

The Nomadic Mindset Gratitude is a Gift of Life



TNM_Podcast Episode #BONUS:

Bavani Periasamy

with Kevin Cottam

Transcription



THE
nomadic
MINDSET

Kevin Cottam 0:04

Welcome to the nomadic mindset season one. My name is Kevin Cottam, a global Nomad and the author of the leadership book, the nomadic mindset never settle for too long. Over the season, we will go on a journey to discover what is the nomadic mindset and how you can tap into that. For this, I will be interviewing of a diverse group of cross cultural thought leaders from all walks of life.

Kevin Cottam 0:28

So let's get on with it. Let's go no madding together.

Kevin Cottam 0:38

Welcome to the nomadic mindset. And if you're tuning in for the first time today, thank you for taking the time to come and explore ideas and thoughts. The world is going through some major challenges with the covert and the economy in freefall. Yes, this is very obvious to all of us. But what can we get out of this major shift? What can happen and how can we do Deal with it. In this episode, the nomadic mindset meets the gratitude advocate Bhavani Petit Asami we need some grace and gratitude today more than ever, is what I believe. And I think that's also what Pavani also believes Bhavani is a beautiful soul who was on a journey to remind people about the basic human connection, and to invoke the sense of mindfulness of everyday actions that is often left unnoticed. Even with all the challenges that we're having, we need to get to the basics. And no better time than now, for this reminder. Let's welcome Pavani Bhavani It is great to have you on the show today. I'm so grateful.

Bavani Periasamy 1:43

Hi, Kevin. Thank you. Thank you so much for having me over today.

Kevin Cottam 1:48

Well, it's wonderful and because I am grateful that you're here, this is all about gratefulness. Indeed, I would like to ask you what because there's so many different meanings of gratefulness and the thought of it what is your interpretation? What is your meaning of gratefulness?

Bavani Periasamy 2:08

For me gratefulness i think is going back to basic just to be thankful for everything that we have every single thing that we have. Right from being able to wake up the body that I have been able to breathe without a machine beside me to even have a toothpaste. I mean, I've had people saying that I know I'm full of tissues. But that's that's about it. Because I know there are people around in the world who can't even afford to face proper hygiene, water, clean water, electricity. So yeah, for me, gratefulness is appreciating, even back to bare necessities that we have every day.

Kevin Cottam 2:55

I love the word that you use appreciating and this appreciate Sometimes it's a challenge, especially in today's world, right. And we are going into we are in a, rather a crisis place today. And so how important is gratitude even more so today than perhaps other times?

Bavani Periasamy 3:15

That's a great, great question, Kevin, because I'm actually deciding to go on a social distancing, literally where I want to cut off from social media right now. There's just so much of people emotional all over talking about especially in Malaysia, speaking about a government who is supposed to do what what is supposed to be done or how it should be done. Just so many comments and so many write ups, just just about all these things. And when I tell people, Hey, take a break, you know, let's be grateful for what you have. At least we are okay. We have our food stocks at home. We have our family safe and sound. And people look at me and they go like, Are you for real? We are at war right now. And you're talking about being grateful at this time. They say, Yes. Because if you can't find something to be grateful for, then what meaning Are you giving to everyone around us then it's going to be even more gloomier. Someone has to sort of shine that glimmer of hope and faith, I suppose.

Kevin Cottam 4:30

Yeah, it's a glimmer of hope, isn't it? And it's true. People get wrapped up into all of the cacophony of sounds from invoices from all sorts of press and media and friends and all sorts of things. And it really does develop a huge, massive mindset that goes on and it builds in the emotions within individuals. And this is when I agree with you, we need to set step back and Look at the bigger picture. How do you do that yourself? I know that you're in lockdown and you're feeling that, but how do you help people to step back and look at the bigger picture?

Bavani Periasamy 5:11

That's two things that I try and tell people. One would be to take a time off from social media as you can. As much as it's a lockdown now, that's in abundance, time is in abundance for all of us right now. You don't have traffic jams. You don't need to go anywhere, you are literally at home. And social media seems to be the full time companion. So I'm just trying to tell people go easy. Spend more time you know, developing yourself getting ready. Do the things that you have not done or putting have been putting it aside saying that you haven't had the time. And I'm grateful people like there's so many audible and all these people have given us 30 days of free. It's just so much of References Books, audios in abundance out there to just pick up something and learn something new. So rather than spending more time on social media and being traumatised by it, Take a chill pill and you know spend an hour on that it's mind Valley or audible or something occasional times off. And the other thing that I will again keep saying everyday find things to be grateful for food at home, you have your family safe with you. You are on a lockdown but to me that's a bigger blessing because you're not locked in in the hospital but you're locked in home. So that's that's a reminder that I keep telling everyone around me Be grateful because it could have been worse or you could be the statistics that everyone is showing up right now. Don't be part of the statistics be grateful you're not part of

Kevin Cottam 6:53

be part of this statistic in in the calamity which is going on but part of the statistic I was wondering this when you see said that is, in the overall after this is all, you know, finished and gone through is, is don't be part of this statistic of not being grateful, ultimately, and find

something new and being grateful so that you shift and change your mindset the way you are. So what do you think about that?

Bavani Periasamy 7:21

I think at this point, it's something that is not going to be easy for a lot of people to get into that mode. Because the reality is it's going to take a while to recover. But again, it's not going to be that situation forever. And you got to be optimistic, despite knowing that you're going to go down you first before it's going to go up again. I think this is a challenge that even I have to remind myself because here I am at home. I personally will not know where my next income is going to come in because My Projects, my sessions are all being postponed. But I need to also have that hope even within myself to know that this too shall pass and we will get over this. But I can't afford to be gloomy and say, Oh, no, I'm too. I kind of want to be doing that. Myself.

Kevin Cottam 8:22

Yeah, no, I totally agree with you. And it is about being that optimistic. And I met I was just recently on part of my nomadic mindset research journey in 2020. This 2020 in Namibia? Uh huh. And I met a young fellow who I find incredibly astute and he's 27 years old. And his story is that at seven years old, he was in a car with his family, his parents and they there was an accident. They were killed and he survived. And then his family extended His family would not take him in. And he then was a child of the streets. And so he ended up being on the street until he was 11 years old. And which, you know, he had to eat out of dumpsters. He left he, you know, he slept under bridges and all sorts of things. But then somebody picked him up and said, You need to go to school. So he started school at 11 years old, with five year olds, and of course, he was bullied and all sorts of things and through a variety of things in his life. He felt incredible gratitude. And he even felt gratitude. He's helped me He says, you know, even from the dustbin, I felt gratitude because the people that put food in there or leftovers, they didn't realise that it was a gratitude for me that it was a gift to me so that I could continue to survive. Now when he said that to me, I was just blown away. I thought how many people would ever think that

Bavani Periasamy 9:58

I am here today, society Just listening to you, I'm at all I'm like, Can I meet this boy?

Kevin Cottam 10:05

He's now 27.

Bavani Periasamy 10:07

Okay.

Kevin Cottam 10:08

And what has happened now is that he's just graduated from university with honours. And he's now been applying and he's been accepted to a variety of universities in Germany and UK as in his master's degree. And he says to me, life is a gift. Never give up. So is this a good? That's probably a very good quote for not only today, but always, isn't it?

Bavani Periasamy 10:34

Yes, because that's exactly and I think the sky is precisely a classic example of having gratitude in life. I mean, here I am comfortable in my room with my air conditioning on and what am I complaining about? I should not even be complaining or even being worried because I think I have plenty to have plenty to say thank you to, and you're telling me this guy literally lift in the streets, eating out of dumpsters and he has something to be grateful for? Why not all of us?

Kevin Cottam 11:14

Exactly. I mean, most people on the streets wouldn't see it as gratitude. But this is a particular I think, a particularly fine example of a humanity. And there's such love in his heart and which is after going through so much, so much pain and and also I didn't share with you that he tried to commit suicide twice. He was almost killed once because well, he had to walk three for the first two years of university had to walk three hours every day and so he missed all of his classes, but he still ended up with honours. And, and along the way, he almost got killed. So because he was robbed and he didn't have anything valuable, and so they decided to try and kill him instead. So but he's still grateful.

Bavani Periasamy 11:57

Exactly. This is cool. So bringing me to tears right now, because I just have so much to be grateful for. And we I'm just generalising here by saying we take a lot of things for granted. The things that we have around us the clothes, the bed, you know, the floor to walk on the shoes, everything we we take everything for granted because it has always been there for us. Or even if it was not there. We have it now. And we forget to say thanks to it.

Kevin Cottam 12:34

Thanks to that, right. And that's a wonderful thing is to say thanks. Do you think then that this is a particular cultural mindset? Or do you think it's an individual mindset? What do you think that can help grow this gratitude that we need to have within us to survive life period?

Bavani Periasamy 12:55

From my experience, right, I really can feel point this to culture. This is just my perspective. But I think this is more values at home values of a individual more than a culture, because most cultures do teach us to be thankful and all the things but I think it takes another level of perspective and understanding to be able to practice it.

Making Sense?

Kevin Cottam 13:29

Yes, I yes. It's a perspective on life and how you want to see your life I would imagine, I mean, with my experience of spending time with nomadic cultures in Mongolia and Kenya and Morocco and Namibia, I have found that this gratitude is actually across the board. It is part of which is in their mindset, and is part of what is their life Life everyday existence, saying thank

you being honoured understanding that I have food that we have family that we have community to honour all of those particular aspects. And they have literally nothing. So.

Bavani Periasamy 14:17

Okay, I have to agree with you there, Kevin. Because when I speak of culture, I'm just talking about sound folks. I've not had experience like you do. So when it comes to that context, yes, I have to agree. You're right. People that you have seen, and I've heard your stories, and I have to agree, yes, you're right. In that sense. Yes. The people that you visit those nomadic centres, I think, yeah. emotions when it comes to gratitude is just awesome. It's immense. It's a lot. It's literally a way of living, unlike us, you know, in the town in, in the main cities.

Kevin Cottam 14:58

Yeah. So then, you know, we Which brings to then how do we create this mindset, you know, within the everyday big cities that we all live within. Because if we don't do that, we really are on a downhill battle. And I don't mean to be pessimistic about it. But, you know, this is a time. I feel that we have to reflect on this and not become Me, me, me my problem. It's about all of us. It's about everyone community coming together. So what are you seeing and what are you experiencing in that?

Bavani Periasamy 15:34

Let me just give you examples. We know the term mindfulness is catching up in the corporate world. We have a lot of health related mindfulness, mental related programmes, trainings that's taking place, but from my observation, it doesn't last long. And that's what worries me because when The day catches up. And people tend to forget to take that five minutes for themselves to just reflect, contemplate. take a breather, breathe deeply. And that's another thing I sometimes just casually ask people. That was the last time you took a different, a good, different. They look at me like, I've got two horns or something. Yeah, it's worrying and I can remind people, but how many people can I reach in a day who will be continuously doing this? to say thank you to take a moment for themselves? to just take that deep breath and just experience life and just have that, you know, being grounded? I don't know. What do you think?

Kevin Cottam 16:47

I guess what bothers me in many respects, is that I read an article today with regards to corporations and with an interesting article by McKinsey. Now McKinsey is really focused organisations. And what I found rather strange about it was that it was a conversation or what people organisations need to do. But there was not one word about humanity or people in this article, it was all about the economy about what you need to do the health of your, your organisation. So maybe underlying they're talking about that, but not really, they're talking about the financials. Okay, so I was quite upset by that. So I'm not sure if there's going to be a lot of change in particular, but it's this is a time of forcing change. And when we look at the rhetoric coming from a variety of different political individuals, we don't see them making a big shift, but it's all about economy money, you know, people are giving, you know, this sort of the side line. So I I don't want to be pessimistic Because I believe that we will be a shift and there has to be a shift. So it's people like us that can help that. So what are your thoughts?

Bavani Periasamy 18:09

I definitely am not going to create and who's going to advocate their gratitude as much as I can in no matter what people say that is full of cliché, that's not gonna stop me. I suppose we all know Mother Teresa is the saying we may not be able to do great things. We can do small things with love, something like that. So I guess we just don't stop. We keep doing. And I'm very hopeful that if we keep doing it, we will have planted or influenced other little ambassadors who's going to continue is going to have a group of following who stopped doing it. So I guess for me is I'm not going to stop. I'm just going to continue speaking about gratitude, even if people get fed up with me, I'm Just gonna stick it out, nothing's gonna stop me.

Kevin Cottam 19:04

And I guess if we can ask the people that even are listening to this on gratitude is, you know, to express and to write to people and to share and even share with the show and with us as to what are you grateful for and how are you promoting gratefulness within not only your life but your community, your direct reports in organisations, the organisation, how are you helping gratitude? So, I think it's an appeal in many ways to start looking inwardly.

Bavani Periasamy 19:33

Yes, I do. And to me, gratitude is and this is all something that always remind the people around me, my friends, my family, take the time to say thank you to people, because people need to know that they're appreciated that they are validated because a lot of times I hear even my friends say, hey, why say things we have friends and I said, the more That's the more reason why I want you to know that I really appreciate what you've done for me. Because we can't take friendship for granted and see, he or she is my friend. They should know I'm thankful to them. No, say to see a thank you so much. Because of you. I got this done because of you. This has helped me a lot. Because everything that happens to us there's always somebody behind you get a cup of coffee, the coffee just doesn't come to you someone obviously paid for it. So say thank you to the person who actually got you the coffee. So you are being grateful for the cup of coffee and to the person who gave it to you see, you get the promotions you get this you get that get a lucky draw whatever it is that you get from the universe. That is yes, there's that mystical power that's at work but there's also a human being behind all those things. So see the Thank you, too. People, and the more people feel appreciated, I can bet you in most cases, they will continue to do the same.

Kevin Cottam 21:08

I totally agree with you. And saying thank you is really very vital. And there was I want to share with you something which I think is also very appropriate for all of us and especially in this it's is when you say thank you is the Bushmen, which are the oldest and the original tribes of Africa, in South Africa in the Kalahari, and maybe ranging back 200,000 years. And they have a word for Thank you. I love it. They told me and I went, Oh my God is so fantastic is beautiful. They say me We are which means if I say thank you, or if all of us say thank you, it's me, we eat. Now, if you break that down me as an AI, we as an all of us, so the way he might interpret it is Is, is, I am part of the V. And so we are all as one we must say thank you, and the gratefulness to that. So I thought it was a beautiful way to say thank you.

Bavani Periasamy 22:13

Wow, that's just so beautiful. The eye the V, oh, gosh, I was just going to read this up.

Kevin Cottam 22:22

I can't say it when you click because they do all the clicking.

Kevin Cottam 22:28

There's no click in me we are but there is if you say it longer.

Bavani Periasamy 22:32

Ah, so that's going to be my reading of this.

Kevin Cottam 22:36

Well, that's wonderful. It's so I think that I want to also ask you this question which sort of popped up when you were talking about Thank you. And that is, I would imagine its presence being in the present moment that is also linked to this gratitude. Would you say so?

Bavani Periasamy 22:55

Oh, yes, I would say so. Because how do I put this into words. Because sometimes, and I, I sometimes catch myself doing this as well, I get so caught up with the D to D, the meetings, the appointments, the sessions, the clients, and then I suddenly realise that I have been on the go in that mindset of appreciation and gratitude has taken a step back. I was so caught up with the rush of things. But when I take a moment to be in the moment, I feel much calm. Because before that I was rushing. And again, I am, I must say, and be honest to say that I'm not 100% gratitude all the time. I get caught up with it. But I remind myself to take a moment and say, You know what, Barney, whatever happens? It's okay. Say thank you for where we are right now. And then go to what I'm supposed to do next, I have to admit I'm not into gratitude hundred percent of the time because I get caught up with things. The schedules the time. Yeah. So that's that's why I try to remind myself as much as I can to be in the moment practice mindfulness and just appreciate being a life.

Kevin Cottam 24:23

You say being, you get caught up in it. And so and then you remind yourself, you don't use the word remind. So what does that trigger for you?

Bavani Periasamy 24:33

Ah, I have it on my phone. So my most of my phone, my laptop, everything has thank you on my bookmarks, so I kind of have Thank you everywhere. So when I see the screen of my phone, thank you. So that's, that's a reminder when I opened my laptop, that's Thank you everywhere. So I purposely make sure that I have a bookmark. When I read and all this, I have Thank you everywhere where I can see them.

Kevin Cottam 25:04

So putting little reminders up around us, right? I guess in offices, you could have these reminders and people that their desks or on their phones or, you know, practical things to help them stay present and go, say thank you.

Bavani Periasamy 25:18

And I really started going into this journey of advocating gratitude. Many, many years ago, it was not easy because life happens. So I knew that I can't give excuses. And if I really wanted to get into this journey of advocating gratitude, I need to live by I can't speak about it, but not do it. So that's when consciously I sort of remind myself so when I get up, I try to do my gratitude for a couple of minutes before I even start the day. And before I sleep. That's, that's a reminder what are the things that I'm grateful for today, for the I'm grateful for today. So doing it morning and night. It's sort of there in my mind. But I do get caught up with life. So I need to remind myself to get back to that be.

Kevin Cottam 26:14

Yeah, that getting caught up in life. We're all getting caught up in life. Yeah, I mean, I personally also have that practice at night before I go to sleep, I put my hand One of my hands on both of my hands on my heart and I say what my gratitude for the day and before I'm finished, almost, I'm asleep and it just makes me very comfortable and calm. So I will practice again also with my meditation in the morning, what you say, to do gratitude in the morning as well for what is coming forward.

Bavani Periasamy 26:43

Kevin, I so love what you said. And I actually wanted to bring it up maybe before we end it. But that's the thing. When you put your hands on your heart, and you literally feel your heart beating. I think that's the biggest gratitude. You can have Being able to breathe, that that itself is a gift of life. And you'll be, you know, your heart is beating on its own without the help of anyone or anything. What more can you ask for? There are people who actually struggle to have their heart pumping on its own, they need help. But here we are. Our heart all belonging to this pumping on its own. I think that's that's the biggest gift of life to be able to breathe in to fill it. Beating against your palm of your hand. I think that's something so precious.

Kevin Cottam 27:39

Wow. And I think that's probably the wonderful way to end this beautiful session with you on gratitude is to put your hand on the heart. Feel that breathe in to that. Isn't it so true. I mean, I love that when I picked

Bavani Periasamy 27:56

it up from Tony Robbins So ever since I heard Tony Robbins Say that I, I knew that this is something that I have to do every day because I have asthma. So I know how it feels to be breathless and have difficulty in breathing. So I can say I totally understand what it means not being able to breathe. So it has a deeper meaning for me that I can breathe on my own.

Kevin Cottam 28:22

The breathing, you know, the other way of doing that in us is a greeting, you know, that is often done here in Asia is and I think it's mainly done in a lot with the Muslim cultures is putting their hand on the heart. Yep. And as the most beautiful thing and you know, I have to say that when I've done that and gone back to Canada and continue to do that, and I see people stare at me and as I put my hand on my heart, and I think Am I doing the wrong thing because I've now come from a cultural place where this is, is a beautiful thing to do. But I think I mentioned that to a few people and they said, No, no, no, it's okay to do that because it's very beautiful. And it has a deeper meaning as your as you say. It's not only breathing, but we breathing to you. It's greeting you it's, it's a gratitude. And I want to thank you very much Pavani for your wonderful wisdom and your thoughts. And if there's one last thing that you would like to share with our audience, what would that be in especially in times of today? Or even not in times of today, but just in general? What is that one thing?

Bavani Periasamy 29:38

Well, if you ask me, the one thing that I would say is no matter where you are, or in what situation you are in, because right now while we are doing this recording is we are at this kovat 19 endemic that's going around and in Malaysia right now we are on a restricted movement. may look gloomy, mean, traumatic, not knowing what's going to come. But you still have a lot of things to be grateful for. Focus on that rather than what could possibly happen or what is going wrong. Because worrying about what is going to go wrong is not going to help you. But if you spend your time being grateful that's going to help you. So why not do something that's a bit more beneficial than worrying about something that's not going to help you at all?

Kevin Cottam 30:38

Beautiful

Bavani Periasamy 30:39

thoughts? Yeah.

Kevin Cottam 30:41

Thank you so much, Pavani. It's been wonderful. I'm incredibly grateful to have been in the presence of you for these moments.

Bavani Periasamy 30:49

Thank you, Kevin. Thank you. Thank you so much for having me.

Kevin Cottam 30:54

You've been listening to the nomadic mindset season one. My name is Kevin cotton. and invite you to Find out more about the nomadic mindset at the [nomadic mindset.com](http://nomadicmindset.com). Until next time, make it a point to go nomadic and start discovering your nomadic mindset.



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