Bill Murphy: Oleg I want to welcome you to the show again.

Oleg Konovalov: Thank you.

Bill Murphy: I've only had a couple of guests on for two times, and you had to come on again. This was great that you have a new book coming out. It's out, The Vision Code.

Oleg Konovalov: Bill, I'm so thrilled. I love talking to you, because we always have great conversations and even exchanging messages, it always amazed me. And of course, I'm super excited with the book being out, because it took me quite a number of years. And this work impacted me more than anything else that I have done in my life. Because writing a book, it's not about what you put on it, it's about how this work would impact me, and so others.

Bill Murphy: Well, that's it, that's a great way to... because if it impacts you, that's going to come out in the writing and that's the best way to approach a book, I would imagine. I haven't written one, but I would imagine that's the best way.

Oleg Konovalov: It is. Because if you're putting the common thoughts on label, it wouldn't impact you. It wouldn't impact anyone. You will waste a lot of ink. That's fine, but it wouldn't be anything transformational. It wouldn't be anything that you really, really gained or learned.

Bill Murphy: Where am I reaching you today? We're reaching you where?

Oleg Konovalov: I am in Moscow now.

Bill Murphy: Excellent.

Oleg Konovalov: Yeah, I'm in the middle of a lot of snow and a little bit of cold, but that's fine.

Bill Murphy: That's great. Well, I'm really interested and the reason I asked that is, I've been reading a little bit of Russian history recently and some Jordan Peterson podcasts on Solzhenitsyn's [crosstalk].

Oleg Konovalov: Solzhenitsyn, yeah.

Bill Murphy: Yeah, and just trying to become more aware of history, because I'm always just super aware, it forms people, the past generations. My grandfather came over from Ireland and I would be disingenuous if I wasn't like... His DNA and his thought patterns and his thinking definitely impact me. And then my grandfather's grandfather's grandfather, it's a cold Island in the middle of the North Atlantic. And it's had its issues through the years. And so how have you been formed being from Russia and from your parents and your grandparents, how has that formed who you are as a leader and where you are today?

Oleg Konovalov: Great question because I always consider every one of us big links in a cognitive chain of the history. If we will ignore or say, "I don't know about previous generations, I'm so good myself," you're snapping this cognitive chain, and it doesn't have much chance to create something further. Russian more than the Russian history is quite tough because for instance, my grandparents, they suffered a lot during this Russian civil war.

My grand grandfather was guild. He was quite well off. And so it was a reason to... And so, my grandparents, granddads, they were through the Second World War. So, it was a quite tough challenge. But I believe it's given me a bit of inner strengths and I appreciate this. At the same time, Russia is a huge country of course, there are people from my mother and my father. They came from different areas of Russia.

So, it's a bit of, I wouldn't say even just a diversity, but it's a lot of different colorful pictures. How they can consider this life or the way how to bring me on. That's fascinating, but it's given me a good way of looking at things. A lived half my life in Britain. I've been to Ireland, right? I know that. I've been to Iceland, so more or less half of the world.

But what I was been looking, for instance, British are very good at finances. Something I thought. Germans are very good at engineering. Americans are very good at IT. Japanese are very good at electronics. Different natures have different unique qualities. And if you're not just competing, but you're just learning from them and merging into yourself, you could get a lot of value and you could start sharing it with people and also be learning from them.

It's not about reading books. It's about how many people I have met or what I have learned from them.

Bill Murphy: Right. I want to make sure we properly introduce yourself, because even though I'm going to do it in an intro, you're one of the number one thought leaders in the world. And why don't you just give us the short... Who do you work with? How did you get to this status? When I start getting into some of this vision and want people to have like a precursor to who you are.

Oleg Konovalov: Ah, right. First of all, I'm not a content creator. Beside writing some books, okay. But I'm a solution finder. My books comes as a result I have found a solution or a few, and I'm discussing how to apply them, how to work it.

You see, I came from the fishing industry background and I have a very simple approach. Can you imagine a passenger onboard of a trawler? No. Can you talk crap to the fishermen? No. Be precise and to the point, right? Weigh the fish, "What do you want for it." That's a very simple approach.

How did I get into it? I'm not chasing any status. I'm looking for that solution that allow probably as a result of people saying, "Okay, we'll put you in the Hall of Fame or we will rank you in such and such way." Great. None of those rankings would feed my family, or would allow me resources to continue my research, my study.

It's about what kind of a practical value I could bring to my clients or to people around the world, or they could learn from me, reading my books. And I love a very simple approach. If people have been reading my book up or been reading my article, then they could apply the material straightaway and gain from it.

Bill Murphy: Right, right.

Oleg Konovalov: Simple.

Bill Murphy: It's very, very cogent and very direct.

Oleg Konovalov: Where is fish? If, you've got a fish. Okay-

Bill Murphy: Hold on.

Oleg Konovalov: [crosstalk].

Bill Murphy: There's a little tiny reference, I think in chapter 11 to a gale storm on a trawler. You put it in there and I'm like, "Hold on, gale storm in a trawler. That's a boat and that's a storm." And I wanted you to tell me what that's all about. Tell me about this.

Oleg Konovalov: I used to be a second engineer on those trawlers. That's a trawler about 38, 40 meters long, these type of trawlers, about a year ago. Deep sea, you're actually fishing from a local area, which is between Ireland and Scotland, just a bit further north, up to the [Swalbert] area. So, you don't have much chance. You start believing in God in a matter of seconds, because you just, "Jesus." That's something you can't withstand in a matter of just like, "I'm cool. I will reach that." Particularly as you can't call anyone on mobile and say, "Hey, I need your help." No chance.

Bill Murphy: Yeah. You're in the middle of the North Sea, 40-foot waves in a hundred-foot boat and you get humble real quick.

Oleg Konovalov: Absolutely. Absolutely. You become very realistic who you are. [crosstalk].

Bill Murphy: So, talking about the book a little bit, so we've had a little bit of a North Sea experience for some businesses over the past year. And some leaders have had a big vision or some leaders think they have a big vision.

Oleg Konovalov: Aha!

Bill Murphy: Which I would like... it's really a two-part question. In your research, what makes a vision, a vision and withstanding unforeseen events and stormy seas?

Oleg Konovalov: Great. Let's put it in a simple way first, goal. This is something we could achieve and that's it. It's done. I want to lose three kilos of weight by 1st of March, I have done it, fix it. I don't need to do anything else. Just to keep it, okay. That's a goal. Regardless of how great this goal is.

Mission statement, it's actually a side effect of vision. So more or less it's what kind of a social impact our activity would have on society because none of the mission statements which actually are written and I could say, "Okay, employ a blogger for a hundred dollars and he would write you a nice couple of sentences. You could stick them on a wall, but who would believe it?"

It doesn't have practicality. It doesn't have functions. It just a nice few words. Vision is it construct, therefore it must withstand six criteria, which is stimulus, because you're acting for people and with people. If people don't see any benefit for it, why they should respond to that stimulus?

That if many of those "great leaders", they're saying, "Oh, I have a great vision." No, it's they have great personal ambitions, because it's nothing for people. If somebody is saying, "I want to be number one in the world in something, who would care about this? No one. It's that person's ambitions. It's ego. Ego kills vision instantly.

Bill Murphy: Ego kills vision.

Oleg Konovalov: Yeah. Instantly, because vision is about what I do for people in a great sense. It reflects empathy, it reflects you care for them. You're solving their problem not yours, because your problem is your problem. It must be really scalable. I had a great conversation with Fasie [Farahey]. He was he's one of the inventors of SaaS. You probably know him.

Bill Murphy: Of Software as a Service?

Oleg Konovalov: Yeah.

Bill Murphy: Okay, SaaS. Yeah.

Oleg Konovalov: Yeah. I had a great conversation with Garry Ridge, who is the Chairman and CEO of WD-40, this famous company. They're all saying, "My vision doesn't have a period [inaudible]." Simple. It always has a potential for extension. Garry recently said to me, "Look, market grows if the value of your product grows." it's not about trying to spread yourself thinly across the globe and trying then pull up all these loose ends. No. Add more value and it will grow.

It's about spotlight, whose skin is in the game? Visionary is on a spotlight like on Broadway for 24/seven, 365 days a week, a year. Sorry. Because you're putting your skin in the game and you're accepting responsibility because you're impacting people's lives, your employees, your family, their family, society, customers, all of them.

Bill Murphy: The vision has a spotlight. You said that-

Oleg Konovalov: Absolutely.

Bill Murphy: Now you interviewed 19 leaders, is that correct? 19?

Oleg Konovalov: Yeah. That was just to put the story, but of course I had conversations with a much greater number of people. I would say that Koran is about 80,000 words itself, you know just my database is more than 200,000 words, so I dig quite deep.

Bill Murphy: Wow. So you're really looking for... Now, one of the things that I was going to ask you about was the difference between a vision and a mission? And someone had said to me that finally stuck of what truly was a vision statement, was that it is potentially not achievable in this lifetime. Someone said it's a horizon that your-

Oleg Konovalov: Constantly moving.

Bill Murphy: When you're in the trawler, and you're going towards the horizon, it's constantly going... it's ahead of you. You can't reach it. It's an ambition that's... Is that true?

Oleg Konovalov: It's absolutely true. Vision is aspiration for the future that we strive to make a reality today. More or less, it's a huge practical space in a future multidimensional space. And so, you're trying to achieve it at the same time it grows. And therefore, it's about scale. It grows, grows. If you can't achieve it completely, that's it, it's gone. It's executed. It's about improving, improving.

Bill Murphy: Got it. So, when Elon Musk wants to go to Mars, is that a vision or is that a moonshot? Is that... Okay.

Oleg Konovalov: No, it's a great vision and I'm absolutely confident that he has something already on his mind. Don't get me wrong. I was promising myself, "Okay. This is the last books that I wrote. No, that's it. Nothing more. Pen down. That's it." Well, within couple of weeks I'm thinking, "I have a great idea to extend it."

That's the same because you explore something new, something tremendously interesting, and it attracts people. It has huge magnitude. People will want to live in that little new planet. They want to be there. So, you must give them more.

Bill Murphy: Interesting. Have you heard of Jean-Claude Biver? The CEO of Hublot watches?

Oleg Konovalov: No, I know about these watches, but I don't know this guy.

Bill Murphy: It's interesting, when we talk about vision, one of your quotes was vision... What's the difference between an ordinary and visionary leadership? And that was one of the questions I had for you is, what's the difference between someone who has an ordinary vision? Because I think this is a good time for a lot of people listening with like, "Well, I think I have a vision but is it any good? How do you know if it's any good?"

Oleg Konovalov: First of all, I was shocked just going through my data, there's less than 0.1% of modern leaders have vision.

Bill Murphy: How many percent?

Oleg Konovalov: 0.1.

Bill Murphy: 0.1

Oleg Konovalov: Less than 0.1, actually less than one in 10,000 leaders, not just people, leaders have vision.

Bill Murphy: Really.

Oleg Konovalov: That affects our understanding of real leadership in a very big way, because we think of leadership as managing tasks, solving problems around us. We are frightening midges all the time, but problems are countless around us. What kind of a solution? Because if I'm a visionary leader, I'm showing people that great destination in that bright future where people want to be, and they want me to lead these people there.

What happens? We are betting too much on consensus. We're saying, "Oh yeah, I need to please everyone. I need to be nice to everyone." Then no chance you would lead people into the future. You would be pleasing them but pleases are faceless. I remember and I appreciate leaders who put me somewhere far.

Bill Murphy: You know, it's so funny in the US right now, that would be the political correctness of gaining consensus.

Oleg Konovalov: Yeah. Yeah. It's not only in the US, it's everywhere.

Bill Murphy: Everywhere, okay.

Oleg Konovalov: You must be nice, but then let's have a look, Steve Jobs, would Apple be today's Apple if Steve Jobs would be pleasing people?

Bill Murphy: Yeah, no, absolutely. No, no, you wouldn't. In Amazon, nobody knows this. They want to focus on Bezos, but they don't realize you have to work 80 hours a week to even qualify for promotion. You don't really see what's behind or going on.

Even Elon, he talks about the fact that, and he's public about it, and he's true, working a hundred hours a week, he goes, "I can get done in three months with my teams what takes other companies two, three, four, a lifetime, because I'm not nice about it. I'm actually working quite hard on this big vision," but I'd love to get your comments on that.

Oleg Konovalov: I was listening one of the interviews of Jack Ma and he said some things that stroke me. I said, "We have done, and we've worked hard in what we have done in 17 years, the same amount of work that normal corporation does in 75 years."

But here comes a very interesting point. When you have a clear vision, you know your direction, you're making people free in terms of enabling decision-making, because people to have a good decision-making, you must make people free by giving some direction.

If I don't know where I'm going, I'm better going to choice. And it's all around. It's almost to extent where a CEO is choosing the color of the paper for the office, it's stupidity. You're wasting your energy; you're wasting your time. You could work a hundred hours a week, but it would not be effective.

And then I think, you don't need much resources. You need less resources when you have a clear vision, because you clearly know what you need. You've been watching as a Shark Tank, this program, it's in the US, in Australia. Dragon Den's in the UK. I'm shocked when quite mature entrepreneurs coming on that show asking for a certain amount of money in exchange for certain percentage of equity. And when they ask, "Why do you need this money?" They have difficulty answering it.

So, they're betting on their luck. But when you know, clearly, "Okay, I have a vision. I have something to build, I need such and such amount of money. I need this type or kind of employees to be in the company." I could clearly communicate what I need. I fully understand what kind of support I need. So, you become extremely effective. You not not wasting your energy. Otherwise, you becoming like a stupid girl that puts a fur coat flying Florida, in the summer.

Bill Murphy: I've been really trying to understand how high-performance leaders and I like exploring the far end of the continuum so that I clearly know what's on the edge. So that's the Jack Ma, the Elon, the Bezos. You look at everybody's got the same amount of time in a day. So, when you look at what human beings can get can accomplish, it really doesn't make sense how one human being can outperform the other so dramatically.

Even if you take out Pareto's Distribution, it's just stunning that... But then your point in this book, which I thought was very powerful, and I think I want people to get this because I'm still struggling with it, but I know it's true. Is visionaries manage energy, not time. And because there's an infinite energy, if... Well, I'd love to get your comments on that.

Oleg Konovalov: Yes. Energy is more important than time, because it immediately reflects on a quality of execution. It immediately impacts what kind of effort you're putting into it. Think, how much time do I need to write a book? Is it a clear number of hours, or is it about effort? It's about effort and so energy, what I will put to make it really great book.

Bill Murphy: And not scattered energy. It's a focused clarity.

Oleg Konovalov: Absolutely.

Bill Murphy: Which is definitely different than a wide open energy that's-

Oleg Konovalov: No. And so I keep my energy very clean. I don't accept any waste talkings. I don't want to talk on a phone for hours about nothing. It's very focused energy. Absolutely pure energy. It's about consistent quality. And in the same case, it's about you becoming, not just motivated, you become a source of inspiration. You are inspired by your vision and you're becoming a source of inspiration for others.

And inspiration has a great power because people say, "Yes, I really need it." When we're talking about time. "Okay. I don't have much time today to go to a gym because I was late and therefore, I don't have those two hours, but I have one and a half hour." Come on, go to a gym, do 40 minutes really cool exercise, and you will achieve your result.

Great. "I don't have much energy." I will tell you; I was writing an article for Indian Management Magazine recently. It's straight after Christmas holiday, and I was so relaxed, and I was just pushing myself. "Well, I don't want to..." Typical story. Finally, I just said to myself, "Okay, if I will write a section, if I write at [two]. I could do it. Yes, I have done. It's perfectly on time. I'm happy with the quality." It's about energy I'm getting from myself. You can't control the time. Time is a very bad metric.

You can't correlate energy and values because I value something and therefore, I would put all my energy, all my effort to keep that value going. But you can't correlate values and time, because you can't serve customer in a good way. Imagine you're coming to a doctor for an appointment, and you have a serious problem, but the doctor says to you within 15 minutes, "Sorry, I can't serve you anymore. We ran out of time." What would you feel?

Or are you saying at the end of the day to your wife, "I can't kiss you because I don't have the right time for this."

Bill Murphy: Yeah. So, you don't find-

Oleg Konovalov: It's about energy and the what you do.

Bill Murphy: So, you rarely see when your interviews and your research is visionaries talking about task constraints, time constraints, they have a much... What you're saying is they have a wider landscape that-

Oleg Konovalov: Solutions, solutions. It's their main concern. And if will take more time to find a better solution, they will ignore the time factor. They will focus on that. They would lead and they will spearhead their teams on that.

Bill Murphy: That's a really interesting cognitive skill that I've been really personally very aware of recently. I, for example, when I walk into my business, which I think any leader can relate to this. When I walk into my business, I'm staring at what is. I'm staring at the current creation that has been put together. And if I'm unhappy with that, because there's a gap between where I want to go and what is, I cognitively, my brain gets focused on those tasks, those problems areas.

But however, when I'm outside of the business and I'm envisioning the future, my brain can hang on to that much more easily because I'm not staring at what is. And so, I was curious in your research, have you found different ways? Because there's Chapter 11, you get into how these guys think, and I'm curious what you found.

Oleg Konovalov: Yeah, because it's not about looking for problems to solve. It's about solutions, but solutions are always beyond the problems. You know, we are the kings of the problems with all of us. We are very good at solving problems, but our life cannot be judged by a number of problems we have solved, it's about number of solutions we have found. I have made my family happier, or I have created something important. And regardless of that scale of that solution, it doesn't matter.

Somebody may get it in the family scale or neighborhood scale, or somebody made it on a global scale. Doesn't matter. It's about solution that people really appreciate. But if you start solving problems, you'll solve one problem. It's leading to another problem. So, you're chasing them, and they start chasing you.

Bill Murphy: Okay, if you start chasing problems they start chasing you. Okay.

Oleg Konovalov: Yeah. You're assigning very human properties to that problems. You're saying, "Oh, that's a very interesting problem, I need to solve it. How problem can be interesting? Come on, fix it and go further." You know, but we become, be loving them. People love giving their problems to others and even they don't want to be involved in solving their own problems. They're really good at this.

Bill Murphy: Are visionaries able to, when they have a vision, is there... Have you found in your research that people... there isn't necessarily a solution yet. So, is there a certain undefined quality that they need to have the team collaborate or multiple teams or partners collaborate on to ultimately find the solution?

Oleg Konovalov: Yes. And what I'm always saying is you must have a courage. You must really have a courage to think boldly, how to find that solution. Even if you don't see it yet, you still have a courage to go further, but the leader's courage is important, but a team's courage is tons more important. And the same case. What happens in real life? Most of our fears are given to us by others. You can't do this way. You can't go this route. You shouldn't be thinking this way. Why?

I had a conversation, it was a number of people about a simple solution, particularly those who are involved in driverless cars and those artificial intelligence and all this augmented reality. They're thinking quite boldly, otherwise they can't create it, otherwise we're still would be using horses and carriages.

Bill Murphy: Yeah, right.

Oleg Konovalov: It's a matter of trying. You could encourage your team, even if something went wrong, you're saying, "Okay guys, we have tried. We know that should be shaped differently. Go on, be brave."

Bill Murphy: You know, bravery and courage, I was talking to a neuroscientist about this recently. Bravery and courage are a different part of the brain than fearlessness.

Oleg Konovalov: Absolutely.

Bill Murphy: Fearless fear-

Oleg Konovalov: Fear is a normal reflex, but courage is a skill. Did I was scared to be at sea facing those gales? Of course. "Oh, Whoa." Facing gale [inaudible] for the first time. Then I was facing like, it was about gale nine on a small trawler, 18 meters long trawler around Shetland Islands.

Bill Murphy: Ooh.

Oleg Konovalov: I was scared to shit. You can't do much. You can't jump from the boat, just say, "Sorry guys. I'm off on shore." No way. You're just learning it in a very, very tough way. And then you say, "Okay, normal. Cool." You're becoming the master of the waves. You keep working with a normal pace. No worries. "Okay. Wave coming. Okay, thank you. I'll get wet. Okay, who cares?" That's fine. It's a skill that we should train. You should encourage in people.

Bill Murphy: I think that's really, really a good point that you're making because that, after talking to the scientists, they've literally located parts of the brain which are the part that actually is your bravery circuit. And when you actually face that obstacle and continue to lean into it, that's actually like you're saying, a muscle, it's a brain muscle.

Oleg Konovalov: Think of large corporations, Nokia. They lost the game. Why? Because they were scared of themselves. We don't want to think about platforms. We're still relying on a really hard stuff. Was it difficult to understand? No, but they were afraid to do something different from what they have done before.

Bill Murphy: Yeah. So that corporate antibodies took over.

Oleg Konovalov: I could tell you, there is no such term as a thought leader in Russian language.

Bill Murphy: A though leader, okay in the Russian... Oh, interesting.

Oleg Konovalov: No, there is no direct translation and therefore I'm just like in Russia, I'm saying, "Okay, yes. I'm a thinker and I'm a consultant. Just like trying to dress it up in a different way. If I would be following those, call it Russian habits, where I would be?

Bill Murphy: Right, right. You've had to redefine the lexicon that you use.

Oleg Konovalov: Absolutely. And most people think in Russia, "Why do you write in English?" because all my books are written in English. They're published in the US, in the UK, in different countries, but they're all written in English.

"You should write in Russian." I say, "No, I am thinking differently."

Bill Murphy: See, that's what I find so interesting is that you are a by-product, we're all by-products of our past. Yet you've leapfrogged even culturally outside of the lexicon of being a thought leader. I find that interesting.

Oleg Konovalov: Yeah. So, you must just think yourself, "Okay. Are you staying in your comfort zone?", because even when you're creating your vision, it's very interesting process. You're going into uncertainty, but vision is the most certain thing in our uncertain life. Okay. But I still uncertainty. You're going through it because you want to achieve a certain level of success or achieve something. When you achieved it, you'll be coming into a very nice soft spot, because it's comfort zone. I achieved something. Bravo. Great. But if you would not continue, that comfort zone will suck you in as a swamp.

How many companies achieved a certain level of success within like three, five, six years of their existence? They were quite successful, and then they're gone, because they relied on that comfort? Vision doesn't tolerate that comfort.

Bill Murphy: Yeah. So, the human, the natural human tendency to be addicted to comfort.

Oleg Konovalov: Yeah.

Bill Murphy: I mean, we have been striving. That's what's made us so successful as a species is, we're quite comfortable. You and I are both in air-conditioned environments, and a hundred years ago, we would not have been in an air-conditioned environment. Our bodies were used to that level of discomfort. So, you're saying that a visionary person has to have a different relationship with comfort and discomfort?

Oleg Konovalov: Absolutely. Absolutely. And therefore, it's immediately correlated to the way they take things in a very simple way. They're not about really some fancy things. They're very simple in the way they live, in the way they talk, in the way they are. They're very structured because they fully understand, "Okay, that could be difficult. That's okay. That's not easy. That's fine. You know, that's a challenge. Okay. I got a smack in the face. Cool. Thank you. I will get up and I will go forward. That's fine."

Bill Murphy: It's a very, very different, and I find that very interesting because I think a lot of us associate the visionary with the one leader at the top. And I'm curious if you found that the individual leaders underneath can have a personal vision.

Oleg Konovalov: I must make others visionaries. This is my duty. Think of a Google. Sergey Brin is not in execution anymore. He was removed. But he made his team of visionaries. And those guys are still driving Google quite successfully. It's if I would not make my team understanding vision and how to work with it, they wouldn't support me because for them, this would be something out of the blue, a little bit of a miracle, abracadabra. "Are we buying that vision? Yeah." Nodding their heads, but nothing else in [inaudible]. I must make them visionaries. I need their energy.

Bill Murphy: Right, right. Absolutely. And that's almost like a free, exponential energy because it breaks through the constraints in time.

Oleg Konovalov: For instance, let's talk large company with branches in different countries. If the people in those branches don't understand the overall vision of that company, would they be effective in contributing to that vision? No, they would be working like slaves, without putting much meaning into their work. And they were saying, "Oh yeah, that's clever guys from the head office that said us to do so, but why? We don't understand, therefore, we're just like, 'Ugh,' from nine to five." So, commitment.

Bill Murphy: So, is that why if point 0.1% of leaders are visionary, where does it fall apart? Why is there such a vast number of leaders that are just plain-

Oleg Konovalov: We've never been trained. We've never been taught how to be visionary. We still assume that reason is somebody very gifted. But it's about focused thinking. I do offer in my book, it's the full process, how to create vision, how to grow as a visionary leader, how to test the vision in terms of viability and practicality, how to communicate and share vision, how to execute it, how to revitalize. It's a process.

Therefore, they called me the DaVinci of Visionary Leadership because it took years to find that golden ratio of vision and make it accessible to all. It's not about being gifted. As Carl Jung said, "Until we make unconscious conscious, we will consider it as leading our life, and we will call it fate."

No. It's about us defining that future, creating that future, putting our signature on that future, being here now. It's very, very different, but it sees a competence.

Bill Murphy: So, that's the meat of the... The title, A Visionary Code, and I know there was the DaVinci Code and there was a story that you could tell about what, I guess someone in the 1500s talked about this code, and maybe you can talk about how that DaVinci type process is how you're grounding this book and the execution of teaching.

Oleg Konovalov: It was a number of questions that I have asked myself working on this project, but eventually it came to a simple idea. Vision is the most beautiful form of thinking about the future that we could make reality. But what defines beauty? What is that golden ratio? And how to make it real practical for everyone would be facing a great vision, say "I wanted that aha moment. I want to be with it. I want to be associated with it. I want to put something into it to make it even bigger."

Bill Murphy: From a two-dimensional reality to something that's multi-dimensional.

Oleg Konovalov: Yes. Even if I think of four-dimensional reality, which is not very easy for the common people, but it's still a lot, but even in the sake of about five-dimensional reality, adding how new generation of people are passing through us, adding more dimensions to it, make it the greatest legacy we could leave for the next generation.

Bill Murphy: Yeah. Well, even when you talk about vision, what you're trying to break down is, instead of it just being words on a paper and people really not buying into it, because they really don't understand and can't ground the words on a paper, on this two-dimensional. One of the big things about that strikes me is that DaVinci, you're called the DaVinci Visionary of Leadership.

Well, what DaVinci did is he took that a ratio and he made it two-dimensional, so you could feel it from multiple angles. And ultimately, you talked about Sergey Brin, really pushing that down into his team so that it wasn't just whatever their do no evil or whatever it was then, but he had them feel it so they could execute on it.

You must make your vision, a collective property as quickly as possible to keep it growing, to give it life. You know, if you keep it for yourself, imagine even the famous artists would paint a famous or a great picture and hide it in the carport, who will enjoy it? It must be shared, and it must be really appreciated. And therefore, people would be willing to, yes, go on it, on that trip, on that boat, on that journey, they want to be with it.

They would be easy to communicate it. They will be coming back home from their office, and instead of when family asking, "What do you do in your office?"

"Well, I don't know much. I just do the space."

You remember that famous story? When Kennedy came to NASA, and they asked John F., "What do you do?"

"I'm helping to send a man to the moon." It was clear understanding of what these people about. Therefore, these janitors probably coming back home from the shift, and saying to his wife, "I'm helping to send a man to the moon."

That's a great understand. You don't need much. It's simple and it's straightforward.

Bill Murphy: There's another story about a similar theme in cathedrals in Europe. When a priest was walking along the street and asked the bricklayer what he's building, because these monuments could take hundreds of years to put together a cathedral. One bricklayer said he's putting bricks on a wall. The other bricklayer said he's building a cathedral for God. He had a firm understanding of the vision of the project.

Oleg Konovalov: Exactly. Brilliant story, I love it. Excellent story.

Bill Murphy: Very, very interesting. And what's been popular in the US, and I'm sure, I'd be curious if it's popular in the world, and you'd be able to tell me, is this concept of people used the word "servant leadership".

Oleg Konovalov: [crosstalk] people.

Bill Murphy: I'm curious where that slots in to how you're framing... because you have this hundreds of people you've talked to about this topic. How does servant leadership mix with vision and execution on vision and teaching others how to be visionary?

Oleg Konovalov: Fits perfectly well for a simple reason. As a visionary, I serve people and their needs, but I don't please them.

Bill Murphy: Oh. See that... I'll let you continue.

Oleg Konovalov: I might be rough taking them somewhere further down line, but I am not pleasing them. Imagine a Viking boat sailing from Scandinavia, somewhere to whatever they... France, or England, or Ireland. And half of the crew would be saying, ["Canuck], we're not happy with something."

And we're saying, "Hey guys, we want to live better life. Keep your mouth shut. Let's move. You will enjoy it."

"Okay, let's have fun." Well, that's might be rough metaphor, but in fact, I'm taking that responsibility to make people life better. I'm putting them on that red carpet now.

Bill Murphy: I think that that is huge, is I think a lot of leaders, that's a huge differentiator is how much you care about other people's opinion of you and/or your vision. There's an extraordinary ability to believe in your vision, but then also to be able to take the headwinds that come at you from others that either question it, think you're crazy for having it, and that-

Oleg Konovalov: Think of a very simple approach. Young guys, youngsters, boys and girls, they don't know what kind of a path to find, and what they do, for instance, young girl, found and met a nice young guy and she's calling her friends and asking, "What do you think?"

They think, "Oh yeah, he is okay." And she continues through those [inaudible]. If they think, "Oh no, he's dodgy." And they stop. It's about wrong public opinion and that young people not understanding what they after. But public opinion is often is opinion of those who've never been asked.

Bill Murphy: I think potentially the strategic advantage for a lot of businesses moving forward is how clear the founding story, or the leader, or the person that's running that division or that and how unshackled they are, either from board's opinion or from external voices. That they can just have that clarity without necessarily being swayed by political correctness or things of that nature.

Oleg Konovalov: Bill, it's very simple. We are all enthusiastic, unless we are responsible. Think, for instance, today those fancy Zoom meetings, conferences. You can see 30, 40, 50 people on a screen. They're all smiling, they're saying, "Yeah, yeah." You say, "Okay guys, who will take care of that?" And the screens, all screens then go blank, because they're all enthusiastic unless it comes to real execution. A real effort and real responsibility.

None of the public opinion or who stands behind that public opinion? Will they take charge? Will they commit themself? Will they feel responsible? No. It's about direct responsibility of what you do. And so, with people around you. We often assume control is most critical thing in organization. Control is an illusion unless the people feel being responsible themselves.

Bill Murphy: Yeah, and that goes to you're never going to be able to control people, but can you inspire them with your vision? Can you inspire them with leadership? That's the world we're in today, moving forward. And it's critical.

Oleg Konovalov: It's still about servant leadership. It's a higher version, a much greater version of servant leadership. But it's about taking us further into the future and making us creators, being visionaries. Instead of being servants, so being grounded only to the today reality.

Bill Murphy: Yes, and one of the big things you mentioned up front was, is this an ego driven project, which is self-serving ultimately? Or is it going to, I like the word "WIFM", W-I-F-M, what's in it for me, from the customer, from the end user. What's WIFM, does it serve the need of the end person?

This has been fascinating, Oleg. I think this is an amazing book and what a project to tackle. Vision, to tackle vision as a project and I highly encourage anybody listening to... On the show notes, there'll be a link too, so you can go and buy it on Amazon.

What's the best way for people to reach out to you, Oleg, to communicate?

Oleg Konovalov: I'm happy to talk with people. Happy to help with vision. They can find me on LinkedIn. They could find me, so why website is contact on olegkonovalov.com. Happy to help, happy to support.

Bill Murphy: Great. We'll make sure that we get the word out for you. Is there anything in particular that you wanted to say that as I was talking, you're like, "I hope he'll ask me this question. I hope he gives me an opportunity to make this point."? If you have anything that came to mind that you'd like to end with, I can give you that opportunity.

Oleg Konovalov: In fact, we are all visionaries. We're all visionaries and it's a matter how to develop it within you and make it real practical competence. But a very important saying is, "People are afraid of future, people are afraid of vision because it's too big and therefore..." But what I'm saying is, don't allow anyone to silence your vision, because great vision will define the highest purpose of your life and your business. Don't allow anyone to silence it.

Bill Murphy: I love that. Don't allow anybody to silence our higher purpose and vision for your life.

Oleg Konovalov: [crosstalk].

Bill Murphy: Well Oleg, this is powerful. I hope you have a great day in Russia. Enjoy the snow. I wish we had a little snow here in the United States, in Maryland.

Oleg Konovalov: Thank you.

Bill Murphy: Fantastic.

Oleg Konovalov: I really enjoyed the conversation. Thank you very much.

Bill Murphy: Okay. Talk to you soon, thank you.

Oleg Konovalov: Bye.