

3 Takeaways Podcast Transcript
Lynn Thoman
(<https://www.3takeaways.com/>)

Ep 74: Always Be Learning: The Top 10 Takeaways of 2021 From Our Guests

INTRO male voice: Welcome to the 3 Takeaways podcast, which features short memorable conversations with the world's best thinkers, business leaders, writers, politicians, scientists, and other news makers. Each episode ends with the three key takeaways that person has learned over their lives and their careers, and now your host and board member of schools at Harvard, Princeton, and Columbia Lynn Thoman.

Lynn Thoman: Hi everyone, it's Lynn Thoman. Welcome to our top 10 takeaways of 2021. After each takeaway, I'll tell you who the 3 Takeaways guest is and, if you're interested, you can find links to each episode in the Top Ten Takeaways of 2021 description. Here we go!

Guest 1: Teach yourself and your children a capacity for solitude. Think about if you don't teach your children to be alone, they'll only know how to be lonely. Create sacred spaces in your home where there are no devices, where you can just practice the quiet of solitude.

LT: That's Sherry Turkle episode #39 [The Empathy Diaries and How Tech Changes Us and Our Relationships: MIT's Sherry Turkle](#)

Guest 2: A system that is overwhelmingly responsible for getting us in this state is the use of animals as a food technology. And if we can replace that technology, we can literally, effectively turn back the clock on climate change. We can turn back turn back the clock and all the historical damage that this industry has done. And I'm not qualified to be doing this, or let me put it this way, I am qualified, but I'm not qualified in any usual sense. I'm not by nature a business guy. I've literally never even balanced my checkbook. I have no interest in that kind of stuff, and I'm not interested in food, actually. I'm perfectly happy to eat delicious food, but I spend no time thinking about it. I've never taken a picture of food in my entire life, so why am I the CEO of a food company? The most important thing, which is that I realized that this problem needed to be solved, no one was solving, and I stepped up, and I think the take home message there for people is if there's a big problem that you care about, don't assume that someone else is solving it, because they probably aren't if you don't see it. The fact is, the thing that makes that your job is, when you decide is important enough for you to try to do something about it, because the biggest thing that stands in the way of these things getting done is just the initiative.

LT: That's Pat Brown episode #55 [Solving the World's Biggest Problem and Creating the Impossible Burger with Impossible Foods Founder Patrick Brown](#)

Guest 3: There's a beautiful piece of advice from [Charlie] Munger that's very simple, again, and yet also quite profound, where he says, "If you want a good partner, be a good partner." And he says, "Likewise, if you want a good spouse, be good a spouse. If you want a good friend, be a good friend." And so, he talks it when I asked him about what made for a happy life, he immediately started talking about relationships, and he said, "I've been a good partner to Warren [Buffett]. Warren has been a marvelous partner to me." And I think that sense of compounding good will by treating the people around you kindly, by treating strangers kindly. We're all deeply flawed and we

mess up, especially when we're stressed and under pressure, but I think that to me is a fascinating model and a very provocative and hopeful model. And I see it as part of the more enlightened form of capitalism, where, as Munger would say, he doesn't see anything as a zero-sum game. For him, he wants everyone to win. And so he says, "I'm not looking to squeeze suppliers, for example, I don't want to brutalize suppliers." And he's not looking to take advantage of his shareholders. He's looking to add value to them and to be honest with them. And so this to me is, it's both a simple idea and a deeply profound and heartening idea of taking this more benevolent and hopeful and positive approach to building relationships by treating everyone in your ecosystem more kindly and more decently.

LT: William Green #40 [How the World's Greatest Investors Win in Markets and Life: William Green](#)

Guest 4: I would say, use humble enthusiasm with everything you do, and always treat people like people, not like transactions. And remember that they're not bumps in the road, they are the road, and that for every success you see out there, there's 20 failures behind it, and it is part of the journey, so don't ever take it personally, but simply learn from it. They're steps on a staircase versus rocks on your shoulders. Don't take it like a rock, take it like a staircase. That was a mistake that's going to get you to know their place and you just learn something, so good job for surviving.

LT: Ellen Marie Bennett #43 [Hard Won Wisdom From An Entrepreneur: Ellen Marie Bennet](#)

Guest 5: Lost trust can be regained. Most of us assume that trust is this fragile thing and once it's done game over, can't do anything about it. But because it's built by actions, it could be recovered by actions, right? And so it really requires a certain way of understanding what you're doing. But it definitely can be recovered, and so I want to leave people with a sense of kind of optimism about this and that this is an area to kind of get to know inside your organization, really understand how you can benefit yourselves and others by working on it.

LT: Sandra Sucher #46 [What Leaders and Corporate Boards Can Learn From Boeing's Mistakes: Harvard Business School's Sandra Sucher](#)

Guest 6: Strive to capture the hearts and minds of your people, and to do that means clearly you've got to come up strategies that they can believe in, and tactics, but if you don't have the hearts and minds, you're not going to be an enduring leader, and that's what you need to be focused on.

LT: Ken Chenault #51 [General Catalyst Chairman and Former American Express Chairman & CEO Ken Chenault: Leadership, Race & Creating Diverse Workforces](#)

Guest 7: Talent and effort are not at all the same thing, and if we understand that, then maybe we can give effort its due and not get distracted just by thinking about talent as the be-all and end-all of what factors into achievement of any goal.

LT: Angela Duckworth #52 [The Secret to Outstanding Achievement with Character Lab Founder and CEO Angela Duckworth](#)

Guest 8: It takes each of us to create change, right? We can't wait for someone else to do it for us.

And there's even one of my favorite African proverb that I'm going to leave you with, which is, "If you think you're too small to make a difference, try spending a night in a room with a mosquito." [laughter] So, you'll realize that none of us are too small to make a difference and it's going to take literally each of us contributing in our own small ways to create a world that works for all of us.

LT: Elizabeth Nyamayaro #47 [None Of Us Are Too Small To Make A Difference: Humanitarian & Author Of I Am A Girl From Africa Elizabeth Nyamayaro](#)

Guest 9: Everybody should always be learning. Remember of the Glengarry Glen Ross play about the salesman, and they would "Always Be Selling", ABS? Well, American public, I would hope they would always be learning. And in this time of stress between the police and the public, always be trying to learn more about the police, and so we can all see each other better than we have done in the past.

LT: Bill Bratton #58 [Community, Race and the Arc of Policing in America: Former NYC and LA Police Commissioner Bill Bratton](#)

Guest 10: An observation I've made over the past quarter decade working here, and candidly, I'm embarrassed to say, I wish I realized it a lot earlier, and it's quite simply that attitude is everything. It's not only the story of each of us, but it is one that we write ourselves and it is the key ingredient when it comes to building one's own character that other folks are most attuned to, and it's the one they're evaluating when they decide whether or not they want to invest in us or if they are really going to buy what we're selling.

LT: James Murray #45 [Secret Service Director James Murray: The New Cyber Physical Nexus & How To Protect Ourselves From Cyber Risk](#)

LT: Thanks for listening!

OUTRO male voice: If you enjoyed today's episode and would like to receive the show notes or get new fresh weekly episodes, be sure to sign up for our newsletter at <https://www.3takeaways.com/> or follow us on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook. Note that 3Takeaways.com is with the number 3, 3 is not spelled out. See you soon at 3Takeaways.com (<https://www.3takeaways.com/>).