



Chapter 1

The tools of the hunt

The choice to become an elephant hunter comes with the need for a few basic human tools. This chapter will outline the tools you need to go on this journey. These are non-specific ways of being or traits that will allow you to see your elephant.

There are essentially four key tools every one of us needs for the hunt: curiosity, vulnerability, authenticity and courage.

EXERCISE

Do you have your elephant hunting tools?

Take a moment to consider your openness to the following traits.

- Curiosity
- Vulnerability
- Authenticity
- Courage

If you want to amplify and accelerate your peak performance, essentially you need a growth mindset and a BS (bullsh*t) filter. To see your elephant is a learning and growing experience, and without a growth mindset, the hunt becomes a whole lot more difficult. A growth mindset is like a 4WD, taking you further and faster than a traditional hunt on foot. For me, in this context, a growth mindset is about embracing challenges and whatever feedback they supply. For most people (with or without a growth mindset), seeing their elephant begins with curiosity.

CURIOSITY: THE ENGINE OF LEARNING

Curiosity drives individuals to investigate new concepts, viewpoints and experiences, thereby enhancing their comprehension of both the world and themselves. This investigative spirit broadens perspectives and promotes personal development.¹ It challenges established norms, fuelling our quest for knowledge and deeper understanding.² Through the pursuit of answers and insights, we can better grasp our potential and identity.³ Moreover, curiosity drives innovation and creativity by transcending traditional thinking boundaries.⁴ This intrinsic motivation is critical for you to discover the specifics about your elephant. However, curiosity alone is insufficient.⁵

VULNERABILITY: THE BLANK CANVAS

The elephant hunter must also be willing to be vulnerable and embrace susceptibility to emotional attack or harm. For many, this is the hardest part, particularly if you consider yourself a high performer, because you like to be in control. But it is this vulnerability that creates a space where you can see the elephant.

AUTHENTICITY: THE ACCELERATOR OF CHARACTER

You will never see your elephant unless you can be honest and authentic with yourself. After all, your elephant is a reflection of your self-awareness. If you cannot be authentic, you cannot be self-aware. Elephants can be good at camouflaging, so we need to play full out.

COURAGE: THE CATALYST FOR GROWTH

Courage empowers us to confront fears, uncertainties and challenges head on. This confrontation is essential for personal development and self-awareness, as facing what terrifies us reveals our strengths, vulnerabilities and resilience. When we stand in courage, we stand up for our beliefs and values in the face of opposition or societal pressures. This commitment to integrity strengthens our self-awareness by aligning our actions with our personal principles, thereby enabling us to understand ourselves deeply.

PREPARING FOR THE HUNT

These tools form the survival kit of your hunt and are necessary for self-awareness and the continual pursuit of excellence. By embracing these qualities, you unlock a powerful catalyst for not only understanding your true self but for contributing meaningfully to the world around you.

Before you look for your elephant, you need to get bluntly honest and be authentic and curious, which is going to require both

emotional time and space. If this is not available to you right now, this might not be the time for you and this book. To get the most out of this book, I want you to be willing to play full out.

If your elephant has been present for a while, it is likely well camouflaged, and you will have to be patient. Once you see your elephant, you cannot unsee your elephant. Once you have made the assessment, you need to be willing to acknowledge your elephant and to own it as part of you.

The further you go into this book, the more you will realise how deep your elephant goes and how it stands between you and your best performance. There is a reason it shows up. In most cases, there is a consistent pattern. Be curious: What is the cause, the reason for the elephant to exist? Why do you have this gap in your self-awareness? What is the motivation or creator of your elephant?

EXERCISE

Build your hunter's toolkit

In your journal or on a piece of paper, write down the answers to these questions:

- Curiosity: What could be my elephant be?
- Vulnerability: What holds me back from being vulnerable?
- Authenticity: Is there anything I am avoiding right now?
- Courage: Why do I want to see my elephant?