the way was with my family, that's including my dad, who was there at the time. That gives you a different outlook, and if you fully embrace it, that enables you to embrace whatever comes at you.

F It's interesting. I've just been to a silent retreat in the South of France for a week. And the challenge that I find is that it's a wonderful experience, but so difficult to integrate that mind state into your daily life.

M I wish I was better at that; I wish I was better at staying in the moment. That's the part that, even after my career and life, I still certainly have to work on that. I will say this, and not to go too far with it, but every day I essentially pray for the strength to be useful to whomever I come in contact with. And of course, I'm thankful for everything in my life. That at least helps, that little bit of grounding to do.

And another tip. Ariana Huffington is one of our partners, and she's created this program called Thrive, which is a great program, with micro steps to help you kind of deal with things.

And one of the best micro steps she gave me was determine a time in your day when your day is done, and then put your phone to bed. And make sure your phone is not in your room. And she even has created a little bed for phones that you can put it into. But it was a good point because, and I think this is particularly difficult during the pandemic, by working from home, many people said it wasn't working from home, it was living at work.

And the boundaries got blurred. And I found that personally very difficult to deal with. But it's an important kind of discipline of pick a time when you're done, because you need the recovery. You can't recover without having time away from work. Resilience is driven by recovery. And that's driven by setting boundaries.

F Things like this, self-care, but even spirituality, is that something that you bring into discussions with your teams? Or do you feel that's a private affair?

M Periodically, when it feels appropriate. And often what I've found is, almost inevitably, a team member you have will face some difficulty, will face a personal challenge. And that gives you the opportunity to show humanity, when somebody has a tough time, when there's a divorce or a death, or an illness or a surgery. And that's one of the things that I love about our company is the fact that we really rally around each other when that happens.

But that's an example of where you can show humanity and you can express your values, your spirituality, and what's important, and those kinds of things. And then look, every once in a while, for example, this week one of my dear colleagues who works with me, Peter Carter, is retiring after 41 years. And we announced it to his team. We talked about his replacement. And I started talking a little bit about his accomplishments and then I choked up and I cried because he's meant a lot to me, and I've been there with him through thick and thin, and he's done the same for me.

And showing that humanity, I'm an easy crier, and I admit it. But you always feel a little weird about it. But what you realize is people say, "Wow. You just showed you're human." And that's part of the problem as a CMO, you're not viewed as a human in many cases. You're viewed as a machine. And so periodically, that expression of humanness goes a long way.

F I'm pulling out two things. One, it's not about you. The other is don't forget you're human. It's interesting. They seem almost at odds, but they're not. You said earlier in the conversation that you pray everyday for the strength to be useful. Well, you certainly did in the past hour. I thoroughly enjoyed it. You've come across as a very, very human leader. And it's very clear that you don't make it about yourself, but that you are yourself. Thank you very much for that.

M Thanks, Frank. I enjoyed this time too.

