

## **The Wellbeing Conversation**

**With Dylan Alcott, Brad McEwan and special guests**

### **Chapter 1: Leadership during adversity with Shayne Elliott and Liz Ellis**

**Brad McEwan:** Welcome. It's great to have you here and we look forward to you joining us throughout the wellbeing conversation. Which is also a collection of stories, probably quite a few stories. Our aim to share stories from experts, well-known individuals and ANZ people to present unique, inspiring and practical insights to help you navigate through this challenging period.

It is wonderful to welcome you and it's fabulous to welcome our recurring panelist throughout the wellbeing conversation, ANZ Ambassador, Paralympian, Dylan Alcott - Dylan great to have you here.

**Dylan Alcott:** G'day Brad. Great to be here. I love being a part of the ANZ family. So looking forward to the whole series.

**Brad McEwan:** Thank you, Dylan. And our special guests as we talk about leadership during adversity are ANZ CEO, Shayne Elliott. Shayne, thank you for joining us.

**Shayne Elliott:** Thanks for having me along. Thank you.

**Brad McEwan:** And also joining us is Australian, Netball.... How do we describe her? Australian Netball great? Legend? Luminary, perhaps? Also a media commentator, Liz Ellis. Hello, Liz. Great to have you here.

**Liz Ellis:** Hello, Bradley. Great to be here. I've found the closest I can get to ANZ blue for today, so I feel part of the team.

**Brad McEwan:** Well done. It has been noted. We've got a lot we've got a lot to talk about. We've got a lot to share. So many stories. So let's get into it.

Well, it's only appropriate then that we start with a story, so a question to all of you, can you remember a time maybe when you were younger, when you first had an understanding of a leader/leadership and maybe your thinking around - I like this leadership, caper, maybe that's for me?

Don't go all at once. Dyl?

**Dylan Alcott:** I'll kick us off. Brad, great question.

I think the first time that I kind of saw a leader that really represented the person that I wanted to be was when I was about 10, 11 years old. I loved sport as a kid. And obviously, you know, having a disability, I never really thought I could get involved. And then when I found out that I could, it really changed my life. It really did.

And there was one player in particular that I kind of idolized for the way that he went about it. It was a guy called Pat Rafter, not only because he looked good in underwear and I think I do, too, but also mostly about the way that he went about it, win, lose or draw. Because let's be honest, tennis players don't always have the best reputation sometimes

with the way that they behave. And I remember watching him lose at Wimbledon and it was gut wrenching for him.

But the way that he held himself in defeat was something that I wanted to strive towards. And he was being a leader in that moment because it would have been very easy for him to, I guess to, you know, really let himself down in that moment and put on a bad example, especially for younger people. And I saw that. And I was like, you know what? That's the person that I want to be in my life. Whether it's on the sporting field or not, always be humble in what you do. And I guess to accept the result, whatever it is. And from that day on, I guess it put a bit of a fire under me that that is kind of like the person that I wanted to become.

**Brad McEwan:** Liz, Shayne?

**Liz Ellis:** I guess for me, my immediate leadership role models when I was a kid, were Netball women. And, you know, it's interesting, as I've got older, I've really developed far more of an appreciation for the local level leadership than I had when I was a kid. Because when I was a kid, I just thought these women just ran the world right? And to a degree, they do, you know, I sat next to Air Marshal Angus Houston once at a lunch. And he said to me, "You know, the Netball women could run the army. And in fact, they probably should." And I thought that was such a great example of these women. And, you know, they can do they get things done. And I think Netball is a really good... A great training ground for a lot of female leaders.

The one that springs to mind for me is a woman called Sheila Ether right? You would never have heard of her. She was not the local mayor or a big wig in town, but she ran my local Netball club and I often say to her, I'm friends with her daughter still, and I'd often say to her: "Without your mum, my life wouldn't be what it is."

So, Sheila rang my mum one sunny Saturday morning and said, "Listen, Margaret, I'm putting together a team for the Greenhill's under eights. Does Liz want to play?" And my mum said, "No. No, she wouldn't like netball. She wouldn't be very good at it. She's a bit of a bookworm. So she wouldn't be into sports and she's a bit uncoordinated." And there's plenty of others who would back my mum up on that assessment actually.

So Sheila, being the leader that she was wouldn't take no for an answer. But rather than argue the point on the phone, she went away and a week later she came back and she rang Mum and she said, "Oh Margaret, you won't believe what I've seen this week. Did you know that 95 per cent of children who end up as juvenile delinquents have never played sports?"

I don't know what the backstory was there. But she went away and found a way to yes and it showed me as a kid that if you don't get what you want, you actually don't stand and argue the point. You find a way to yes. So, to me, this woman was a terrific leader in our community. She got kids into sport. She kept them away from the bad stuff. I grew up in the western suburbs in Sydney. And she made us all feel so welcome and so needed by the club. So, of course, we all played and we went on to leadership roles at a local level. I umpired, I coached junior teams. So to me, that early role modelling of inclusive leadership and finding a way to yes, was super important. And I thank my sport at the local level for that.

**Shayne Elliott:** Right. I'm a bit older than everybody here. Maybe I'm lacking in cognitive ability. I can't remember back that far.

I'm struggling to sort of think, to be honest, that young. So my sort of first experiences I guess are much more work related and maybe that and I didn't have the benefit of sort of playing team sports or anything like that or have that exposure when I was younger.

So mine was really when I was, you know, in my early 20s and, you know, I was working hard and all that sort of stuff. And I had the benefit of working for, I'm based in Auckland and my boss was over in Australia and then his boss was in New York. And both of them showed me time and time again something that I really valued this quality of leadership about making difficult choices. And doing the right thing even when it comes at a cost.

So, you know, being prepared to stand up for what the company at that time and the team really believed in. And I was able to see through either the different economic circumstances or different personal circumstances of people and witnessed them and the way they went about making these decisions for either individuals or for the group. So that was sort of my experience of thinking, wow here are some people who had power, if you will, and the ability to change people's lives. And, you know, and actually the way they made those decisions and the outcomes were heavily influenced by their own sense of ethics and what was right as opposed to what was expedient.

And so that was sort of my experience and something that I've, you know, often draw upon and, you know, to some extent saying, well, what would they do when I'm confronted with some of those some challenges.

**Brad McEwan:** So for all of you now, people look up to you as leaders, whether it's an official title or just because of your standing in the community. Did you always feel that you were natural leaders? Did you get feedback saying, you know, you have leadership qualities or is it something that you've had to really work on?

**Dylan Alcott:** I think from my point of view, I definitely didn't think, especially when I was younger, that I was a leader in any capacity, I really didn't like the person that I was growing up. I didn't like my disability. I got bullied about my disability. I actually hated the person that I was up until I was about fourteen, fifteen years old, so that kid definitely wasn't a leader. He was sitting at home eating Doritos and playing video games. And I never thought I was going to be anything much in my life at all.

And I remember I was you know, not only did I have a great family support who helped me get over that. I remember looking at the mirror when I was younger saying, you know, Dylan, you've got to try and get your life back. I've got to, I started putting myself out there and, you know, inviting myself places and things like that. And what I found was as soon as I started talking about my disability more, everybody around me started becoming more comfortable about my disability. I couldn't believe it. It was like a flick of the switch. And from that point on, I kind of realised that I had to be a leader in my own life to be able to help me become the person that I wanted to be.

And then when I started to feel comfortable with that, and I guess became really proud of the person that I was and really proud to have a disability. I kind of looked around and I was like, you know what? They're four and a half million people just like me in Australia. One point three billion people in the world with a disability who feel exactly like I do, who

felt like they weren't included, who felt like they didn't have the opportunity to be the people that they wanted to be.

So I kind of fell into it Brad. I kind of looked at that and thought, you know what? I guess I want to be that guy. I want to be that guy to try and help people get at and be the best versions of themselves, no matter their ability, disability or not. And I don't I never really did it on purpose and I still don't. I just try and be authentic to me. I just try and be me every time I leave the house. And if that has even a very small, small, small impact on my community, well, then, you know, I can go to bed at night thinking that I've you know tried to help a young kid who is just like me get out there and be the person that they want.

So I guess it was, I guess, part natural, but also part work through experience. And I stuffed up along the way as well. A lot, I'm sure. And I think that's probably one of the best ways to learn.

**Shayne Elliott:** Yeah, there's a lot of similarity. I mean, I was not a natural leader, if I think back at, you know, things through school or sports or whatever it was, I was never the kid who was, you know, the captain of anything or le leader of anything or...or, whatever. I guess I sort of struggled a lot with those things myself and wasn't...

So I never really set out with an aspiration to be a leader. It never occurred to me, to be perfectly honest. I sort of knew I had some inherent skills around communicating and other things. But it really just happened by chance and it happened really through my work, was the opportunity that came about. And as said, I happened to work for great leaders, who've sort of looked after me and made sure that I got given more and more opportunity and stretched me and coached me and pushed me into things that I didn't feel comfortable with.

But it wasn't that I set out and said, hey, I've got these great leadership capabilities and hey, I've got these great aspirations to apply them. And so I sort of fell into it, very much along the ways that sort of Dylan mentioned.

And I totally agree with what he said about, you know, it's about being authentic to yourself, right? And, you know, I, I know I'm sure there are a lot, well, there are lots of books about leadership and can describe all sorts of qualities that would be good things to have. But you have to be what's true for you. And if those things lead you down the leadership path and there's a lot of responsibility that comes with that, I don't want to over egg that. But, you know, it's not always easy sitting in any sort of leadership position when you do have power and authority and then your decisions that you're making impact real people's lives. But nonetheless, I think it is about authenticity. And ultimately, that's what's the most important thing. I think in a leader or anybody, to be perfectly honest.

**Liz Ellis:** Yeah, I reckon it's fascinating hearing you both talk, Shayne and Dylan, about the fact that you be yourself and you're authentic. And I reckon sometimes we look at the outward shows of leadership. So I made that mistake when I was younger. I think that leadership was about being the loudest and the bossiest and anyone who knows me, knows that I'm excellent at those two things. Right? So I don't know why you're laughing, Dylan.

**Dylan Alcott:** Hey, I'm with ya! People say the same about me. Good combo.

**Liz Ellis:** Right so, you think... So I actually got leadership positions because I was confident enough to be the loudest and the bossiest. But then over time, you understand that that's really just part of the outward show of leadership, whereas really the definition of a good leader, I think is someone who has great integrity. And when they make those tough decisions, the people who they lead will actually follow those tough decisions if they know that you have integrity and that you're authentic you're true to yourself.

Whereas if they think you're making those tough decisions based on your own personal gain or looking up to somebody else, then it doesn't matter how loud or how bossy or how confident you are, if the why of your leadership is not to be a good part of the team or to lead the team well and make decisions based on what's best for your team and your business, then I reckon people pick that up. And it took me a little while to sort of figure that out. To me, it took a few goes at being a leader.

And, you know, I was captain of junior teams all the way through. So I was a bit different to you two gentlemen in that I was always sort of looked at as a leader and people would say one day, she'll captain Australia once I get over my obvious uncoordinated-ness. Then, you know, then that was something that was talked about. But it took me a long time to become Australian captain because I was held back deliberately and I'm grateful to the people who made those decisions now, even though I hated it at the time. In order to be able to understand what leadership was about a bit more. It wasn't about just being able to be loud and make a decision on the spot and get on with things and be a great player. You've actually. There's a whole lot of dimensions to it, but I think integrity is the key one.

**Shayne Elliott:** I think that's a really important point you made there about being loud. I mean, I think there is this general idea from people that, you know, somehow charisma is the secret ingredient of leadership. Right. And being loud and sort of in your face and my experience of that, I went to the last bank that I worked for, which I spent most of my early years and work. I had the opportunity when I was quite young to be working in head office alongside, you know, it's a very junior person about sort of witnessing the most senior people in the company in New York. And what I saw at the time there was the guy that was running the place at the time. He was actually you'd argue he had almost no charisma, you know, like he was extremely bland and very bright, thoughtful, probably a bit shy. But he was an amazing leader because he was authentic and he still had an ability to communicate in his own way without necessarily doing what we all expect if we watch a movie about leadership or something. And so that I think gave me a bit of a, I guess a bit of an inspiration to say, well, you don't have to fit the mould. There isn't just a way of being a leader. It really depends on you and what you're trying to what you're trying to achieve.

**Liz Ellis:** Charisma covers up deficiencies in leadership. You know, like someone who's really charismatic can probably get away with it a bit more.

**Shayne Elliott:** Yep, I'm personally naturally shy. I'm not you know, I'm not a I'm not an outward person. I would rather be just at home on my own with my family than most other things.

But you sort of learn in these roles that you have to push yourself as well. And, despite what I say about, you know, of course, you have to be authentic. But there is an expectation of you in your roles as well.

**Brad McEwan:** So Shayne when you talk about uncomfortable and being authentic. It's one thing to be leading a massive organisation like ANZ, given what we've experienced

over the last few months, how do you balance and clearly we're moving into the adversity now? How do you balance between "I've got this. We've got you. We are going to protect you." Which I know is a big part of your values and within the organisation. But also saying, "You know what? This this stuff that you're all dealing with, I'm dealing with it too."

**Shayne Elliott:** Look, it's a really good question. And we're going through that a little bit at the moment. I mean, I think that part of, you know, leadership in this case is people want to know that they're not alone. And you know, we've got people in over thirty odd countries, all going through their own personal challenges with this.

And everybody has, you know, has a different experience of COVID and what it means to them. They worry, and in particular, when you're working from home, you don't have the same opportunities to run into people at the kitchen or whatever and have a chat about things. People want to know that they're not alone and that what they're experiencing isn't necessarily unique. And they also want to see that sort of humility, I guess, from their leaders to say that, you know, we understand and that we you know, despite I mean, I'm extremely privileged. I mean, I know it's hard for me to sit here and talk about hardship. I mean, I'm extremely lucky and in sort of an elite position. But nonetheless, being able to share your own experiences, I think, again, creates a bond with the people, a sense of belonging, if you will, a sense of team, you know, all of those things.

And people like. I know I don't I'm not saying this sounds a bit manipulative and I don't mean it in that way. People like to see a little bit of weakness in their leaders too. They don't want to see perfection. They want to know that you're real. That, you know, so that, you know, for me, the things that have to resonate a little bit, I get feedback. You know, I'm able to talk. You know, I've got a 15 year old daughter at home. And again, we're very privileged. And so, you know, it's not exactly difficult for her to be doing school at home, but it has its own challenges. So I do have some and people want to know that you have real life, that you're not just a robot and that you have some empathy for those situations. And so, anyway, we can, you can communicate that I think is very, very effective.

**Brad McEwan:** Liz, you certainly have this public persona, which I know we all have another side to ourselves. But, you know, you're always smiling and you're always bouncing around and you seem to be good at so many things. But are you able to just give us just a wee little insight perhaps into your experience with COVID and a lot of I think a lot of the thoughts and the worries and the fears that we all have?

**Liz Ellis:** Absolutely, COVID terrifies me or terrified me at the start in particular because towards the end of last year, so I'm going to backtrack a little bit. I live in a rural an area, a rural area of New South Wales, live on the Northern Rivers, which is I live in paradise. So I'm really fortunate. But we got affected last year by the bushfires. So whilst our home and I live on a farm, so we weren't directly affected. But I could see one of the fires from my place to the north, there was fires to the west of us. The smoke blowing. I'm a chronic asthmatic. Right. So like so many people. Eventually, all that smoke inhalation took its toll, and I ended up with pneumonia over Christmas. And so, you know, on Boxing Day, I was in hospital and it was, like I was fine, but it was I've got two little kids an eight year old and a four year old, and they were really scared. What's Mummy going to hospital for?

So we just got sort of going through that and I just started to, my health had started to improve. And then COVID hit. And when you're a chronic asthmatic and you're recovering from pneumonia and a disease that appears to be a respiratory disease comes through, it's terrifying. So I really bunkered down. And it was just so difficult because I felt like I

didn't really know what was going on the outside because I live on a farm, I wouldn't go into town. I have an elderly mum. So I was concerned about her. So there's all these things that happen. And then a heap of my income fell away. So I'm fortunate I've got some good income that's fixed, but a lot of what I do is freelance. I've been freelance for 20 years. And over the last 20 years you get used to it. Before I did that, I was in an incredibly conservative industry. I was a solicitor.

So, you know, it's really and then I left and was like, oh, my God, I'm a freelancer. And then it took me 20 years. But I was sort of comfortable with it. And then suddenly something like this hits and all your income falls away. And the way it's structured is that, you know, job keeper wasn't available and all that sort of stuff. Now that's not a whinge, that's just exactly what it is. I'm very much like Shayne, I'm in a very privileged position.

But all these health worries that you have, then all become overlaid of financial worries. And then I'm going to do my job and get on television and be like, hey, this is fun it's all good. So you do get very good at putting everything in compartments. So, you know, I worry about my mum. I worry about my health. I've got to home school, my little girl. And eventually I just thought, you know what? What are the priorities? So my little girl started to homeschool the first week. She'd got up at eight o'clock every morning. She was in the office in her school uniform! I was like "how easy is this homeschooling business?" The next week, not so good. Sort of dragged her feet into our office and sat there. The third week, wouldn't do it. And I thought, you know what? I'm not going to have this fight, right?

So I find in my life, when you have all these issues that are starting to overlay each other and compete, I just thought what's the priority? The priorities are to keep us healthy and happy. So I just said to my little girl "You do whatever schoolwork you want to, you're an appalling speller. So let's just work on your spelling and then everything else. We'll just let's just go outside and play." Right.

So for me, the best thing for me to do for my mental health was to find the fun. So we just went out and I gardened, we planted vegetables. We went for walks. So, you know, you have to just find the fun. But the COVID situation has been terrifying. I found it terrifying. But it's interesting, isn't it? As humans, six months down the track and initially it was so overwhelming. But now I think we're really adaptable and I feel like it's just a part of life. You just go on.

**Brad McEwan:** What about you, Dyl? How you been going, really?

**Dylan Alcott:** Oh, it's been a tough year. First and foremost, you know, I'm like Shayne and Liz and all of us on this call. You know, there are people lining up at Centrelink who were trying to get jobs. There might be people watching this right now who are down to three or four days or whatever it is. So everybody's life has been affected. And I'm not saying mine more so than anybody else's. And my love goes to everybody who has been.

But can you believe in about a week I was supposed to be going to the Paralympic Games? That was taken away. And that was my whole life, was training up to that. And that I guess that, not that that element of not knowing has been really tough, especially at the start of the year. We don't even know what's going to happen in 2021.

And in terms of my, you know, profession, obviously as a tennis player, that that was all cancelled for the year. And I mean, even a couple of months ago, I had a pretty tough decision to make whereby you might have seen online, the U.S. Open plan to go ahead as

a tennis tournament. But they left off the press release that they were cancelling the wheelchair tennis tournament. They also didn't tell us, didn't talk about it with us, didn't mention it to anybody.

And, you know, as a leader I had a pretty tough decision to make, I kind of sat there on the couch saying, do I call them out here or do I just accept the fact that they're going to discriminate against wheelchair tennis and pretend like, you know, we don't really exist?

I decided to call it out because it was kind of bigger than tennis for me. You know, if it if the U.S Open, for example, gets cancelled because COVID is affecting the USA. Fair enough. But I guess we need to be involved in that decision as tennis players. The example that I give is imagine if they called Serena Williams and Ash Barty and said, hey, we're not having a women's draw this year. We're just gonna have a men's draw because Roger Federer makes more money for us.

That would be disgusting if they did that, and that's kind of what they were doing to us. So I guess at that moment I decided to kind of call it out because that's happened to people with a disability all our lives. People decide what restaurants we go to, whether or not we can go on their airline. You know things like that.

And it was a tough thing to do because as Shayne kind of said before, you've got to be authentic to you. But when you call things out or when you try and be a leader for your community or the people that you believe in, God, you open yourself up to a lot. A lot of dickheads who say some pretty mean stuff to you. You really do. And, you know, I had my mum calling me in tears saying, "have you seen what people are writing online about you, you know, calling you a cripple, and a spastic and U.S. Open's doing what they should have done for years, which is just put people with a disability in a home" and just all kinds of crazy stuff.

But I'm so glad that I did because, you know, for a small minority who say things like that, you know, the vast majority was really supportive. And the vast majority of people learnt and understood that it wasn't about the tennis. It was about being involved in discussions that included you when they're talking on your behalf. And it was yeah, I guess it was a good, I mean, it was a great result that they you know, one of the biggest sporting events in the world decided to change their decision and now have been – and now every three days, we have a call with US Open about involving wheelchair tennis, which is pretty cool.

I almost fell off my chair when Andy Murray and Roger Federer called me, I'm at home and say, "oh, g'day Dyl. It's Andy and Roge. Can we help get you in the U.S. Open?" I normally get the most excited when Shayne calls me to be honest. So I was there was a ... Now, I think Roger might be about even with Shayno.

But I think I think if I'm honest, I'm a pretty happy guy who's had you know, I always tried to see the positive and to be able to be at home with my partner, Chantelle, for the year has been incredible to be able to see my family, but it has affected my mental health, right? And I'm comfortable talking about that. And I think talking about it with people, with your teams, with your managers, with your friends is so important, because as soon as I started speaking about it more, I became more comfortable with the situation that I'm currently in.

**Brad McEwan:** Absolutely.



**Liz Ellis:** And you probably give license to people, Dylan, when you speak about that to open up, don't you?

**Dylan Alcott:** Exactly right, Liz. And people might look at us as people in the media, especially for you and I Liz. And Brad yourself and Shayne. Now, we're always happy because we're in the media and oh, look at their lives. You know, they live the best lives ever, things like that. And we're definitely not saying we don't. We're so privileged and so lucky to be who we are. But, you know, I used to, when I was getting bullied and hated the person that I was. I didn't tell anybody for two years. And that ruined my life, Liz. I really did.

And as soon as I started talking about it, I realised that I became more comfortable with who I was. But it helped. It helped so much. And no matter if you're, you know, starting off on a job or you want to be the leader of an organisation, it's okay to be vulnerable and it's okay to talk about these things when you are going through adversity because it helps you. But as you said, it opens up conversations for everyone else around you.

**Brad McEwan:** Yeah, it certainly does. And look, as a mental health advocate for more than a decade and a beyond blue ambassador. You know, I talk about mental health all the time, and I always go back to one of my mum's favourite quotes being "a problem shared is a problem halved". And so many times when I open up about my mental health, the person that I'm sitting across from who maybe ignorantly, I sort of think they seem to have their stuff together, they open up. And they're sharing their story and we're both feeling a lot better for having that conversation.

Talking of conversations Shayne, if someone within your organisation or even if it's your daughter, if they come to you and they say Shayne or Dad, what are some simple things, how can I help myself get through this really difficult period? What would you say?

**Shayne Elliott:** Oh, that's a really challenging one, I mean, I think it goes to this, just going back a bit. I was just reflecting listening to Dylan then. I think, again, I don't I bet you Liz or Dylan but I think sometimes when you are in some sort of formal leadership role, you feel this pressure that you have to have the answer to everything, so that your job is to provide the solution. So, you know, and the reality is that in many cases there isn't one or you certainly don't have it.

So to your point, sometimes just listening can be the best thing that you can do. And I know in my particular case, you know, I do have a rush to sort of seek a solution. And I know I have sort of take a deep breath and sometimes the best thing to do is just not get into solution mode and actually listen and then take those things away and give some thought to what the best thing to be able to do is. And that would be the same, I think, in the scenario that you gave me.

But I do and I agree with you about the listening piece. I mean, I've learnt that more recently in particular, that people just want to be heard sometimes as opposed to they're not actually asking you to solve the problem for them or give them the solution.

But I think the good thing is there are lots of tools out there. As we've learnt, some of those things are simple and are online. Some of them, there are really good people. And we've, certainly at the bank here we've got lots of channels available to people, whether it is seeking proper, you know, more formal advice or psychological advice, et cetera, on some of those things.

And one of things that I've noticed in my time and again, I'm a bit older than everybody is just that whole idea of sort of mental well-being is we never talked about that was not a concept somebody talked about even, you know, ten, fifteen years ago.

The idea that you can we think about that as an employer, as a team leader, to think about how do we consider the mental well-being about people, never would have occurred to anybody, I don't think, ten, fifteen years ago. So it's a really healthy thing that companies, sports bodies, lots of people give real thought to this, just like we do about physical health and safety, making sure, you know, stair rails have handrails and that we have access for people in wheelchairs and all those other things. I think it's a really healthy thing, but I imagine we're still at the very early stages of that.

**Liz Ellis:** Yeah. And I think mental well-being I think you touched on it there Shayne, is a bit like physical fitness. You know, if someone comes to you and says I'm unfit, you don't go. Well, here's the gym membership, off you go.

You actually say, OK, well, how can we fix this? And, you know, it's going to be a long process, right? Because going from being a couch potato, to being fit and fit for purpose for your life is a journey. Right? And mental health is the same and I reckon.

Brad, to your question, the first thing - what I learnt as a leader, I think as a leader like Shayne, I had to have all the answers and the best leader I learnt from was Julie Fitzgerald, who was my coach, and she still coaches. She's the longest serving coach in super netball. She coaches the Giants and when she rings me I answer the phone with "Hello Coach" and she hasn't coached me for thirteen or fourteen years, but she's still in my eyes she's someone that I learnt so much from with every conversation.

And the thing that she taught me was she coached us. I was like Captain of the Diamonds, and she was my coach. She had never played higher than C grade at Karingai now there's nothing wrong with playing c grade at Karingai, it's an excellent competition. But so, but she showed me that you actually don't have to be the best to be a leader.

So, her whole thing was, as a coach, she didn't have all the answers, but she knew how to get the answers out of us. So it taught me that if someone came to me with a problem, a) it took such courage to get to that point, to say I've got a problem. Right, that's. And you have to acknowledge that if you don't acknowledge that, then you can't help with it with the next step.

And the other thing is, you then acknowledge that okay, hey, this is going to be a journey and I'm going to help you like Shayne said I'm not going to give you all the answers because leaders who give all the answers, actually, I think don't think enough about how to get the best out of the people around them. So but I think the first thing you can do is to acknowledge the courage that it takes to come to someone in a position of leadership and say, I've got a problem. So I think that's an extraordinary step.

**Shayne Elliott:** It's interesting you say - I agree with you about the challenging piece. I would just say again listening to you Liz there again, thinking through my career. The bosses that I loved were the ones who didn't necessarily just give me the answers but knew enough about you to ask you the right questions.

They'd always ask those questions that you'd struggle with and think I haven't thought of that, I don't... I have to go away and really challenge myself. So they just provided sufficient challenge for you to keep going.

Actually, the reason I left that employer in the end was because I didn't see that anymore. And I realised that the people I was working for didn't challenge me. You know, they pushed me. They weren't making me better or making me dig deeper into my sort of experience or skills or learning. And it was a little bit "Oh just do this, do that, and you'll get ahead". And that's not, I don't think that's what people want to your point. You want to thrive and do well in whatever field it is. A lot of it has to come from yourself. Right? And you need coaches, leaders or other people that sort of nurture you along, sometimes point you in the right direction, but are really just providing that challenge. Not just, I've done it before. Let me tell you how to do it. That's not leadership, right?

**Dylan Alcott:** And I think that the stigma of asking for help is slowly starting to get eliminated. There is definitely a big stigma. I know as a sports person, when I when I used to play wheelchair basketball, I was sixteen. The next youngest was twenty four, twenty five. And I was hating it because I was the rookie, I was getting bullied and, and I didn't feel like I could come forward and tell anybody how I felt. And that's the same as you know, if you're struggling with your mental health or you want to talk to a leader or whatever it is, previously you had to look like you were stoic enough to be able to do it yourself. But hopefully that stigma is now changing and people are reaching out to people and being vulnerable and asking for help, because I think once you do that, the example that I give is, you know, I see a mindset coach and a sports psychologist and people go, you see a psychologist, what's wrong? It's like, no, no, no. I just want to get better. I want to be better. I want to be the best. And if I am playing tennis for four hours every day and not working on my mindset, I'm not the best person that I can be. Whether it's for my mental well-being or for my performance out on the tennis court.

And the example that I give is someone like Rafael Nadal. He's not bad at tennis. He's got a pretty good mindset. Guess what, sees a psychologist. You know what I mean, not because he needs to, but because he wants to be the best that he can be. And I think changing the narrative around working on your mental health and your mental wellbeing not as a negative thing, but as a positive thing to be a better person, to be healthier, to be fitter in everything you can do is so important. I think that's why even conversations like this goes a long way to helping that, you know prevail.

**Brad McEwan:** Absolutely. We know what we can't do right now and what we haven't been able to do for extended periods this year. But one thing that we can do, and I think we've all seen it come to the fore, particularly because it is so incredibly powerful, is we can be kind to people and I think all of us, we've seen it go to another level where people are stopping and they're realising how they can impact someone's life with something so small that particularly with the mental health battles a lot of people are having at the moment, it might change their day. It might change their week. It might pick them up for the rest of their lives.

**Liz Ellis:** Absolutely and kindness costs nothing.

**Brad McEwan:** And we see it every day, don't we? We say it every day now. And I think everyone, because of what we've experienced. People are going to that extra step to pick someone up and have that empathy of going. Well, no. I need to help someone here because it helps us.

**Shayne Elliott:** I think that's true. I mean, I noticed just in our little neighbourhood, certainly early on, there was a very conscious, you could feel it that people were smiling more, people were taking time to say hello or, you know, look out for somebody else. That sense of community came through very strongly, you know, thinking about elderly neighbours, perhaps you hadn't seen for a while and making sure they were well stocked with things.

I mean, I think it waned a little bit. It is kind of interesting here in Victoria at the moment because we're going through this second wave. It has had quite a big impact. I think that's still they that sense of community. But what I noticed this time and again Dylan you live here, too, it's a lot harder this time. It feels like... The first time in a funny way, it was almost exciting. I don't mean that. I mean, it was obviously devastating, but there was an excitement and an adrenaline about, oh, we're all working from home. We've got kids at home, all this stuff happening, you know it was sort of it was almost this adrenaline keeping people going was all change. Now it's just a drag, you know, like now people are really over it and feeling you can feel a sort of sense of sadness almost in the streets or even in the shops that people are quite grim. So hopefully that sense of community will come through more strongly again. And given it's been for such a long time, hopefully it will be a sort of more permanent change.

**Dylan Alcott:** Yeah, I agree with the sentiments in Melbourne. I think it could be definitely more dangerous this time on people's mental health because it does feel like a lot more of a burden the second time around.

Also, now we have to wear masks. As you said, everybody was smiling at each other. You can't even see the smiles anymore. I started winking and now I look like a bit of a creep. I don't know... I'm smiling under my mask, if anyone wants to say g'day.

But, it definitely feels a little bit more morbid this time. And I think it's even more important for people to be leaders and to call out to check in on your neighbours, to check in with your co-workers, to have these connections, whether it's, you know, face-to-face via online platforms or whatever it is, because I even feel better getting up this morning and just talking about, to you guys, you know what I mean? Having this conversation, I've learnt things.

It's just refreshing to do things like this. And it doesn't have to be, you know, people watching this Zoom you can call anybody you can call anybody on the phone. And I think that personal connection is so important to you to get us through it, especially, you know, people that work at ANZ who are in Melbourne, because it's definitely a bit tougher down here than it is in the rest of the country at the moment.

**Brad McEwan:** Absolutely. Now, we're going to wrap up in a couple of minutes, but I want to finish with a question that I would often ask at the start of a conversation, but I thought we'll leave it till the end. And, you know, we've shared quite a lot of ourselves. So we'll start with you, Liz. How are you? How are you right now?

**Liz Elliott:** I'm good, actually. Thank you. I think it's interesting listening to Shayne and Dylan sitting outside of Victoria. It's like you get a sense of what's going on, just, you know, on social media and that sort of thing. And just when friends, I've got lots of Victorian friends that I've played Netball with and they're posting, it feels like the novelty has worn off. You know that first, you're right, Shayne, that the first one was like right, we're all in

this together. And I think you can cope with huge adversity if you're not by yourself doing it, know.

So if there's a lot of people you know, in the same situation. Human nature is to do things in a team, so, you know, I feel sad for what's happening in Victoria.

I have to say, I feel very fortunate. I'm a naturally optimistic person. And the happiness that you see on me when I'm doing television stuff that's me, right? And I'm not good enough to have a mask. So as I said, I was terrified at the start of COVID. Fortunately, I live in an area that, you know, to not too badly affected, but it's really working my empathy muscle at the moment. You know, I think the best thing you can show is empathy. And I see what's happening in Victoria and I feel really sad for you guys. To, you know, to people living in Victoria seeing you have to do this and the weather's a bit cold and it can be a bit dreary and it sort of all coalesces into one thing.

I will say though the thing I wanted to sort of mention through this conversation was what I learnt about leading and being in a team in tough situations is you have to learn to redefine your success. And I'll tell you what I mean.

When I started leading Australia, I was I thought it was ace, right, I was finally the Captain of the Australian Netball team. But I was the Captain of the Australian Netball team at the start of one of the worst periods for us in terms of results for years, right? And he's one for you Shayne we lost a lot to the Silver Ferns. Yeah. Yeah. Don't start me.

**Shayne Elliott:** That was a long time ago.

**Liz Ellis:** Yeah it was. I'm pretty sure the Diamonds are ranked number one in the world now so we're all good. So but we lost a lot to them.

You know, we're struggling over England and South Africa - teams that we've previously beaten pretty well. But we kept on getting flogged by New Zealand by record amounts, and we actually decided as a group to redefine success.

So for like people who were watching us might have thought success is the scoreboard. And that's the thing that happens a lot in sport. But we started to redefine things like we wanted to win the first five minutes of each quarter. All right. So you do that in the game. You forget about the bigger picture, but you focus on the little wins that you can have.

And I think when you translate that to what's happening now, either in your workplace or at home, especially if you're living in Victoria, you're got to redefine what success is in your day, and in your workplace and look for the little wins and for us that gave us the confidence to four years later win a World Cup, not because we were great, but because we'd found the little wins along the way. And those little wins, tied it to big wins eventually. So, I mean, I'm not in that situation in Victoria where I've been lock down. But I can see that you need to redefine what success is for you, and that is personal or professional, and eventually that will lead to big wins.

**Shayne Elliott:** That is such a great point.

As you, again, listening to what you're saying. I remember one of my jobs actually was a bit of a turnaround, about 20 years ago in business that was really in a terrible position. And I used to go to these morning meetings every Monday and it was just miserable. And

I'd just taken over this team and we came to that same sort of aha moment that you just pointed.

Why are we letting them define what all these other people define, what success looks like? We're playing by their rules. Right. Which don't apply to our business. So we should redefine what success is. So at that point, you know using today's theme, as a leader to say no no, we're not playing that game we're playing our game and we've decided what this looks like and this is what is right for us and our business because very different. That single thing shifted the sort of just it's shifted the entire focus and culture of our business.

And we were able to your point, just start making baby steps towards winning on our terms. And I think, you know, today it's very similar, actually, in a funny way. You know, we have as a business, you have a scoreboard. It's called, you know, your PNL, your profits or whatever. And that tends to be understandably the thing that people rank you against, you know versus your peers.

But in times like this, what's really important is the scoreboard changes. And that's really it does kind of sounds hokey, but it does come through. It's about your culture and it's about hey, is the culture of the bank strengthening through a time like this? Are people really living our purpose, which is about shaping a world where people and communities thrive, is that what we are achieving? Because actually, you know, more than at any other time. That's what our stakeholders need us for.

And so being able to sort of subtly shift, not abandon the other score card, of course, we need to do what's right for our shareholders. But to really shift focus and I think as a leader, that's what our people are asking for. Tell me, in a time when I'm feeling overwhelmed. I've got all this stuff happening, all this sort of information that I'm struggling to understand. Tell me what's important. Give me that guidance for now. Don't take it for granted. I just need to know what's the most important things that we're doing.

And I think, you know, leadership, we haven't talked about it too much today, but a lot of it is about providing that focus and clarity to your team. You know, creating clarity about why are we're doing what we're doing. Why is it most important thing and why we're doing it now, I think is really a critical part of leadership.

**Brad McEwan:** And Dyl? It's been certainly been a challenging period, but you're going ok?

**Dylan Alcott:** Yeah mate I'm best of I've been for a while, which is good. I've never sat on my couch so much in my life this year to be honest. And I realise that it's not the place for me. So, you know, I've been really actively trying to get really fit, which I've been lucky enough to do.

But also, you know, even like last night, I had a date night with my partner Chantelle at home, where we just played backgammon and cooked dinner together and things like that. And it was really nice. Like I woke up feeling really refreshed and it's little things like that.

And I think the one thing about leadership that I really want to leave everybody with is that it comes in all shapes and sizes. You do not need to be the captain or the CEO to be a leader and you know, the space that I work in is obviously disability and educating people to better understand disability. And a lot of people come up to me and go, you know, they're able bodied and they go, I want to do more stuff in the disability space, but I feel

like I don't have the authority to do it. So I just don't really do anything. And I'm like no, no, no. You can definitely be a leader and be an ally to people that you work with, people within your sporting teams or people from the community that you really want to help. You know, you don't have to be intrinsically an expert in what you're doing to be a leader.

And I think it's a really important lesson because we need leaders, especially in this time. And as we said, it might be as simple as reaching out for a phone call to one of your mates. You know, I mean, that's showing leadership that might be leading a company or your teams within ANZ or whatever it is. It might be that as well. But I think it's really important for all of us to, in whatever way it is to I guess, to look internally and be that leader to help everybody through these, you know, this pretty tough time.

**Brad McEwan:** Fabulous insights from all of you. I know that we could talk forever, but unfortunately we can't. So we'll have to wrap things up in just a moment.

**Brad McEwan:** Thank you, everyone. That was I know I had expectations about what we were going to hear and the conversation we were going to have, but I can see from the smiles on everyone that I know how much we got out of that. And I really hope and believe that so many other people will get so much out of it, too, because we are real and we have fears and insecurities and worries like everyone else.

**Liz Ellis:** Absolutely. And I've got to say, it's great to see someone like Shayne being so vulnerable and so open so congratulations to you on doing this and to ANZ on taking on this project because, you know, you mentioned before, Shayne, but I think communication is vital to any form of leadership.

And so, you know, I you know, I do lots of stuff in businesses that I've had someone say to me before. "You know I tell my people what to do and they just don't listen to me" And my question is "Are you listening to them?" So, you know if you're listening to this. Thank you. But make sure that your voice is heard as well, because you are whatever point you seek within ANZ. Your role is absolutely vital. So, yeah, it's been a pleasure to listen to your leaders today.

**Brad McEwan:** Shayne it's been I think we have to catch up and do this again, Shayne. This has been terrific.

**Shayne Elliott:** It has been terrific actually. I've learnt a lot. You know, again, I didn't have I wasn't quite sure what I was signing up for doing this. But actually, it's been really good and actually made me reflect on myself and some of the things that I've had to think deeply about. And then, you know, listening to Liz and Dylan, there's a lot of things in there and I've even taken some notes because some I've learnt something here myself.

And I'm sure, you know, the people watching will take away, even if it's just one thing or one observation or one reflection that'll be worthwhile time invested in themselves to do this.

And I'd just also I take the point that Dylan and Liz mention, you know, I think it's really easy in a company to say leadership's about the boss. You know, it's about the CEO or the chairman of the board or whatever it is. And to some extent there's an element of truth there because that's where power lies. But, you know, we all have a leadership role and you don't need to be managing other people. You just have to have some empathy for other people and some care. And you can exhibit leadership every single day. And to Liz's

point about kindness being free, in a funny way so is leadership. It doesn't cost you anything to exhibit that leadership. And in and, you know, it's good to stand up and do the right thing. And so, yeah, I've got a lot out of it. Thank you for the opportunity.

**Dylan Alcott:** I can't beat that Brad. It's got to be ending on that. I just I literally have taken so many, I've got a piece paper. I've taken so many notes of all the incredible stuff that even I learnt today. And to be honest from the bottom, my heart, I love being a part of the ANZ family.

I know they really care about me and they really care about their people. And to be able to, you know, come on every one of these episodes with you, Brad. I'm really excited. I really am, because I think they're going to help a lot. And I know who's coming up in future episodes. And I'm really excited. I'm really excited to be part of it. And anybody that is, that is doing it tough out there. I just want to send my love. I really do.

And I promise you I promise you, we're all gonna get over this. I'm just going to be resilient in these tough times. And, you know, a brighter, a brighter day is definitely coming soon.

**Brad McEwan:** Dylan, you're a fine man. Very well said, Liz, Shayne and Dylan, thank you very much. Thank you for sharing so much of yourselves. And to those of you who've been watching. Thank you for joining us on the wellbeing conversation.

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**Dylan Alcott:** *Hey everyone Dylan Alcott again, now we touched on a few topics around mental health throughout that chat, now if that brought up anything for you make sure you reach out to [BeyondBlue.org.au](https://www.beyondblue.org.au) or their phone number is 1300 22 46 36. You can also hit up Lifeline on 13 11 14 or reach out to the people within your ANZ teams and they'll be able to help.*