

Take on Board

Transcript – Lessons from the Larapinta + Third Birthday celebrations!



Helga Svendsen 0:00

Hello fabulous take on board community and welcome to this special third birthday celebratory episode of The take on board Podcast. Today we'll do two things. Firstly, we'll open with some of the words from the take on board community at our third birthday party. And then in the second part, we'll get into the episode which is some of my reflections on governance. Prompted by my recent trip to the Northern Territory. Yes, governance reflections on a hike. I truly am a governance nerd. As always, before I start, I'd like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which this has been recorded. They Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation, and pay respects to elder's past and present. Given its NAIDOC week in Australia, this is even more important. National NAIDOC Week celebrations are held across Australia in the first week of July each year. To celebrate and recognize the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. NAIDOC Week is an opportunity for all Australians to learn about First Nations cultures and histories and participate in celebrations of the oldest continuous living cultures on earth. You can support and get to know your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through activities and events held across the country. So I'm going to put a link in the show notes to all of those events. Now, as I mentioned, the second part of this podcast is my reflections on governance after doing some walking on the Larapinta Trail in Northern Territory. So whilst this was recorded on Wurundjeri land, I also pay my respects to the Arunta people on whose land I walked during that week. And the Arlen Gu people on whose land I spent some time at Uluru and Kata Tjuta, just afterwards. Okay, so let's get this underway. The first part of this episode is sharing some of our take on board birthday party. As you probably know, take on board events up all about connecting with other members of the take on board community, we always start with some introductory breakout rooms. And then because I'm not in those discussions, I always asked for people to give some highlights. I love the diversity of topics they discuss. So let me give you a couple of examples from the party. First up, we're hearing from Philippa Dobbin.

Phillipa Dobbin 2:25

So I met Carolyn, Bronwyn and Karen, we had a fantastic conversation about the difference between AICD your organisation and Women on Boards, and what the value is in all three of them and our experiences with those. And then we segwayed into fantastic, passionate discussion about psychological safety in the boardroom. So Carolyn's work in the past, and how she's now working with an organisation and with respect to diversity and inclusion. So those were the things that we

covered and we didn't really get to talk about until so. Then we talked about how wonderful it is that videoconferencing has opened up geographic regions, and we're all from different parts of the country. And indeed, that makes it all even more special for us to be able to grow with each other.

Helga Svendsen 3:11

And this from Leanne Mulcahy, who serves on the board of Northeast water and chairs, the Victorian local governance authorities governance and risk committee

Leanne Mulcahy 3:20

Agreed to congratulate Andrea on her first board role. So very well done. That's awesome. I was with Mary and Sally as well. And we spoke about the importance of I'm paraphrasing this but diversity of experience around board tables. So not to feel intimidated because you don't have legal or whatever it is, you know, and everyone brings something of value to the board table. And we're all at different places in our journey of development. And that's where we spoke about the different courses and the different availability programs, you know, that are available to us and suitors that different times.

Helga Svendsen 3:58

And this one from Cris Parker. Note that Cris has already been a guest on the podcast about ethics, which he touches on here. So I'll make sure I put a link to the two episodes that she's been on in the show notes. Here's what Chris had to say. Hi, everyone.

Cris Parker 4:13

So I was in a room with Angela and Sarah, and Alicia. And we jumped pretty quickly to diversity two, which led us into the conversation about the overturn of Roe versus Wade. So we went way off, but we did start like really very well. And we sort of addressed those issues and worked out where we're from and there's mixed heritage in the room, which is really rich and wonderful, but then jumps very quickly into discussing women. Angela is in a position. Sorry, I'm throwing her under the bus is in a position where she can reflect in a male dominated industry which has just come out of and reflect how powerless she was when she was a younger person. And then it's actually really wonderful to see women and young women now feeling more confident with their voice. And that led us to the Roe versus Wade overturn. And what impact is that going to have a women in the United States are generally will it be a positive thing? And also then looking, actually, at least your spawn in India. So sort of addressing culturally what that was like for women there. And my name is Cris. And I am I work I'm an ethicist. I work in ethics, and I sit on some advisory boards as an ethicist.

Helga Svendsen 5:30

And finally, this is Leonie Morgan. And a special shout out to Leonie, who's been part of the take on board community since day.in. fact probably before that. So it was Leonie, who actually prompted the take on board accelerator program. And she was in our first group of that program. She's an all round superstar. So here's what she shared. So

Leonie Morgan 5:50

I was in a group with Jo and then all and Rachel, and only only, you know, on a couple of boards, some Holmesglen TAFE and Fixed Screen, which is Victoria's film, television and games agency, we found those sort of things, and Emily's list. And we spoke a bit about what we've done, what why we're here and everyone was here, because we really love you while you and we love the community that you've built up, that we also talked about, Well, Jared talked us through her had challenging conversations. And I found that really useful, because often I'm a bit nervous about challenging conversations. And Joe talks from her own experience of having a great ending to a challenging conversation today. And her principle was all through the challenging conversations to be kind.

Helga Svendsen 6:42

People may have heard me talk about this before, but I'm a bit of a fan of Kim Scott's radical candor. framework. And for her it's communicating directly and with care. Similar from it being about kindness and care, I always say be direct, but rapidly love.

We talked about networking, and how we want to do it. Well. This is Angela Kranjcic, reflecting on what's important to her in a network,

Angela Kranjcic 7:07

Feeling ported and introducing people into other people, you know, sort of like what we're doing now and here. And I can't remember who just said, you know, we all have so many different backgrounds in our, in our careers, or, you know, even in the original catch up wheel wheel for different continents. So you know, those sorts of things, as you know, what's important, everyone is different.

Helga Svendsen 7:29

And on the same topic from Rachel de Gruchy

Rachel de Gruchy 7:32

I found in my career that you sort of stay very narrowly focused on your own industry and issues around it. So the opportunity to meet people from different industries, if you work in the private sector to interact with people, for public or not for profit, it just gives you a much wider understanding and a bigger perspective on what's going on. And I found that that's really been invaluable.

Helga Svendsen 7:57

And again, from Philippa Dobbin, who we heard earlier.

Phillipa Dobbin 8:00

something that I've reflected on in the last couple of months, I've come out of 30 years in the corporate world, and started on my own. And one thing I find really enlightening is, every network I've been involved with, or every person I've met over a cup of coffee has led me to the next person, everybody wants you to be successful. Everybody's desperate for you to be successful. And it's such an interesting contrast to being in the corporate world where it's competitive, and you're only as good as what you did last week. And you know, I'm not saying it's a bad thing, but it's it's really stifles your desire and your ability to be the best you can be. I think some of those, say, I just find we've all come from different backgrounds, we're all learning from each other. We've all got something to contribute, we seem to have a lot in common, but also we want each other to be successful. And we're generous and very expansive. And I just, it's just a bit of an aha moment. I had a month or so back. And it's it's fantastic. I really, so whether or not you're in employment, whether or not you're on a board, I think these events and this this type of network is absolutely crucial in helping us to be successful because we just need sometimes somebody to be in our corner.

Helga Svendsen 9:14

Yeah. Oh, I feel that that is such a beautiful way of saying it's so you know, and I think I love to take on board community because of its generosity and inclusiveness and bringing along in that way. You know, somebody put something in the Facebook group and all of a sudden people are putting up their hands to help out got each other's backs. I remember someone saying to me years ago, you know, the network is amazing and it's really supportive.

For Mary Muirhead, it's all about connection, which is one of my guiding words to Mary is the chair for the learning for Life Center. And here's what she had to say about connecting.

Mary Muirhead 9:51

One of my key drivers is connection. That's one of the things that really gets me going and I just have these spark idea. So these sorts of events, but I love meeting new people and hearing what they do. And that just starts me off in one for this. But I also really, what I love is also putting spaces and meeting the people. I've heard so many of you talk on podcast and it really like blows my mind to actually meet you. You're, you're like superstar. So I've really enjoyed meeting the people that I've heard and God, Oh, wow. Oh, wow. And until I meet people, they are voices. But when I meet them, it really also syncs it up and go back and listen to something again, I've got too much time on my hands, obviously. So it's the connections, meeting new people, and reading the faces to the people I've heard. I really love that. Thank you.

Helga Svendsen 10:43

We also got to welcome some new members, and give them a warm welcome just as much as those who have been around for quite a few years. So this is from Sarah Gray. And Sarah, I am so please, you're joining us for the take on board Kickstarter program.

Sarah Gray 10:57

I'm just feeling lots of gratitude, actually, because I only really got connected through Michelle Redfern about seven days ago. And lots of thoughts happened in that last seven days. But similar to what Philipa said, and also Bronwyn, everyone's just been so giving with their time, everyone I've spoken to has given me half an hour of their time to sort of direct me and like try and get on my first board position. So just really grateful to be connected with a community like this and looking forward to learning lots more over the coming months and years. So for me,

Helga Svendsen 11:27

We heard from take on board community members about what they value about the take on board community, this one from Liz Pommer,

Liz Pommer 11:35

That I felt really comfortable because how do you bring together a bright group of people always so I think Sally and I felt comfortable that just sort of jump in and start sharing things. And she showed me her book, the governance, core, sort of checklists, the the book and that was really useful to just to share some of those resources to know that she had that and that she's gotten the book on Amazon. Yay.

Helga Svendsen 12:00

And this one from take on board community members.

Unknown Speaker 12:03

Like I just love walking into a room, let's just say virtual but walking into a room and not knowing anyone. So that was amazing. That's number one. The second thing is I was just amazed to see how people who don't know each other got so comfortable so quickly. That's very difficult. And just the fact that we did it, I think says a lot to everyone how comfortable we are in this group,

Helga Svendsen 12:27

And Michelle Redfern showing us exactly what this community is about.

Michelle Redfern 12:32

I want to introduce Leonora. So we found out that Leonora has just returned to Australia from from Asia after some years in Asia, and she's looking to expand your network. I always admire a woman who says I'm here to network, and I'm here to expand my network. So welcome back Leonora. And we'd love to Well, I would certainly love to help you expand that network.

Helga Svendsen 12:54

I couldn't resist offering the take on board community to also help out Leonora. And I reckon if you put a post in the take on board Facebook group saying you've recently returned and who's up for a coffee, I reckon you'll end up with a full calendar. And this is from Carolyn Grant. And given she spoke on the podcast about psychological safety, I really valued her words about how safe this community is.

Carolyn Grant 13:21

That's so valuable. I think we started to come really protective of that time. So I really thank everyone for sharing their films. And also, you know, I got this sense that we're quite unselfish, that there is Israel, you know, familiarity and trying to help each other in whatever way we and that links back to the value that you've supplied to take on voice. Hell yeah. Because I think everyone started looking for different things. There were a lot of things out there, but not enough actually listening to what was happening and what we needed and your podcast and now going into the books. I think that that feels such a needed gap. Like you said, you started because it wasn't there. And I think the following is really growing because you've provided wonderful value in that time. So thank you.

Helga Svendsen 14:01

Thanks to all the take on board peeps. I think Sally sums it up pretty well here for us. How are you?

Sally Parrish 14:07

Thank you very much for the invitation today. I have really enjoyed this. I was laying in bed going, shall I because I had to get up before the kids to do it. But I'm really glad I invested the time so lovely to meet your thank you for some great chats and some really good food for thought today. Thanks, everyone. Lovely to meet you.

Helga Svendsen 14:26

And likewise from the fabulous Gretchen Scott, who's on the board of the Churchill Club.

Gretchen Scott 14:31

I want to thank you for being up in the world. And I'm really glad that I got to fall into your universe and get spun around with all these other people here. It's a real treat. And happy birthday.

Helga Svendsen 14:43

Last but not least a call to action from me at the party to you right now.

People have got either topics or guests that you know that you think might be a prion on the podcast. Please feel free to let me know. That's exactly what the podcast is about. At least by being able to explore some of those things and just hear different stories from people. Some of you will have heard this, but I created it because I wanted to hear some of the stories, and I was looking for a podcast around it, and I couldn't find it. So I thought, well, I'll do it myself. So I want to be able to share some of that stuff. So yeah, just open invitation, please feel free to share topics or speakers, or whatever ideas about who they might be able to be on the podcast, as well. And finally, with thanks from me, for being here, thank you so much for being part of the take on board community. It's one of my favorite things in the world. And thank you for helping you celebrate this morning. Yay.

Michelle, you can do that. So folks, that's it as the summit from the take on board birthday party this year, thank you so much to all those that were part of it. And those that reached out via message and gave their congratulations, thank you for being part of take on board, because without you, this

wouldn't be anything. So now let's move to part two lessons from the Larapinta. This is the third birthday celebration episode of take on board, I can't really believe it's three years. And that's three years on our it's probably another 12 months prior to that in the making. And I am super excited to be celebrating our third birthday. So thank you for being here, for being part of the take on board community, and for doing all that you do to support the podcast and to support the community. Now, if I may, even though I already know that you do a lot, if I may, can I ask for one thing, and that would be that you share the podcast with somebody, if you could share it with a board colleague, or maybe a work colleague or a friend or a family member who might be interested in governance, I would really appreciate that.

Alrighty, so some of you may know that I took a holiday Recently, there has been enough holidays over the last couple of years. And for those that have been listening for a while, you will also know that my end of year reflection, my RSVP, one of my goals for this year was to take some holidays, to take some breaks, and most importantly, to see new things. So I went to Central Australia, flew into Alice Springs to do six days of the Larapinta Trail. It was amazing. I had planned to do the root bone track in New Zealand in February, but that got cancelled because Borders was still closed. So I ended up in Central Australia, and it was just fabulous. Before I tell you about the trek, can I just say that central Australia is magnificent country. And it's impossible not to reflect on our First Nations people. Again, I've probably said this a number of times on the podcast. But in thinking about governance, which is really about the long term stewardship of organizations. The First Nations people have given us an incredible lesson in this having had continuous cultural connection to the land and the waters for 60,000 years. It's kind of hard to imagine that that is the case. But when you go out and have a look at some of the country around Central Australia, you kind of really get that impression of long term stewardship. Let me take you through the trek that we did, what I might do is take you day by day, and some of the governance lessons that I learned from that. Day one was section three of the Larapinta trek, it was a 14 and a half kilometer day and it was in the chewings range and Stanley chiasm. Now when we got started, our two guides, Johnny and Bri sat us down. And what I loved right up front was that Johnny went around the table and asked us all while we were there. And here's my first governance lesson, he was setting the vision or checking with us our vision about what we were doing there and what we wanted out of the trip. So I loved that that framed the first day and indeed the whole trip just the different reasons that people were there to do it. The other thing he did in that first briefing was, yes, we talked about risk, but he put it in a really lovely way he asked who was up for a really big day, and who was just up for a big day as opposed to a really big day. That is he was checking with us. What was our risk appetite? What was our appetite for doing things. So I thought that was a really great way of setting the scene as well.

Now day one, oh my God, it was hard. Like I said we did 14 and a half kilometers. Now I do quite a bit of hiking. I would expect that that would normally take maybe four hours, maybe five hours. No, six hours. We're out on the trail uphill, downhill, over rocks, down waterfalls, all sorts of stuff. So in fact getting up and down that dry water Fall was another thing that I really noted. And that was that we needed to look out for each other. Tim, who was one of the people kind of if it was in front or behind me at that time going up or down, but he was just there for me, you know, I was clambering

up and down. And in the end, I didn't need any help from him. But it was so lovely to know he was there. And again, I think that's a lesson for governance, we need to know our supporters are there and that they're there for us, even if we don't need them. So we did this walk out to a flat, we had lunch there, and then we came back again. And when we came back, we went into Stanley chiasm, which is this kind of two rock walls on either side of us and you walk in and there's a water hole in the middle. It's extraordinary and beautiful. And we were incredibly fortunate that when we got to the water at the end, there was nobody else there. So we could just sit in silence. And it was really just one of the most spectacular moments of the trip. So really lucky to have that on the first day. A couple of other things from day one, at the risk of sharing too much information. So showering on the trip is getting a bucket of water and going on washing. And at our camp on day one, there was this beautiful little spot set up to shower. So you get your gear off and shower with a small bucket of water out in the open air. And again, my governance lesson from that is you can do things differently, and it's still effective.

We had dinner around the fire that night. It was absolutely beautiful. We were sleeping under canvas. It was really windy. But you could hear the dingoes getting around and it was just magnificent. Bedtime was around about 7:30pm. So quite early because we're all exhausted. Oh one other thing to note around day one. In fact, every day, at the end of the day, one of our guides Bree would always prompt us on what was your favorite part of today. She was encouraging us to reflect, to have our gratitude for the good things that had happened and also help us to prepare for the next day. The second thing they did, and this is around I think strategy and planning is they would always tell us what was happening the next day. When we're having dessert. We kind of broadly knew what was happening ahead about day by day they would tell us what was happening the next day, probably so we didn't end up feeling too overwhelmed by what was coming. So day one exhausted fell into bed. It was a very windy night, but I still managed to sleep pretty well. I did consider briefly as I was lying in bed utterly exhausted, like, Can I do this? Can I really do this for six days? What if I just tell them I have COVID and go home, but luckily woke up the next morning feeling okay. So day two, section four. It was a 22 kilometer hike and it was out to Brinkley buff. So a much longer distance. But actually a shorter Walking Day, we were starting to get used to what we were doing. And it wasn't anywhere near as Rocky. It was just some long up and down and incredible views. And just a really great day's walking because people started to kind of pair off and chat and start to really get to know each other. We had lunch up on top of Brinkley's bath, which was incredible views and ran into some friends of my sister, my sister Ingrid was also doing the hike with me and we ran into someone that we both know, Francis, who was doing the hike for women probably in their 70s full pack carrying like 20 kilos and doing the whole 16 day hike. So if that doesn't tell you show your full strength that I don't know what is now my governance lesson for day two was around risk. So I'd say on day one, they checked, you know who wanted to really go for it and who didn't quite want to quite go that hard. There was two in our group windy and Tim, who you know they are the go hard or go home people. So they had gone off ahead at one part of this with the permission of the guides. And they were meant to meet as a broader look at we get too broad a look at and they're not there. So Bri had to bolt off and find them and you could see in that moment just the oh my god, okay, maybe this is not going to work out. So again, it was a good lesson in risk. It was a good lesson in assessing and reviewing risk and reviewing risk appetite and reviewing the risk framework because from there I think we stuck with them. It was only towards the end when we were heading back

home that people could split off again. So again back at the camp that night instructions for the next day, reflecting on what was awesome and another beautiful peaceful sleep. Day three. Look they were all magnificent. But day three we did section eight it was almost 19 kilometers serpentine gorge or serpentine gorge maybe and counts point. So serpentine Gorge is where we started the day. And it was just magnificent. Again, towering cliffs, beautiful little forested areas in the middle and a bit of a waterhole. And again, we were lucky enough to have this to ourselves for a very short period of time before we got started, so I took a moment there to find a quiet spot by myself and just to do my own private and silent acknowledgement of country. And for me, I really just paid attention to my feet on the ground, I like to get my boots off, bare feet on the ground sometimes, before I do an acknowledgement of country. But I'll be honest, I wasn't taking my boots off for anybody because it was too much of a rigmarole to take them off and put them on again. But regardless, even though I had my boots on, I really paid attention to my feet on the ground, and to the connection to the ground through my boots and the sounds in the silence. It wasn't, it wasn't silent, there was all sorts of sounds and birds and water and, you know, just rocks moving and so on. But it was just a beautiful moment to take that time and yeah, pay my respects to elder's past and present, and to acknowledge those traditional owners there. And they were incredible connection to the land, it was a beautiful moment for me. And that night, when we were went around the campfire, that was definitely my standout moment. Something else that stood out for me for this day, as we walked along this kind of long bluff at the top of a mountain, our guide for the day Gianni encouraged us to do part of that walk in silence, and to just observe and to reflect. And again, my governance lesson from that. If you're thinking strategically, or if you've just got hard things to think through, which often many of us do in the boardroom. Sometimes not talking it through, sometimes just walking and using your body and observing and reflecting in silence is a way to get some really good thinking done.

The other thing I noticed on this day, am I governance lessons, there was lots of taking it in turns to lead. And that's just like it should be in the boardroom. Leadership is not just for the chair, or in this instance, for the guides. Leadership is an activity, not a title. It's for everyone to take a part on. And in this trip, everyone literally stepped up. That night we were in camp, I can't remember the name of the place that we camped. But it was a beautiful little spot, although it's fair to say it was mice infested mice everywhere, in and out of tents. I fortunately didn't end up with any in my tent. But they were absolutely everywhere. And you could just hear them having a party overnight while we were trying to sleep. I did however, managed to sleep pretty well. It was however, not a long sleep. Because day four, day four was section nine of the Larapinta Trek 32 Kilometer day it rained all day. And we went along the inner lander paths and through waterfall gorge. So it was a really huge day. We started out at 5am I think we got up just after 4am We started walking in the dark in all of our waterproof stuff, head torches on and we were navigating obstacles, big rocks, and little rocks and all sorts of stuff. And again, sometimes that's our strategy fields that you're wandering along in the dark with obstacles. Sometimes you need help to get over the big rocks. I certainly did a couple of times. But eventually the dawn comes and you get to see what you're doing. So on this day, it rained most of the day. So again, it was a lesson in being prepared. I wore my waterproof over pants, I wore my raincoat and I had a pack cover on all day. And luckily I didn't get wet. But everything else around us did. One of the lessons in culture which is important for governance from that days, one of the group wasn't feeling 100% So everybody does leapt in and helped her out. Someone carried her pack

some hydrolyzed to re hydrate her came from another person, energy gel from another and we just kind of kept an eye out for her for the rest of the day. As I said it was a really long day. We hiked for about 11 or 12 hours, and I was pretty sick of it. It's got to be said by the time we got into camp. Fortunately that day, our tents were already up. And I pretty much collapsed into my slightly soggy tent and just kind of lay on my mattress recovered before I could get out and have dinner. It was a good day's hiking and we enjoyed it. But it was long and wet. Not what I expected in Central Australia.

Day five we did section 11 A of the Larapinta was about 20 kilometers along the Finke River and I gotta say after doing the big day, the day before it was just felt like a lighter day we felt like we had We had literally got over the big day. So one of our team, Bernie took the day out, she had some blisters and things weren't going well on her feet. So again, reflecting on risk reflecting on strategy reflecting on, you know, just putting one foot in front of the other except for when you can't. And taking the timeout is sometimes the right thing to do. We had a really lovely day, though, really, we all just felt lighter. There was a beautiful border crossing before lunch. So we had to take our boots off and get across the water. And I even ran into a friend of mine, Sonya law, who is on the board of me, my I knew she was in the area, because we were catching up later in the week. But it was quite surreal just to be wandering along and go, Hey, I know you. So that was lovely. So this was also the final night of our trek. And Tim, one of our members of the crew this week, he shared an activity with his on the final night that he always does on family holidays, and on team events, because he does some Sport Coaching and so on. And it was just beautiful. So I wanted to share it with you. So what he did, we're all sitting around the fire. And he said he wanted to share this activity with us. And he went around the group and gave each of us an award. Now when I say it award, it's kind of like a little filing card with some scrawled notes on it. He went around and he reflected for each of the people in the group, including the guides on some of the strengths that he had observed during the week and some of the, you know, attributes that he had observed during the week. And then he bundled it all up into an award. So for me, he reflected on my presence, he said I had a big personality, which I think I'll take in the nicest possible way. He reflected that I was purposeful in what I did. And he reflected that I was comfortable in my own skin. And he reflected on my sincerity. And he gave examples for all of this that had come out during the week, which was just glorious. So the award that I got was the SuperCoach Award, which I was pretty pleased with it must be said, and I've still got, I might even put up a photo of this in the show notes or on the website. It was just a beautiful thing to do. And I may well borrow that from him, I think at some stage in the future, to reflect on, you know, this sort of thing and people's strengths. That was just beautiful. So thank you, Tim, if you're listening, it was lovely. Day six was our final day. And again, it was a very early start. It was section 12, about a 16 kilometer hike up Mount Sonder. So we were summiting. And the idea was to get up there by sunrise. Sunrise is about 7am. It's about a two hour hike. It was about an hour's drive to get there. Actually, it might have been more than a two hour hike. Look, I can't quite remember I've probably blocked it out of my mind. But I think we're up at about 2am We will probably in the car by about 3am. And we're on the trail by about 4am. Pour that early and dark and cold. So again, if I reflect on governance or strategy, one of the things that Johnny our guide on this day did that was really fabulous was that he set expectations. Well, yes, we were getting up at the crack of world before the crack of dawn. Yes, we were hiking up a mountain. But we might not see sunrise. And he was absolutely right. We were fogged in. When we got to the top we got up there it

got light, but we couldn't see anything. We did have a beautiful cup of tea. He did bring Tim Tams that made it all better. And we did you know have a little celebration for getting up there. But there wasn't the views. But what that meant was that as we were walking down and as the fog lifted, ah, we got like just this incredible space and scenery emerged as we came down from the summit, the amazing plains, these amazing cliffs, these amazing shadows coming as the sun came up and light, it was just magnificent. And the other thing I reflect on, again, in terms of governance was in this one, we all came down at our own pace. So it was a lovely one to pace ourselves, which again, is what we often need to do in governance, what we need to do in building organizations what we need to do in developing strategy. My final kind of reflection was when we all got back in the trip carrier and we're heading back to Ellis we set up our communications for the future. So we've now got this beautiful little Whatsapp group that we can share photos in share ideas and share plans for our next trek in. Actually, I should tell you who was on the trip. So I was there with my sister, Ingrid. There was another two sisters there Ruth and Bernie. God, how would I describe them? How did I say before the two people that were really you know, going hard or going home Tim and Wendy who were just God, they just took off. They're amazing. Our guides Bree and Gianni. And so we're a small group, but really gelled extraordinarily well. And it was just, oh, it was so lovely. So, in summary, let me give you some of the lessons I learned. So there was lessons around strategy, starting with revision, that briefing at the start reflecting taking the time to reflect on what things have gone, well, taking time to reflect and, and being quiet on part of the walk. Acknowledging country is part of strategy, I think, and also setting short term, medium term and long term goals. So the guides always would just tell us what was happening the next day, which is probably our medium term goal. And then during the day, it's like, here's what will be my morning tea, here's what will be by lunch, and it was really literally one foot in front of the other, which is very much implementing a strategy. And the other thing, sometimes just do things differently, like sharing outside with a bucket lisk, there was plenty of risk lessons there, setting the risk appetite at the start making sure everybody in the group is aware of risk appetite, making sure you amend your risk approach, you know, when two people take off at the start, and then they miss the turn off? Well, you amend your risk. And say, we're going to do things a little bit differently. When one of the group's not feeling the best everyone pitches in. And again, people don't take off the front, they help carry bags and provide things that's needed. And the other thing about risk is just the many times we're allowed to go at our own pace. And the third thing that I draw together is just around culture. I've said reflection a couple of times, but the time to reflect the prompting of what was the best thing that happened today, when we're sitting around the campfire, taking it in turns to lead, working as a team when people you know, weren't feeling their best. And really ensuring sustainability. So pacing yourself was really strongly encouraged. And the other thing I really noticed from our guides is, you know, they just smooth the way for us. I mean, I know that's their job as guides, but they smooth the way making it look effortless, so that we could just get on with doing the walking. They were endlessly optimistic, they provided beautiful meals, they provided direction, even when we once lost our way in lost our direction in the rain, and they just kept us moving along. It was incredible. One final thing I wanted to reflect on. And I don't know if this is about culture, but this hike was pretty challenging. And as I may have mentioned earlier, I probably didn't do quite as much training as I should have. Yet. I've done quite a bit of hiking in the past. And what I reflected on was amazingly, I did not get any blisters, I did not get any muscle soreness, I didn't need to dip into the quite extensive stores of anti inflammatories that I had in my medical kit, because I actually did okay. Now Bernie and Ruth who were also on our trek, they were new, they've never done a multi day hike before. So they did heaps

of training heaps of training much more than I did. But there was still caught with kind of blisters, and so on. And what I just reflect on there is that muscle memory is an incredible thing. And that you can get away with a bit more once you've done some of these things a number of times before, and I think there's probably some similarities with boards. Once you've been on a board for a while, you've got more of an idea of the cadence of how a board goes. So you might not need to train quite so hard when you join a new board. Although obviously, you still need to pick up the pace, I guess when you're on a new board. The muscle memory, I guess that you get from hiking might be similar to board stuff. So I really encourage you to start as early as you can in building your board muscle memory, so that you can continue to build on that. So that's my lessons from the Larapinta. It was an absolutely spectacular trek. In fact, now that I think of it, the fabulous Dominique Hess also one of the take on board community is heading off to do Larapinta soon as well. So you might get some other reflections from her. After doing Larapinta we then headed down to Uluru and Kata Tjuta for a couple of days, which was also absolutely spectacular. So I strongly encourage you people of the take onboard community, take a holiday if you can go and see something new if you can start to build that muscle memory or use the muscle memory if you've got it. And look, I think going away is to free your mind but maybe at some stage reflecting on what some of those governance lessons might be from whatever trips you're taking as well.

So that folks wraps us up for this episode of take on board our special Birthday episode. Again, if I can ask you, I would love it. If you could share this episode with somebody you know, and help us to build the take on board community, that would be your little present to me that I would appreciate enormously. In fact, if you want to let me know, I would love that as well. I love it when I get feedback for them to take on board community. Thank you so much for being with me on this three year journey. And indeed, this one week journey that I've shared with you today, and I look forward to many more years of governance tips, tricks and advice with the take on board community. I'd also like to thank all of those fabulous people who came and celebrated the take on board third birthday party, it was so wonderful to see all of your happy shining faces and for people to reflect on the value that the take on board community is giving them. I heard gratitude up quite a bit through that. So thank you for being part of it. Folks. I also want to do a shout out to my producer, Buffy gorilla who has been with me since the start Buffy without you, this podcast just could not happen. And also to Lisa Davis who just oh my god. I don't know how she does it. She just holds everything together. Getting in touch with podcast guests. You know confirming that when they're on confirming with people coming to events, social media, everything. Buffy and Lisa, you two are absolute rockstars thank you for being here. And thank you to everybody else who's listening in today. Yay. Happy birthday to us.