openSAP Invites

Thought Leaders Episode 5 - Cultivate a Positive Mindset for Self-Innovation

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:00:00] Why is the bumble bee flying, because actually the body is too big for the little wings, right? And it's a bit of a miracle and well, the bumble bee doesn't know that we believe that she should not be flying.

Voiceover: [00:00:14] Welcome to openSAP Invites Thought Leaders, your invitation to learn with us on the go.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:00:22] Welcome to a special Thought Leaders episode with Martina Peskoller-Fuchs in which we learn how to cultivate and nourish a positive mindset for self-innovation. I'm your host, Elisabeth Riemann. And today we learn the importance of taking control of our choices and our reactions to live a healthier, happier, and more meaningful life. While we can't always be in control, we are free to choose how we respond, and Martina says we need look no further than the humble bumble bee to be reminded that the seemingly impossible is possible. I love that. Martina explains how thought leaders like neurologist and psychiatrist Viktor Frankl have inspired her own self development. We talk of the search for meaning, hard choices, and soft skills. Martina shares her personal and professional experience with us from our happy memories of the beauty and freedom of the mountains to the pain and suffering inflicted by conflict.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs is from Austria and holds a Master of Law degree from the University of Innsbruck. She worked in the legal and international environment for over a decade after spending considerable time in war torn regions and dealing with large scale crimes while working for the International Criminal Court. She developed an interest in conflict prevention and alternative dispute resolution. She then trained and became a certified mediator in Austria and started working as the ombudsperson for the European Molecular Biology Laboratory. Furthermore, she has training and extensive experience in coaching and NLP communication, conflict resolution and meaning-centered psychotherapy by Viktor Frankl. Let's say hello.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:02:12] Hello. Welcome to openSAP Invites Thought Leaders.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:02:16] Hi, Lizzie. Hello, very happy to be here.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:02:19] I'm really looking forward to learning from you today, Martina, how we can cultivate a positive mindset and really understand how having the right thoughts and outlook can really positively influence our own approach to self-innovation. Before we dive in, though, I would like to start with a warm-up question. Martina, you grew up in Austria and you now live and work in Germany. When you think back to your own childhood in Austria, can you remember what you dreamed of becoming as an adult?

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:02:49] I grew up in Austria in a very privileged environment. And I think the most spectacular was maybe the mountains around. But there is nothing I can tell you that is so spectacular that happened to me and that made me have a big dream to do something or to go somewhere. I think I lived in the moment and I was a happy child. So and I also think this is what accompanied me a bit throughout my whole life and what shaped me a lot. This is my background, but there is nothing that I can say I always knew or there was something that shocked me or something that helped me further. This is more like a gradual development. It's one moment after the other that came. So not maybe much to say here in what shaped me so you much in the sense like having a clear objective, you know.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:03:37] Thank you for sharing that with us. So, you worked in the legal profession for many years before paving a new career path for yourself. Can you tell us a little bit about your career today and explain the background and what triggered the start of your own professional transformation and your personal reinvention?

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:04:01] I think, and it is also very often the story that I tell studying law has shaped me a lot and I'm still attached to the legal profession. And I also see, particularly in nowadays world, how important it is to have another power, maybe to to politics, but to have this legal order, fairness, and justice. I worked for a long time first for the United Nations and then for the International Criminal Court. In working there, I was exposed to to unspeakable crimes. I have witnessed not myself, but I've heard stories about them. I've also been in the field. I have been in many conflict regions either post-conflict or still in conflict and so I've worked with big conflicts, if you wish. While there I saw, I sometimes, I was really shocked and startled by the fact that we went there with a team with a noble mission, right in a way, to to look after justice, to investigate and bring to justice, but there we were and we were fighting amongst each other.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:05:09] And like people are fighting in teams, you know, it's you have conflicts, and so I always thought, how does this happen? You know, we are very privileged, we we have nothing to worry about. We have a job, we are safe. How comes?

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:05:25] And I also saw, you know, the suffering that was caused to each other, and no disrespect to the people that were around us with the suffering, but I saw some real suffering within our teams. So, from there, I thought, I think, I somehow would like to work with these smaller, the interpersonal conflicts, and also work-related, because this is what I thought. I thought many of us have great missions. We work for companies. We work for organizations that are important. And I also realize it is not an individual that can make a difference. But otherwise, what brings us move forward is working in a team and working in a team requires a lot. And it also means dealing with conflict in a in a good way, in a way that brings us forward. So I developed from my interests from being a lawyer and working more like in in adjudication or coming post-conflict. I would like to I wanted to work with smaller teams, workplaces to prevent conflicts or deal with it in a good way. This is how I became a mediator also or a conflict coach. I started to work in communications, so interpersonal communication. And from there it becomes pretty clear that if you're dealing with people who have conflicts, who have issues, they might have their own internal conflicts very often. So, the the conflict that happens with another person is either the source or maybe it's, it's the, the symptom of an interpersonal conflict. So this is what brought me to coaching, systemic coaching, neurolinguistic programming. And then further on, I realized that sometimes our interpersonal conflicts, they're not healthy and maybe we are already have mental health problems or we are on the verge of having them. What helps us to be or remain mentally healthy? And this is why I then took a training in meaning-centered psychotherapy by Viktor Frankl. All of this is very important for my job that I have now. I'm an ombudsperson, an organizational ombudsperson. I help people in a workplace with their interpersonal and sometimes interpersonal conflict and problems, hoping that this will help the whole organization to perform their important mandate.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:07:54] Really important work. Thank you. And how, if I may ask this question, how do you protect yourself when your own mental health I mean, looking at different conflicts, some of the experience you had in your previous profession, how do you maintain a really healthy mental outlook yourself?

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:08:11] It reminds me, you know, we have some let's call it, let's talk groups of of peer groups.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:08:19] And here I have them with students. So I work with very intelligent young people and also scientists and people with technical background. And we have had this let's talk session where they share their own experience and maybe also mental health problems and stress. That was the topic. And then the student afterwards turned to me and says, but how do you do that? I'm only ... I'm struggling with myself. So how do you do that with with hearing all of this? I think it's the same as we all can and must and need and want to protect ourselves and is how we use also our mind, how we look after our body and how we maybe sometimes create a healthy distance, how we understand what is ours, what is not, how we understand this is what I'm responsible for but not and also to remain curious, I would say. But don't take over. I leave the people their own issues. And what I think is the key and that many others in my profession or similar professions we work on is we want to empower the person we don't take over because I'm not the savior. I'm not I can't be. And this would not be healthy, always keeping this distance and the balance between being there. You're right. If you, for example, walk a mountain and you can walk with someone, you can guide them. Maybe you have the rope, but the person have to walk by themselves and anything else might be counterproductive. And that's also your own protection, that you don't deplete your own resources and that you deal with the stress in a good way. And I also always say, look, this is what I tell people, so I need to walk the talk myself, otherwise I'm not a good example.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:10:10] Yeah, I think you and I think it's as you said, it's empowerment, right, and it's keeping a healthy distance from other people's problems, I guess. And it must be very rewarding work for you, I think, just to feel that you're helping other people deal with the internal issues and the turmoil that they have.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:10:23] I guess, you know, it's rewarding. It's a bit like I don't have this helper syndrome that I think, you know, oh, and then it's me who is fixing it, I would rather say. But I do see that the interaction I have with the people, with intelligent and with loveable, likeable people, our interaction brings something new. And this is extraordinary. And I can see that is successful for both of us and then for the environment. And yes, this is really rewarding. And you have an immediate feedback. Remember I told you I worked for international justice and this is a very long haul. You need to be very patient. Whatever you do for years might not have an impact. You know, the conflict is still going on. But if you work one on one with a person or with a little group, and then you can see, see, there is a relief, they are doing much better. They tell me I didn't know what my problem actually was. Why did I have such a big problem? Very reassuring. And and also, again, another privilege, because some of us we don't have a job where you can see immediate results and where you can see what you're doing has meaning and help someone. You accompany them for a short time, and you can see how they develop and then they give you the feedback. Fantastic.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:11:40] That does sound fantastic. And I guess what you've listed, there are some of the really positive influences that you've had. What's influenced you positively?

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:11:47] I think what's key is that I like people and I remain curious. And this is what motivates me every day. And I like I mean, to self-development is this hour, our discussion today. That's it. Right? What else? That's it. Sorry to say that, you know, we are also very often it's about technological progress. That's all good. That's nice. But if you don't know how to use it, if you don't know how to use your mobile device so what is the technological progress in order to use it, well, it's your attitude again. So this is about this being the person behind and it is about active personal development. So for me in my profession, remaining curious and liking people and understanding that whenever they develop, I develop with them.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:12:36] And can I ask you to walk us through some of your own personal milestones?

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:12:40] You know, you sometimes when you learn certain things, you're not aware that you have learned them and that you are maybe more advanced than you used to be. And it's just natural, you know, certain things. And now you become, as they say, unconscious competent. So, you don't really know. And then I really have to think back. What did I not know in the past and what did I need to learn and what led one to the other? I think one key moment was when I met or I had to do for my training to become a mediator in Austria. We have quite a comprehensive education program. And in this program, I also met a psychotherapist and she actually was also into Viktor Frankl. And with her I had very important interactions. And there was one metaphor she she brought to my attention; how do I speak with myself? And she said to me, well, you're always talking in what is not possible. Does it help you? Do you need to start thinking what you can do? Because otherwise, what are you doing if you only think in terms of what you cannot do? And so she gave me this metaphor of the bumble bee. Why is the bumble bee flying? Because actually the body is too big for the little wings. Right. And it's a bit of a miracle. And, well, the bumble bee doesn't know that we believe that she should not be flying because that there is a logic to the wings. She just needs to fly. And this is why she flies. She's not interested about our theories, why something is not possible.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:14:15] Martina, you mentioned Viktor Frankl. How much of a role does he have on your life?

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:14:20] This has shaped me a lot, I think. And I will tell you about Viktor Frankl. I also would like to highlight, for example, there is one book which is apparently amongst the most influential books and the one books that you should read, number 10, Congress Library. And it's about the man's search for meaning. Viktor Frankl was a psychotherapist, a neurologist, a philosopher. He developed the meaning-centered psychotherapy. And to make something complex, very brutally brief and simple, other therapy forms and other psychologists before they for example, if you say Freud or Ardler or Jung, they would say they would describe the human as someone who is driven maybe by, linked by the sexual desire or by power. Frankl says, yes, also, but not only. A human being is more than that, a human being for him is attracted by meaning. We are happy when we are doing something meaningful. He had many people from the past or Kierkegaard, Bubar and maybe also the stoic ideas that influenced him and his Kierkegaard, who says we don't only want to be happy, we want a reason to be happy.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:15:42] So the happy pill alone is not sufficient. We want a reason. And this is in his philosophy or the way he put it down. And it's a construct how we could live a good life and to remain healthy and to remain or to be at the end happy not because at the forefront is happiness. But we understand that if it's meaningful in the long term, it will make us happy. If I give you an example, a young father or a young mother who one who needs to get up in the night and to feed the child, well, it might not be super happy at that time. Right. Can do something else. So it's not about this drive of happiness and joy, but in the long run, if we do this job as a as a mother or father, well well, in you know, this will give us the sense of fulfillment and a deeper happiness that is not based on, you know, one moment to the other. This is what what comes to the happiness and joy.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:16:42] Martina, as you know, as a software company. And we typically think about product and process innovation and continuous improvements that are triggered by real business needs. So, whether that be market share, competitors, efficiency. So, I was

wondering, how can we really transfer this familiar business perspective that we have onto the journey of self-innovation, this pursuit of happiness with a reason in the bigger context, how can we bring those two worlds together?

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:17:11] Very good. I like the question and to see it also in light of this background. Right. And maybe we want to use different metaphors, because this is to say, for example, I mean, communication and conflict. And people say, well, these are soft skills. I always, I don't know what this means, as they call it what you wish. But for me, this is just the skill. But whatever if you mean it's nice when you call it, they call it soft. But if you think it's not important. Ok, so talking about the the metaphors of maybe how we use it and in is self-development in in your context and also for in maybe the technology world, you you said the word business needs. Right. So, I would say sometimes this self-development. Okay, so whatever we are doing is no longer working. Sometimes there is an acute business need. Yes, you you might have serious problems. You might lose your job, you might have problems with your family, you might have a health issue, Okay? And there is a big business need to change something. External events that you cannot change. They challenge you to change yourself. Nothing will change if you don't change in all of this in your response, because it's got you there, right.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:18:36] And I think that's a really good reminder because often times these things, they feel completely out of our control with each of these external events, as you refer to them as well. And I think it's really important that we get that sense of power back, that maybe we could do something ourselves. And I guess what you're saying is the only thing we can change there is ourselves and our own reaction, the way we respond to these external events.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:18:57] Exactly. Exactly, Lizzie. And you said the word to get the power back. And this is this is what it is because, you know, this is the stoic ideas. And so where they say it's not the things that concern us, but the opinion about the things. Okay, so we start with our opinion. We are not free from everything. So, this is Frankl. Well, that's not my belief. We are not free of the external factors and we are not free of the things we can't control. But we are free to respond in a certain way. And here is the thing. Sometimes we respond with our default program. We always respond in the same way something doesn't work. We get super angry if it helps us well, get super angry, find then it works. No business need to change. But if you realize that being angry no longer helps, then there is the business need to change. If you want to look ahead, you change, or you adapt, or you do something before there is an imminent or an urgency to change. Right.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:20:02] So being proactive, I guess.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:20:04] Yes, I think you know that it's a bit late if you you can still do it. And it's a good learning. And sometimes this is the leverage, right. That you're in the business world, you respond only to when it happens. And it might be okay, but if you have time at your hand, if you have a developer group, they might be proactive. And, you know, in our brain, we can do the same.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:20:26] And I think it's really good to be a few steps ahead of the game. Right. That's what you're saying as well. Not just responding, but but thinking ahead, staying ahead of the competition as well and really driving our own self-development even when there's not an external need that right now, sometimes you need the leverage.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:20:41] Sometimes, you know, it's it's more you need a bit more force and then it goes faster. Who knows? But and here is the thing, I think the emphasis needs to be put on, sometimes we need to, but it's not only that we need to. We, I think what we what I would wish that we embrace is, we can. We can. Yes, we can. Yes, we can change. We can adapt. And this is it can happen before. You don't need to because we need to do so many things. But we can. We are able to. And here comes because I also you know what you say, self-development or this is I think that the word used I like a lot because on the other hand, we say change. We need to change something.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:21:23] I tell you, when I work with people, they're a bit resistant to needing to change when it's about their person, about how they behave, about how they respond. They don't want to change because they think, oh, I betrayed myself. I need to change. No. And this is why I always say, no, no, no, no change, no change. Stop. I mean, this is our mind working, right? Who resists change? Don't change. Look at it like this. You are developing anyway, right, because some people don't think, oh, this is how I am and this is how I stopped, and I say, well, when did this your self-development stop? When does your program and we are changing any way we can change either in response to things in a passive way, to the external things that happen. So, the destiny will bring me somewhere, okay, or I take charge, as you say, I get the power is not the full power because I'm not free of anything, but it's a big power. I take it back and I influence my development. I like them and I'm not changing, but I use what I have and the experience and this is good, you know? And so, people sometimes some I meet, they're very aggressive or they're very passive. If you are very aggressive, you mean you have drive, you have courage, you have energy. Keep that. You don't need to change. Keep that. But it's something you. It may be posing as maybe smiling and maybe, you know, at something, what you haven't done, if you are, let's say, a passive person, maybe then you are patient and you can put up with a lot. You can also keep that. But it's something, okay, when it matters, speak up.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:23:16] I really like that that you say add something to our current characteristic or trait. It's not about taking something away from us, that makes us very defensive. I think it's really good when you say add something that seems really encouraging, that we're taking back our own destiny and we can really drive positive change and self-development ourselves.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:23:35] Then one question I do have in this context. You keep talking about the default program that some of us have. Where does this default or system setting come from and how can we really actively change that or adapt it?

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:23:48] Because I try to stay using your metaphor. So, I come up with a default program. I think it works, you know, does so we are living and and working and everything and being a human being is quite complex. Right. And we have to simplify certain processes. So, we we create default processes. If something works, this is how we do it. Right. Are you preparing your meal, how you interact, how you you know, you have process. That means you don't need to think about them each time. It doesn't take such an effort and it works like in a relationship we might not know. And it works. If you start a new relationship or in a new work context, you have your default program. Right. And I'm not even saying wrong. Right. But it might not work. Needs to be optimized, I guess, or you need to change it. This default program doesn't work anymore. So you have some and this is why maybe and you know, it's very interesting that I'm using the metaphor of the technological world because I'm not very savvy in technology, but I'm trying my best so thank you for your leniency. But, you know, so, for example, if we if we keep it very simple, if you have software or if you have a computer, if you use something, you know, maybe like if I say default, you always use, for example, Word to create charts, okay? And it has worked. It's not so bad and it works. But maybe I realize well, I needed to be more complex. I need want to have nicer charts or I want to do something else with it that doesn't work anymore. Or the

environment, you know, don't have windows. They cannot don't have work. I cannot relate with them. So then you need to or you need you want to explore and you're able to explore other options, move out of your default program and create more awareness that this is how you do it. I'm using Word this is why it's not working. Now, this is not the best system to do charts.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:25:59] I think it's self-awareness then as well. Isn't it like looking at something, seeing if it's really working or not, and then going from there?

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:26:06] Absolutely Lizzie, this is the key. So, this is when we talk about self-development and this, you know, as other famous and thought leaders of their times told us, awareness is the first step in any change. Now, we don't like change in any development, let's put it like this. But it starts with awareness and with the with a good awareness not and we can enter that later or in another time, like we need to be mindful. What is awareness? Awareness is not, again, criticizing us for something because we don't like it.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:26:41] Just being aware what is happening, you know, not awareness. Like I'm such an idiot. I'm using the Word program to do you know, you're already in a quite in a state of mind. And maybe this is a program that you have that you bash yourself the whole time. Self-criticism. Yes, exactly. And this might, you know, not be so helpful. Sometimes it is, but maybe you need to get awareness. Does this help you? Does this bring you in a good state? Is it meaningful? Does it bring in a resource for a state? Right. And so these are just awareness. No, no, I notice. Okay, but why have I been using Word for a chart now? This is a very interesting question, but in self-development, it brings us to our own path because we look into trying to analyze something which is much more complex because we go into the past. We don't have the best of all memories. It's it depends on how we feel now.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:27:35] Right. I guess we're selective, aren't we, when it comes to our memory?

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:27:38] Yes, we are not. And also it's only hours and it depends how I feel. Now, what instead, what else could I be doing? What do I need? Huh? Why is it important? Why do I want. Because I need to be said it. Opens, it opens my world, so why what is important, what drives me and then what do I need to do? Who can help me or not? What I'm not able to remember my story. So, don't start looking. What you're not able. It's also true sometimes, but internally. What are you able. I don't know. It's okay. Who could you ask? Being in the present moment and understanding what is happening now and this is what you say.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:28:19] This is awareness and being really mindful of your own awareness as well and stepping away from being really self-critical. So you've talked about how important a healthy mindset is, but how do we really cultivate that, Martina? How do we step away and stop ourselves from being so negative?

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:28:35] What is very important is creating this awareness. And it sounds yeah, it sounds so simple. It's something that has been under the sun for for thousands of years and at the moment is very en-vogue mindfulness meditation. But that's quite a trick to do this awareness. Right, to really become aware. It requires some, some diligence, you know, and not to go again into judging and maybe understand or create a meta awareness that while trying to get to where we are again, criticizing ourselves.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:29:10] Well, I'm now criticizing myself how bad in my for criticizing myself. I can't even be aware of myself. Okay, so exhausting. And, you know, this is also what we have been doing. This was our default program. Either sometimes it's guilt, sometimes it's being negative. You know, whatever it is, create first awareness. We need the person to be there and engage in that process. And only we ourselves will know what it is that we only can get this awareness and know what's the right or the wrong thing. First of all, what's positive and negative, I want to be very clear, is not about all being, well, a super happy and we are all naive and everything is beautiful. You know, I do not want to create this or suggest this. And also, if you want if you want to have a bad day and you want to feel sorry for yourself, that sometimes is also maybe very healthy, then you need to understand how you do that. It comes some it comes from somewhere. It's not random. Right.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:30:06] And it's all part of life and something that we need to to recognize and be aware of.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:30:10] Yes. Yes, exactly. So it's not all being only positive and only being happy because, you know, being healthy also means that we have different and I think this is for for some a bit of a problem that they cannot embrace their sadness. We sometimes have a sad day, but whether you feed it and you get like, how sad am I? Do I have a reason? Why am I said, how come, you go into that, you reject it. You know, you eat a lot of rejection, you feed it, you make this sadness the big thing. Right. And then it will keep you from doing other things, meaningful things that you were meant to do to walk the dog or to to do some work or to go out, you know, because you are too busy with nurturing or feeding this sort. And it paralyzes people. Right.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:30:58] Maybe we formulate like this. See how we can get ourselves into a resourceful state. Is it helpful what we are doing right? And sometimes being said is also okay, sometimes being frustrated, sometimes being depressed, and we can live that. And that's part of being humans. The emotion is there, but it's how to get control of it and how to manage one's emotions, how to manage, for example, stress. This is something it's also the biology that determines it. You know, it's something maybe less within our control. It's outside factors. But there is a part for us that we can control. And here what you have said before, the two words, I think awareness, what's happening and maybe already see what should be happening instead and getting the power back.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:31:53] And this is with the good questions that we ask ourselves instead of saying, well, this should happen and he should be doing this and he should not have that, you know, catch yourself while you're giving away our power. You are you're spending a lot of time with things you you might be able to influence, but you certainly cannot control. What your mind does with you and see how you can use it in a better way.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:32:19] Yeah, and I guess it's kind of letting it. It makes perfect sense. It's really good advice. And I think it's good to have that check on our mind and think what it doing. Is it running away with this again? Is it setting this default program and to really breaking free of that finding that liberation to really take the control back?

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:32:35] I like that we are maybe into knowledge work, all of us. Hmm. So, it was just beautiful. We use our mind, we use our intelligence and it's fantastic to have such a brilliant mind. And how do you use your main instrument? How do you take care of it? If you really if you have to work with your laptop or with your computer or with your software, what do you

do? You trash it. He'll put it in the corner. You sit on it, you left it in the heat, you know, put water on it. What do you do it? How do you deal with your brain?

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:33:09] Yeah, it's something that many of us, I guess, neglect. It's not a question that I asked myself on a regular basis. How do I take care of my own mind, my own mindset? What are my thoughts? I mean, we're all in our heads all the time. So, I guess we have to make that a happier or positive place in which we reside, because that affects a whole external experience and how we can contribute to society as well. I guess we have to be in a positive place to really put something back to society and to really help others.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:33:36] Mhmm. I don't even say it should be positive or whatever, but to understand. You are a big part in this, and you are doing this. It's not, it's not random. So no one like give it a break and now we do mindfulness is quite modern. I think is great, but there are many other things or play an instrument or do something where you give your you know, as in some books you describe the monkey mind where you just get some peace, you know, just let it not overwork. It will not help in the long run.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:34:10] Also I would like to say you said to take care, right. I read this in a recent article. We say to each other, take care of yourself. What do you mean with it? Like eat well and don't get a cold. Is it only physical? You know, and I think these take care of yourself. This has a lot to do with being a good companion for ourselves. Now you take care of yourself, too, right? It's the full package and you take care of yourself. So too. Right. So, who's taking care of whom? And also in which respect?

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:34:45] Look after yourself how? I think this has a lot to do with how we treat ourselves also in our mind or you know what you want to be spiritual or whoever is you or whatever, but you look after yourself is nice not take care.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:34:59] Yeah, we need to be more aware of that. Absolutely. In every way, it's kind of saying that we have to take care of yourself. It's something we have to just say. But we should really reflect on the meaning and think do we practice that ourselves as well. And I guess we really can't separate mental and physical health. They're so intrinsically linked.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:35:15] It's one health and it's interlinked. And we know this when you when you have bodily symptoms, if you if you have ill physical health, you will not have maybe you might have a little depression. You might feel a you know, it's interlinked and the other way around. So we have to work on all aspects you to keep healthy. Right. To have a good nutrition, have a good lifestyle, but also how we how we deal with our mind or our inner dealings. Stress sometimes is outside and it's outside of our control and maybe also the bodily reaction. And so but there are things we can control in stress. And, you know, many say a lot about perception as well so we can change our perception.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:35:59] But let me give you this example of this woman who came to consult me, basically long story. But actually, she said I feel much better now where I am, the environment, the work environment, everything is better. But is this still in my system? The two years that I had to go through, I feel like I was a guinea pig. And then she gets very frustrated and this is unfair and and this makes it brings me down, I feel like I have been treated. I was a guinea pig. And, you know, I somehow, I can't get my motivation because I feel like it's okay.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:36:36] For example, now we said. Let's let's look into this. So, you think it's not helpful, do you want to feel frustrated, but is there something to do with it? She said, no, I don't need it. I said, okay, because maybe sometimes the frustration helps us to do something right or the anger. Maybe we need to take care of something. She said, no, no, no, no, this is it. I need to go on with my my job here and I need you to focus and this constantly coming to my mind. So, let me say, okay, we want to get you in a different state. I want to let go, okay? I said so let's analyze. Remember who constructed this idea of the guinea pig.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:37:12] This metaphor, I like to think, who constructed this? Well, I did it. Did you do it? My mind did it. And I said, well, if your mind did it, we can undo it. Right? How do I do it? I think I have it. I see myself already. I cannot just undo it like this. Okay, how do you undo what your mind has done? How do you do that? How do you do that? What do you think? How do we do that? Any idea?

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:37:37] I know when I've had this discussion in the past, people just like will stop. And it sounds really easy, but whenever I need to stop a train of thought that's hurting myself, that's causing me suffering, I really need a positive distractor. So, it's like what you've said before, it's not a matter of letting my thoughts run away with me. I need to to give it a break. I need to stop thinking. But I can't do that just by sitting down and saying I'm going to stop. I need to do something that gives me pleasure, whether that be be gardening or something else.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:38:06] Perfect. Perfect. So, this is one of the options. I'm more like into seeing what works or not than what people have told me and what I've read and what I do myself. So it seems to me indeed not thinking something doesn't work. And this is all a neurolinguistic programming tool, not, you know, the classic example. Do not think of a pink elephant with a blue elephant. I don't think of it. Do not think of it, is there. You create the image. It's there. So these do not think is not. But again, be aware, be aware of what you're thinking and understand it and then think of something else.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:38:50] You cannot think of something else without being aware. Okay, this makes me feel negative. Okay, now you need to say no longer this, but what instead exactly what you do. Distract yourself with something else. You can say distract or you can say, and this is like maybe a little meditation, a mindfulness meditation exercise. Your mind comes back to whatever upsets you or whatever or the elephant, and then you bring your attention back to the gardening eye comes back, the elephant comes back.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:39:20] We can distract ourselves. That works very well. But what we can also do is take this metaphor that our mind has created, okay? And then we can work with it. We can say, well, okay, maybe it's good that you were guinea pig. You are no longer maybe you put emphasis, but I no longer am. I have this experience. How did I free myself? How did it happen that you got yourself out of it? You take out the tragedy, you maybe make it a bit. You take some humor; you can give it this. You take away the fear or the negative feeling. You're disconnected with the metaphor. So, you work with a metaphor. And instead of distracting yourself, you go into it, you dive right into the pain and you look what else is hidden there. So, I think that's important now.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:40:08] And I think that's really important. I'm glad you mentioned it. And it brings me back to what we discussed at the beginning when you said it's really not about change, it's more about self-development. So, bringing back the guinea pig metaphor as well, it's not about changing. It's not saying don't feel like you were a guinea pig. It's like bringing something more positive into the mix. It's acknowledging and being aware of what's there, saying we're not going to

change it or take it away, but we're going to adapt it. We're going to optimize it. We're going to put a positive spin on it.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:40:33] Yeah. Or helpful again, I will say with the two of us would say positive. Right. But a more helpful if those people who don't like positive, then don't be positive. Is it helpful? That is bringing in a good state. It's helpful. No. Then make something more helpful very often. That's positive. Right.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:40:50] So bringing it back into the software context as well. It's doing health check. Are my thoughts healthy?

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:40:55] Exactly. Exactly. Are they helpful? Are the healthy will they help me in the long run? And you know, as you say, being a self-critic, I know that many people use this to motivate themselves. I had a recent experience with a person who said to me, you know, I have I have motivated myself. She has a lot of awareness already.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:41:13] I have motivated myself with guilt over so many years. The guilt is everywhere. Now I have to get rid of the guilt. So just she gets awareness and now she takes away she gets rid of the guilt. And, you know, it hurt her. She was successful, she says, but no longer. It took over. It grew. It was like a virus. It was everywhere. It took over. So while it worked and it was helpful at some moments. And this is why I also don't ask why it was positive and maybe now it got out of control. Why did you bring the did not to do something bad? It was a good intention. It was driven by good intention. But now it got out of control. It spent everything okay. So now say okay, what instead? And how do I work with the guilt, not with the guilt. I distract myself. What else can I explore? Maybe, you know, more gratefulness, gratitude, you know. And so yeah.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:42:07] Great sentiments to close our episode on today, Martina. Thank you so much. It's been really wonderful for us to hear about your own personal experiences and really benefit from your guidance today on so many levels. Thank you so very much.

Martina Peskoller-Fuchs: [00:42:22] Thank you very much. Thank you very much, Lizzie.

Elisabeth Riemann: [00:42:26] Thank you for listening to openSAP Invites Thought Leaders with Martina Peskoller-Fuchs. If you enjoyed this episode, please share rate and review and you can join in the conversation by adding a comment on openSAP.

THE BEST RUN SAP