

Limitations Are Only Real If You Believe Them with Mr. James Douglas

00:06.930 --> 00:13.220

You are now listening to the Audacity to fail
podcast, a podcast about Miss stepping into

00:13.220 --> 00:16.840

success.

Get ready to dive into conversations and real

00:16.840 --> 00:22.700

stories from leaders as they share how failure
activates a growth mindset is an important part

00:22.700 --> 00:26.420

of learning and motivation for improvement.

I'm your host,

00:26.430 --> 00:32.230

Dr Shari Dade psychologist with the National
Center for Organizational Development.

00:32.240 --> 00:34.860

Thank you for tuning in.

Let's get started.

00:41.030 --> 00:45.410

Limitations Are Only Real If You Believe Them with Mr. James Douglas

Support for this leadership podcast comes from
the National Center for Organization

00:45.410 --> 00:49.270

Development N C O. D.

Aims to increase the long term growth and

00:49.270 --> 00:53.180

performance of the Department of Veterans
Affairs by collaboratively working with the

00:53.180 --> 00:56.900

leaders throughout the V. A.

To improve organizational outcomes by

00:56.900 --> 01:00.820

supporting the development of an engaged
workforce for additional information on our

01:00.820 --> 01:02.930

services, click the link in the show notes,

01:08.530 --> 01:11.910

Are you living a life based on the memories of
your missteps?

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01:11.920 --> 01:17.970

Or are you actually living a life with a vision
of your future in mind that the decision in

01:17.970 --> 01:23.020

this question can be life changing.

Especially for those who feel limited by their

01:23.020 --> 01:26.520

failures, their situations or their
circumstances.

01:26.750 --> 01:32.850

Virtually all of us face limitations of some
form in our lives and yet those limits don't

01:32.850 --> 01:37.170

have to stop our successes.

Good leaders are constantly looking for

01:37.170 --> 01:43.520

opportunities to take control of their futures
by challenging their own perceived limitations

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01:43.530 --> 01:46.780

and the assumed limits that others may place upon them.

01:47.000 --> 01:51.830

For today's episode, I have the pleasure of chatting with Mr James Douglas,

01:52.020 --> 01:57.720

the associate director for the V A. West Texas health care system In his role.

01:57.730 --> 02:02.710

Mr Douglas is responsible for the administrative operations of the health care

02:02.710 --> 02:09.070

system to include fiscal and engineering oversight, get ready to join us as we explore

02:09.070 --> 02:11.580

the journey of miss stepping into success.

02:11.810 --> 02:17.900

This is the audacity to fail podcast.

Limitations Are Only Real If You Believe Them with Mr. James Douglas

Episode 15 failures are not our

02:17.900 --> 02:21.790

limitations.

Hi James, it's good to have you on this episode.

02:21.790 --> 02:25.000

How are you today?

I am doing just great Doctor Day.

02:25.000 --> 02:28.480

Thank you so much.

It's very humbling to be on here with you today.

02:28.480 --> 02:33.280

Thank you of course of course.

And I am so excited to have this dialogue to

02:33.280 --> 02:37.220

continue a part of the great conversation that
we've already started having.

02:37.230 --> 02:40.070

So let's get right into the conversation.

Okay, sure.

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02:40.080 --> 02:41.380

Let's do it.

All right.

02:41.380 --> 02:48.170

So I want to start by mentioning a connection
we both realized during our first time that we

02:48.170 --> 02:53.200

spoke and we realized that we're actually both
born and raised in the same area in north

02:53.200 --> 02:57.240

Louisiana.

And so naturally we begin to speak about how

02:57.240 --> 03:02.240

those experiences and the impacts that has had
on us today.

03:02.250 --> 03:07.990

One of the things you mentioned is the impacts
of learning about who people are and how you

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03:07.990 --> 03:13.410

view people, How do you think your early experiences have impacted who you are as a

03:13.410 --> 03:18.990

leader today?

I I think it is has profoundly impacted who I

03:18.990 --> 03:22.910

am today simply because of the fact that I mean I tell people all the time,

03:22.910 --> 03:29.790

I grew up with grandparents and aunts and uncles from Louisiana that showed nothing but

03:29.800 --> 03:35.990

love nothing but love for people, love for one another and you know,

03:36.000 --> 03:42.890

just an outpouring of love that has really kind of stayed with me throughout my life that I I I

03:42.890 --> 03:46.830

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demonstrate or at least I attempt to

demonstrate on a day to day basis when I

03:46.830 --> 03:52.340

interact with people making no difference where

they come from or what their role and what

03:52.340 --> 03:57.810

their jobs and duties people are just people.

And I think that that is has been very

03:57.820 --> 04:03.340

impactful and something that I never give up.

Something that I'm I'm not ashamed to go out

04:03.340 --> 04:08.110

and portray because at the end of the day we're

all just that we're all just people right and

04:08.110 --> 04:14.020

we're living this thing called Life.

We're absolutely I say it impacted me greatly.

04:14.020 --> 04:16.450

So, thank you for asking that question.

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Of course.

04:16.450 --> 04:22.890

I remember you talking about titles don't often matter, it's how we impact people in the lives

04:22.890 --> 04:29.060

that we impact and so knowing and thinking about your experiences growing up and how they

04:29.070 --> 04:34.310

align with many of the experiences that I had growing up and also seeing that very similar or

04:34.310 --> 04:39.860

taking that very similar view around it's about the people that we impact as opposed to who

04:39.860 --> 04:44.590

might be sitting across from us or the titles and all of those things that come along

04:44.590 --> 04:49.400

sometimes with how we approach things and how we approach people,

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04:49.410 --> 04:53.560

it allows us to communicate with people at the core of who they are.

04:53.570 --> 04:57.970

So that's something that struck me when we first talked and I thought you know,

04:57.970 --> 05:02.550

it's something that as we are speaking to leaders and talking about the journey to

05:02.550 --> 05:07.780

success is definitely important to grasp onto.
Yeah, I would agree.

05:07.780 --> 05:14.650

You know, and I guess just today I was kind of reminded of that when I was reading um

05:14.660 --> 05:20.600

you know, Dr Jensen is leaving V. A.
And and 11 of the statements that he wrote in

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05:20.600 --> 05:24.760

his he said you know, he said lead with love
right?

05:24.770 --> 05:30.540

You know, and that's the kind of approach that
he has taken throughout his time with via and

05:30.540 --> 05:33.430

and others.

And you know, I think that that is a very

05:33.440 --> 05:40.320

needful thing when we start to look at V a big
picture rise and we start talking about what

05:40.320 --> 05:43.340

it is that we do.

It's kind of hard to get away from that.

05:43.340 --> 05:49.260

And I think it was something that you know, not
a lot of people senator and leadership position

05:49.270 --> 05:54.080

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were bold enough to demonstrate our sales, but
we've got to get back to that point and

05:54.080 --> 05:58.890

understand that again, we're all just going
through this thing called Life and it's how we

05:58.890 --> 06:04.400

treat one another that determines how
successful will be at whatever our jobs are and

06:04.400 --> 06:07.730

how depend that we are on others and how we go
about that.

06:07.740 --> 06:13.930

Yeah, absolutely a very powerful statement from
him and kind of a charge to the V A at large

06:13.930 --> 06:20.180

into the leaders that are here. Absolutely.
One of the things that I have found through

06:20.180 --> 06:26.240

this podcast and just kind of over time is that

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storytelling is so integral to how we learn

06:26.250 --> 06:28.720

about one another and how we connect with one another.

06:28.730 --> 06:35.230

And it opens up so many opportunities to truly see ourselves in the experiences of others.

06:35.240 --> 06:39.460

And you have an inspiring story of how you came into the V.

06:39.460 --> 06:43.190

A.

And thus your journey to where you are now

06:43.200 --> 06:46.950

within executive leadership.

Can you share some of that story with our

06:46.950 --> 06:49.890

listeners?

Oh my gosh, I'd be more than happy to,

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06:49.890 --> 06:56.840

I, you know, I am, I am not ashamed of the failures that I have experienced because you

06:56.840 --> 07:01.970

know, talk about the love that was demonstrated. But I'll just say that I grew up in the inner

07:01.970 --> 07:06.500

city of Dallas when we moved from in Louisiana and I was in an area that there was not a lot

07:06.500 --> 07:10.870

of opportunity, there was not a lot of successful people to be able to point to.

07:10.880 --> 07:17.740

Um and and, and pitfalls abounded and so in my own way of thinking as a

07:17.740 --> 07:21.560

young man going through high school, how can I break away from this.

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07:21.570 --> 07:27.660

Uh you know, I was just trying to look for opportunities to to not fall into that same

07:27.670 --> 07:30.480

thing, right?

I'd love to go out and play basketball.

07:30.480 --> 07:32.860

So I'll be heading out wanting to play basketball when I,

07:32.870 --> 07:35.420

others were going to do other things.

But you know,

07:35.430 --> 07:40.740

I was in downtown Dallas one day walking around soon before I graduated and I passed by a

07:40.740 --> 07:45.090

recruiting office and I can tell you this is why I believe in providence.

07:45.090 --> 07:50.460

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A little boy said go in there and it was an
army recruiting office and I never thought

07:50.460 --> 07:55.670

about joining the military, anything like that
just so happened and I did and never knowing

07:55.670 --> 08:00.940

that that would be my saving grace at some
point in life because I did go and I

08:00.940 --> 08:05.810

successfully spent four years in the military
doing army infantry stuff and then just enjoyed

08:05.810 --> 08:08.860

and got to travel Germany and different things
like that.

08:08.860 --> 08:14.480

But at the end of that four year tour I found
myself right back into the environment in which

08:14.480 --> 08:19.850

I was trying to break away from.

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And so I saw help,

08:19.860 --> 08:23.430

I was able to interact with another guy who was
in the community.

08:23.430 --> 08:26.910

It was a veteran and he told me about a program
with N.

08:26.910 --> 08:30.430

B. A.

A Dominus Ilary program in another place called

08:30.430 --> 08:31.500

bonham texas.

08:31.760 --> 08:37.540

And so I, I went to the, to the V. A.

In Dallas and I inquired about the possibility

08:37.540 --> 08:41.290

of being able to participate in that and they
were gracious enough to say like,

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08:41.290 --> 08:44.420

okay, we can do this, we can do this and we can
have you there.

08:44.420 --> 08:51.250

So on may the 20th of 2002 I got on the bus to
go to bottom and my life

08:51.260 --> 08:57.830

changed dramatically.

I spent the next 11 months there in bottom

08:58.230 --> 09:03.900

salary getting to understand what it was that I
was going through and the things that I needed

09:03.900 --> 09:10.510

to do to to to move away from that I met some
people along the way who are who are fast

09:10.510 --> 09:16.220

friends now and be a part of my life forever.
I went back into Dallas and I lived into your

09:16.220 --> 09:22.050

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house in transitional residential housing And I
worked at the Dallas via as a CWT housekeeper

09:22.060 --> 09:26.310

for that four year.

Having gotten back into Dallas.

09:26.310 --> 09:30.150

I started school because I didn't have a degree
at that time.

09:30.160 --> 09:36.840

And so I was able to get that going and then I
was grateful to be able to

09:36.850 --> 09:42.780

get a job as a real job.

I guess if you will in june of 2004 with the V.

09:42.780 --> 09:46.010

A.

As a recreation therapy assisted in our today

09:46.010 --> 09:47.200

is called R.

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C L. C.

09:47.200 --> 09:54.040

Back then it was a TCU traditional care unit.

But if I tell you that I really did

09:54.040 --> 10:00.810

meet people veterans who really pushed me down
the path of what it was that I should be

10:00.810 --> 10:04.160

doing and and help me to make some decisions
along the way.

10:04.170 --> 10:10.360

I'd be understanding it because I tell you that
was just just some wonderful experiences with

10:10.360 --> 10:15.430

some, some folks who are no longer here but who
I feel watch over me even to this very day

10:15.440 --> 10:18.800

because we became fast friends throughout the
process.

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10:18.800 --> 10:23.910

And so I was able within that seven years that
I worked there to finish my undergraduate

10:23.910 --> 10:28.990

degree as well as a Masters in Health care
Administration because at that point I know

10:28.990 --> 10:35.830

that I wanted to be able to serve more and more
so so that that that is kind of

10:35.830 --> 10:40.930

like the impetus that kind of like really
helped prepare me and get me involved.

10:40.940 --> 10:47.040

I did a residency program I guess if you will
with my executive office there at the Dallas V.

10:47.040 --> 10:50.360

A.

Where I worked in customer service I applied

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10:50.360 --> 10:55.200

for and I got the position as a customer
service coordinator at the Dallas reac and I

10:55.210 --> 10:59.050

also during that time finished an M. B. A.
Two as well.

10:59.060 --> 11:06.010

And then that path really what I guess it is
came complete for me when in october of 2016 I

11:06.010 --> 11:11.230

went back to the bottom B. A.
But I went back as the administrator for that

11:11.230 --> 11:18.160

facility and the 800 or so employees who worked
there and many knew me

11:18.170 --> 11:24.720

from when I had come through as a patient years
before and was very much aware my story and my

11:24.720 --> 11:31.020

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journey and how that came along and that's just
a fantastic thing where you know I am able each

11:31.020 --> 11:36.720

and every data to come in and do what I think
is my purpose in life is certainly my passion

11:36.730 --> 11:41.860

in life and that's to take care of the two most
important people that come in our doors every

11:41.860 --> 11:46.580

day, our veterans and our staff, you know, to
be able to take care of them.

11:46.580 --> 11:53.530

So that is certainly in a nutshell, the journey
that I've come through and that

11:53.540 --> 11:59.900

has really shaped my leadership style, my
philosophy and how I go about treating

11:59.900 --> 12:06.340

people right and and understanding, we have got

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to treat people in the proper way and and for

12:06.340 --> 12:10.150

me it's been very successful because that's how
I am able to have.

12:10.150 --> 12:14.750

I had any measure of success.

It is based off of the people that I've

12:14.760 --> 12:18.530

interacted with.

You know, just the other week I got an email

12:18.530 --> 12:24.770

from an employee in bottom and they were saying
just wanted you to know you're still you know,

12:24.770 --> 12:27.960

on our minds and we still think about you from
time to time.

12:27.970 --> 12:34.090

Those are my flowers I guess if you will and
and it helps me to be able to to stay in the

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12:34.090 --> 12:39.680

moment and never get so full of myself or get
so to a point where I,

12:39.680 --> 12:45.720

I think that I'm any different from anyone else.
We're all here just trying to do the hands on

12:45.720 --> 12:52.160

the wheel of making this the best health care
system in this country and our veteran Yeah.

12:52.170 --> 12:58.630

Talk about a full circle experience of being
able to think about into

12:58.630 --> 13:04.060

grasp and to acknowledge when there are
limitations when there are different

13:04.060 --> 13:10.610

circumstances that are placed ahead of us and
limitations, just like failures

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13:10.620 --> 13:15.560

can often lead to this feeling of being
defeated.

13:15.570 --> 13:20.900

And if we allow that feeling to take up
residence, if we allow it terrain,

13:20.910 --> 13:25.450

it can ultimately lead us into having this
victim mindset.

13:25.460 --> 13:31.140

And I think that's so difficult at times to
overcome along your journey.

13:31.150 --> 13:35.410

Did that mindset show up for you in those
spaces?

13:35.420 --> 13:41.520

Oh yes, by all means, you know, even even as we,
as I sit here before you today,

13:41.520 --> 13:47.160

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I have to be mindful of the fact that the
things that I've been able to do Could could

13:47.160 --> 13:53.110

easily change right in a moment's notice and
and I have to be guarded against that and keep

13:53.110 --> 13:59.900

my eye on the bigger picture some 20 years
removed now from my time being there and and

13:59.900 --> 14:02.740

but I'm getting what I what I need.

But again,

14:02.750 --> 14:06.250

it's just understanding and knowing that I'm
not in control,

14:06.260 --> 14:13.230

I am not the master of my destiny and I think
that as I do get older and

14:13.230 --> 14:18.400

I hope wiser uh that that I can make decisions

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now, you know,

14:18.400 --> 14:22.870

and it's it's almost like autopilot where I
don't have to even phantom,

14:22.880 --> 14:27.540

you know, I guess that it's that whole weighing
theory of looking at what it is that you have

14:27.540 --> 14:31.780

and weighing out this, this decision this and
that and I guess to a great degree,

14:31.780 --> 14:38.190

I I utilize that in my role as the associate
director because at the end of the day I try to

14:38.190 --> 14:45.130

make the most sound, best decision I possibly
can and the way of doing the

14:45.130 --> 14:49.800

right thing and I can stand on that and I can
own that and and as a leader,

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14:49.800 --> 14:55.430

if it doesn't succeed, I own that too as well,
I'll be the first one to raise my hand and say

14:55.440 --> 15:00.300

it was that's on me and that's what it is.
And I think that that's many times I employ in

15:00.300 --> 15:03.690

order to be able to get to the best that I can
possibly be for sure.

15:03.690 --> 15:09.290

It sounds like this awareness of your own power
in any situation,

15:09.290 --> 15:15.441

your ability to make decision.
But then also your ability and your willingness

15:15.441 --> 15:20.501

to own whatever comes outside of that decision,
whatever comes on the other side of that

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15:20.501 --> 15:23.061

decision.

And that can often be so difficult because we

15:23.061 --> 15:27.161

don't know what's going to be on the other side.

Often you're absolutely right.

15:27.161 --> 15:31.561

And you know, and I guess it's it's it's all
about the relationships too as well because I

15:31.561 --> 15:35.241

can recall one time when I had missed a
deadline right?

15:35.241 --> 15:40.922

And I had gone into mourning report and you
know, at that time you got all the leaders and

15:40.922 --> 15:43.422

all that kind of stuff and they got anybody got
anything.

15:43.422 --> 15:45.962

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And I just raised my hand and my normal place
and I said guys,

15:45.962 --> 15:50.892

I gotta I just gotta tell you something I
missed the deadline and I did was not able to

15:50.892 --> 15:55.632

get the information in, and I take full
responsibility for it.

15:55.642 --> 16:02.392

And I, you know, I will work to be able to try
to get as much of it right as I possibly can.

16:02.402 --> 16:06.702

And the director at that time simply said, you
know, James,

16:06.702 --> 16:11.643

we are, we're all just human and that in the
entire room full of other leaders and

16:11.643 --> 16:16.293

department heads and all that kind of stuff.

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And that was early on throughout my time

16:16.293 --> 16:20.593

working in the executive space.

And so there's nothing wrong with that,

16:20.603 --> 16:25.353

There's nothing wrong with that.

And when you do make a mistake and when you're

16:25.353 --> 16:29.023

all willing to own up and when something
doesn't work,

16:29.033 --> 16:31.393

because at the end of the day, the buck stops
here.

16:31.393 --> 16:34.723

So the service Chiefs and the department has
that report to me,

16:34.734 --> 16:38.394

we talk about things and then I give them my
best advice.

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16:38.394 --> 16:41.320

But at the end of the day, it stops here with
me and you know,

16:41.320 --> 16:44.320

I can be able to protect them.
But nothing ventured,

16:44.320 --> 16:47.250

nothing gay.
I guess if you will for sure, and being

16:47.250 --> 16:51.090

consistent in that process.
I think too, as well,

16:51.100 --> 16:56.980

it's something that I think has been able to
afford me to develop relationships that are

16:56.980 --> 16:59.290

long lasting without V. A.
Across the board.

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16:59.290 --> 17:03.300

For sure, consistency is often key, right?

It's often very,

17:03.300 --> 17:10.180

very important and it does show in your story
throughout just your ability to take ownership

17:10.190 --> 17:15.560

over your circumstances and take ownership over
the things that you do in spite of those

17:15.560 --> 17:19.330

limitations, right?

In spite of those situations and circumstances.

17:19.340 --> 17:25.620

And I think one of the biggest things for us to
do is first to recognize when we are

17:25.620 --> 17:30.190

allowing our circumstances, our situations to
limit our reach.

17:30.400 --> 17:36.490

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So one of our past guests on this last episode
described this as manufacturing your own

17:36.490 --> 17:41.550

failure and it's something that really stuck
with me of like how often do we manufacture our

17:41.550 --> 17:48.170

failure when we allow our limitations to really
smother our ability to reach higher?

17:48.180 --> 17:54.160

And were there moments where you recognized
this happening for you?

17:54.310 --> 17:57.610

I think about being honest, I'd say it happens
to me quite a bit,

17:57.610 --> 18:01.690

you know, because here's the deal, you know, as
we, as we,

18:01.690 --> 18:07.920

as leaders, look at the entire frontier via and

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how it's ever evolving and changing from the

18:07.920 --> 18:11.740

veteran perspective as for as well as the
employee perspective,

18:11.920 --> 18:18.080

no one has a, a certainty about how any efforts
will go right,

18:18.080 --> 18:23.450

you just will never, you know, and so in order
to, for us to be successful,

18:23.450 --> 18:27.610

we still have to make decisions for those
groups of individuals.

18:27.620 --> 18:32.030

And so sometimes we just have to say, you know
what with what I have,

18:32.040 --> 18:37.640

this is the best solution and the best choice
and I'm going with it,

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18:37.650 --> 18:41.210

we're going with this, we're gonna move, move
forward and you know,

18:41.210 --> 18:45.770

I think that that has, I'll be quite honest
with you,

18:45.780 --> 18:49.390

I've been very fortunate, uh, in the sense that,
you know,

18:49.390 --> 18:54.380

the things that I've looked to try to
incorporate or work with or as a team or,

18:54.380 --> 18:59.600

or leadership, we we get done and they are
successful and I can feel I can step back and

18:59.600 --> 19:05.280

said, you know, but but it is continually
raising the bar and trying to make things the

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19:05.280 --> 19:09.940

best that we possibly can for those two groups
of individuals are veterans in our staff,

19:09.950 --> 19:15.660

while at the same time making the calls that
you have the responsibility of those folks at

19:15.660 --> 19:20.170

the end of the day, folks look to us to to make
those decisions for the organization and move

19:20.170 --> 19:24.760

it in the right direction.

So yeah, there there's always those types of

19:24.770 --> 19:27.350

feelings.

Yeah, absolutely.

19:27.350 --> 19:32.850

And I think that's a very honest admission
right of saying there are moments where I think

19:32.850 --> 19:37.960

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about circumstances where, where I think about
situations and I do worry about the limits.

19:37.960 --> 19:43.570

I do worry about not being able to push past
those situations and circumstances.

19:43.580 --> 19:48.770

And often when it comes to our successes, we
are thinking about those limits.

19:48.770 --> 19:53.310

The limits can show up in the thoughts of who
we are,

19:53.320 --> 19:56.480

can show up in the thoughts about our resources,
what we have,

19:56.480 --> 20:01.510

what we don't have our circumstances, what we
know and what we don't know.

20:01.520 --> 20:06.790

But I think it takes a great deal of audacity

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and what you're talking about is to be able to

20:06.790 --> 20:12.160

consistently push through those constraints,
consistently asked for help.

20:12.160 --> 20:17.050

I remember when we first started to talk about
this, you talked about like when you went into

20:17.050 --> 20:21.170

the dome ancillary, you mentioned, I knew that
I couldn't help myself.

20:21.170 --> 20:24.670

So I reached out and I asked for help in other
areas.

20:24.670 --> 20:31.080

And so when you think about the word audacity,
because it takes a great deal of audacity to do

20:31.080 --> 20:34.790

that, what does audacity mean to you?
That's exactly it.

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20:34.790 --> 20:40.270

So, so that's what it means to for me to be
able to do those things to push the envelope to

20:40.270 --> 20:45.880

be able to really try to make a difference, I
guess making those decisions with the

20:45.880 --> 20:49.850

information that I've been given the best
possible solution that I have,

20:49.850 --> 20:52.830

and then, you know, boldly stepping out a
little bit and saying,

20:52.830 --> 20:58.280

hey, this works for us, and then it's also
engaging those other people to it as well,

20:58.280 --> 21:03.520

right in the process and getting their buy in
because we can't make things work on our own

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21:03.520 --> 21:06.370

accord.

But if I if I engage enough people and they can

21:06.380 --> 21:11.720

and I can sell them on the idea or the notion
that this is possible,

21:11.730 --> 21:14.960

uh and they can catch on to that vision and
that dream,

21:14.970 --> 21:18.180

then it's hard not to make things work, you
understand.

21:18.180 --> 21:21.950

So, and that's just one of the things that that
I employ,

21:21.960 --> 21:24.770

of trying to get feedback from different people
from our veterans,

21:24.770 --> 21:28.290

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from stakeholders, from our employees about
what it is to do.

21:28.290 --> 21:32.520

Let them be a part of helping us come up with
the solutions.

21:32.530 --> 21:38.660

So for me, audacity just means being able to
really move forward in an

21:38.660 --> 21:45.380

uncertain way while yet, and still believing
that we can be successful and and and

21:45.380 --> 21:50.860

reaching our in go and so, so I guess if you
will chart new territory and looking at

21:50.860 --> 21:56.090

different processes and, and I think that we
have wide open vistas in which we can be able

21:56.090 --> 21:59.650

to do that.

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You know, for me, the thing that I looked at

21:59.650 --> 22:03.030

will then be a, when I first got in, I said,
you know,

22:03.040 --> 22:09.250

guys, we we we do, we may do well on certain
things, but we we missed the mark,

22:09.260 --> 22:12.120

making sure that our employees know that we
care for them,

22:12.120 --> 22:16.980

we value them uh, and and that we have their
best interests at heart,

22:16.990 --> 22:21.650

while at the same time, you know, asking them
to care for veterans to the best degree

22:21.650 --> 22:25.880

possible, then then we've got to be able to
mail things together.

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22:25.890 --> 22:31.640

I think that we have more than enough smart people with NBA that we can do both things at

22:31.640 --> 22:35.800

once, which rises us as I would have been prone to say,

22:35.810 --> 22:41.530

you know, a rising tide floats all boats, so we continue to go up and in that in that direction,

22:41.530 --> 22:43.550

then we'll we'll get to where it is, there we go.

22:43.550 --> 22:49.200

But it's got to be intentional.

It's got to be consistent and and we have got

22:49.200 --> 22:54.880

to be able to look at and address the needs of both of those parties.

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22:54.880 --> 23:01.370

And I've been in west texas now for three years
and I've been to more services I guess if you

23:01.370 --> 23:07.480

will for the loss of family of our employees
that they're not,

23:07.480 --> 23:13.270

they're not care to have to go through to.
But we have got to be able to walk alongside

23:13.280 --> 23:19.750

our people and let them know it's more than
just about the job that I care about.

23:19.750 --> 23:26.560

But I care about you as a person and I need to
be able to let you know that I am here for

23:26.560 --> 23:30.680

you, I support you.

And I think that those kind of things has has

23:30.680 --> 23:37.200

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worked so well for me that I never will stop,
I'll never stop being human,

23:37.210 --> 23:41.980

you know?

And what I, and I go back with what it was dr

23:41.980 --> 23:48.910

Jensen said earlier about leading with love.

I'm not ashamed to say that I just

23:48.910 --> 23:55.020

love people and I think I can get the most out
of people when I'm treating them in the proper

23:55.020 --> 24:00.310

manner when I'm holding folks accountable at
the same time giving them opportunity to grow

24:00.310 --> 24:04.910

and develop and become who they want to become.

I think that's when we're at our most optimal

24:04.910 --> 24:10.030

and those are some things that I employ, that

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some peop like man,

24:10.200 --> 24:14.830

like, yeah, we got to do it the way we got to
do it,

24:14.840 --> 24:20.640

that's just who I am and I'm not ashamed of who
I am today as you were talking.

24:20.650 --> 24:25.410

The thing that kept popping up in my mind is
servant leadership.

24:25.420 --> 24:32.310

Just the description, um, servant leadership is
meeting people where they are first

24:32.320 --> 24:36.290

and then finding ways to make that a part of
their story.

24:36.480 --> 24:42.900

And when you think about that, what would you
say to leaders who have the opportunity to help

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24:42.900 --> 24:46.980

others grow past their limitations?

You know,

24:46.980 --> 24:51.300

in order for me to build what I hope as a
veteran is?

24:51.300 --> 24:57.650

Like I say, the best health care system in this
country, I've got to be able to replace people

24:57.650 --> 25:02.820

such as myself and we've got to understand that
we're in these positions and in these roles

25:02.820 --> 25:07.310

only for a short period of time.

So when I come I'm into an organization,

25:07.310 --> 25:11.720

I'm looking for people to replace me.

I'm looking and I'm and I'm feeding it into

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25:11.720 --> 25:14.390

them.

I am feeding what what do you need to know,

25:14.390 --> 25:18.910

what do you what do you want to know?

How do you want to do this to the best possible?

25:18.920 --> 25:23.940

Because that builds that consistency, right.

That that builds that country of individuals

25:23.950 --> 25:29.100

who have been fed into and now they get it and

I'm hopeful they're reciprocating and feed into

25:29.100 --> 25:32.710

others and and do all these kind of things that

that that builds a model where it can just

25:32.710 --> 25:38.180

start to go and go and go and you know, I've

been very fortunate to be able to have leaders

25:38.180 --> 25:40.750

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such as that.

And it would be, I guess if you were

25:40.750 --> 25:47.050

hypocritical for me not to be a leader such as
that at all level to make myself available,

25:47.060 --> 25:50.670

uh and speak so servant leadership.

And that aspect is,

25:50.670 --> 25:54.740

is to understand that I've got to be growing
others too as well.

25:54.740 --> 25:58.700

I've got to be developing others too as well.

I've got to be offering those folks

25:58.700 --> 26:02.170

opportunities to become who it is that they
want to become.

26:02.180 --> 26:07.620

And as a matter of fact, I speak to this in leo,

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I mean when we're meeting as acquired with our

26:07.620 --> 26:11.050

new employees, I tell them, I said now you're
in to be a,

26:11.050 --> 26:14.610

let me offer you one bit of information.
Never leave,

26:14.620 --> 26:19.880

stay in chart your course.
You may be coming in at this level,

26:19.890 --> 26:23.550

but get what you need in order to be able to
attain this and then just go to where videos

26:23.550 --> 26:28.320

that you care to go and make a good career out
of it while at the same time always keeping the

26:28.320 --> 26:33.200

mission at the forefront, serving our nation's
veterans and taking care of them to the best of

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26:33.200 --> 26:38.510

our abilities, a living testimony of that.

I like that idea when you come into the V A

26:38.510 --> 26:42.310

don't leave chart your path, chart your career.

Yeah, absolutely.

26:42.310 --> 26:47.020

Yeah, Absolutely. Yeah.

And I'm not ashamed that I was a cwt

26:47.020 --> 26:52.770

housekeeper, not even on the full rows and so,

and if I can sit here today before you as an

26:52.770 --> 26:56.990

associate director for a healthcare system,

then what you can do,

26:56.990 --> 27:01.600

it's just, it's phenomenal.

So and encouraging folks and then making it

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27:01.600 --> 27:03.980

available for them too as well.

Right?

27:04.200 --> 27:07.690

You have to do that.

You have to, you know, not only just talk the

27:07.690 --> 27:10.820

talk, but you gotta walk the walk and do all
those things too as well.

27:10.820 --> 27:16.960

Because that too is consistency and how you
really own that right at the time and make sure

27:16.960 --> 27:19.780

that folks are participating in things like
that certainly.

27:19.780 --> 27:25.140

And I think that will speak to so many people
because we do often hear individuals who are

27:25.140 --> 27:29.350

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leaders or who have a hope to be a leader
within our system saying,

27:29.360 --> 27:33.120

you know, I do have these limitations or I
don't know if I have these skills or I don't

27:33.120 --> 27:38.040

know if I've these experiences and they're
really focusing in on those limitations that

27:38.050 --> 27:42.270

can be very real at times.

But what I hear you saying is,

27:42.270 --> 27:45.680

you know, being able to move with your future
in mind,

27:45.690 --> 27:48.640

right?

Charting your future, being able to move with

27:48.640 --> 27:55.460

that, taking learning experiences throughout

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each of those situations and really being able

27:55.460 --> 27:58.880

to be consistent about pushing through those
limitations.

27:58.890 --> 28:03.290

Are there anything else that you would
encourage or say to some,

28:03.300 --> 28:08.380

I want to encourage them to start if they are
looking to progress within their career.

28:08.390 --> 28:13.520

Yeah, I mean one thing that we, we are we were
rich with resources in order to be able to get

28:13.530 --> 28:18.080

folks to understand things.

I mean we we have all kinds of tools and

28:18.080 --> 28:23.640

opportunities and programs that can really help
people to learn more about what it is that they

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28:23.650 --> 28:28.090

feel that they may need, there's there's not
going to be anyone that's going to look at as I

28:28.090 --> 28:30.660

come up to the best decision that I can make.
Trust me,

28:30.660 --> 28:35.180

I've done my homework, I've looked at things
that I did not know by the time I make a

28:35.180 --> 28:39.660

decision, I would have known so much somewhat
about it that I can make that decision,

28:39.660 --> 28:43.780

so getting out there and and tapping into those
resources so that you can be able to learn,

28:43.790 --> 28:48.820

get a mentor, you know get folks who sit in
those roles to be able to help guide you

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28:48.830 --> 28:53.500

through and also provide you with input and
guidance along those lines and then you know,

28:53.500 --> 28:55.720

if you need to have particular school and put
into it,

28:55.730 --> 29:00.120

you know, get your school, it's a sacrifice.

But if you put your head down and keep going

29:00.120 --> 29:05.270

and you you can be able to do what whatever
that is that you choose to do dr day,

29:05.270 --> 29:09.660

do you have a moment where I can just share
with you one of the rationales behind what it

29:09.660 --> 29:15.720

is that that I feel, thank you.

So when I was working in the in the clc because

29:15.720 --> 29:19.910

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like I said, I got my first job as a GS four
recreation therapy assistant.

29:19.920 --> 29:24.950

And so my job was to have activities with our
veterans to play dominoes and do trip.

29:24.950 --> 29:29.190

So I had really had a good job so I would get
to know them on a very personal level and they

29:29.190 --> 29:34.710

confided in me and they would become a resource
to One of the things that I that really kind of

29:34.710 --> 29:40.540

helped me to understand this was I had a
veteran that came to my door and he must have

29:40.540 --> 29:47.540

told me the same story 20 times he told me to
watch and what what he was

29:47.540 --> 29:50.770

doing.

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He was recounting his experience during the

29:50.770 --> 29:57.050

military, which he was very proud of.

I listened just as intently on the 20th time as

29:57.050 --> 30:03.960

I did on the first time, you know, because what

I realized was was that it meant something

30:03.960 --> 30:08.610

to him to have someone take the time to listen

to what it was that he had to say,

30:08.620 --> 30:15.430

the lesson that I got out of that was is that

one day if I'm fortunate enough money

30:15.440 --> 30:21.140

won't matter titles, won't matter the positions

I've held won't matter.

30:21.140 --> 30:27.290

But what I feel will matter will be the

people's lives that I've been a part of,

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30:27.300 --> 30:33.870

along this life journey that I can sit back and
I can reflect upon how in some

30:33.870 --> 30:40.070

way I helped someone to be able to do it.
And I'm very hopeful that in my day to day

30:40.080 --> 30:46.550

activities, I'm building up those memories
because that's exactly what it was that he was

30:46.560 --> 30:49.830

doing and I and I said like you know that's
just the you know,

30:49.830 --> 30:53.900

the timeline of life and how we go through it
and what it is that we do.

30:53.900 --> 30:57.110

But that lesson kind of really made me realize
you know,

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30:57.120 --> 31:03.590

all this is leading and your value should lie
in those things that really matter and can

31:03.590 --> 31:07.840

really make a difference in someone's life.
So I strive to do that each and every day.

31:07.850 --> 31:12.620

That's what motivates me a great deal Yeah,
that's a very powerful story and a very

31:12.620 --> 31:19.420

powerful thing to hold onto as you are making
your way through your career and just

31:19.420 --> 31:24.410

through life in general.

Sure, So we've come close to the end here James

31:24.410 --> 31:31.400

and and yeah, I definitely am inspired by your
story and and it really does align with some of

31:31.400 --> 31:34.680

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the values that I hold.

I believe what we look for in the world is

31:34.680 --> 31:39.800

often what we find and so this idea of being
able to push through and push past our

31:39.800 --> 31:43.560

limitations to not look at them as ceilings,
but you know,

31:43.560 --> 31:49.730

as the next step and to be able to think about
how can I use the resources that I have to gain

31:49.730 --> 31:56.140

more resources to get me to where I'd like to
be is an ongoing lesson that I think I am

31:56.140 --> 31:59.890

always learning and always striving to place in
my life.

31:59.890 --> 32:05.170

And so I think the message and stories that

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you've shared today are going to be so useful

32:05.180 --> 32:08.570

and so helpful for so many leaders and just so
many people,

32:08.570 --> 32:13.330

so many veterans throughout our enterprise.
And so I'm extremely grateful for for you being

32:13.330 --> 32:19.260

a part of this show today.
I am so so grateful to be able to share and to

32:19.260 --> 32:24.350

let folks know that you are not defined either
by your circumstances,

32:24.350 --> 32:31.320

your environment, your whatever that may be,
but your define signed by what you phantom in

32:31.320 --> 32:34.290

your own mind and what you want to be able to
do and you can,

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32:34.300 --> 32:38.830

you can, you can always overcome you know, and
just just just make the most of this thing

32:38.830 --> 32:40.480

called life.

Hey, there we go.

32:40.490 --> 32:42.880

There we go.

Well before we sign out today,

32:42.880 --> 32:46.320

let's do a really quick game of word
association.

32:46.330 --> 32:51.390

Um, where I check in, I give you a word, I give
you a phrase and you give me the first thing

32:51.390 --> 32:53.290

that comes to your mind.

Okay, okay.

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32:53.300 --> 32:57.380

All right, so the first word, first phrases,
servant leadership,

32:57.390 --> 33:03.650

love nice.

The next one is stepping above our limitations.

33:03.660 --> 33:09.640

Audacious leads me right into that last word
audacity to fail.

33:09.650 --> 33:14.570

Yeah, absolutely.

So thank you so so much.

33:14.570 --> 33:18.420

I always love word association.

It's always really fun to see kind of how

33:18.420 --> 33:20.290

people are thinking.

It's the psychologist in me.

33:20.290 --> 33:22.840

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I always want to know like what, what's turning
up there,

33:22.840 --> 33:24.800

what are you thinking?

But I love that.

33:24.800 --> 33:30.230

I love the words that you chose.

I think they align so well with the stories

33:30.230 --> 33:33.890

that you've shared today so well with who you
are and like you say said,

33:33.890 --> 33:37.690

I'm not ashamed of who I am not today and not
tomorrow.

33:37.690 --> 33:40.140

Right?

And so thank you so much.

33:40.160 --> 33:43.760

Thank you so much.

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Thank you and Jan and thank you to dr Shyamalan

33:43.760 --> 33:46.910

fairly too as well for making the introductions.

You know,

33:46.920 --> 33:50.460

people like you are going to be the change that

V. A.

33:50.470 --> 33:54.290

Needs by getting things out such as this.

I believe that wholeheartedly.

33:54.300 --> 33:55.700

We'll see y'all later.

Bye bye.

33:55.710 --> 33:58.610

Thank you.

So we've come to the end of another great

33:58.620 --> 34:04.340

episode of the audacity to fail podcast.

Thank you for tuning in to learn how missteps

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34:04.340 --> 34:08.190

can lead to growth and success.

Be sure to check out the key lessons in the

34:08.190 --> 34:13.190

show notes for a refresher to request services
from the National Center for Organization

34:13.190 --> 34:14.990

Development.

Check out our website.

34:15.000 --> 34:19.910

Also lengthen the show notes.

Remember if you missed the target 100 times you

34:19.910 --> 34:24.220

have not failed.

Instead, you've simply found 100 strategies

34:24.230 --> 34:28.690

that did not work.

Be well and continue to fail forward until next

Limitations Are Only Real If You Believe Them with
Mr. James Douglas

34:28.690 --> 34:29.980

time.

Thank you