

Alison Whitmire: Welcome to Learning in Action's podinar series. Today we're focusing on FLEX: The Art and Science of Leadership in a Changing World. I'm here today with my special guest, Dr. Jeffrey Hull. I'll give him a proper introduction in just a moment.

Alison Whitmire: What we're going to talk about today on our podinar is talk about what has changed in the workforce. What's changed and changing, and what's the implication of those changes in the workforce on leaders and their leadership, and how has their leadership needing to change. What are the dimensions of leadership that are most important for leaders now to embody, to demonstrate? And then, how do you assess where leaders are on those dimensions? Then how do you coach leaders to be more effective in matching their leadership style with what the needs are of the people they're leading. And we're going to talk about a case study well. We'll have conversation and your questions along the way.

Alison Whitmire: I'm Alison Whitmire. I'm the president of Learning in Action, and I'm joined today with Kris Harty, the podinar producer and the head of community and customer care for Learning in Action. Hi, Kris.

Kris Harty: Hey, Alison. Hey, everyone. Thanks so much for joining us today.

Alison Whitmire: Yeah. So, Kris is going to be monitoring the chat box today, and we're going to be connecting with you and hopefully engaging with you throughout this.

Alison Whitmire: So, what the heck is a podinar? Well, if you've never heard of it, this could be [inaudible 00:01:51] We like to say it's a cross between a podcast and a webinar. We've been doing this a little over a year or something like that now. As we do it more and more, we're coming to learn what's unique about it. Really what we're going to do here is we're really going to crowdsource what you most want to know. The questions you ask when you registered [inaudible 00:02:17] class day, the [inaudible 00:02:19] day really shaped the direction of our conversation.

Alison Whitmire: Unlike webinars--and there's lots of great webinars out there--that drop a load of content that can be really meaty and valuable, this is not that. What we're intending to do is create a dialogue and really ebb and flow just [inaudible 00:02:41] of what's important, what's coming up. That's our intention is to help you crowdsource this and us ebb and flow with where the energy is. We do these at Learning in Action because we genuinely want to see coaches thrive making a living coaching, and we want to do whatever we can do to educate, inspire, and help you keep on doing what you do.

Alison Whitmire: And we'd love to engage with you today. As I said earlier, so much of what we want for this is to engage you in it. So, here's how you can engage with each other and with us. If you'd like to chat with each other and just comment along

the way, you can put that into the chat box. And if you want everybody to see your chat, you'll need to change that little area to all panelists and attendees otherwise just me and Kris and maybe Jeff will see it. So, everyone will want to see what you have to say.

Alison Whitmire: If you have a question, a very clear question, then put that in the Q&A box. It's much, much easier for me to see what questions you have. So, I have something from Susan--hi, Susan--that says the voice isn't working. Kris, are we getting more comments about that?

Kris Harty: Yeah. We are getting a number of comments. The audio is going in and out a little bit.

Alison Whitmire: Okay.

Kris Harty: Yeah. So, maybe ... I think it's better when you stay still and pretty close to your computer.

Alison Whitmire: Okay.

Kris Harty: Yeah, that's pretty good. I think if you can hold that for us, that's pretty good for now.

Alison Whitmire: Okay. So, Kris, please feel free to pop in, and don't wait for anyone else to kind of say something. Feel free to pop in, and I can adjust right away.

Kris Harty: I will. I will. Now we're hearing it a little bit again. I'm wondering if you might have a headset nearby.

Alison Whitmire: I don't. But do you know what, how about this? I will see if I can go another location and try something else. How about you ... I'll go off video, and you can introduce Jeff and get us started.

Kris Harty: You bet. You bet. Will do. All right.

Kris Harty: Okay. Well, we are very excited today to have Dr. Jeffrey Hull with us today, and we're excited that all of you are joining us today as well. Jeffrey, if you wouldn't mind ... Thank you for the slide change. We love that you're here, being the CEO of LeaderShift, Inc. You're a speaker, consultant, and a coach. Jeff is a director of education and business development at the Institute of Coaching. He's also a professor at Harvard Medical School and New York University. And he has just recently published the book FLEX: The Art and Science of Leadership in a Changing World. Jeff has been featured on Harvard Business Review, The New York Times, and Investors Business Daily.

Kris Harty: We're really, really excited today to have you with us, Jeff. Thank you so much for making time out of your schedule. We know your calendar's pretty packed. Yeah. And we appreciate that you're here.

Jeffrey Hull: My pleasure. It's always fun to talk with all of you, and it's an honor to have folks from all over the country joining us. I love working with Alison, so happy to be here.

Kris Harty: Well, we're glad that you are. I understand that you're taking some time from a retreat that you're at in Washington State.

Jeffrey Hull: Yes. I'm actually being beamed into you from Bainbridge Island, Washington, where I'm doing a week-long writing retreat. I just published a book, and I've been percolating on how to get started on the next one. So, I'm taking a break to talk to you all from doing a, I would call, the beginning stages of the next writing initiative, trying to figure out what that's going to look like. It's kind of exciting to shift gears from putting the book out in the world to creating the next one.

Kris Harty: Yeah.

Jeffrey Hull: There's no place more beautiful to do that than Seattle, Washington, and here on the island. So, I'm excited to be here.

Kris Harty: Well, we're thankful that you took some time too and that you're enjoying the beauty of the surrounding area in Washington State. Yeah. It's a great place to be, and writing, boy I tell you. Yeah, you have tons of great content to share. I'm excited about your first book for you, excited to dive into the content here. I'd be good to hear more about what your next might be. It sounds like you have some ideas behind it.

Jeffrey Hull: Well, the first book really ... This current book, as you know, is really about the current major shifts that are taking place along the leadership landscape. As an executive coach, what I've seen that is really not only exciting but a huge opportunity for coaches and leaders to be empowered in different ways than perhaps we have traditionally thought about. I left off this book with a sort of hint of my next book, because I think taking the next step toward diversity inclusion is really an important piece. And I talked a lot about that in my book, but that's probably going to be where I'm headed in the future is an even deeper dive into the ever-expanding diversity of our leadership, of our leader's in today's world, and also the need to developing more inclusive workplaces. But, we'll see.

Kris Harty: Nice.

Jeffrey Hull: I see Alison's rejoined it.

Alison Whitmire: I'm here. Am I sounding any better?

Jeffrey Hull: You are.

Kris Harty: Much better.

Alison Whitmire: Okay. Well, thank you, Kris, for filling in there. I appreciate that.

Alison Whitmire: So, Jeff.

Jeffrey Hull: Hi.

Alison Whitmire: Hi. Thank you for your patience.

Jeffrey Hull: No worries.

Alison Whitmire: So, tell us. How is the workplace changing, and what's driving that?

Jeffrey Hull: What's driving that is actually a probably bigger question than I can address in one answer or one podinar, but clearly the shift that's taking place is huge in terms of the way organizations are structured today. How they're organized is much flatter, more networked, more international, more multicultural. The paradox of that is that the types of people that are stepping up into leadership roles are really becoming a rainbow coalition. I say it's a paradox, because what we hear on the media is all about sort of this takeover of the world by the autocrats in Philippines and in Brazil and Turkey. Whether or not we consider that to be true here is a question.

Jeffrey Hull: But in the real world at the business level, the organizational level, what I see is greater democratization. I see flatter, more diverse organizations, and there's a huge opportunity in that. I find myself over the last let's say 8 to 10 years coaching an incredibly diverse population of up-and-coming leaders. I think that that not only needs to be expressed, honored, and promoted in the world through what we write about, but it also places a great deal of responsibility on us as coaches to be very thoughtful about how we are supporting and developing the next generation of leaders, or the current generation who's working with this more diverse population, because I think as recently as 10 years ago there was a more monolithic approach to leadership that you were, as a coach, you were asked to come in and help someone become more of a charismatic, directive ... Learn how to supervise and learn how to direct and learn how to delegate. And all of that is valuable, but it's just not the only game in town anymore.

Jeffrey Hull: I think that there are so many new, interesting and actually very exciting ways to lead, and that's one of the reasons why I wanted to write this book is that I was

seeing that change in the landscape of my practice. In parallel with that, the research around what makes for effective leadership has also evolved, and I wanted to bring the two streams together in the current book.

Alison Whitmire: I think what I'm hearing you say is that maybe at one time leadership was like, "Let me come in, let me be very direct, let me maybe tell you what to do. I need to be larger than life. I need to be this persona in order to lead," and now I'm hearing you said there needs to be a real shift away from that. You also talk about post-heroic ... Kind of what I'm hearing you talk about is kind of a type A-ish kind of leader. So, talk to me about how this fits into what you call post-heroic leadership or alpha or beta leadership.

Jeffrey Hull: I think the key here to simplify sort of the language is that the traditional approach to a leader, a leadership journey, is that sort of all roads lead to the individual. All roads lead to the person, the one person who's stepping up to lead at the top of the pyramid. You know, traditionally, that's probably viewed as a male thing. It's typically been men, but that's not necessarily the case. Even women who have stepped through the glass ceiling or broke the glass ceiling have until recently had to take on that persona of all roads lead to me. I'm the one that has the vision, I'm the one that will set the direction. I have the mission, vision, values. I'll set the tone. But there's a real strong focus on all roads lead to the leader.

Jeffrey Hull: There's still value in that. I don't think that the need or the opportunity or the urgency for core, key leaders will ever dissipate or ever go away, but there's something else emerging, and that's what I wanted to touch on, which is there's environments now that are run by shared leaders, by collaborative leaders, by multiple leaders or transitional dynamics where people hand leadership off to others. And they can be equally effective. In fact, when you're trying to create an environment of creativity, of innovation, where you want to get the greatest ideas from people, having that sense that's there's only one person in charge actually may dampen all of those creative voices that you really need to bubble up to the surface.

Jeffrey Hull: So, this more what I call a beta-style leader, which is really more of a consensus-builder, a collaborative leader who may or may not take charge when needed, may step back and create more of an environment for the voices of everyone to be heard is really important in an environment where you need and want innovation.

Alison Whitmire: Okay, so, if I put together what you said, you said the workforce is changing. It's becoming multicultural. There's a much greater degree of diversity. And I didn't even hear you say the word millennial, and that's the ... That has its own texture to it as well. You have all these changes in the workforce, and so in order for a leader to leader effectively, it means that they have to change. I think what I'm hearing you say is the shift you're talking about that needs to be made is much

more from, "All the responsibility for this is mine, and I'm going to figure it out," to something that's much more ... It's less about I and more about we.

Jeffrey Hull: Absolutely. That is the core. And even the I needs to have agility and flexibility and not be stuck in a particular modality. So, that is one of the core themes of my book, whether it's focused on developing leaders ... Because there's kind of two audiences: leaders that want to develop and expand their capabilities and also coaches. Many people on this podinar may be coaches. How do I work with that next generation of leaders, or how do I work with even the current generation of leaders to have them expand their repertoire to be more agile in today's work environment? That was really the focus of my work in the current book.

Alison Whitmire: Great. So, talk to us now about ... Okay. What does this mean? Leaders have to change. How is it they need to change? Or what are some of the dimensions of the ways in which leaders need to either change or shift or match their new workforce?

Jeffrey Hull: Well, what I started doing in stepping back and reflecting on this broader change was initially to look at my own practice. So, I've been coaching for over 20 years, and I had noticed a very big shift in the types of clients that I've been asked to coach, the types of areas of focus, the so-called issues or challenges that I was working on. I started to categorize them for myself.

Jeffrey Hull: Then working at the Institute for Coaching at Harvard, I have access to hundreds and hundreds of coaches. So, we did some research and surveys to determine what are the other coaches finding that they're working on. The summation is that we were all finding that there are particular areas that we've been asked to work in that has evolved over time.

Jeffrey Hull: That's how I developed these, what I considered to be sort of the leadership agility categories of flex or flexibility. They all actually have some element of developing an expansion or a flex in your style. There were six ... I think you might have a slide for this, but there's actually six core categories that came up in my research.

Alison Whitmire: One question-

Jeffrey Hull: There you go.

Alison Whitmire: ... that's coming up from the audience is how you're defining leadership.

Jeffrey Hull: Oh wow. That's sort of ... There's so many ways to define it, but I guess what I would say about leadership is the energy that impacts a group of individuals toward the accomplishment of a vision, toward the manifestation of a dream. It's really what does it take to coalesce a group of people, a group of humans, a

small group, a large group, a worldwide group of human beings, to carry out a vision. That is the act of leadership, and it's more than something that's done by just one person these days.

Alison Whitmire: For sure. Thank you.

Alison Whitmire: Okay. Do you want to talk about these six dimensions that have emerged from your work and your research?

Jeffrey Hull: Yeah. So, basically, they're ... Obviously, there are literally hundreds of areas that we all work on with leaders to develop their capacities and their capabilities. But they do tend to come into ... They do tend to show up in common themes. For the simplicity of being able to write about the research and have people focus on what areas should we develop our clients or what areas should we develop as a leader, they are summarized in these six categories.

Jeffrey Hull: The first is flexibility around decision-making style. How do you make decisions? Do you do it directly, preemptively, and then share your decision with the group? Or do you step back and bring in others first and do it more in a consensus-building style? And again, as you'll see with all of these dimensions, there's no right or wrong way to do it. They can all be strengths, and they can all be limitations. So, flexible is a decision-making style.

Jeffrey Hull: Intentional is connected to your communication style. Once you've decided something or you've set a goal or a vision, how do you communicate that? How do you impact those that you want to influence? There are different ways to do that. You can be more data-oriented, facts and research, or you can be more emotionally-driven, more narrative storyteller. And again, either one of those can be powerful depending upon the audience and what your goal is.

Jeffrey Hull: The third dimension is working with emotions, which has become really crucial for leaders in today's world, and developing your sense of comfort and accessibility and awareness around how you operate as a leader in the domain of sharing, expressing, and being with your feelings, with your emotions. So, emotional agility or emotional intelligence.

Jeffrey Hull: The fourth category I call realness, but that's really just a summation of a deeper theme around authenticity. Authenticity is, and many of us as coaches have seen this, where our clients struggle with this spectrum between being more stoic and conservative and being more open and vulnerable and humble and transparent. It's like, where's the right way to be with openness, with disclosure, with being personal. That all traces back to your level of authenticity as a leader.

Jeffrey Hull: Then finally, collaboration I think is pretty straightforward. How do you ... What is your style of collaboration when you work with a group? Are you directive and

advising and mentoring, or are more coaching and more empowering? There's benefits and drawbacks to both.

Jeffrey Hull: And finally, in the engagement of a group, what is the energy you bring around structure, around results orientation. Or on the other end of the spectrum, a more creativity orientation, which can be messy and chaotic and kind of fluid. Do you like to have almost a chaotic brainstorming kind of environment? There's a lot of different ways to engage with your team as a leader also.

Jeffrey Hull: So, those are the different categories that we see come up over and over and over again in our research of effective leadership.

Alison Whitmire: Okay. That's super helpful. It sounds like each one of these six dimensions is a spectrum.

Jeffrey Hull: Yes.

Alison Whitmire: I can imagine--and we'll talk more about this in a minute, maybe how you'll get here--is that everyone kind of maybe has a style that is going to naturally fit somewhere along this spectrum for each of the six. How does one know after ... Let's say we can figure out ... And we'll talk about your assessment in a moment where we can figure out where we fall. How do we learn kind of like ... I hate to use the word should, but how do we know where we should fall? How do we know where the ideal spot on the spectrum is of each of these six categories?

Jeffrey Hull: Well, I think that the ideal spot is what I would call the movable spot. The case studies that I share in my book in fact were in many ways the inspiration for me writing the book. When I would encounter a leader who demonstrated the ability to actually move in his or her style between the different ends of the spectrum, maybe all in the space of one day ...

Jeffrey Hull: I actually have had a couple of clients who have what I would call the alpha or the left-hand, more directive style, and then you think, "Oh, that's how they are. They're kind of an alpha-driven leader." And then, two or three hours later, I would see that same person in a different context, and they would be quiet. They would be collaborative. They would be empathetic. They would be very, very different. That's when I realized, wow, this level of agility is actually available to leaders. I've seen it in action. And that's what we need to develop.

Jeffrey Hull: So, it's not about finding the specific spot on the spectrum to target but to continuously develop your agility in all of those dimensions so that, at the end of the day, you're able to move in the direction that the situation calls for and be the most effective leader you can be under almost any circumstance.

Alison Whitmire: Then it sounds like it then requires the leaders' keen adeptness to know which place on the spectrum is being called for in the situation.

Jeffrey Hull: Absolutely. You've got to know where you start in order to know what to expand. It's like if you're into sports and you're trying to run a marathon, you need to do some self-assessment around what are your strengths in the first mile. What happens to you at the 10th mile? And then, if you've talked to a runner, you'll find, "Oh, I'm great in the sprint, and I'm great in the first nine miles, but for some reason I crash around the 12th mile. So, that's where I need to do my work."

Jeffrey Hull: That's the same thing is a self-assessment, a feedback loop. Understand your strengths. I'm very much focused from the positive psychology framework that we want to expand what we do well. It starts from looking at where are you, what is your sort of natural comfort zone in all of these dimensions, and then what do you want. What's your desire to expand, and what's going to be most helpful to you to expand?

Alison Whitmire: Okay. So, we've got a question. Thank you, Heather, for your comment that these six dimensions really resonate. That's super helpful. Tim's asking a question. He says, "When we talk about leadership strategies, are we talking about in Learning in Action, what Alison refers to as self-soothing strategies. It's about learning relational intelligence and building skills in areas that they're not familiar with." I think what Tim ... Thank you, Tim, for that question.

Alison Whitmire: I think what Tim is asking is when we're under stress, and let's face it, we're under stress in the workplace a great deal of the time, we will have kind of the comfort zone of where we are on the spectrum. It'll have a little bit of a maybe crusty edge on it without ... I mean, what we know is that when we're under stress is that, unless we have development quite a bit, we sometimes lose that agility. Our response becomes hardened.

Alison Whitmire: So, I'm curious about your thoughts of ... And then I want to turn it over to the audience and see what other questions they have. How is this idea of leadership agility different or the same as what some people would call emotional intelligence and resilience and kind of that whole just need to be okay when it's not okay?

Jeffrey Hull: I think those dimensions, resilience, adaptability, and emotional intelligence, are all components of the broader spectrum of leadership effectiveness. To your point or Tim's point, when we're under stress, we all do tend to default back to our patterns and our comfort zones, what we feel the most ... What we're typical or what we're most used to. So, that's when self-awareness becomes really crucial, becoming aware of your own tendencies and where you need to expand the pie. That's actually what this framework is really all about.

Jeffrey Hull: Once you know that you have a tendency, let's say under stress or in urgent situations, to be very decisive and very directive. Maybe you get a bit bossy at times. In an urgent dynamic, maybe that's actually a good thing, because people

will look to you for leadership, but becoming aware that you don't want to do that when things calm down again. When you then want to work with the same group of people, but you want to have creative conversations, and you want to hear from everybody. They're all looking at you like, "Yeah, but you're not ... That's not your style."

Jeffrey Hull: That's when you have to open up your style and practice being more flexible and developing a more expansive approach. And also recognizing that when you're under stress, you may need a series of practices or self-care practices, mindfulness practices, healthy ways of taking care of yourself so that you can pull yourself back to a place of calm, balance, and then be able to stretch again.

Alison Whitmire: Yeah. Yeah. For sure. Kris, will you launch our poll to see which one of these dimensions our audience would most like to dig into? The question about the poll is ... So, Jeff and I are going to dig into one or two dimensions of this particular ... It seems like no one's voting there. Oh, there we go. One or two dimensions here, and we want to vote on which ones that you'd like us to drill down on.

Alison Whitmire: Kris, while we're having that poll result come in, what are you seeing in the chat box?

Kris Harty: You know, chat today has been pretty quiet. Yeah. But I think everyone is really tuning in and just absorbing. There's a lot of rich content here.

Alison Whitmire: Okay. Great. Thank you, Kris.

Alison Whitmire: All right. Well, I'm going to call it at realness and emotional intelligence. It looks like that's where we're getting the biggest bang for the buck. So, let's go to realness. You want to talk about what you mean by realness, and how you help your clients self-assess?

Jeffrey Hull: Yeah, so what you're showing on the screen actually is a part of a quick self-assessment that is in my book and that I encourage coaches to work with leaders or leaders to work with themselves, depending upon whether or not you have a coach. You can be your own coach. One of the things I did in this book was to try to pull the veil back a little bit and open the secret box of what it means to be a coach and share some of the tools and approaches that we coaches use with our leaders so that fundamentally leaders can in a sense coach themselves. They can ask themselves some of kinds of questions that a coach would ask. It's great if you have a coach, but you can also be self-reflective in this way.

Jeffrey Hull: Around this particular dimension, we're really looking at the distinction between what I would call ... A more alpha, typical leader tends to be a little bit more contained. They're going to be very self-confident, they're going to come across

as very comfortable in their skin, and they're going to exude strength, which is all great qualities. They're what we would call sort of the alpha traits.

Jeffrey Hull: But on the other end of the spectrum, they may be less comfortable with being open and transparent with sharing their humanity, with sharing their vulnerability. They may have a challenge with how they view vulnerability. Is it a weakness, or is it a strength? That may be something that a more traditional alpha-style leader will grapple with. Humility is sometimes an issue I've run up against with clients who come across as that sort of strong, "I've got it together," kind of leader, and then they can stumble into arrogance or overconfidence or controlling behavior if they're not careful.

Jeffrey Hull: So, this is where ... This assessment is ... It's not supposed to be a personality assessment. It's more sort of a ... Again, to your point Alison, it shows you your comfort zones. And so, what I do is I have my clients reflect on these questions, place themselves on the spectrum, and then share this with some of their colleagues and get feedback. It's always very interesting to see whether or not four or five of their colleagues, their direct reports, their boss, their peers, actually put them in the same place. What is the alignment or misalignment between how they view themselves and how they're viewed by others? It's a little bit of a 360-style feedback, but it's quick. It's like a quick hit to raise your awareness.

Alison Whitmire: Yeah, it's super quick.

Jeffrey Hull: Yeah. Exactly.

Alison Whitmire: Someone can do it really efficiently.

Jeffrey Hull: Exactly. Let me give you one quick example that might resonate with people. I worked with an emergency room director physician who, interestingly enough, was what I would call an extremely alpha ... When you run an emergency room, you have to know what you're doing. You have to be confident. You have to be strong. You don't have room for a lot of empathy and openness and all of that. But the challenge was that he exhibited all that strength and confidence with his patients, but that translated into coming across as a bit cocky and arrogant with his colleagues.

Jeffrey Hull: And so, this work that we did in a coaching dynamic made him wake up to the fact that how he was with patients, saving lives, in a hurry, all of that that the doctor needs to know, could actually be something he put aside and shift into a more humble, listening, vulnerable, open space with his colleagues. Once he realized he could do both, that's exactly that the kind of leadership agility that we're looking to develop. And it was really eye-opening for him.

Alison Whitmire: That's such a good example.

Jeffrey Hull: He didn't even realize. I mean, he's a great guy. He wasn't doing anything wrong, but it was a eye-opening wake up for him that he could develop that level of agility in his leadership.

Alison Whitmire: Yeah. I'm going to zoom out for a second. A number of Learning in Action clients have a depth of experience in healthcare. I'm curious if there's anything kind of unique about the broadly healthcare workplace that makes fears that much more important. Or is the healthcare workplace pretty much an example of all the others?

Jeffrey Hull: I think it's an example of all the others, but perhaps it's almost like a heightened example of all the others in the sense that, to succeed in a career in the medical profession ... And I would say this is true for nursing, but it's particularly true for physicians. You really have to have a very strong achievement orientation. And so, there isn't a lot of room in medical school or even nursing school, although they teach you how to have a probably nice interpersonal dynamic with your patients, but it's highly competitive. It draws people that are very results-oriented and sort of a type A energy.

Jeffrey Hull: When people in the healthcare space or physicians, nurses get into leadership roles, it's often not as obvious to them that they might want to expand their repertoire of the way they communicate, the way they show up, the way they make decisions, because what they need to do in their medical focus may be quite different from what they want to do as a leadership focus. I think it's similar in professions like engineering, legal profession. There are definitely similarities to those high-achiever, knowledge-based, more driven kinds of environments, but perhaps it's heightened in the healthcare space.

Alison Whitmire: What comes up for me is just how much more is at stake-

Jeffrey Hull: Yeah, that's true.

Alison Whitmire: ... which of course heightens everything. Okay. How about emotional or emotional intelligence?

Jeffrey Hull: Emotional intelligence is actually interestingly parallel actually to the that dimension of authenticity, but it is a lot about whether or not the individual leader is comfortable with their awareness, their expression, and their being around emotions in their space. So, again, a more traditional leader kind of in the vein that we think of as what I like to call the alpha-style ... You try to stay rational for the most part, and you try to stay focused on the data and in general keep kind of emotions out of the context of leadership.

Jeffrey Hull: Yet, in today's world, I think we are all coming to see and the research is showing that there's an emotional component to just about everything human beings do, every decision we make, every environment we're in with a group.

There's emotions under the surface, and the iceberg is so huge that, in many cases, that emotional component is actually more impactful than the rational, and we're just either not aware of it or we're not focusing on it. We're not understanding or willing to accept or work with it.

Jeffrey Hull: That's actually the dimension here that I'm focused on is have leaders assess their comfort with emotions, their awareness of their style with their feelings. It gets to whether or not they are naturally empathetic, whether or not they're naturally expressive, whether they tend to withhold or maybe even have a bit of a judgment about emotional content. That's where the opportunity for coaching and developing and expanding, becoming more comfortable with what's always in the room, as I like to say ... I think I said it in my book. The elephant's always in the room. The emotions are there.

Alison Whitmire: For sure. Is there one more dimension you think would be really rich for us to dive into before we kind of go into case studies or questions?

Jeffrey Hull: They're all rich. I mean, it kind of depends on what people are interested in, but flexibility would be your way of making decisions and having-

Alison Whitmire: Let's just go there. Yeah.

Jeffrey Hull: Okay. Whether or not you tend to be focused and declarative in your decision-making ... Interestingly enough, I find people that are more alpha-driven in their leadership decision-making also tend to be multi-tasks. They're doing a lot of different things, and they consider themselves capable of making a lot of decisions. They are deliberative and quick, whereas the beta style leader is more deliberative and reflective, inquisitive and consensus-building.

Jeffrey Hull: The reason that this spectrum is so rich is because both of them are really valuable. Depending upon the situation, you really want to have access to being able to do both of these things. But that ability to move back and forth in the spectrum is really a powerful capacity to develop. I find that leaders that are ...

Jeffrey Hull: For example, let's use an example in the other extreme, because my book also talks about folks that are too beta-oriented, leaders that are incredibly consensus-driven and love to brainstorm and love to hear from everyone before they make a decision. That can actually frustrate people at times when there's a sense of urgency, or there's a sense of competition, or we need to get to the results. The team will sort of throw up their arms like, "We love our leader because he or she is so good at listening to us, but they don't get to the result. We wish they would be more directive at times." So, it actually can work in both ways.

Alison Whitmire: Yeah. For sure. Yeah. There's a measure on our instrument that looks at kind of the extent to which we can over or under collaborate.

Jeffrey Hull: Yes, exactly.

Alison Whitmire: We'll get the feedback for people who over collaborate. They're like, "You're wearing us out. Can't we just make a decision already?"

Jeffrey Hull: You know, that one is particular relevant ... You mentioned millennials, and I sometimes shy away from categorizing, because I think there's danger in putting people in boxes and saying millennials are this way and boomers are that way. That kind of thing, I think, is a bit of a oversimplification at times. That said, it is true. Research has shown that millennials do have a bit of a quixotic approach to this theme, because they do want leadership. They do want vision. They do want direction. And, they also want a leader who invites their participation even though they're only 23 or they're only 27.

Alison Whitmire: It's all of that.

Jeffrey Hull: Exactly. And getting back to the opening, the leadership landscape today, in order to work effectively with millennials, requires leaders to be able to move back and forth in this world, because on the one day they need to brainstorm with their millennials to have them feel involved and get their creativity and all of that. And the very next day, those same millennials are like, "Okay, so what did we decide? What are we doing? Tell us what that to do." So, yeah, this particular dimension is particularly relevant in that flatter, millennial, networked kind of environment.

Alison Whitmire: Yeah. I love that you brought that up, because I think that those of us who coach leaders who work with a younger workforce ... The people I work with are super challenged to figure out like ... One day, they want me to tell them what to do, and the next day they want to participate in a vision. Which is it? Yes is the answer. Yes.

Jeffrey Hull: Yes is the answer. It's both.

Alison Whitmire: Yes is the answer. It's a both/and. I tell you, I end up coaching a lot of my clients around just accepting what is instead of judging.

Jeffrey Hull: Yes. Thank you. Love that.

Alison Whitmire: I get a lot of resistance. "It shouldn't be. They shouldn't expect so much, and they're so entitled, and they're so this way, and they're so that way." I'm like, "How's that working for you, really?"

Jeffrey Hull: Exactly.

Alison Whitmire: Yeah. Yeah.

Jeffrey Hull: I know. Beautifully said. I totally agree. And then, the ability to develop is really one of the core themes of my book. The ability to develop, that level of agility to get the most out of your team, whether your team is Gen X-ers, whether your team is from India, whether your team is from Poland, whether your teams is women or men or any ... You know. As a leader, your goal is to get the best ideas and the best creativity and the best loyalty and commitment out of all of those people, so you need to develop this ability to move and not get stuck in a particular pattern of leading.

Alison Whitmire: I love that. The rich overlap between what you're talking about and mindfulness ... I'm sure it overlaps with a lot of other things, but the idea of mindfulness is about being present and accepting what is. Boy, if we could all just do that, and that would be ... And we could coach our clients to do the same. That would be a big shift.

Jeffrey Hull: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Alison Whitmire: Kris, what is going on? I've got the questions in the Q&A. Anything else going on in the chat we should know about?

Kris Harty: Yeah. Yeah, Alison, we have a comment from both Marissa and Allen who are familiar with Ken Blanchard situational leadership from a few years back. They're noting some overlap as well in some of the concepts, but both have noted too that there seems much more granularity and nuance with what you dive into here, Jeff. I think the question maybe is just to, if you can, address some of the similarities and differences.

Jeffrey Hull: Yeah, no, I totally appreciate that. I think that there's a lot of similarities with situational leadership, with servant leadership. You know, the whole leadership theoretical evolution from trait-based leaders, which is what we would consider that traditional probably for thousands of years, the charismatic, directive, authoritative individual personality ... That has evolved in the last 30 years or so to expand, to include situational leadership concepts and servant leadership concept and more recently shared leadership or network leadership. So, I am definitely in that lineage.

Jeffrey Hull: I think the only distinction that I would really make is that the situational leadership, even servant leadership, still has an undercurrent of the individual personality of the particular leader is key. That person runs the show, and then they need to change how they lead according to the situation. I don't fundamentally disagree with that, but I, again ... Actually to what they said in the chat, I'd like to expand it even further to be even more inclusive of the situation. The situation actually includes people, and so it's shared leadership, partnering leadership, collaboration where the leadership is handed around. Leaderless at times is a possibility. So, it's in that same lineage, I would say, my work.

Alison Whitmire: Cool. So, Stacy Griffin has a question. She said, "Can you say more about what and why the environmental organizational changes make these six dimensions increasingly relevant? And any others moving into the next 10 to 20 years." I realize that's another whole podinar, and we're getting through with this one. Just in just a couple of sound bites, what would you say are those environmental organizational changes.

Jeffrey Hull: I think there are probably two or three key things. There are lots of different multi-faceted shifts that are taking place, but there's one that's clearly multiculturalism. I have so many clients now that have teams that are made up of people from all over the world, and that there's just no more monolithic Western way of being. I think that more and more leaders are becoming humble and aware that it is really valuable to learn and embrace all the different cultures that our teams come from.

Jeffrey Hull: So, multiculturalism, multi-gendered demographics, women rising into leadership roles. But, you know, women rising into leadership roles are not ... Or people of color rising into leadership roles is a demographic kind of shift, but it's not just about the gender or the race. It's about the style, recognizing that they no longer need to just follow the leader and be the leader, act the way the leaders used to act. They can do it their own way. They're empowered, or at least I'm seeing more and more, and I'm hoping my book will hopefully encourage that. They're empowered to develop their own style of leadership.

Jeffrey Hull: So, changes in demographics, changes in geography, multicultural, global, and then finally I think the technology, that we're just incredibly networked. We're working 24 hours. We're always connected. In the world of social media and texting and all of that, we're all millennials. There's no real distinction. Everybody's on Facebook and everybody's doing social media, and there are a lot of internal social media apps now that organizations are using. So, in that sense, it's like there's an interconnectivity that automatically creates a flatter, more democratic kind of ... We're all in this together, guys. The pyramid is not keeping the information secret as much as it used to. You know, the people at the-

Alison Whitmire: They can't.

Jeffrey Hull: Yeah, they can't. Exactly. So, those are I think the key things that are shifting among many others.

Alison Whitmire: Okay. So, let's look at your case study. Maybe you could talk about what you did. For Cynthia, why did she engage you? What did you do, and how'd it turn out?

Jeffrey Hull: Oh wow. Yeah. Yeah, Cynthia. Cynthia was working in pharmaceuticals. She's a research director for a global pharmaceutical firm. What was clear in her work

with me is that she came to see that ... This is the example actually similar to what I mentioned before was that one of her strengths was that she had this beautiful ability to bring out the voices of her team.

Jeffrey Hull: In fact, they were ... This is another area that shows up a lot, which is virtual team. She was based in Pennsylvania with a large pharmaceutical firm, but her research team was spread out all over the world. She had this wonderful ability to create an environment, even virtually like online, where people would share and get to know each other and pop ideas about how they should focus on new research protocols, because she was working with scientists. So, that was a strength.

Jeffrey Hull: Where she was challenged was the people would sometimes look to her to be decisive, and she kind of resisted it a little bit. She was like, "Well, you know, maybe we can wait til next month, because I'd like to collect more data before I make a decision." She's a researcher. She's a scientist. She always wanted a little bit more data.

Jeffrey Hull: So, if you look at the top arrow, she placed herself and other folks placed her pretty far over to the right of being a consensus-driven leader. What we ended up working on was for her to develop more of that authoritarian energy, or more authoritative energy. I wouldn't say authoritarian. Authoritative energy when necessary. When we were coaching, I asked her explore with me when she did make a decision, how did it feel.

Jeffrey Hull: When did she really feel good about making a decision, and what were the contexts or the needs she had to get to that place where she would say, "That's it. I'm done," so becoming aware of what she needed to support herself to be decisive, and then to be able to translate that to her team and be more open in practicing that. In fact, she actually brought her team along with her. They became kind of her coaches, so it was actually really ... It was really great.

Alison Whitmire: Wow, how'd she do that? Did she just ask for just, "Hey, when I'm being too collaborative, let me know when it's time to just decide?"

Jeffrey Hull: Yeah. So, a good example is they were trying to decide on a protocol and how many research initiatives were samples they needed to do, and she basically said to the team, "I need to know how many X, Y, and Zs we're going to do," and they basically said to her, "You decide." She said, "Okay. So, I'm going to decide," and then she ... It was a very interactive process, but she aimed to claim her inner decision-maker.

Alison Whitmire: I love that it wasn't just her trying to figure that out for her and her leadership. She was figuring that out and the leader she wanted to be in relationship with her team.

Jeffrey Hull: What's wonderful is it proves and it demonstrates that you don't have to give up one to become the other. I've had some very decisive authoritative leaders who kind of roll their eyes when I tell them that they might want to learn to be consensus-oriented. They're like, "Oh my god. I don't have time for that. That takes so much time." "You mean you want me to listen to everybody and go around the room?" It's like, "Yeah. That might actually be a good idea once in a while, but you don't have to stop being decisive. You don't have to stop being authoritative. Just have more flexibility and more ability to do both depending upon the situation."

Alison Whitmire: We just have about three-ish more minutes. In this case study, what would be most interesting for us to zoom in now for a last time together?

Jeffrey Hull: I think that when you get to the granularity space of these coaching and these particular expanding practices, what you want to do as a leader or as a coach is really get to that micro level of when is the trigger. What is the trigger that prompts someone to be particularly decisive or be particularly resistant to being decisive? What is the environment that creates that situation, and how do you play with that? How do you shift it? How do you practice something new? What would be a little bit of a risk? What would you be willing to try? I think that's often the opening.

Jeffrey Hull: What I like to do with my clients is have them almost see this whole exercise of expanding their repertoire as a game, as something fun. They're growing. They're expanding. Not so much as work or my personality or any of that. No. Loosen up a little bit. Play with it. Learn to take a bit of a risk. I think that's what I would [inaudible 00:54:03] to look for.

Alison Whitmire: I'm curious to know. Cynthia was on the far end on some of these measures, but there's no line going to the middle. How did you determine which of these areas that she wanted or needed to flex more on?

Jeffrey Hull: Well, I think that the ... Getting back to sort of the core motivation theory, you want to choose those areas that you as a leader and with your coach, in dialogue with a coach, are most motivated to change, like you can see the value. We not going to change our habits or try new things if we don't envision a value, envision the benefit.

Jeffrey Hull: So, in this case, Cynthia could see the benefit of being more decisive with her team, partly from feedback, partly from her boss, but partly from herself, realizing, "Yeah, I could be a little bit more directive at times." It has to come from a sense of autonomy and choice, I think, and that's why, depending upon who you're working with, they decide which categories are going to be most relevant for them.

Alison Whitmire: I can see that. So, one last question from Karen Gifford. How would you introduce your dimensions and coach a leader using them who's, say, the COO and president of a company, where you've got three founders? In other words, you kind of have partner-ish people and CEOs, CTOs, COO, where traditionally it's been really consensus. It's like carve by committee or product by committee. You can end up not being decisive enough to actually have a vision. How do you think you might use this in that kind of situation?

Jeffrey Hull: Well, I can see two or three different opportunities. One would be for each of those partners to get a better sense of their own style and what may be a strength and what may be a source of frustration for them in working with each other. Once they have a sense of how they are more comfortable with their decision-making or their communication or their comfort with emotions, then they can be in dialogue with each other around how do we leverage our capabilities together to get even more effective. If we are kind of shared leadership, then we need to know our strengths, and we need to balance each other.

Jeffrey Hull: They could use each other as role models. I have seen sort of team leaders, partners, do that. That would certainly be a starting point. I would also just look for where there may be friction, because I've worked with founders in startups where there's two or three people, and they're usually ... It all works great until it doesn't. And all of the sudden, there's a very difficult decision and someone says, "I'm taking over," and the other two are like, "Wow. Wait. Hold on." So, it's in those moments of conflict or tension that an opportunity to step back and reflect, as Tim had said, under stress. Is this how you show up? This could create an opportunity for dialogue around how they could work together more effectively through difficult moments.

Alison Whitmire: Nice. It's simple, and it's elegant, and it inspires a lot of conversation. Great.

Jeffrey Hull: And you can do it with a coach, or you can do it yourself. That was really part of my intention was to create a framework that people could use alone, with colleagues, or with a coach.

Alison Whitmire: Yeah. Beautiful. We're at the end of our time, so-

Jeffrey Hull: Flies by.

Alison Whitmire: I know. Doesn't it? We'd love feedback. Kris, if you want to launch our feedback poll. If you want to know more about what's going on at Learning in Action, you can hear all about that at learning-in-action.teachable.com. Kris is going to up that link here in the chat box. What we are defining what we at Learning in Action are doing is in this space of relational intelligence. It's its own space, and we're charting new territory.

Alison Whitmire: If you want to know what that's all about, you can learn more at our free class that's for 90 minutes on October 25th. We have another masterclass that's going to tee off a workshop I'm giving at the Capital Area Coaches Conference in September. It's about how we coaches can begin to identify our blind spots as coaches and some common patterns we see. We're also doing a masterclass in the neuroscience of emotional intelligence. Super fun. And of course, we always have EQ and RQ training going on. All that information's on Teachable.

Alison Whitmire: If you'd like to learn more about Jeffrey, you've got his LinkedIn here, Twitter here. If you'd like to email him, it's here. Some of you asked for his website. Website's right here. You can find out more information on Jeff and what he's up to. If you want to find out more about me and how you can get ahold of me and Learning in Action, all that information is here.

Alison Whitmire: Finally, our next podinar coming up in September is with Mandy Blake.

Jeffrey Hull: Oh, I love Mandy.

Alison Whitmire: Isn't she awesome?

Jeffrey Hull: Yeah.

Alison Whitmire: Has she presented at the I of C before?

Jeffrey Hull: Yeah. I presented with her, so it was great.

Alison Whitmire: Did you?

Jeffrey Hull: Yeah. [inaudible 00:59:35]

Alison Whitmire: Anyway, she rocks. Anyway, Your Body is Your Brain, and oh by the way ... And that's on September 6th. No, by the way, the Institute of Coaching conference is coming up, October something something [inaudible 00:59:48]

Jeffrey Hull: 18th and 19th. Come see us.

Alison Whitmire: October 18th to 19th in Boston.

Jeffrey Hull: I'll be there.

Alison Whitmire: Yeah. So, keynoters ... Do you know keynoters yet, Jeff, or still TBD?

Jeffrey Hull: Oh gosh. Lots of good ones. I'm not going to be able to ...

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Alison Whitmire: They're always good. Daniel Goleman's almost always there. Marshall Goldsmith's there, and so some really heavy hitters.

Alison Whitmire: Thank you all for joining us. Jeff, thank you so much for being here today.

Jeffrey Hull: Thank you for having me.

Alison Whitmire: It's been a pleasure. Kris, thanks so much for catching the ball.

Alison Whitmire: Until next time, have a great weekend. Take care, everybody.