

# 55 The leadership shift of a senior leader during the corona...

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

people, team, leader, organization, bit, deliver, png, claire, energy, anymore, business, point, work, feel, enable, habits, connect, important, vulnerability, spend

## SPEAKERS

Claire Van Hoorn, Murielle Machiels



Murielle Machiels 00:00

Hello, everyone. Today I'm having a conversation with Clare and Clare is the senior leader at Procter and Gamble. And she's always been very successful. She leads a large team. And she started the COVID crisis with a lot of energy with her team, and thinking it would be a sprint. And then she found out like everyone, that it wasn't a sprint, but a marathon. And she started to feel that this wasn't going as she wanted, she started to be tired, her team was really tired, and she felt we cannot continue like this. We have to do something about this. And this is her story. And I hope you will be inspired. She talks about what she went through and what she did. And of course, what were the outcomes. So stay tuned for this episode. I'm Murielle. co mom, an educator, I used to work really hard and sacrifice the important things to me until I lost my motivation. Fast forwards passed many failed attempts and lessons learned. And I found a way to reach great results while working less. today. I'm obsessed with helping other leaders build meaningful lives. So each week, I'll be sharing inspiration to change your life and organization. This is rebel leader with a hearts. Claire, how are you?



Claire Van Hoorn 01:34

Good morning radio. Yeah, very good. It's a sunny day today and the day before the long weekend. So I'm all good. Thank



01:41

you.



Murielle Machiels 01:42

Thank you. Nice to nice to get you here on the podcast. We've been working together for almost a year now, a year since I walk in the park or walk and talk in the park. Really? Could you maybe describe a little bit who you are?



Claire Van Hoorn 02:01

Yeah, so I'm Claire. I'm a mother of two small children, three and a half in one and a half. And I'm married to a doctor, an ICU doctor. And I live near to Brussels, with a house with two cats and three chickens. And I work already nearly 13 and a half years with Procter and Gamble. And I just started a new function as of April 1 as the corporate marketing leader for friends, Benelux. And before that I've done a lot of brand functions and worked on a lot of different brands within the PNG portfolio, but always within the PNG community. So my first job and still there after 13 and a half years.



Murielle Machiels 02:43

Nice, nice. It's funny because PNG was also my first job. What binds us? Yeah, you understand the weird animals we are on how we how we work at PNG. Yeah, the weird animals. But I got a lot out of PNG in my career. Because I i think it's it's so great. The all the methods that you learn all the trainings that you get. And I remember I was really drilled to think a certain way. And it makes you very, very efficient. And yeah, and, and you have always been successful. Otherwise, you wouldn't do such a great career and you had a lot of resilience. But at a certain point you felt things had to change. Maybe you can explain a little bit what's happened and how were you feeling at that point.



Claire Van Hoorn 03:43

So it was around last year, so exactly one year ago, maybe a bit a bit longer. But I was just in a new also a new assignment leading up for business units. And we were doing very well with the business. So we were projecting 7% growth. And then COVID hit us. And at first I think everybody like everybody underestimated COVID they said, Okay, look down a few weeks, and then we'll go back to normal life. However, that never never happened. And that tends to kept on going and going. And the business impact on my business unit

was very, very bad. So we went from 7% growth to actually projecting to deliver under index 100. So losing versus a year ago, which of course has such a mental impact when you are working with a team that is convinced that we're on the right track to deliver the target or actually over deliver the target. And then you come in a situation where you don't have any influence or control anymore, and the whole business collapses. And on top we had to work very, very hard because we had to make all these alternative plans to still maintain the most out of this So we lost a bit our hope of delivering the target, we had to work day and night with the full team to actually see what we could still save in terms of business. And the fact that COVID was mentally taking longer than what we all anticipated. That combination led to a point where I thought, I cannot do it anymore by myself. And as as also, when you're a leader of a team, and especially in tough times, you can feel a bit alone, because you want to protect your team and you want to be the the lighthouse for them and their support system. But sometimes you also need to think about yourself. And at that point, I was just running behind my own tail. And of course, my husband in the in the hospital had a very tough time because he was working on the frontline to very small kids. So at some point, I just wanted to escape my full situation. That is how I described it as well to my husband, I said, I just need to escape this whole situation. So then I call the my coach that I had already met via B and D are name is Valerie. And she also used to work in ge. So she also understands where I'm coming from, like you do millennial. And she, she was very helpful. She listened and gave me some tips and tricks. And then at some point, we said, Guys, not only me that needs help as a leader, but let's try and help your whole team. Because if not, you're not the only one in this one in the full team is actually in a very bad weather. So let's see what we can do for your team. And that's how we came in contact.



Murielle Machiels 06:38

Yeah. And what was the effects on your team then because you said it was not only me, how was your team feeling?



Claire Van Hoorn 06:48

exhausted and exhausted and finding it hard to find the motivation to continue powering through, you can do that for the first few weeks. Okay, we can go on the last last mile. But if the energy balance is not good anymore, and I think a lot of people at PNG, they thrive on the combination of working together as a team seeing each other having the one plus one makes three, and having to work at home, and then also very tough circumstances. And mothers with their kids at home, single people living in 30 square meter bears downtown. So they were very also personal situations, which led to people just not having the right energy balance anymore. And especially the fact that we couldn't see each

other. And, and also, for me, that was also a very insightful, aha, that I needed to connect with people to get energy to do my job better. And from a work from home situation, that was just impossible, and we had to adapt. And now one year later, I can do that. But in that point in time, I, I was not able to fully regain the energy balance by the adaptations that were needed.



Murielle Machiels 08:06

Yeah. And could you do you remember? Well, no, we are almost a year further, what were habits that had always served you in the past that were not serving you anymore at that moment?



Claire Van Hoorn 08:24

I think when you have a crisis, which we thought COVID was a small, condensed crisis, then you put your team together and you shoulders underneath, and Okay, we run a bit harder. But because the crisis kept on going and months and months, and in a prolonging, I think the effect of just putting the shoulders underneath for a short period of time to get it fixed, could not happen anymore, because when we couldn't fix it, because COVID was an external factor that we just had to deal with. And second, the timing was just taking too long. So people were the energy was not there at any point, one because I didn't get the rebalancing of energy because of the people working from home. And second, it was just taking too long. So habits of connecting the team in a crisis, ideally in one room, divide and conquer, and then we go and fix it. That was just not possible anymore. working from home taking too long and an ongoing crisis that was too big for us to solve.



Murielle Machiels 09:26

Yeah. And maybe also the habits because that's also what I remember from PNG. You are all very productive, very efficient, and often very hard working. But it's for me, it seems like working harder was not possible anymore. In this case. No.



Claire Van Hoorn 09:48

No, I think everybody tried their best to do what they could in the circumstances that they were in and again, very different with kids at home. feeling alone all the different situations. We had, but the amount of hours were just done, we couldn't invest more, I also couldn't invest more I was just the better, he was getting depleted and working weeks on end until 1011. It's just also not my strength, I'm not that good evening person in the sense I

need my sleep, I need to recuperate. And I think that was also one of the biggest hazard we learned in your course was how to maintain the energy balance, and that's taking a break, you should not feel guilty about it, because it then gives you again, the energy to actually perform at a higher level, when you again read before, instead of just going like a little mouse on the on the wheel. At some point, you just get tired. So you need to pause your famous word energize. And I think people are feeling guilty that they were having to do that or wanting to do that because everything was on fire. So taking a walk during working hours or going to do sports, because the curfew was at 60. They didn't do it because they all felt a bit guilty. And I think that was also the a hazard letting go on that and that it was actually good to take time for yourself, that it had a positive impact on the business, which I think is a very nice learning that I hope a lot of people implemented.



Murielle Machiels 11:26

Yeah. And yeah, I, I've already said it, but I find that you are a very courageous leader, courageous for, for two big reasons, probably more reasons. But two reasons in my eyes. Well, first of all, you also decided to share your vulnerability, your difficulties with your team, which requires a lot of courage I meet sometimes leaders that are quite inspiring, but then they don't share any of their issues, which makes it difficult to relate to them. But the other thing that that I found very courageous is that you decided to ask for help. And I remember when when I was a CEO, I wasn't used to asking for help, because I was I had this this false belief that asking for help meant that I wasn't strong enough. And, and yeah, and good enough. So it was really like, like a lesson for me and no difficult exercise to start asking for help. But you did it. And is this something that you do often? Or is this something also that you thought, Okay, this is really not possible anymore. And now I need help.



Claire Van Hoorn 12:50

I think what I said before is, as a leader, you can sometimes feel a bit lonely, right? Because you're at the bottom at the top of the team, and people look up to you, and they expect that you have a solution or an answer or a decision for everything. But look, I'm 37 I'm a young lady, I don't have the solution for everything. And I'm not a super woman, although everybody wants to be one. And I also want to be one, right. But I also discover my limits. That's one from a personal point of view, but also a second, I also I'm still very efficient and effective. And I want to be in if I can ask help and therefore be able to help my team or deliver better business because I asked for help I see that as something positive. So one is, I'm not a superwoman. So I also need to be coached, and I'm young enough and I want to learn and I want to develop and second if it can speed up the process to to to deliver things better within the team or within the business. I just see it as

a normal business strategy, actually to ask for help.



Murielle Machiels 13:58

Yeah, but it is it isn't it and it's smarter, and it's the way to go. But well, I still meet a lot of leaders not really capable of asking for help, and especially not for themselves and maybe help in consulting for their team or their organization but help for themselves. That's a that's still quite unique. Well, of course more and more do it but it's it's still something that people need to learn. And maybe what would have happened if you hadn't asked for help? What would you think? What do you think whatever happens?



Claire Van Hoorn 14:39

I don't I don't know Emilio but i what i do know that it was not a trip would not have been positive. So if it would have been that I need a break from work or that I would get into a burnout. I don't know. But I at least know at that point that if I at that point continued. I would really want To escape now, I felt I wanted to escape, but at least I had some parachutes that could help me along the way and make the full what smoother. I think the full would have been much harder for if I wouldn't have asked for some parachutes.



Murielle Machiels 15:15

Yeah. Yeah. And so it's at p&g at Procter and Gamble, you have a lot of trainings. And still you decided to start this key leader program with us. In what way is it different than from the other trainings you took?



Claire Van Hoorn 15:34

I think the two biggest differences in the training module that the key leader program offers is one, it's an training over time. So something that is not like classroom training, training that you immerse yourself in for a day or two days, and everybody is a whole Ida. Yes, this is great. And then the next day, they go to work again, and then they fall into their old habits. And then they easily forget everything that they did in the in the two day class training. So the fact that it's overtime, that it's really driving habit changes, because it enables overtime. Training, I think this was one that I would have made it very unique versus what we have. And also I therefore I thought it would be a much more sustainable investment. And the second thing that I liked is that it's an online platform that people could do it in their own time. Some people like to do the training early in the morning, some people like to do with the podcast over the weekend when they go working. So the

flexibility of the platform was also very much appreciated, especially because we launched it in the summer. And that we were we didn't know at that point. But of course, we hit it into another COVID lockdown. And then you need to be flexible as a employee, employer, sorry, and as a manager to give people the opportunity to do it in their own time. And I think that's what the what was ideal on this platform.



Murielle Machiels 17:03

Yeah, thanks for that. And I remember also we discussed it, because, yeah, it's bng, you have a very strong culture and the strong culture of working hard and delivering and with all the energy going up front and the action. And, and I told you Well, in this course, you're going to learn things that go a little bit against what you have always learned at PNG because it's about also slowing down pausing and not the the excitement of Let's be an act, let's be all active together and go Yes, there is that as well. But there is this rhythm of slowing down pausing looking inside of you what is happening, and then. And I remember we discussed this, and how was the impact of that on your team?



Claire Van Hoorn 18:02

I think what you describe as being our culture of work hard, play hard, that doesn't allow people or we don't teach people to maybe think before they do, because we just learn how to do and then we learn it, learn the trick, and then we apply it. But sometimes thinking before doing and really thinking or taking a step back helicopter, okay, what is the work that needs to be done? What's the Priority Ranking? What is really, you have the diagram of urgent important not that stuff. We all get taught that. But in practice, we open our laptops, we look at the emails coming in the meeting of the calendar, and we just go and I think the fact of the two things that we implemented effectively is no email zones after 7pm so people could was at night and did not get the instant positions every time of email in their phone or on their laptop. And we enable on the Monday morning and the Friday afternoon no meetings on so people can start their week think okay, what do I want to deliver on the week and then on Friday reflect how did it go and prepare already the week after so that people can go into the weekend as a closing their their work week and especially again in COVID times were work and your laptop was on your kitchen table. Having a closure moment was also super important. So those were actually the mechanisms that we put in place for people to enable to pause and think. But I think also your your the tricks that you learn or the the theory that you learn in the module. That's you need to understand a bit also your triggers in your body and for me, it's a heartbeat that goes up or breath and goes up and then I feel a bit of anxiety popping up. And then I think now I need to breathe, take a minute, it's only a minute and but recuperate. And then Okay, I'm good. And then we can go again. But that those micro,

you call it micro breaks, I think those micro breaks are so important just to get over the blood and the oxygen flow again through your body, right. So it's, again, if you look from the theory, but also from the physical point of view, it's all super logical what we have to do. And again, because it's in the platform on an ongoing, longer term basis, people could really adapt it and put it in practice, see the added value of it and then continue to, let's say, embedded into their work life, again, very different from my classroom training.



Murielle Machiels 20:43

Yeah, yeah, because I believe the secret isn't changing our habits, and our conditions, behaviors that something happens, and we are used to dive in and work very hard to solve it. And now we change that habit into something happens, we pause, we look at our energy, we increase it first, and then we breathe, and then we analyze things. And then we go into action and accelerate again. And it's so much more efficient. Yeah,



21:18

no, fully true.



Murielle Machiels 21:19

And so at the end, what was the effect on you personally? And then on your team of this training? What changed? I mean, how do you feel



Claire Van Hoorn 21:33

I was I liked about the program, as well as that. And how I also position is in the new team that I just started is it's investment in yourself. So it's actually what people also and myself also suffered from NY, I also wanted to escape is because I didn't have any meet time anymore. When you're working super long hours, when you have two very small kids, a husband that so working a lot, then the only thing that you do in a day is eat sleep work, kids. And that is it. And I also recognize that I needed some time for myself. And this program, actually, I positioned it as something for me. So that in that sense, it was helping on two levels, one is okay, I could feel that I would was becoming a bit more happier, because I was investing time in myself. And that time in myself, I needed. And then second, I was investing in myself to develop or learn new theories and learn new habits, which also helps. And if I look at the effect of it, we started in July, of course, this summer was also a little bit less busy, I went on holiday for three weeks. And that was also a great and



needed break. And then I remember that we blocked it every morning from nine to 930 in the calendar of the full team. And I think that the fact that it was in the calendar, and people were reminded again, every day of doing it, that people invested the time in it. And there was a discussion also enabled in the team on a different level. So besides only talking about work, and how are you doing from a personal point of view, we could also connect with the team on this topic. And I think that also made the connection again, in these more difficult times much stronger. And if I look at the results of the survey that you also did me realize, I think we managed as well to connect better as a team, feel more part of a team and feel safe and secure environment which I know everybody needs to thrive. And therefore we were able to survive. Let's say that was best that past year as a team. And I think that has been highly appreciated by the team and of course gave a lot of energy back to me because that as a leader, of course when business results, but you also want your team to be happy and healthy. Because that's also the majority of your responsibility, right? Because otherwise, if people are unhappy and unsatisfied, they will not deliver the business that you want. Yeah.



Murielle Machiels 24:13

Yeah. Yeah. And I also enjoyed because we we did some sessions with the separate teams as well. And, and I liked also to see that every separate team had different needs to really improve as a team as well. In some teams, it was about saying no more in order teams, it was about drastically reducing the number of emails and meetings sent. Yeah, that was also very interesting to see and that saying no and giving permission to say no, it's also something very important.



Claire Van Hoorn 24:52

Yep. And I think this, the training again, enabled the discussion on a different level. With your team, right, because you, as a leader, position yourself more vulnerable, that enables other people to open up better. And therefore the hierarchy gets out of the system, which I in principle don't like too much the hierarchy. And I think, therefore, even the most junior people were feeling okay to speak up and share their voice and share what they were struggling with. Because, again, when you're in the trenches, at the end of the funnel, usually the most junior people, they actually suffer the most, because it's the end of the chain, then the work just needs to be done. But if they don't have the feeling that they can speak up and share their their point of view, it's, again, the energy balance and will not work at some point. So I think having the discussion at a different level made us connect much stronger.



Murielle Machiels 25:56

Yeah. And also your results, because you were telling me with when COVID hit you expected your results to be very bad. And at the end, it was better than what you thought no, yes,



Claire Van Hoorn 26:11

yes. Yes. So also, the stores went back open that helped in June. But I think especially the summer plans that we worked on, delivered really strong results. So I think at some point, we switched gears and said, Okay, let's focus on what we can influence and probably majority of the summer, because then the stores will be back opened, consumers will be out of lockdown. And we work together with the team to deliver the best summer plans that we could make. And I think there again, the energy from the work came back because people were seeing again results of all the hard work that they put in. And it puts us in a different place and space of mind when the next lockdown came in October, and we all were sent home again, I think the fact that we survived and delivered the summer was a great reassurance that even in tough times and in crisis times, we could still connect and work as a team and deliver the business that we wanted.



Murielle Machiels 27:07

Yeah. And I'm also curious, did you see an impact also on your family life with your husband and your kids?



Claire Van Hoorn 27:17

Well, of course, if you have a mother and a wife that wants to escape the situation, it's not I think, the most ideal setting. And I think the summer, the fact that I called Valerie, the fact that I went to working with you. And as soon as I feel I can get back in control in the sense because I've asked for the parachutes to help. And the longer summer break, I felt, let's say end of July, beginning of August, I was back in my old self. And, and that was good. So I think it still took me maybe four to eight weeks to get back into my into a better space. But, and having good discussions with, of course, your husband and with my husband about it and was important. And the family time during the holiday was also a way to regroup with the kids. So in the end, I think I was in time and I was able to contain that period of impact because I was able to get the help that I needed.



Murielle Machiels 28:21

Yeah. Which which, again, is really great. Because some people, they just try to put whatever they're feeling like in a little box and just continue to deliver, deliver until that thing explodes and it hits you and you faced it you you decided, Okay, I can feel it. And I'm going to face whatever I'm feeling although it's uncomfortable, because otherwise it can explode later. So yeah, great.



Claire Van Hoorn 28:54

But I think I also focus on Okay, what what happens if I wouldn't do anything, right? And if I wouldn't have done anything, then I wouldn't have able to be the mother, the team leader or the wife that I wanted it to be? So I also, I think, if anybody feels in that type of situation, it's more of weighing the two words in that sense, or is it? Is it worse to face the current situation now and find a solution and therefore get back on track? Or is it okay? We hide it in a box and save it for later. But then the continuation of feeling not good and feeling unhappy or no energy, it just lingers on so you're also not feeling happy? So I decided to take the short term pain in that sense, okay, we face it, we do it but then at least we solve it. And again, it's maybe very much linked to my solution oriented character. But I think also what I under what I realized is that I personally don't have the solution to everything and there again, the help comes in That's I needed somebody else to help me find the solution.



Murielle Machiels 30:03

Yeah, yeah. Yeah, no nice. Because Yeah, you say it's the short pain. But sometimes you go through a roller coaster of emotions when you decide to open that little box and do something about it. And a lot of people think, yeah, but I will do it later when this is finished, or when this project is delivered, or when I'm on the holiday. But I often say and then later never comes.



Claire Van Hoorn 30:32

Yes. Well, it's true, right, I read an article last week, again, also on this topic that says, If you focus on the then then it will come because then it's holiday, or then the project will be finished, it will never come because there's always an alternative popping up. Right?



30:51

Yeah.



Claire Van Hoorn 30:52

So again, dealing with it as soon as you can. And getting it out of the way. I think one gives two great benefits back is one is you, you, you are working on the solution and therefore can get energy on that one. And second is you learn again, more about yourself. So you can also adapt again your habits or learn new things to prevent it in the future. Because I also see that I mostly inspired by leaders also within the company, but also from external companies that that know themselves. So and if you know yourself, and you know what your flaws are, but also what your strengths are, and you're open about them. And you can connect with that leader on not only on Okay, you're the leader, you tell us what to do, or we follow you but you connect emotionally to that leader. It's much more fun, and nice to work for that type of profile, right? So I also Aspire myself to be the type of leader that is there on each level with the employee right on, okay, if you need a decision, I can help if you need coaching, I can help. But if you want to just tell me how your weekend was. I'm also here because it's also that's what gives me energy back right? I'm not a robot. And I'm also not a superwoman I'm just a normal human being that likes the job that she does and loves working with the team to deliver business. So in that sense, that's just who I am. But also I aspire to be and therefore just spending time on developing yourself and knowing yourself is important for me to become the leader that I want to be.



Murielle Machiels 32:36

Yeah, yeah, I completely agree. And I believe the the more we climb in an organization, the more we have to go inside, to solve some things that's we're still there and still preventing us to be really the leader we want it to be in here that others aspire to follow, like you say, yeah,



Claire Van Hoorn 33:00

yeah, it's difficult. And not everybody is used to it. Also, I think our generation is much more open to it than previous generation. So. And I think also, the younger generation that we are hiring now is also expecting that right? Like they're expecting from our brands to have a purpose, they also want the leaders to have a purpose and a company to have a purpose. So I think all that coming together is also enabling a much more integrated and connected organization. But also, actually, enhancing the requirements of what you need to be as a successful leader is not only a good strategic thinker, and a decision maker know you also need to be purposeful, authentic servant leader, while if you all need

to do that, oh, it's pretty heavy if you think about it, but again, if you can be your authentic self, know what you're, what you're good at, know what you are, where you need help or support and can be honest about it. Again, it's easy to tell and to write it on a piece of paper, but it's still hard work to practice it every day. And also to prevent you falling back in autopilot, especially when some times are a bit tougher is your back and we also talked about that right? What happens if I fall back in autopilot is okay, I get to delegate and I should delegate more CO work, but then I actually command is a bigger word, but then I tell people what to do. Yeah, I'm very directive. Exactly directive and then that's good that I know it and also open that my team told me that because again, we're all here to learn. I call it always the backpack that I have on my back and every experience is feels a backpack with new learnings and and again, experience that can help me along my way. So again, I think the key leader program has been a very enriching program. I think everybody takes out of it, what is important for them. And I think I'm looking forward to do it again, with my new team. I think even myself, I will redo a few of the modules. And I'm actually wanting in the next one to spend a bit more time on the team transformation parts. And especially in a smaller team within the lead team, I think that will happen, then an even more material impact on not only the personal individuals in the team, but also on the full team as a business team.



**Murielle Machiels** 35:33

Yeah. Yeah, that's great. Because that's how we shift our shifting from transforming ourselves to transforming our team and then the whole organization. Yeah. Now it's, it's really nice. And, and I find it also exciting that you do it again, with your team. It's, it's, it's also nice for me, it gives me recognition, as well to my work, because sometimes I can be tough with myself as well and think I should still it I will, and I continue to improve it. But I also find it exciting what you said about purpose and values and what the young people expect. Because a lot of people think that we go in these digital times, and that we're all becoming robots. Well, the trend that I see is exactly the opposite. We're becoming as leaders, and as organizations at least more successful, once more human again, and more connected to ourselves and to others.



**Claire Van Hoorn** 36:35

Yeah, and I, if I reflect on it, I think it's also a bit a compensating factor, right? So when you're all in an office, or together, you, you think the facilitation of that drives the connection and the human interaction. Now that we're all at home, and that our laptop is our way to communicate and see each other, I think, then the level of connection just changes one, it's more one to one. And second, I think also, people have been much more enabled to let their guard down, because they're only talking to a computer that says so

the vulnerability was easier in this type of setup. And therefore, I and of course, the context that we were in because everybody knew it was stuff, I think people were much more at ease at being in our organization much more vulnerable than they've ever been, even with me and my team and Geneva or my lead team here in France, Benelux we just talked also on a different level again with each other because we really wanted to understand how are you doing? How are you surviving? How are things at home? How are things with your team? questions you would never ask because it was taken for granted. Or you would just do it at the coffee talk at the at the canteen. Now you really needed to spend time to connect with people and therefore I think also the organization's are getting more connected. And beyond that people are spending so much time on digital devices that in the in the time that they want to connect with something it needs to be something that gives them purpose instead of scrolling swiping, swiping what what everybody spends their time on. A team member told me my new team member, he says are you on Tick Tock already? I'm a bit old for Tick Tock. He says okay, Claire, don't install Tick Tock. I spent seven hours on Tick Tock last week. hours if needed your work workday that you spend on an app. Yeah, what do you do? Yeah, I watch funny videos. And I. And



Murielle Machiels 38:43

so I know we got yourself a little bit about.



Claire Van Hoorn 38:47

Yeah, but it's one, it's not even a one to one connection, right. It's one with a device. So therefore, I think when we then we really spent time to connect, it needs to be on a much more qualitative level, because it's compensating all the robotic or machine connections that we have in our new lives.



Murielle Machiels 39:08

But here again, I mean, you you, you might think that it's normal with a COVID times but I can assure you that there are organizations where they only talk about projects, and there is no small talk and no, no deeper connections anymore. So it's maybe because you created that environment that allowed people to share that feel normal, that vulnerability and yeah, to have deeper connections, because truly, yeah, of course, with this, we are all going with a COVID we're all going through tough times the mental health it has a big impact on the mental health. But in a in in quite some organizations. There isn't This safe space to connect at the level that you are connected with your team.



Claire Van Hoorn 40:07

I think I just tried to do my best Miller, I know it's not perfect. And I know if you ask the organization now, what do you want the most, and everybody says, a team physical. So I think they're still in immense need for physical connection with people, and especially small talk. So having fun together. So I know this is super high on the urgency list. Every sanitary context gets really sad, we should plan for this. But again, I think and I have to give a lot of credit to my team leaders as well, because in the end, I don't speak to every team member on a daily basis, but everybody in their sub team was able to at least emphasize that they needed to create an environment where coffee small talk was there at the maximum that they could offer at that point. And, again, still probably not enough, and we should have done more. But I think we tried our best. And hopefully we delivered, let's say above average on this one. Yeah,



Murielle Machiels 41:15

yeah. And I'm really wondering what will happen to these first moments where we can physically meet and party together? I think it will be crazy in a lot of companies, because people like you say there is really this big need of connecting and of Yeah, not letting go and letting go of the control and just having fun. So really curious to see the first team meeting, sir.



Claire Van Hoorn 41:47

Dan, I think it's also fun to see the other people get or the organization, right, because you've been so stuck as well, within your own business unit was when you were in the office, you could see people on the floor, and you will see people at the lunch canteen and that you also didn't have so I've just seen seen people physically not since October anymore, and I haven't even talked to them since October anymore. So I think I think we also need to spend some time again to reconnect beyond our own business team, because you just haven't spoken so long. So I think we will even need time to reestablish ourselves as an organization not only making all the sub teams connect to a bigger hole again, and I think I think the party will enable that for sure. I'm Miriam. But probably we need to think as a management team, even on how we facilitate that more. Because again, we know that when we perform as a full organization, or connected it, again, delivers much happier people and therefore happier business results. Yep, I'm curious to see how that will happen. But still, we are very careful. And the current expectation is only in September, that we will go back fully. And maybe not even fully, especially that people don't even want to go back five days a week anymore, right? Spending 18 months, let's say at home. So I'm also curious to see how this hybrids, work from home work from office

solution. will, will turn out but I think the revolution that we've gone through, as well will hopefully create a better wellbeing for the employees in the end because work from home or from office saves time for a lot of people less stress for a lot of people. So I'm hopeful for the future on that. And



Murielle Machiels 43:41

yeah, me too. Me too. Well, thank you, Claire. It was really nice having you in this podcast. We had planned it a couple of times already. In this time we did it. So really great. And I hope you got a lot out of this episode, I find that Claire is a very courageous and authentic leader. Because courage is not doing bold things courage is moving forward, despite your fears, is showing your vulnerability to your team is daring to do new things that are making you uncomfortable. Maybe that's courage for me, and I don't see that many courageous leaders anymore. So in fact, she followed Claire followed my key leader culture program. And should you be interested in following that program for you as a leader for your team or your whole organization like we are accompanying many organizations with this program. Be sure to contact me The goal of this program is really to increase your impact in these uncertain and digital and fast times. Meaning knowing what you want and Reaching it increasing your balance your energy balance, but also increasing your sense of purpose or your meaning. So be sure to contact me and subscribe also, if you want to be part of a community of authentic leader looking for building meaningful lives and organization by Yeah, you finished another episode of rebel leader with a hearts if you want more go to rebel leader with a heart.com for show notes and past episodes. If you love the show, subscribe, leave a review and share it with a friends The more the merrier. Thanks for tuning in and have a great week you rebel leader with a hearts