BtR 398 Transcript

00:00:00 - Jerry Dugan

All right. Hey, Rudder Nation. This is Jerry Dugan, your host, and in this episode, we're going to have special guest Salome Trambach. She is Danish. Danish. Denmark. Danish, Danish. And living in Copenhagen. And leadership coach, executive leadership coach on top of that, has a wealth of experience as a leader, and so she's helping leaders really get themselves and their teams out of the rut of not having a psychologically safe environment, not working in alignment with their values. Some of the things you've heard me talk about over the years, especially if you're in a leadership role. So sit back, relax, grab a notebook and a pen. Here we go. All right, Salame, thanks for joining me. How are you doing?

00:00:43 - Salome Trambach

I am doing so well. It is a pleasure to be on your show. I've listened to some of your episodes and I've been on the other side, sitting back, having a notebook with a Little pen and also a cup of tea, just kind of listening and getting some of the gold nuggets with me. So I hope that there will be some for people today as well. But it's a pleasure to be awesome.

00:01:02 - Jerry Dugan

Awesome. And for the guys driving, I hope you're not sitting back and relaxing.

00:01:06 - Salome Trambach

You're paying attention. I don't know how. I think the US, you're better at multitasking than you do here, than we do here in Europe.

00:01:13 - Jerry Dugan

At least we think we're good at multitasking. That's probably the problem. Oh, my goodness. Now, when I was looking at your background, listening to some of the episodes you've appeared on, on other shows, some of the highlights I picked up from your career is that you've been a vice president in a couple of roles with human resources. You've hold some board member positions, worked with Pricewaterhouse Cooper, their Mexico division, but for the Denmark market, the Danish market. And then My favorite one, which you had to correct me on, was you've coached for Coachello, not Coachella, but it still caught my atTention.

00:01:52 - Salome Trambach

I thought it would have been cool, though, and I would have figured, what would that mean, though, to coach for a festival, but could have been cool.

00:01:58 - Jerry Dugan

Right? Do you pull the leaders aside and say, all right, this is how you manage stress, or this is how you make sure that your employees are heard when they report something? Or what do you do when you have a band's lead singer start to fall apart?

00:02:12 - Salome Trambach

Yes, it would be a cool role to have. I must admit, for those who are also big fans of festivals and music, maybe there's a role out there that exists or that somebody can go out and create, right?

00:02:24 - Jerry Dugan

Yeah. Oh man. I'd be the guy that goes around inspecting people's tents. Like how well did you stake it into the ground? What's your setup like?

00:02:32 - Salome Trambach

Oh yeah, because of course with your nature loving and outdoors nature, then that's your expertise as well, which I think is also really useful. And so many good leadership qualities to learn from doing that as well.

00:02:45 - Jerry Dugan

I think so, yeah. Now I heard somewhere that you like to climb mountains.

00:02:51 - Salome Trambach

Oh, I do. Mountains make me so happy. I was just away for a few weeks as well. It's not a very popular travel destination yet, but in know they have the Albanian Alps. I like to go and hike and conquer some peaks. I'm not necessarily looking to conquer Mount Everest or any of those crazy peaks, but I just love to challenge myself to be out in nature, to have all the different environments in terms of weather. And it's a great way to get perspective on life, to get to know yourself a bit better and just to take a break, I think from day to day and to reconnect with yourself and with nature, which is really lovely, which I think you know a lot about as well.

00:03:36 - Jerry Dugan

That's why I do it. And for an extrovert, a lot of people are surprised when I go solo into the woods for a couple of days and they're like, won't you be eaten by a bear? And I'm like, there are no bears where I'm going.

00:03:48 - Salome Trambach Where do you go?

00:03:50 - Jerry Dugan

A variety of different places. So being in the Dallas area, it's a lot easier now for a short trip if I want to just test out some new equipment or push myself or try a new menu item. There's the LBJ grasslands just west of Dallas. If I want some mountains, I've got to go north into Oklahoma. There's the Watchita National Recreation Trail. It's, I think, a hundred something miles goes into Arkansas, so it goes into two states. And that one I've got a plan for because it's a ridge trail. So once you're up the mountain, not a lot of water sources. So you got to cash water across the route.

00:04:31 - Salome Trambach

They have to plan that really well.

00:04:32 - Jerry Dugan

Yeah. First time I went up there I just saw a bunch of blue lines on the topographical map. I was like, oh, plenty of water sources. I got my filter, we're good. And then I read the fine print on the map and it said these are seasonal water sources which meant when it rains. And I was remembering, okay, it's July, there are raining seasons in April, I am two months too late for this map.

00:04:54 - Salome Trambach

Oh, my Lord. Yeah. That is an important piece of information to have before you go out there.

00:04:59 - Jerry Dugan

I fortunately found a puddle. I filtered all the water I could carry. I think I hiked one or two more miles, called it a day, slept overnight, and then hiked back. I was like, I can't.

00:05:10 - Salome Trambach

Keeping it safe.

00:05:11 - Jerry Dugan

Yeah. I didn't want to be that guy in the news. Like, hey, no. Experienced Tiger died because I didn't want the I told you SOS at my funeral, I guess.

00:05:21 - Salome Trambach

Oh, no. There used to be this show I shouldn't be alive. Was it National Geographic or a Discovery Channel? I don't know, but it's kind of those kinds of stories that you want to avoid being the main character.

00:05:34 - Jerry Dugan

I don't want to be on any of those shows I play.

00:05:37 - Salome Trambach

Exactly.

00:05:38 - Jerry Dugan

Oh, man. So I do love doing that, getting out to nature. It does help me unplug from everything, the pressures and recentered. Like, who am I? What are my values? What do I want in life? What's most important? What do I need to stop doing all those come to light when I'm out there by myself, which I think is a great segue or an okay segue into your own leadership journey, and you talk about and you help executive leaders establish values based leadership. Can you kick it off and let folks know, what is values based leadership? Jerry said it a couple of times, but what is that? How did you discover it? And we'll start there.

00:06:20 - Salome Trambach

Yeah, absolutely. So I work with value based leadership. I work with mindfulness, with authentic leadership. They're all very related to one another. It's really around being able to know your

values, know what's really important to you as a person, to know your boundaries and your principles in order to be able to show up in the way that you want as a leader. When you are in a workspace with your team and your community, so that you can really lead with the impact that you actually desire, it's all about being intentional, because when you haven't checked in with yourself, when you haven't really taken the time to take a step back and know what is it that's important to me, whether that can be anything, it can be integrity, it can be a certain amount of freedom, flexibility, fairness, all these different types of things that can be important. The more you are aligned with that, the more you can make sure that you fit into an environment that you seek. If you're looking for a new leadership role in a new company, for example, if you're creating something yourself, the people that you hire, the more you're aware of that, the more successful you're going to be because you're not going to get lost along the way. These are the things to look for before you start something. But also along the journey, you want to check in, because our lives change. We grow, we get older, we get married, we get divorced, we have kids, we don't. We go on a solo trip. We come back from with new perspectives somewhere out in the world, and then we have to recheck in what is important to me now, how do I want to lead? How do I want to show up? So that's what I work with, with a lot of different leaders, a lot of founders of companies, and a lot of executives around the world. And these are often people that are, like you mentioned the beginning, they're a little bit in a rut with themselves and also with their teams, and they're not guite sure how to get out of it. And I think that value based leadership, mindfulness, presence are key aspects of being able to come back to yourself and to help yourself connect better with your team.

00:08:21 - Jerry Dugan

Yeah, and I think making big decisions is easier when you know what your values are. And I think a lot of folks take core values too lightly. They think that's just a poster my company put up on the wall, or that's what every company puts up on the wall, but they don't really live by it. However, it sounds like if you're really leading from a values perspective and position, it means you know what you stand for, you know what you're against, you know what your guardrails are. And so when somebody comes and says, hey, I need you to really crack the whip on your team and hold their feet to the fire and manage every little minute detail about them. If your core value is all about, it includes things like collaboration and respect and dignity. All those things are a big no. It's like no, because you're asking me to do something that's going to take away the respect for this person's dignity or the respect for this person's intelligence and capabilities, and that goes against my values. I'm not going to follow that. I think that's huge. And I guess, what kind of signs would people be looking for if they're not leading by their values? Like, what's the impact by not leading from your values?

00:09:34 - Salome Trambach

Well, it's definitely an emotion that shows up bodily, so it's something that you're able to feel. It can come out as stress it can lead to burnout for people that I've coached along the way or helped facilitate workshops. In teams, there is sometimes even demotivation, an inability to even wake up in the morning because you're not really sure how to handle the day, how to go about your day. And you can become a little bit more introverted, a little bit easier to have negative emotions, anger, disappointment, because you're not aligned, so you're not feeling,

and you're not living up to your fullest potential. So it feels wrong. Basically, you can feel it in your body. Your body is speaking to you. It's telling you something isn't right. I don't know exactly what it is. And you need to look inwards, and you need to start talking to people about it, people that you trust, because it may seem complicated. And what's often what you were talking about with the values and the core values, corporate values, it's often a second thought. It needs to be integrated into strategy. It's super important. It's important for you as a person, and it's important for the team, and it's important for the organization. Some of the organizations that succeed the best are the ones that have really clearly identified values. They have ingrained them and integrated them in everything that they do. And it's something that the employees live by and live for. It's very purpose driven. And once you have that, it's much easier to go about your day. So I think if you're listening to this, you will know, as I'm speaking about this feeling that is hard to really describe and put into words, you'll know that there's something there that you need to look at. If you're not feeling quite right, if you're not able to be honest about what's going on. For example, if there's a situation at work, for example, let's say what you were just mentioning, a higher leader comes to you and says, listen, you need to lead your team differently. We're not reaching the results that we need. I need you to do A-B-C and D, and you're feeling off about that information. And you need to figure out, how do you balance it. Because on one hand, you have to live up to what the organization is asking you to do, and on the other hand, you have to live up to your own value. So where is the balance between the two? Where is it that you're crossing a boundary and where are you not? And being clear around that. I remember having to leave a role at some point, a leadership role, because we just ended up at a crossroads where there was no more collaboration, it wasn't possible, and everything I believe needed to happen. And this leads back to collaboration, fairness, integrity, honesty. I wanted to be honest, but there was certain amount of information I had to hide from my team. It didn't feel right. And I knew that this was the time that I needed to leave. And I did that in the best way that I could with respect to everyone, and parted ways and said, this isn't for me anymore. Somebody else can come in and take over, but I need to do this in the best way possible. And that meant being in a situation where maybe you're unemployed for a while and maybe that's okay, because maybe that feels much better than staying in a position where you're going to just get angrier, you're going to get more intra yourself, and it's going to get out in your personal life, you're going to come home and your significant other or your kids or your dog or your cat feel it. So it's really important. And so I think taking a step back is key. Whether you go to the mountains, whether you take an hour away from your day to day, meditate, go for a walk, just think about what's important to me. What is it that I'm not doing right now I should be doing, and what am I doing that I really should not be doing?

00:13:19 - Jerry Dugan

And that resonates with me a lot, personally, because I left a job where I have five F's. I look at and make big decisions off of how will this decision impact my faith journey, my family life, my fitness, both emotional, mental and then physical? How will this impact my finances and future growth? And I remember sticking it out at a job that was really all those things you just mentioned demotivated in the morning, or at least when it was time to get ready for work. Easier to get angry. Just feeling like there's nothing I can do that's going to change anything. And my wife had just said to me when I was contemplating what to do about a new situation that came

up at work, and my wife just said, just quit. I want my husband back. And the moment she said, I want my husband back, boom, that family pillar, or know, lit up like a big red flag in front of Me. And it was like, all right, stop, Jerry. Whatever you're thinking about doesn't matter because family is at stake here. And so my wife and I talked through that, and she explained all those things I just mentioned. And then I realized, wait, in my fitness, like in 2020, 2021, I was 40, 50 pounds lighter. And hills and mountains are my nemesis. That's probably why my friends call me kung Fu Panda on the trail. So cute, because stairs are his nemesis. For me, it was Hills and mountains. But when I was fit, I would go up these things and think nothing of it. And now, towards the end of 2022, I was back to, gosh, my post army dad Bod fluffiness. And I realized, wow, my family and my fitness have been impacted by what's going on at work. What's going on? Can I change anything? Is there a future here? And the answer exactly, no to making changes. No to a future there, is it aligned with my core values? No, also. And, yeah, that next work, because quitting.

00:15:19 - Salome Trambach

Is one thing, and I think being able to accept that as an opportunity also gives some release to say, okay, this is actually one way out. And then the great question that you asked, what can change? What can I do? What can be different? Because then you open up for opportunities. because what often happens, and this is where we really test our mental ability, our mental wellness, is how do we act in times of uncertainty, in times of change, where we don't control everything, where everything is a challenge. COVID is one example. Everybody was on thin ice. Nobody knew what they needed to do, and everybody was challenged. And so in those situations, maybe you're in an environment that you actually do like, but all of a sudden, there's uncertainty, there's a lot of change going on, and you're not as much a fan of this situation. I have a particular client that I work with in a big global manufacturing company, and this person has been in that role for many years, really high up in hierarchy, but not at the highest. So getting some information that they're not really a fan of, and then they have to lead that back down. And I had to switch the conversation and say, okay, there's information that you're getting. There's demands that are being put on you, but what power do you have to turn this into something positive? What can you do to have an impact that is different than the one that you're experiencing on your end from your managers and your leaders? Can something be done? Can you look at this differently, like we talked about at the beginning? Can you do something around the psychological safety so that from where you are in hierarchy and all the way down, it's different. It feels more safe, it feels more open. Something is going on. So that the way that you're leading down is changing the dynamic of the company and at some point that's going to come back to your boss and change things in that direction. But I think it's important to ask those questions because we do have a lot of power in the way that we go about our teams, the way we decide to communicate information. We can say it's okay to say we're going through something really difficult, something really hard. I do not have all the answers. I have certain suggestions, but I want the rest of you to help me out and let's get there together as a team. Because often what happens is as leaders, we put an insane amount of pressure on ourselves and we feel like we're alone in it and we're not. So if we can get to a place where taking that step back, realizing that if we can be more present, if we can listen more, if we can engage more with the people around us, we might figure out that there's more solutions than there are

challenges, and maybe that can make us more comfortable in a current situation and say, okay, I overcame that challenge. How did I do it? I included others. There's so many smart people around us, let's utilize them. Right? So quitting is one way. Figuring out the opportunities and the challenges is another way. So take a step back, think about what are your options?

00:18:10 - Jerry Dugan

And you mentioned the word psychological safety, and I'm familiar with it because I have a leadership framework called Tent Trust building, empowering, navigating and thriving together. And all those really only happen if you have this environment that is preserving of psychological safety. So for the folks in the room listening in who don't have a clue what that is, what is psychological safety? Because I know some folks, they hear psychological safety and they get triggered and they say some of the meanest things in the world, and it's like, now nobody wants to talk to you. I think you're missing the point here. So what is psychological safety and why is it so important?

00:18:50 - Salome Trambach

Yes, psychological safety was made more trendy in the business world, if you could say that. But also in research by Amy Edmondson. She wrote several books, but she also wrote the Fearless organization, where she talks about high psychological safety can increase performance, can increase success of companies, can increase success in hospitals and all these different environments in education. She's a professor at Harvard. And basically what it means just to really strip down all of the complicated things around it, it's just, do I feel safe enough in my team to be honest, to make mistakes and be honest about them, to ask questions, to speak up? Do I feel safe enough to be who I am without being judged for being different, without being humiliated. Can I take a risk? It's those questions. So it's really interesting, because the way that I work with executives is there's a way to test that so you can do like, these. Not a personality test. It's a behavioral test that you can help leaders to gain more awareness about themselves, but also around their team. And you get the team to ask certain questions, to answer certain question anonymously, and then it comes back to the leader through the coach. Say, this is how safe you are in your team. Because they might think, oh, but I don't understand why they're not speaking up in meetings, why they're not saying how, but they're thinking. And I'm like, well, as a leader, you need to always look back at yourself and say, what is something that maybe you're doing or not doing that is leading to that? Maybe you're not fostering that environment where people do want to be open and honest. Are you being open and honest? So that's really what psychological safety is. It's about feeling trust. We talk about that as being something between two people and psychological safety in a bigger group. So it's basically about feeling trust in a bigger group that you can be yourself and that there are no consequences, no bad consequences, just to speaking up.

00:20:48 - Jerry Dugan

Yeah. There's something I learned from a lady named Susan Scott from fierce conversations, and that was that it's important to take responsibility for the emotional wake you create because you might come in and think you were impactful with that. In the army, we called it the 32nd blast. It's when you came in, you chewed somebody out. It was not personal, but you needed

them to drive it home. That. That was wrong. Don't ever do it again. Which, in the military, it's part of the culture. Sometimes it works. Sometimes it's the reason why people don't reenlist. And it's probably magnified outside of the military, where it's like, hey, who are you to talk to me like that? I don't have to be here. Unlike the military, I could go to prison if I decide not to come to work the next day in the civilian world, I just go find a new job, or I start my own business, or I do contract work for a while, whatever it is. But I have that mobility to go somewhere else. Whether or not I believe I do or not, that reality is there.

00:21:45 - Salome Trambach

And this is what you're talking about. It's exactly back to. We talk about value based leadership. Okay. You take a moment you think about, how do you want to show up as a leader? Okay, I want to show up as someone who is empathetic, someone who listens, and someone that creates a trust. All right, you go into a meeting, the conversation, the topic of the meeting is around psychological safety. You want people to give you some feedback around something that happened recently. What do you do? First of all, you take that time before the meeting. You think about, what is the intention here? This is the way I want to show up. How can I then do that? Go into the meeting, you have some questions that you've already prepared, and you have maybe a story about yourself that you're prepared already. Also about how you've made a mistake in the past, maybe, or something that creates just a little bit of vulnerability and openness that gets your team to think, okay, this guy isn't necessarily an asshole. This woman isn't necessarily an asshole. They care about my opinion. And then you see what happens, and then you leave that meeting and you take time again away to think, well, what was the impact? How did I end up showing up? When someone did say something, did I just say, oh, that doesn't matter, and I don't actually want to hear your opinion, or was I open to it? You have to constantly do that work, because if there isn't psychological safety in your team right now, if there isn't that openness, it's not going to change overnight. You need to give yourself time to notice slowly that change is happening because it takes time for people to trust you. So you notice that along the way. And the more intentional you are, and the more you take time and you're present and you listen, the more you're going to notice the difference. So these are important things to think about when you want to go in that direction. There's no fix, there's no quick fix. But if you're intentional and you know what is important to you, then you can get there.

00:23:28 - Jerry Dugan

Yeah. And it might be a hard pill for some of us to swallow right now to realize that slump or that rut that our team is in might be because of us as the leader, creating that environment. And step number one is owning that, taking responsibility and accountability for creating the environment. We don't have to be the sage on stage. That's a teaching term. When I was getting my master's on educational technology, I don't know why I had to flex like that. Guys, I'm sorry. It just came out. It wasn't important. But the old school way of teaching is that the teacher had to be the sage with all the knowledge on the stage. But in today's learning environment, so many people in the world are collaborative and collective in their cultures that social learning or social constructivism is much more effective and impactful and just join any mastermind group, and you see that happening. People are feeding off each other's ideas. They're encouraging each other. And the teacher or the coach or the consultant is really just creating that environment so

that can happen and providing the guardrails and leaders. Today, even in the military, I learned this lesson early on in my leadership career as a soldier going through training, when I got the nickname the Warden and I got pulled aside, and they told me that's just what you see in the movies. Dugan. Yes, this is how you really lead people. And learning that over those four years in the army was life changing for me. And I see it effectively employed time and again when I do it, when other people do it. And then I see teams fall apart when they feel like they've got to control the information, control the people, control the activity to every fine detail. And I love that we talked about this psychological safety. So it seems like it keeps coming back to core values. And for somebody who has not taken the time to really define what their core values are, what's a good exercise that you typically run people through to help them get there?

00:25:28 - Salome Trambach

Yeah, I actually have exactly that. I have an exercise that I send to people, and it takes them over two to three days, let's say not full days, but just a few hours here and there. There's a few questions that you can ask yourself. I think if you have never worked with values before, it's really useful to have a guide that will state out a lot of different values, like name them specifically, whether it's faith or it's fairness or it's freedom or it's whatever, family, all these different things. So that you can, as you're answering questions, figure out more easily. What is it that makes sense to me? So you can, for example, think about, well, what is a time in your life where you felt that something wasn't right, something was crossing your boundaries, where you had to maybe leave a situation or where you didn't act in a situation the way you wanted to? What kind of value does that speak to? What do people say about you that you value the most? What are other people saying? Can you ask somebody that? How do you spend your time outside of work? How do you prioritize your time? That also will tell you about what are some of the things that you value spending time on. And if you were to witness a situation that will get you angry or that will make you want to act right away, what is that situation? What is this thing that's going to trigger something inside of you? Is it somebody mistreating an animal? Isn't somebody speaking bad to somebody of a different ethnicity? Like, what is it that's going to get you going? Those are questions to ask yourself. Because honestly, taking it's such an important investment. It can't even be spoken about in money or in anything else, but the investment that you put into taking the time to reflect, to sit for just an hour to start with, just speak to yourself, think about your experiences in your life, answer certain questions about yourself. Just connect with yourself for a little bit. You're going to get so much clearer on what's important to you and what you need to do and the next step that you need to take. It's going to be so much easier to make decisions in every aspect of your life. And we don't want to get stuck not being able to make decisions. So I think that if anybody ever wants to have a very specific guide, I will gladly send it to any of your listeners. They can always email you. They can email me whatever they need. I will gladly do that because I think it just contributes to an even better world. The more self aware we are, the more impactful we can be in the way that we want.

00:27:56 - Jerry Dugan

Yeah, I firmly believe that having self awareness is probably the first step in any situation you're trying to resolve, whether it's conflict between you and somebody else, conflict between other people, a problem to solve, somebody to hire, a place to go work. Knowing who you are, I think

is the first step. And I love. So folks, take her up on this offer. Email me info at beyond the Rut.com or click the link on the show notes. So depending on how you're seeing this, I'll tell you instructions on how to get there later. Now, if people want to find you, Salome, what's the best way for them to reach out to you?

00:28:31 - Salome Trambach

So LinkedIn is a great way. Definitely Salome Trambach. So that's my name. Aseraf is the middle name. You can find me there as well, and then my website. So Salometrambach.com is a different way as well. Linkedin. I can get back to you really quickly on the email. It will just take you to a little pop up where you can send an email. So up to you what you choose. But both ways are great.

00:28:57 - Jerry Dugan

Awesome. And then, any final words of wisdom before we go?

00:29:00 - Salome Trambach

I think, honestly, observe more, react less. Just observe more, react less. Take that time. That would be my advice.

00:29:10 - Jerry Dugan

Love that. And notice, folks, she put a lot of pauses in there just for you to let that sink in. So let it sink in. And maybe I'll put in a moment of silence at the end of this before the next episode on your player kicks in.

00:29:23 - Salome Trambach

Little meditation time, right?

00:29:26 - Jerry Dugan

That'll be a first on this show, especially out of me. Like, Jerry's going to give you 30 seconds of silence. Yeah.

00:29:32 - Salome Trambach

And people are going to be like, what happened? What happened with the sound?

00:29:35 - Jerry Dugan

He really did it. Oh, man. Celebrate. It was great to have you on here. I know this has been months in the making because we booked this a long time ago.

00:29:43 - Salome Trambach

We did. But we're connected to pleasure.

00:29:46 - Jerry Dugan

Oh, man. Yeah, same here. So looking forward to staying in touch, collaborating and all those things.

00:29:52 - Salome Trambach

It's been a true pleasure and I look forward to hearing about your next trip, your next solo tenting nature trip. I would love to hear even more about that. Thank you for having me. And I wish everyone out there an amazing day, an amazing week, amazing months.

00:30:07 - Jerry Dugan

Now, I hope you got a lot of value out of that conversation like I did. We talked about the importance of knowing your core values so that you can lead from those values, make big decisions in the framework of your values, and create an environment where not only you have the psychological safety you need to take risks, but you also create an environment where your team, your employees, are willing to put themselves out there, share their ideas, and collaborate in a way that lifts up everybody's boats in that rising tide. So if you want to learn more, however, you're listening to this episode right now, the link to the show notes will be in that description. Just click on that link. It'll take you to Beyondtherut.com, whatever number this episode turned out to become. There you'll find additional information on Salome, her website, how to reach out to get that core values exercise and related episodes around leadership tent knowing your leadership Credo and also knowing your triggers. Those are some of the things we talked about in our conversation. So again, go to the player. How you're listening to this episode right now. You'll see a link to the show notes and you could get more information, bonus content for you to help you deepen your self awareness and apply that to the workplace so that you're getting your team out of the rut while getting yourself out of the rut as well. Now, it's been great spending time with you in this episode, and I look forward again the next time we meet. But until then, go live life beyond the rut. Take care.