

Announcer: Welcome to the Carey Nieuwhof Leadership Podcast, a podcast all about leadership, change and personal growth. The goal? To help you lead like you've never before in your church or in your business, and now your host, Carey Nieuwhof.

Carey Nieuwhof: Hi, everybody and welcome to Episode 230 of the podcast. My name is Carey Nieuwhof, and I hope our time together today helps you lead like never before. Well, I think if you listen to this podcast even occasionally or if you read some of my writing on my blog or you picked up my latest book *Didn't See It Coming*, you know that one of the core commitments that I have is to see you thriving in life and leadership and that deals with a lot of like emotional health, just all those soft issues that maybe we don't talk about enough in leadership because these are the things that I see sinking leaders, stuff like I wrote about in *Didn't See It coming*, cynicism, pride, emptiness.

Carey Nieuwhof: It's that stuff that you can't really figure out and one of the voices that has really spoken to me in the midst of all of this is Pete Scazzero because, and I've got him as a guest. He is quite well known now for his work on becoming an emotionally healthy leader and it's so good. I won't spoil it for you but Pete and I go back to a book that I read years ago when I was on vacation that kind of helped me realize, uh oh, I got work to do and so it was a real joy to be able to talk to Pete. This is a pretty honest, open conversation. It's about all that stuff like, remember when you were a young leader, and you were really excited and I know there's a lot of young leaders listening, but like, think back a year or two when you just started and maybe you had more enthusiasm than you do right now or maybe you were more hopeful or more optimistic.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, that's what I'm talking about. That's where we're going to go today, so whether you're in business, whether you're in the church space, I think this is really helpful because these conversations determine how you end, determines the kind of family you're going to raise. It determines the kind of person you're going to be, the kind of senior years you're going to have and it's just so important to me. If you work on this stuff now, oh man, great things happen so anyway Pete's written a number of books. We'll link to everything in the show notes and that sort of inspired me to write my last book, *Didn't See It Coming*, which is still months after release, number one in, well, when I was recording this, all the categories, audio book, Kindle and hardcover. Thank you so much. It's all about overcoming the seven greatest challenges, no one expects and everyone experiences, you can learn more at [didntseeitcomingbook.com](http://didntseeitcomingbook.com).

Carey Nieuwhof: Also guys, hey, it is budget season. I got two things I want to tell you about today that I think can help you immensely. First of all, what are you doing for your digital strategy? It is after almost 2019 so I really think that if you're going to engage your people maximally, you need a strategy. You talk to most churches, they're like yeah, I'm not really sure even if you have like a mobile thing, you're not sure what you're doing with it. Why not check out [pushpay.com/carey](http://pushpay.com/carey). It's more than just a mobile giving platform. First of all, you

know my conviction that I mean if you go to mobile giving, you're going to have more giving next year so there's that, but it's also about connecting with your congregation and the people you want to reach during the week. It's an engagement strategy. I love Pushpay. They do great stuff. I think they're the leader at keeping our industry on the cutting edge of technology and they have a huge heart for the church. Last year, they helped more than 7,000 customers process billions of dollars in generosity.

Carey Nieuwhof: Head on over, they got a special offer. I'm not going to tell you what it is but if you go to [pushpay.com/carey](https://pushpay.com/carey), just sign up, talk to a rep and they've got well, a special offer for listeners of this podcast. Absolutely no obligation but go to [pushpay.com/carey](https://pushpay.com/carey) to learn more and get your church into the future in 2019. Speaking of the future, it is budget season so are you thinking about how to fund your next big growth project? If you're a senior or exec pastor, maybe you're trying to hire a youth pastor, children's pastor or you got a new building project or, you know it's crunch time. You just got to save money. Remodel Health is a new technology solution that offers a unique health insurance benefits platform that's saving most churches, get this, 30% to 50% on their health insurance costs. Yeah, that's because they're really a technology company.

Carey Nieuwhof: They partnered with Medi-Share and they're an affiliate of Brotherhood Mutual so you're working with the best and on average, they're helping churches save \$60,000 to \$100,000 per year to repurpose toward projects that will help you do more for your ministry. In other words, like that's a couple staff positions right there. Visit [remodelhealth.com/carey](https://remodelhealth.com/carey), to find out more and receive a free quote and buying guide today. That's [remodelhealth.com/carey](https://remodelhealth.com/carey). By the way, Carey is spelled C-A-R-E-Y in all cases. Guys, I am so excited to dive in to my conversation with Pete Scazzero. He is an amazing leader, author. He and his wife, Geri, do incredible things and he's got real talk so this is about you. This is about your leadership because guess what? You bring you into everything you do. Hope you enjoy this conversation. Here we go.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, I'm really thrilled to have Pete, and Pete, I kind of need you to say your name because you say it with a New York accent way better than I could.

Pete Scazzero: It's Pete Scazzero.

Carey Nieuwhof: See, Scazzero. I can't quite get the A right with my Canadian accent. Anyway.

Pete Scazzero: It's an Italian thing, Carey.

Carey Nieuwhof: It's an Italian thing and a New York thing, a Queens thing?

Pete Scazzero: Yes, yes.

Carey Nieuwhof: Okay, great. Coming to us from New York City from Queens, Pete Scazzero. I have really appreciated your ministry over the years. It's got a personal impact for me as I was telling you before I turned on the mic because I took, I think your first book with me as vacation reading about the Emotionally Healthy Church and you had that nasty assessment in the middle of it where I realized I'm an emotional toddler. This is like, I think I'm three years old so I was like 35 going on three. Tell me how you got into the whole business of paying attention to the emotional health of the leader. What was your background and your story into that?

Pete Scazzero: Carey, it's not really very complicated. I got into it through pain and through crises in my own life and in my own leadership so I didn't, I wasn't like pursuing this. It was basically a wall that I could not get through based on my experience, my gifts, my network. I wasn't going to get through this wall so. At that point, I've been pastoring six, seven years, planted a church in New York City. We were growing, we were planting other churches but I realized on an external level, people were changing but not changing very deeply. Again, our context here in the inner city of New York, we're a multiracial church with about 70 plus different nations in it so as we had folks, African Americans, Latinos, old folks from all throughout Asia, Europe, et cetera, the racial tensions and dynamics were such that I realized that we were not going to reflect a multiracial body of Christ that the bible talks about. We had a vision for it but that our discipleship did not go deep enough to really change people that deeply.

Pete Scazzero: Then it was clear, we were recycling the same old problems under stress and I said there's something wrong here. It's our discipleship is not working real well and then on a personal level, my own life began to crumble. That's probably really got my attention. I was stressed out, exhausted like many other lead pastors and we had a split in one of our church plants. I found myself very angry and bitter and cursing, didn't know what to do with all that emotion side of me and then my wife was unhappy in the marriage with four kids and so God was banging at my door for a while until Geri, my wife quits and says, I'm not participating in this pathology anymore and not leaving you, but I'm not going to go to church here anymore, I'm going to go somewhere else so that's what, at that point, hit the bottom where God had my full attention. Then I was ready to go into, we call today emotionally healthy discipleship and leadership. Then I had all basically stopped, God stop, I wasn't going to, where was I going to go at this point.

Carey Nieuwhof: What were some signs that you're emotionally unhealthy? When you look back on that, before Geri quit? What were some indicators? Just so people can find themselves in the story.

Pete Scazzero: For me, I mean Geri, my wife whom I loved, was unhappy. She didn't feel loved by me. I loved her but she didn't feel it so that's always the first question. Here I am trying to love the whole world and my own wife doesn't feel it so that was number one. Number two is I was stressed. I was highly stressed, anxious. Going

way too hard, did not have any rhythm in my life and as much as I incorporated "spiritual disciplines", I was very disciplined in terms of my disciplines, but it wasn't enough. I think I leaked a lot in terms of my stuffed emotions were leaking into anger, frustration and I was clear, I was recycling the same old problems. Something was wrong. The pain is what got me moving sadly but part of it is my training as a leader had never touched on the emotional components of leadership or discipleship and so it was a whole ignored area in my life and so leading, leadership brings out all of one's gaps eventually.

Pete Scazzero: It all comes out and I had so many. I was so immature trying to raise up mothers and fathers of the faith but I was an emotional infant and that was the sad thing about it. I had great exegetically and I knew a lot of leadership stuff in the conferences and I could lead and build a church, but I was emotionally unavailable. I was really an emotional infant and it was ludicrous to think that I was going to raise up mothers and fathers of the faith and we're going to change the world. That's what's really sad and I got, I look back now Carey and I said, you know what, the evangelical world has kind of pushed me forward because I had gifts and I could lead and speak and so as far as they're concerned, I'm a poster child, a hero.

Carey Nieuwhof: You're a rockstar, yeah.

Pete Scazzero: Yeah. I'm a rockstar that's about to crash but no one's thinking about my inner life. They're just seeing the externals. That's all anybody cares about. That's what's really tragic and nobody ever asked about my marriage, how is that going? That was a nonissue for most leadership conferences. It wasn't talked about.

Carey Nieuwhof: What are some signs of emotional immaturity that people should look for?

Pete Scazzero: I would start with level of awareness, self awareness about what's going on inside of you. I just read a statistic of a, I think it's that book Emotional Intelligence 2.0, those guys who, they said that 36% of people in the workplace cannot identify their emotions easily and like you said, do you know what you feel? They're really not sure. I thought that's probably pretty accurate of most churches as well. I mean people, they don't have a theology for our humanity, for what's emotional. We have a theology that goes way back to Augustine or and that emotions are bad, spirits good, the body's bad and so I've got this kind of a neoplatonic view of life. I think it really impacts us as leaders because we actually, it's secondary. That what's important is what you do externally with what you're thinking, but not what's going on inside of you, feeling wise. I think your level of self awareness of what's going on inside of you, that's that's clearly number one. The ability to feel and to integrate your feelings into a healthy thought process.

Pete Scazzero: Then secondly is the pace of your life slowing down for Jesus. Is your life slow down enough to be with Jesus, out of what you do for Jesus? I mean that is a

critical number two. Then of course as you know, Carey, if you want to really find out how you're doing, just ask the people around you, ask them how do they experience you, and I think I was a force, sometimes a destructive force you know when I walked in a room and I don't think my presence brought great peace and joy to our team that I was leading. It was too frenetic, too anxious and I was very unaware of how, for example, my family of origin had impacted me. I was so unaware. I look back, it's sad so I've been on a journey. It's been a slow journey over 23 years now and still unfolding and it's been wonderful but I'm still on it. I mean it's not like, hey, I got it, check, but it was a turning point for me of integration that these have been the best 20, almost 23 years of my life.

Pete Scazzero: I mean it as a person, as a father, husband. I mean I've loved leadership but I had to leave in a sense of formation that I've received that I would consider very limited and constricted and it was killing me actually. I would had to leave leadership to save my soul if something hadn't happened to me.

Carey Nieuwhof: Had you continued on, the end was near or inevitable?

Pete Scazzero: Yeah, I think I would have left. I would have left and done something else. My marriage couldn't support it. I mean Geri wasn't going to participate in it. We had four small girls at the time and she didn't want to be a single mom. I don't blame her. Thank God. She saved my life. Man, I appreciate her.

Carey Nieuwhof: I don't want to be facetious here but I'm just curious. You say the key is self awareness. I agree. Daniel Goldman would agree, every counselor in the world would agree. How do you know whether you're self aware? I mean it's almost a circular thing, right, where it's like, I don't know, am I self aware? How do I know I'm self aware? If I say I'm self aware, am I actually self aware?

Pete Scazzero: Yeah, well, I mean for me, like up to that point I remember, I ended up in a therapist office, okay. Yeah, again I wasn't the kind of guy that went to a therapist's office. I mean going to a therapist was for losers you know?

Carey Nieuwhof: No, I know. It's very, your story parallels mine. I send people there, I don't go. I get it, yeah.

Pete Scazzero: When I finally got there because of pain and again, Geri forcing me to look at myself, is when I realized that I didn't really know what I felt. I knew anger. I was good at anger but I wasn't good at like, I'm sad about this or this person hurt me yesterday. I was just like let's go move on, next hill to take and then began to ask questions of my family of origin. How I grew up, which was very painful and I grew up an Italian American home and there was abuse in my family physical and some severe emotional abuse. I came into adulthood quite damaged. I came to Christ but I was carrying a load that I'd never gotten touched in my discipleship and so once I started to look at that, I started doing feeling. I journal in the morning as part of my prayer time like what am I feeling, because I was so

bad I was like, how did I feel about that conversation with Carey yesterday, in the podcast? Oh, you know what, he really pissed me off when he said this, you know.

Pete Scazzero: I couldn't tell you at the moment but I had to like practice. It's like exercising in a gym. I was just so bad at it, Geri said that to me yesterday? That was sarcastic. I had a zing to it. Oh yeah, write that down. I got to talk to her about that. It was that kind of a thing like little baby steps and I've got to look at my family of origin, how it impacted me, that was like a shock.

Carey Nieuwhof: To the extent that you're comfortable sharing, what did you learn?

Pete Scazzero: For example, again my family growing up like men didn't do feelings in the house. You just shut up and get to work and do it. My family had an extra zing to it. I think it was Italian culture, Italian American culture, you are what you do culture and so to begin to realize, oh my gosh, like what do you feel? Like shut up feel, just go do it you know and get up. Then I began to read Psalms, his scripture opened up to me like, here's David, his enormous gamut of emotions or, he's all, he's suicidal, he's joyful, he's jumping, he's happy and he says, he's feeling before God. I discovered the Psalms. I discovered Lamentations. I discovered grief and loss. Almost in the whole bible began to open up to me like I'm missing the bible. I've got a very narrow bible here and I went, oh my gosh.

Pete Scazzero: Once I got permission, I think of that, then I was like oh no, I don't do feelings because you weren't allowed to feel growing up because when you're being abused and beaten up quite a lot, on a weekly basis. You don't feel. I mean you can't feel. If you're a kid, you'll die if you feel so you have to shut all that down. Now the problem is I was an adult in my mid 30s. I'm still not feeling. How do you love if you don't feel? I mean my wife could feel it because I didn't, how do you feel? I don't know. I just, I feel good. How do you feel, you know? I was just, so you can't get close to a person who doesn't feel. Love is about feelings, right. It's connection. It's connecting, a bonding with a person, not an intellectual thing. We think the same things and so you really couldn't get close to me because I wasn't close to me. I didn't know what's going on inside of me.

Pete Scazzero: How are you going to get close to me? You can guess what's inside, it seems angry so I would, then I wouldn't lead. I have a gift of leadership but my leadership was confused and one, I didn't do conflict because I never saw it. I never saw a conflict resolved in a mature way so I would just over spiritualize things and I'd be a doormat.

Carey Nieuwhof: How would you over spiritualize things because it happens a lot in the church.

Pete Scazzero: Yeah, it happens in companies too, right. What I would do is I wouldn't address it straight up. I'm a leader. I'm setting vision. We're going forward here and then of course, you get folks who are, don't think this is a good idea. It could be something, it could be as simple as I'm leading a staff meeting and someone

wants to spend half the staff meeting praying and I want to say no, there's an agenda, here's what we're going to do in the staff meeting. Something as simple as that but rather than have a direct conversation with the person, one on one, assert myself, negotiate our differences, I call it clean fighting today or just have a clean discussion, speak clearly, respectfully, honestly. I would stuff it. I would maybe over spiritualize. I think the Lord is saying this, I throw God in there, but I would be passive aggressive. I would give people a silent treatment. I would avoid, when there was a conflict in the church, I generally would take the blame for it so let's move on because I was so uncomfortable with tension.

Pete Scazzero: I used to love versions like Jesus was a lamb going to the slaughter. I said okay, beat me up but we got to keep going here. I wasn't having an honest conversation with people about things. Something as simple as that like speaking honestly, I lied so much Carey, when I said in 1996, my life, I lied to myself about what I was feeling and what I was thinking. I lied to my wife in conversations in the bedroom. It could be in the bedroom, it could be in the kitchen because I didn't want to have conflict or tension. I think it made our church, everything from spinning vision and guys, you know it's easy to do as a leader, exaggerating, looking at data, hard data, being honest about it. Starting to be honest in 1996 was part of my revolution was being honest. That was like oh my god, I was hard and every day I said, I'm going to try it, I used to say to Geri, my wife gave me six months.

Pete Scazzero: We kind of had this second conversion and we set a three months sabbatical to begin to work out that emotional health that spiritual maturity can't be separated so let's just try to live it ourselves, personally in our marriage. Took a three to four month sabbatical, came back and Geri said to me, I give you six months, basically. I said no, I think I can do this. She said, you've changed, we've changed now and take us on early steps but we created the church here that everyone's doing it the way we have always done it and for you to walk back in that system and to think you're going to be strong enough. One of my criteria was that I would, our marriage would be first. I would lead out of our marriage. At this point, after Jesus, we made a vow, I'm going to lead out of the fullness of our marriage and if at any point you feel like the church is first, I'll resign. I made that pledge.

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow.

Pete Scazzero: I meant it. She was, I don't think you can do it and I said, I know. I said, but I'm going to give it a shot. I believe I can. I said, I will resign before I hurt you again and so of course, we'd cut our limits, became a big part of our life, theology of limits and, but it was a day by day saying and so it was a matter of changing not just ourselves, but then leading out of our inner life and out of our marriage and changing a culture. It was quite a journey. It was really was and I, but at that point I had nothing left to lose because it was awful. It was awful and I'm embarrassed. I look back, I'm like oh my gosh, Pete, like dang. Not that I haven't made any mistakes since then but the level of unawareness especially how my

past impacted my present, I just can't even believe it. The shallowness of my leadership and discipleship, and I was saying all these great things in the pulpit from scripture, but I wasn't living very much of it.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. The lying part, there's a researcher who says the average person tells about 200 lies a day, which seems crazy but everything from, hey do you like cauliflower? Sure.

Pete Scazzero: Yes.

Carey Nieuwhof: I mean little stuff. I'm not talking about lying to the IRS or the police. You're talking about like trying to get through a meeting is a great example or over spiritualizing things or telling your wife something that you know isn't true. It happens a lot in the church doesn't it? We don't tell the truth.

Pete Scazzero: Well, we want to be nice and we actually believe that if I'm nice to you that that's helping you, and we forget that we're not helping people if, it's the truth that sets us free. Now again, we're talking about we want to be respectful right, we want to be thoughtful, not imprudent and nasty, but lying is never, you're never going to build the kingdom of God by pretending that what's wrong is right and I think what happens in leadership is because we want to be liked and I did not realize, Carey, how much I wanted people's approval and validation. It was deep and again you got to go back to family of origin for that and there were some gaps in my own just developmental, didn't get validation or approval from my parents for different reasons. My mom had mental illness and my dad was emotionally unavailable so here I am like now, I can get validation from preaching and teaching and casting vision but if I have the one on one conversation with you, Carey, as someone who works for me and I got to tell you that you did a poor job, you're not going to like or I have to let you go. You're not going to like me.

Carey Nieuwhof: No, people pleasing, right?

Pete Scazzero: Yeah, so I would avoid that conversation and I'd preach more and teach more because that was, people liked me then. You're with me?

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, yeah.

Pete Scazzero: I wasn't aware of how that was a deep family of origin issue, of validation, and just memorizing a few bible verses was not going to change that.

Carey Nieuwhof: You said something very interesting that your spiritual walk, you believe in Jesus, you love him, you read the bible, you pray. Can you have a close walk with God and still be emotionally, spiritually immature? How does that work?

Pete Scazzero: Let me ask you a question. Can you love God zealously and yet people experience you as defensive, judgmental and unapproachable?

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah.

Pete Scazzero: I think that's a great question. Your question's very good. No question, I felt close to God and I would go to, I was charismatic church and so I was going to major prophetic kind of meetings and glory of God coming in a room and experiencing all that. Our church, I would say was very much like that in the early years. People came to Christ. People were healed. I really just see, I believe in miracles and so we saw amazing things happen but it was much like the book of first Corinthians. It was almost a gnostic kind of Christianity but there wasn't love and humility and brokenness, that was in the core of it all and like what Paul says, if you've got all the gifts and the power and growing a big church but you don't have this ingredient called agape, which is very supernatural, you don't really have anything. I would say whether you feel close to God is not the question. The question is, I think are people experiencing you as like Jesus, humble, approachable, soft, safe.

Pete Scazzero: That's why I was just reading today about, that if your brothers has something against you, it says, leave your gift to the altar Jesus and go and reconcile then come back to the altar and worship. We do just the opposite and I know I can always on resolve relationships, but I'm just going to keep worshiping God and I feel better and so I found myself in, I was in 10 hours of prayer meetings a week in the early years. We had so many prayer meetings. We're following the Korean model, early morning prayer once a week, Friday nights, half nights of prayer and I believe in prayer but no, is prayer enough? No. No, it's not.

Carey Nieuwhof: No, that if you're not right with people, you're not right with God.

Pete Scazzero: You can't separate the two and I think I kept, even though I, it just got separated from me and slowly over time in building the church and even who I looked for it, who was going to hire, who are going to be key leaders. My whole criteria was externally, gifts, experience, competency, it wasn't like is this person humble, broken, approachable? That was like oh my god, when I realized that's me, I'm the problem. It really started with me, Carey. I was like oh God, but it was liberating too because I stopped trying to show, I would stop trying to impress anybody. I was like that's over because I'm not impressive. I'm kidding myself. It was very freeing actually and very liberating.

Carey Nieuwhof: You said something about your church, which is interesting. Geri had given you six months, Pete and you're like, no, we can do this but she also made the astute observation that you trained an entire congregation to behave basically like you. Somebody once said, we reproduce, how did they phrase it? We reproduce who we are, not who we want to be and that's true so you would go back to New Life Church and probably see a group of immature people. First of all, how did they respond to the new Pete? Then what did you do to help them lead a similar journey of sort of awakening?

Pete Scazzero: Well, I would say that when I first came back, this is 1996. I'll start with the bad news first.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, yeah, sure.

Pete Scazzero: Why not.

Carey Nieuwhof: Why not.

Pete Scazzero: It was a few of our friends obviously. We'd get together every couple of weeks and I had one friend who was really prophetic and big intercessor and always getting words from God, but he tended to be on the judgmental side, I'll put it that way. I'll never forget, we get together for a big Italian meal, Italian guy in there and when he started criticizing some other pastors in our city here, and I couldn't take it. I was like no, don't talk about him this way. I just appreciate, we love the church, we love the whole church and we all got flaws and it didn't go over well and did it again and again and I realized that I don't want to participate in this. I kept saying something and I said, I don't want to have an enjoyable dinner here if you're going to criticize. To actually have a conviction like that, it cost me the friendship.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, you guys didn't stay friends after that?

Pete Scazzero: No, well, he left the church and felt I was arrogant and all that stuff. Actually what happened was his marriage wasn't in good shape either. He's very spiritual and I basically let him know that if you're going to, I said before you use your gifts in our church, I said your marriage has to have integrity and I said it doesn't right now. Your wife is miserable and as your pastor, I'm telling you like to stop taking care of the whole church right now and ministering the world and get to work on your marriage and that didn't go over real well so, because no one was going to teach him. He kind of had a direct line with God. That's fine, God moves mountains for the church and I get that and it worked out okay, right.

Pete Scazzero: I mean for him, but I began to set some I think parameters of what's acceptable, what's healthy, which I think a pastor is meant to do, a leader does determine the culture but that was in a couple of instances, in a couple of individuals but in general, just like I was in need of like a deliverance, I was in bondage, the whole church was in a sense. We began to it, very slowly, just bring it to our staff team our board and I didn't write anything Carey, or speak on it anywhere for seven years. Let me just live this out and I said, a good friend came to me and said, if you don't write it down, let it age like good wine, this material and then you can write it down. After seven years, I wrote down the book, The Emotionally Healthy Church, just let me put this on paper, theologically.

Pete Scazzero: I had to do a lot of inner work, of starting to live it out, I remember one woman and I was on the phone with her just the other day, when we shared our story, Geri and I about our marriage being a mess and falling apart and just, she ran

out of the room. I went after her at the time, I said what are you doing? She goes, I feel like you're naked. That's not how I see a pastor, like it just scared me and we were just sharing about Geri's unhappiness. I mean it wasn't like that horrific, but it was just for her to see that kind of vulnerability and brokenness and tears, it was such a paradigm shift. I think we started attracting large numbers of broken people. I think AA types, and we began to I think move away from a religious kind of an external measure of spirituality. That was a big shift. That was big.

Carey Nieuwhof: Do you see, because you work with a lot of leaders nationally, internationally, do you think people use spirituality as a mask for emotional ill health and if so, how?

Pete Scazzero: Well, absolutely. People can use a lot of things to mask emotional immaturity, right so if I could be a CEO and just be absorbed in my business making money and be masking all my immaturity because I have money, I have power, I've got position so I can use a lot of things. I can go from relationship to relationship as a single person, to mask my immaturity of not wanting to be alone so it's lots of things I can use. Do people use the church and leadership? Of course, they do. Of course, and I think that should be the norm, we expect. Look at the New Testament. Look at the Jesus with the Pharisees and Sadducees trying to talk with them, trying to help them come into some vulnerability, some openness, some softness, right and explodes on them in Matthew 23, and a woe to you. You tell them what to do but you don't practice what you preach, and I think that should be the norm.

Pete Scazzero: I think the question is, am I getting the kind of discipleship and mentoring I need as a leader to help me not follow the way of the world's understanding of leadership. I think unless there's some, in evangelicalism or the Christian culture, I think has bought into a secular leadership model, which focuses on the success and numbers and all that, that we have to make an effort to go this direction because it's so countercultural and counterintuitive and it's slow, which is fine.

Carey Nieuwhof: Do you think, generally speaking, that the emotional health of a leader is reflected in the emotional health of a congregation? That as goes the leader, so goes the church.

Pete Scazzero: Yes. Yes, there are some situations when the system is so toxic and especially when a pastor maybe stepping into a church has been around a while, that it's not possible to remain in the situation, that there are a few that are like that but I think for the most part, if you've been pastoring a while, the church will reflect our level of differentiation, will reflect our level of health. I had a friend who was a therapist. She used to say to me, Pete, you want to be by God's grace, the most, a mature person in the church emotionally and spiritually so that you may not be a therapist, but you can say to a fellow, a staff person who works for you, you don't know what's going on. You're not a therapist, not your field but you

can say, when I'm with you, Jane for example, I had to do this once. I've done it more than once. When I'm with you, I experience you as judgmental. I'm not saying you are judgmental.

Pete Scazzero: I'm not saying what's gone, I don't know your history and all I'm saying, I experience you as judgmental. Now that's a thoughtful feedback to give someone because hopefully I want to challenge them to come up the next level, right and not being reactive because they go pastor, that sermon sucked, you know that was the worst sermon I ever heard you. You say, oh really? Well, tell me, what was it about that sermon that was so awful for you? I'm exploring versus getting reactive and so getting to a place of less reactivity, more differentiation, begins to basically bring the whole system into a greater calm. You're not looking for people to, you want them to be who God made them to be within the context of a community versus I want you to be who I want you to be because I need you to build my church and do this and this and this. The level of emotional maturity differentiation will determine the level of the church that's why the more you grow as a leader internally, the more you're going to bring the church with you wherever you go.

Carey Nieuwhof: It's surprising because I got emotionally healthier over the years, our church got surprisingly emotionally healthier without me having to teach on it, do anything, conflicts dropped, health increased, relationships got better as our marriage got better, as I just tried to keep short accounts and I found, I don't know if you've discovered this with you but how do you, New Life Church is a big church. Our church is over 1,000, it's 1,500 people so you can exactly have control like you could over 20 or 30 or 100, but if I was good, I've always taught my staff hey, if we're healthy at the senior level, if the relationship with our elders are healthy and between our elders, with our senior leadership team, with our staff, with key volunteers and any or most people going to only really have 10 to 15 meaningful relationships. It doesn't matter how big or how small your church is. Your human span is 10 to 15 people that really kind of know what happened last Tuesday and for the rest, it's just hard to know.

Carey Nieuwhof: If those relationships were healthy and if they were, they were strong, somehow that percolated through the whole church. If I took my eye off those relationships or I didn't lean in as hard as I needed to or I wasn't as authentic as I should have been, that somehow we started to get little fires even in the outside regions of the church. Is that a common thing?

Pete Scazzero: Yes. In fact, this is so interesting, Carey, that was by same philosophy. Now our church is about the same size as yours and if I said, let's live it out ourselves, health, a deep walk with God. You're growing and maturing again, elder, staff, key people, the inner circle I can quote "control" or monitor, and the rest will flow. New Church Development, which came out of Germany, I don't know if you're familiar with them, they do studies.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, I do know them. Yeah.

Pete Scazzero: They do studies out of Germany of levels of health in churches and they've got the best. They will tell you that regardless of the size of the church, just give me your core 30 or 50 people inside the church. You give me the names of your core people and I'll tell you the health of your whole church. It doesn't matter if you have 10,000 people because that inner core will reveal what the whole church is, which makes total sense, right. You're only going to give what you possess.

Carey Nieuwhof: It's almost like the mom and dad in a relationship, right. If there's a healthy marriage there, the kids are more likely to be healthy and the family is more likely to be healthy than if mom and dad are going at it every day.

Pete Scazzero: For example, we tell parents, for example, if you're parents of children the most important thing you can do is your own genogram of your family of origin, going back three to four generations. Your own awareness of how that's impacted you.

Carey Nieuwhof: What's a genogram?

Pete Scazzero: A genogram is a tool that helps you map out trends or dynamics in your family going back three to four generations.

Carey Nieuwhof: Did not know that.

Pete Scazzero: Yeah, so it's a tool that I actually, I was exposed so initially in 1996 in a small way with it, in the therapist's office I said, this is powerful and the guy did this and 15 minutes he goes, let's look at you and Geri and your marriage. He said, let's look at your, Geri, your parent's marriage and Pete, let's look at your parent's marriage. He put on a board, describe their marriage and aloof, stable but no intimacy. Then he goes, let's look at your grandparents marriage and we looked at it and said, our marriage is not that different even though we're the first generation of Christians. That was one of my first eye openers of, oh my God. I'm preaching like I'm superior to all of them because I'm past to all that but the truth is, my marriage is no different and, or very little difference.

Pete Scazzero: We pray together. We read the bible. We go to church and all that, and that was my first indication, oh my gosh, and so a genogram, I did my advanced work in marriage and family and so there's all levels of doing a genogram. I actually like worked on how do you help people get it? How'd your family do? What is success for your family? How'd your family do conflict? How'd your family do affection? How'd your family do money? How'd your family do racism and the poor? Yeah, we can go on and on and then the question is, how do you do it? Very often we do things very similar or in reaction to our family and then you got to say, I know how does scripture? In the new family of Jesus, how we supposed to do it?

Pete Scazzero: Now discipleship is breaking the sinful parts of our family of origin and our culture so you Canadians have your cultural sins, like we have ours here in the United States and every country does, and every every family and ethnic group does as well and so you've got to sort that out, then what doesn't belong in the family of Jesus and that's got to go to the cross and die. That's the difficulty. That's a level of, we take sexuality as well, right and how your family, what the message is you got about sexuality from your mom and dad, your parents? Oh, nothing well, I know what was the message in the nothing and that's what's living in your body. How'd your family do attachment? Okay, well how do you do attachment? I don't. Okay, but that's a discipleship issue because scripture calls us to love, right? Scripture calls us to attach to people.

Pete Scazzero: I know, but I don't know how to do that. I know, but that's why it's important that you get disciplined. That's why the church exists and so we're going to help you do that right now. For me, it took me, Carey, into a whole realm of got to help people into serious discipleship, that's deeply going to change their lives and their families and their relationships so we can really make an impact in the world but it all began to come together about discipleship. It's not just bible study. It's applying the bible very specifically and kind of forcing people like I had to do it first myself in my own life. I got to do some hard work here of discipleship and not just be enjoying great worship and prayer meetings and bible studies. It's living it, not just talking about, that was a big shift for me, big shift.

Carey Nieuwhof: How did you learn all this, Pete? I mean you you went from very self admittedly not self aware, conflicted marriage. I'll just lean harder into it to this guy who all of a sudden has all this self awareness. What was that journey like for you?

Pete Scazzero: Well, I got to remember, I'm almost 23 years down the road. Two things, one is, this happened in 1996 and I'm a guy who was raised in scripture. I'm a guy who became a Christian at 19, poster child evangelical, I mean, we're just intervarsity staff workers blah blah blah seminary, the whole thing and passionate for Jesus, loving Jesus. When this happened, it was 1996, it was a conversion. It was like bondage being broken all of a sudden. We tasted something of Jesus and the kingdom and life that we had not tasted in our 17 years prior to being a Christian. We didn't have a theology for it at the time, but we knew we had taste of something that was God and it pulled us forward. Fortunately, Geri herself is a research and developer and I'm a research developer and so we just, we think about why do we, how do we break through this thing? I say, well, part of it is, not just that we were just a mess.

Pete Scazzero: We were like, we do love Jesus. Jesus reached out and grabbed us and we want to respond to that we were okay if the whole church left. We came back from the sabbatical and I say we're going to start living this out. We're not going to change our mission to reach the poor and reach our community and help develop leaders, but how we do it is going to change. We came back so that everybody leaves. It's okay because we can only live with the integrity, which we

know is right at this point. We're not going to play church or pretend but yes, and we could have lost our marriage. We could have left leadership. We had been zealous Christians that since we'd come to Christ in college together and it was such a tragedy. Here we were on the brink of leaving it all and we were like, how did we ever get in the spots of such a level of exhaustion and misery of hating leadership? How did we get here? Once we tasted another way of doing leadership, we were like we're never going back, never.

Pete Scazzero: I mean it will be absurd so I think we had such a, over the precipice experience, Carey. We have worked on it steady and be the learning ever since and continue to grow. We haven't talked about this, we know it led us into learning from outside our tradition. We end up in monasticism, slowing down. I end up in Catholic monastery, Geri and I for a week of silence with a trap or something. We ended up in places we never imagined this journey. It's like we got in a journey and we left the shore, just kept opening up new doors to us and unfolding and our church was so gracious. I think it was so, because I guess we were the founders, they followed. I think we tried to be, our church was such good soil, so open, and I think as we were pastors of the church, we're still grounded in a local body. The community gave us a grounding, which we were very fortunate.

Pete Scazzero: I know we had each other and we had a great community to support us along the way and so it just kind of had a life of its own and we're, honestly, Carey, you're ready for this? I mean like I'm learning, I'm growing. I mean we feel like we're still like growing a lot. This thing is unfolding because we're following Jesus and it just keeps getting wider and larger and deeper and so I feel like I'm still changing. There's a lot to be changed in me and so I'm still changing and growing. It's exciting to me. I think once you step in that journey of that level of connection with Jesus too, he's leading us places that are always new.

Carey Nieuwhof: I'm with you Pete and I think you know that our stories have a similar parallel, but what do you say to the guy who says to you well, Pete that's great but this isn't the gospel. This isn't spirituality. This is psychobabble stuff that you, great that you're into pop psychology but were, is this really spirituality? Do you ever get that and what do you say to that?

Pete Scazzero: Yeah, I say to that is, I get it. I would have said the same thing.

Carey Nieuwhof: No, the 30 year old me would have said the same thing too. I stayed away from people like me.

Pete Scazzero: This is the gospel. I mean this is the gospel. The gospel is about the grace of God setting us free to love him and love other people, but what this is, is applying the gospel. This is deep application. Listen, I know that I preach the gospel but I live the law and I don't think, there's levels of knowing the love of God but the more I suffer, the harder I work, the more God's going to love me. That was my unspoken message.

Carey Nieuwhof: Right. The more miserable I am, the better I am.

Pete Scazzero: Yeah, and I can have a day alone with God if I suffer and work hard enough, but again we're so unaware of how much of that comes from family scripts with a conditional love and yet we're preaching grace, but really we're living a law and we actually end up giving that to people around us and why are they feeling a heavy yoke from my leadership versus a freedom because I'm sitting in a meeting and I'm driving this vision but that drivenness is not coming out of a deep place with Jesus. It's coming out of my own unresolved trauma and family of origin, stuff that I haven't thought about. People in the room can feel uncomfortable but I am the leader, I'm gifted so they're going to follow. It's they work for me, but you can feel it in the room and so.

Carey Nieuwhof: Can you unpack that? I don't want to interrupt you but that was so important what you just said, that sometimes in our leadership, we're working out unresolved personal issues. Can you just unpack that?

Pete Scazzero: Well, I would say, you are working at your unresolved personal issues, not sometimes, you are. Especially with authority figures. It really comes out. For example, I learned the hard way over the years that when you hire someone who has unresolved issues with their parents, your father, it's going to come out with you as their leader. It's only a matter of time and they're unconscious of it. You say yes, they say no. You say up, they say down. You say right, they say left, like this is so irrational, you know?

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah.

Pete Scazzero: Very often, the ambition, the drivenness is coming from a deep well somewhere else. It's like to be with people, it's never enough, just never. That's a good science. It's going back somewhere so for me, who you are is way more important than what you do. I mean it's who you are is what you do. It's your person up there that we don't need, in fact in 96, I realized we don't need clever illustrations and I really got the contemplative and learning from the Desert Fathers was, actually experiencing I think the riches of monasticism outside of, within the Orthodox, Roman Catholic and even some evangelical Protestant orders, really gave me a vision of a life with God and a practical vision that far, was so outside the box of my training as a pastor that really served me to realize, okay, now I'm first a contemplative who seeks Jesus. My life is seeking his face.

Pete Scazzero: One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek, that I may dwell in the house of the lord all the days of my life. Psalm 27:4 of David. He is my life first and after that, I'm a leader, I'm pastor in the church, but that is not my life. He's my life. I think that enabled me to transition out of big lead pastor and take a different role in the church under the board and not being in any kind of executive leadership anymore because my identity was not in that any longer. I did it 26 years and it was great while I did it, but it was over. It was just over and it was

important that someone else stepped in and do it and take the church forward, but that deepening our walk with Jesus, again I would say that's foundational to everything.

Pete Scazzero: I mean that many times we end up not, I think many times in our church is I discovered my relationship with Jesus became more functional than intimate and it was the monastic, it was the contemplative tradition like I remember we stayed with monks for a week, Trappist monks that their life was a Benedict in rhythm and just participating their life getting up, seven times a day stopping to pray and they would go to work, but their life was seeking his face. It was so foreign to me. I was like, this is unbelievable. I realized how important it is to learn from the broader church globally and the broader church outside of our tradition and I consider myself an evangelical and very committed to mission in raising up leaders, but I believe that we're just one piece of a larger church. I think unless we learn from folks outside ourselves, we'll remain shallow. I do believe that. It's critical that we're open to learn from folks that we don't agree with everything about what they're doing. That's okay.

Carey Nieuwhof: Is there a level of drive, ambition, that sense in leadership that you're moving things forward? Is there a redeemed version of that? You know what I'm saying because I do get that a lot of that drive and ambition and I feel like I'm always testing my motives for it now, and they're mixed because we're on this side of heaven but there was a time we're probably blindly, I was just working on my issues like we talked about, but can you or how can you have a Godly ambition or is there such a thing?

Pete Scazzero: I think so. I mean we see that in Paul, don't we? I mean.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, yeah. Well, Moses on a mission like he could have quit 1,700 times.

Pete Scazzero: Yeah, I think leadership is, my best definition of leadership I like comes out of Bobb Biehl, leadership is knowing what to do next, why it's important and bringing the necessary resources to bear to make that happen. I mean leaders are taking people somewhere right, so Jesus, I think the key is, say if you're a leader, I think you have a responsibility before God with your life to be a good steward of that. How are you going to lead people forward? Well, I can just because a person who's older now, it's a little easier because there's nothing like, first of all, aging is such a gift because it just becomes so clear that I mean, the foolishness, the absurdity of trying to impress people or whatever with what, these goals I want to make a lot of money or have a big company or church or, it's so sad actually what people running after and you're like sorry, you'll come back. It's a way out. You survive.

Pete Scazzero: I hope you survive the process but Park says that immaturity but I think the ambition is tempered by, one, I really do believe that we need, every leader in particular needs a deep anchor in Jesus so I believe the disciplines of building in silence and solitude and stillness, these aren't optional spiritual practices for a

leader especially in the 21st century. These are indispensable. I have a spiritual director. I've got some mentors. I've got a therapist I'll go to occasionally as well. My wife and I will do rounds of therapy personally or together so I'm always working on myself to kind of, I don't trust, but then I got people around me who's, I tried to create an environment, whether I want to or not, they say stuff to me so I think we can do foolish things at any point in our life regardless of how wise we may be at the moment, so I never want to underestimate that, but I think if you're deep in your walk with Jesus and you're listening, you're asking God, what would you have me to do?

Pete Scazzero: You know that Ignatian principle of discernment of, on a scale of one to 10, are you holding it before God like totally, and I think what I learned in diving into monasticism in 2003, which really my deep immersion was life is doing God's will not mine so as much as I have general direction goals and I was like, God's leading me to this. I'm always holding it with an open hand and then I'm like, God not my will but your will be done and what would you have me do today, what would you have me do with my gifts right now with emotionally healthy discipleship? Well, how will you lead? That's my whole life posture is open. I wasn't there to that level of I think freedom until I actually entered into drawing from some of the riches outside of hey, build a church. God's goal is get it as big as you can, as fast as you can and reach as many people as you can. I've had people tell me that. You don't need to pray to God or anything. The Great Commission is there. Just go do it and I'm like that is not what the Bible's teaching. Yes, go do it, we all have the Great Commission. We're committed to it, but your role may be to live in North Africa among Muslims and have a church of three.

Carey Nieuwhof: And you can be faithful.

Pete Scazzero: You've been a tremendous success or you can build something really large and be a failure because God never asked you to do it. He asked someone else to do that and I think that's why the discernment of God, what would you have me to do.

Carey Nieuwhof: How do you discern that? How do you today discern what God wants you to do next?

Pete Scazzero: Number one, of course the foundation is I'm always asking God.

Carey Nieuwhof: How do you know it's not breakfast that you're hearing back or do you hear breakfast or you hear God's voice?

Pete Scazzero: Yeah, so I don't hear literal voices, although I've had some moments of such clarity that felt like that but I'm listening to the Spirit of God who lives inside of me and passions, longings and desires. For example, I'll give you an example, so I have a desire, a passion, a burden to write a book on marriage, emotionally healthy marriage, it's something like a course and all that and I'm like let's, I

think we've been teaching it 26 years. I mean I'm like, come on, I'm sorry 22 years. Just, yeah, I want to do it and I was already like okay, I'm ready. I'm ready to start this thing. It's probably a two, probably two to two and a half, three year project, book, workbook, DVD, all that and if I was showing, as I've been wrestling with it, I took day alone with God before I started back to work after vacation, but I was like I was excited at the same time I was like I have so much other stuff to do that's important like I don't notice the time.

Pete Scazzero: I'm like, but I really want to do it but I don't know and so here I am like, and then I showed it to Geri, I said Geri, what do you think about this? She says, well, I thought you said a year, the most important thing is this. If you do that, well then she said that's never going to happen. I don't see the space for you to do that right now but you know, whatever you want to do, you do and like, obviously it's your choice, but it's hard for me to say. It was a five minute conversation but it was like God, it was like God. I just had to get alone I was like, it's not time and then I got in touch with my, why do I want to do it now because I'm afraid I'll die and it'll never get done. I'm afraid of it because it's just a big project two, three years and a part of me is afraid that I'll die and it won't happen.

Pete Scazzero: Once I put in my journals like this on and my executive director here and she's like, yeah, I wasn't feeling so good about it either. She didn't say that, so why didn't you say something? She's like, oh you were so excited about what was I going to say, and I knew I was in a process and I actually have a coach I'm going to talk to talk to about it next week and I realized it already kind of got resolved before I even talked to the guy, but I knew I was in a process so again, there's certain big decisions that are a discerning process, but something as simple as last weekend, I invited three friends down from, we were friends 30, 40 years and spend a day at the beach in New Jersey and we got a whole day together but Geri and I love our time alone, with God, with each other, family but I monitor how much entertaining do I want to do, hospitality can I handle do I want to do in this season in light of how much time I want alone with Geri.

Pete Scazzero: I live on a rule of life, kind of a monastic rule of life by updating how I want to structure my life to keep Jesus at the center. What do I need to keep Jesus at the center of everything I do? That's number one, so that's time alone with God I need but I got Geri and I got four girls, two are, one's married, another one's getting married and so those are my highest responsibilities, God, Geri and then our children, our adult children and now I've got, I want to work. I want to work a five day week. I don't want to work a seven day week. I don't want to work to 60, so I got certain structures in there and there's only so much time and then I'm like, okay, God, how would you have me best spend this time?

Pete Scazzero: Even with doing like fellowship, I'm like renegotiating a bit, something like 20% on staff here at New Life, and New Life Fellowship releases me to serve the larger church around the world with Emotionally Healthy Spirituality, which I do, so I wanted to renegotiate some things at New Life, so I want to cut back a little

bit on this because I want to do a bit more externally this stuff, but it's all a process.

Carey Nieuwhof: Then you have other voices speaking into it.

Pete Scazzero: Yeah, absolutely. I don't trust myself totally but I am listening to the movement of the Spirit of God inside of me. That's something I didn't do before. I didn't trust myself. I got this huge passion for racial reconciliation since I became a Christian at 19 years old. We built our church on it and so where did that come from? I wouldn't say you got to do it there, but that was a God thing for me. I had to listen to that and follow it.

Carey Nieuwhof: Who are you reading? Who's influencing you? If there were a couple of books, you've written extensively, we'll link to your website, your resources in the show notes but you mentioned monastic life. I know one of my favorite books, and we'll link to it in the show notes is Henri Nouwen's The Genesee Diary, not particularly well known work of his but he went to a monastery, sorting out his soul stuff and it's just his diary and he talks about finding Jesus and finding his brokenness in the rhythm of everyday life. It's powerful. Who are you reading that you would say hey, if you're looking to get in touch with, yes try these two or three books?

Pete Scazzero: I'll give you two that I read this summer that impacted me and the first is Fleming Rutledge's book The Crucifixion.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, I don't know that one.

Pete Scazzero: That's thick. It's like 600 pages but it's I thought a brilliant work on the crucifixion, best I've ever read actually and yeah, you read different books differently based on how God's coming to you and so I actually read it very slowly and outlined it and I spent time in the scriptures he was referring to and it's basically about the centrality of the crucifixion and I wrote, we are about preaching the crucified Jesus and not a Corinthian ostracism that Paul was coming up against, and I was really challenged by that and I loved it on to of it being gospel centered but again, I see emotional discipleship as crucifixion applied that we're following, we preach nothing but Christ crucified to call people to Jesus and a life where we reject the world's definition of success, the world's definition of being great, the world's definition of being popular, we follow Jesus to a cross and the resurrection out of that. That's number one.

Pete Scazzero: The second one, I read a book a little differently called Deep Work. I've got the guy's name, it's called Deep Work.

Carey Nieuwhof: I know who you mean. We'll link to it in the show notes.

Pete Scazzero: Yeah, what I liked about it was I think you made a really good point about how our culture even pulls us greater to shallow work, and how important it is that

we set aside very specific time to do deep work. What's impacted me since, and I know what it is to write a book. As you know, Carey, it takes a lot of deep work, you got to isolate yourself. You've got tremendous discipline of just staying with it not moving from your seat, but what I liked about it even with Deep Work around my work in a given day at the office, like today was primarily an office day for me here at Emotionally Healthy Discipleship so I said, I'm not going to get involved in email, Twitter, answering these phone calls. I am going to do some deep thinking, deep work around how we are helping churches bring these courses into their midst and we had a number of issues we were wrestling with.

Pete Scazzero: I said I just the three to four hours to focus and not talk to anybody, and so I came to the church at one o'clock but I was in such a good place and I've been in meetings now through the day and my day will end here at 5:30, but I can do a bunch of stuff here. Right now, I'm doing this podcast with you and it's all good but I know this isn't my deep work of thinking time, and I just liked the way he defined it.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's a big change for me too. My sort of catalyst was a burnout and I'm like, okay, I got to live differently and that happened, in my case 12 years ago, and the reinvention was underway before that, but I was very uncomfortable with silence, very uncomfortable with being alone and quiet. Blaise Pascal, a man's chief problem is his inability to sit quietly alone in his room by himself, very true but I found my most productive work and my most meaningful enjoyment in my work often comes from that deep work, that is away from all the distractions, away from everything and you have to be at peace with yourself to be able to access that.

Carey Nieuwhof: Pete, while I've got you, I got to ask you this question because I get it a lot. I'm sure you get it all the time too. This has been so helpful, so enlightening in terms of really being in touch with yourself and in touch with Christ, but there are people listening going, okay, great. I work for an emotionally unhealthy leader or I'm married to a very emotionally unhealthy person. Help, what do I do? Can you wave a flag and go excuse me boss, but you're a train wreck? What do you say? What do you do? How do you approach the people around you?

Pete Scazzero: I think your first, and you're not alone, this is the nature of life, right? Going to the supermarket can be a challenge. The key is you're monitoring, you're working on yourself, and you're monitoring yourself and your reaction and when you find yourself reacting, the question is, what does your reaction tell you about yourself, not about the other person.

Pete Scazzero: My counsel is you do the work, the hard work of growing and maturing yourself. That's number one. It's not changing everybody around you. It's let God change you and the rest of it will unfold with time but it's you that's the key to this, and so it could be something as simple as a mother who's constantly babysitting for her adult daughter and so I don't have a life and I'm angry and I'm bitter and

she's running my life and she's always demanding and expecting this and this. That's not about her daughter and son in law, it's about you being able to set a healthy boundary and how do you assert yourself and how do you have a voice and your understanding of who you. There's so much going on there, so my focus, my word to you would be work on you first before you work on anybody else.

Carey Nieuwhof: It's good word, kind of a lifetime project too, if I'm not mistaken.

Pete Scazzero: It is, and it will unfold. It will unfold. You can't control people's reactions.

Carey Nieuwhof: You mentioned family, and we talked about it a lot at the beginning of the interview and you mentioned growing up in an abusive environment and everything. Were you able to or how were you able to work that through with your parents or did that happen?

Pete Scazzero: Absolutely. In fact, the great thing about doing this kind of work in your family of origin, it actually heals the relationships because you don't want cut offs, you have emotional cut offs, physical cut offs.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, because one thing would be wow, if you grew up in that kind of environment, I haven't talked to them in 20 years. You hear those stories but your story didn't go in that direction.

Pete Scazzero: No, absolutely and so for example, my mom for example, my mom had severe mental illness, wasn't really able to raise us and so as I got in this journey, she lived another I guess eight, nine years and was she repentant? Now, I mean as a level of awareness as she was able to do with me but it was it I felt like at her funeral and my dad's funeral. I remember saying I look at my whole extended family in the room and saying, first of all, I have a great relationship with everybody. I don't have any cut offs, any unspoken stuff, I feel great but I wasn't living any kind of lies anymore and just not that we spoke about everything and not that everything was all resolved but there was integrity in the sense of I have my direct one to one relationships everybody. I'm not going through other people, my siblings. We're very committed to our relationship. Now we're spread around the country and the United States, and we all kind of came through a war together, and with all know we've been, but we meet every once or twice a year staying weekly contact with each other and it's wonderful but do we carry scars from our past? Of course, we all do.

Pete Scazzero: I would say that this is the way the healing of the cutoffs of your past is to go back, I call it go back to go forward like Joseph. Joseph's the great example in Scripture. He went back with his brothers who betrayed him and wrecked him but he saw the hand of God in all of it and he was able to use it so he could be a blessing to the world out of his pain. He grieved it and I had to grieve it because grief and loss are very important but he knew that he became a gift to the nations and I believe that God's called all of us to be a gift to the world out of

our histories regardless of what's happened to you, so I wouldn't be having this conversation with you Carey if I did not have unique pain of my own life.

Pete Scazzero: We all of us got our pains but because I've grieved and connected with my own pain, I can connect with anybody's pain. I may not have died of AIDS. I might not have been raped. I may not have had a child die but I have grieved my own losses, and if you grieve your own losses, you can grieve anybody's losses, and so that's why it's so important that people get in reality because spirituality if anything is all about reality, not medicating ourselves to run away from it.

Carey Nieuwhof: No, that's a really good word it is a redemptive word too. I mean my book, which just came out Didn't See It Coming, really comes out of the most painful period of my life and it's lessons like I can only really learn. We were having dinner with friends, good friends people who were there sort of for the crash, before the crash, during the crash, after the crash, we were at dinner with them last week, my wife and I, they were over at the house and he's remarked on it three or four times. He said, it's amazing to me how something that painful to you is something God has used again and again, but that is kind of the promise, isn't it?.

Pete Scazzero: Well, Carey, absolutely. Tell me the title of your book so I'm going to ask you to send me a copy since it just came out.

Carey Nieuwhof: I'd love to.

Pete Scazzero: Give me in three minutes or so the thesis and heart of the story it was that came out of and what is the gift you're trying to communicate to us through that book?

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, so the book is called, Didn't See It Coming. It's about overcoming the seven greatest challenges that no one expects, but everyone experiences. It's semi autobiographical, a little bit like your first book, The Emotionally Healthy Church, but it really deals with seven issues that I've had to tackle and I've just seen lots of other leaders try to tackle that are the stuff that flies under the radar screen, things like cynicism, emptiness you've already talked about, like why is it that you can be successful on the outside but feel empty on the inside? Why is it that you can be grateful, like you know you're grateful, but you don't feel full? Irrelevance, pride, disconnectedness, just this feeling of being all alone and isolated in leadership, compromise, not just the moral compromise that gets you divorced or fired but the little things, the lies you tell everyday, the unwillingness to be honest with yourself or with your team or with your family.

Carey Nieuwhof: It's really those issues and then I've got a section on burnout too, because I hit burnout 12 years ago. I was 41 and it was really, it was a slide into burnout where I started to learn about some of this stuff and went, oh, gosh, I'm becoming cynical, what's up and really the book is a breath of life saying, okay,

so you grew cynical, all right, so you burned out or you got low grade burnout or you feel empty. That's not the end of the story.

Carey Nieuwhof: There's sort of a meta theme in each of the sections and each of the issues about okay, what theologically is going on here and then I try to give some really practical tips like when it comes to pride, I think a lot of pride is driven by insecurity, not just narcissism. If pride is an obsession with self, the insecure are proud people because they don't want smart people in the room, they're afraid to let other people have the spotlight, they wouldn't do what you did and step out of the senior role. They would hang on to it until they die because their identity is tied up in it because they're afraid, so what do you do? Well, that's a theological problem at a very deep level. We go there but then it's okay, here's what you can do next week, push someone else into the spotlight. Just give them the chance that the habit of humility will actually cultivate a humility in you and you don't have to wait for your emotions to start. Eventually your emotions will catch up to your obedience, so that's what the book's about.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's why I'm saying a lot of very quiet Amens as you're talking over the last hour.

Pete Scazzero: Well, I think I love it. I look forward to reading it, and I think our best books for me come out of our lives. I think that's one thing, I ride along the journey, I think that's what do you have to offer out of what God's coming to you as a person, as a leader, so that's fantastic.

Carey Nieuwhof: Thank you and you know what, in a real way, you've been part of that journey so thank you, Pete. I really appreciate it. Hey, people are going to want to learn more. You have your own podcast, tell us about it and then tell us a website where they can find you and connect with you.

Pete Scazzero: Yeah, so the podcast is called Emotionally Healthy Leader but I would encourage people to go to our website [emotionallyhealthy.org](http://emotionallyhealthy.org) and basically, our mission is to equip the church in a discipleship that deeply changes people for the sake of the world, so probably as a leader, the key book that's out there is Emotionally Healthy Leader that I wrote after my 26 years of being lead pastor. That is probably the most popular book out there for leadership but leadership flows out of healthy discipleship, and I found that many leaders have gaps in their discipleship and thus, we're talking about things like managing a team and strategic planning but how do you discern God strategically for an organization if you're not discerning God for yourself on a personal level?

Pete Scazzero: I would encourage you to go to the website, look at some of the videos on there about what is this Emotionally Healthy Discipleship course and those leaders kit and I would just begin to explore in there. That's what I would encourage people to dig into is what's called Emotionally Healthy Discipleship course. That I believe is going to be the fruition of our 22 years of we're offering the church something to bring to the church that can radically change their culture but it's

not your average bible study. This is what, you're going to do a genogram, you're going to do silence and stillness and daily offices and Sabbath. In fact, Carey, check it out as well. We're in very early stages. It's not a small group, much like alpha. It's a centralized course for evangelism. It's a centralized course where the leader gets trained. The leader has to live it a little bit before you teacher it.

Pete Scazzero: We say, if you haven't lived it, don't teach it because you're just transmitting information. It's like immunizing people against the truth so don't do it. Wait. Live it and then teach it out of your life then it's going to have some significant impact.

Carey Nieuwhof: We will link to all that in the show notes. Pete, I can't thank you enough. Thank you so much.

Pete Scazzero: Carey, thank you very much. It's been a joy to be with you. It's been great getting to know you.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. Yeah, it's fun that we get to do this, isn't it?

Pete Scazzero: It is and now I've got the idea of interviewing people on my podcast as well so you will be one of my guests.

Carey Nieuwhof: I would love to.

Pete Scazzero: Once I get rolling in it. Thank you very much, Carey. God bless you and thanks for the privilege.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, that's so real, isn't it? I hope it's so helpful. You may want to dive into the show notes. You'll find everything at [careynieuwhof.com/episode230](http://careynieuwhof.com/episode230), or you can just go to Lead Like Never Before, click on Blog. You'll find it all there so that's where you'll find the show notes. Guys, this show's free so wherever you get your podcast, if you're a new listener and you haven't subscribed yet, here's the truth. I only ever listen to the podcast I subscribe to so if you enjoyed this, hit subscribe and maybe leave us a rating and review. We are over 800 ratings and reviews. Thank you guys for doing that. Thanks for sharing this with your friends, with your team. It's been an awesome journey so far and the journey is a little bit bigger than this podcast so here's what I'd love to do.

Carey Nieuwhof: If we haven't also connected on social yet, why don't we do that? All the links are in the show notes so you can just find me @cnieuwhof or Carey Nieuwhof, it's so easy to spell, on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. I also write a blog, which you can find at Lead Like Never Before, plus I do some books. Anyway, it's fun to connect in the wider realm and I just love hearing from you guys and trying to get in your corner. Then next week, we are back. We got a great December lined up and my guest next week is Jon Thompson. Now Jon is a leader that you may not have heard of, but you're going to want to get to know

and we talk about calling and gifting. Jon's been a friend for many, many years and his teaching on this stuff is blowing up. He is a fascinating guy, leading a one of Canada's fastest growing churches and Jon and I talked about this question that I get a lot from people in business, people in ministry, what am I truly called and gifted to do? Listen to this.

Jon Thompson: There was a gift given to you and so certain spiritual gift clusters lead naturally to vocational ministry and natural gifts and acquired gifts are there, but there are certain clusters and at that moment again, it's critical and just to share this, if you're going into vocational ministry, 80% of your job description better be in your spiritual gifts.

Carey Nieuwhof: Whether you're a marketplace leader or a church leader, I think you'll find this fascinating. Got Daniel Pink coming up in December too. That's going to be a lot of fun. Guys, thanks so much for listening. Again, subscribe if you haven't done that. We're back next Tuesday with a fresh episode and I hope our time together today has helped you lead like never before.

Announcer: You've been listening to the Carey Nieuwhof leadership podcast. Join us next time for more insights on leadership, change and personal growth to help you lead like never before.