

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

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, hey everybody and welcome to episode 260 of the podcast. My name is Carey Nieuwhof and I hope our time together today helps you lead like never before. Thank you listeners, I just want to start by saying thank you for sharing, thank you for engaging, thank you for letting us know what this show means to you. It means a lot to us too, and guess what? We just passed eight million downloads. We have a big celebration coming up at 10 million, so hang on for that, but 8 million downloads later, just thank you guys so much. You are incredible, you make this so worth doing and all of us who work on the show, and there's quite a few in the background, just want to thank you. Thank you so much. Today we are talking about slowing down to celebrate and to rest, and why is it so many of us who are driven ruin our souls?

Carey Nieuwhof: This is very close to my heart because I burned out, as some of you know, 13 years ago. I'm thrilled to have Ruth Haley Barton on the show today. She is an author and has written just some really powerful stuff on how to make time for rest, so I think this will be good. Also, on the other side of burnout, I figured out a brand new way to live, if you've never checked out the High Impact Leader and you would like to get some of your life and leadership back, head on over and check that out now at thehighimpactleader.com. Here's what I think will happen, number one, you will gain somewhere between three productive hours a week to three productive hours every day, back. If you do that, let's say it works out for you, you take the high impact leader course and you end up with three hours a week back, do you know what that boils down to? Over a month of reclaim time.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's right. It could be a month of vacation, it could be a month to work on a book, it could be a month to launch your podcast, it could be a month to read your kids' stories at night and tuck them into bed, it could be a month to take up a hobby, it could be a month to work on something at work, like some new project or, you split it however you want. For some people, it'll be over a thousand hours in the course of a year, which is insane. I mean, if you think about that three hours a day, what would you do if you got three hours a day back? We've been able to help a couple thousand leaders through the High Impact Leader, and they see tremendous results. There's also a 30-day money back guarantee, so head on over. If you're curious about how to get your life and leadership back and reclaim control of your agenda, head on over to thehighimpactleader.com where we've got everything ready for you.

Carey Nieuwhof: I also want to ask you about your team, how's your team going? And some of you, let's be really honest, you don't have a team and you're thinking, "I can't afford one." You're a solopreneur, you're a solo pastor, you're a startup, and you're like, "I don't have money for staff." Some of you, you've got staff but you haven't got enough staff or you haven't got the right staff, how do you solve all

that? Well, I'll tell you the way I've solved it. I turned to BELAY. BELAY is a virtual staffing solution that I've used now for a couple of years and they are some of the people that work in the background of this show and also of my blog and writing and speaking and some of the other things I do. I got to tell you, I love them and they are my go-to solution for staffing. You can head on over to belaysolutions.com/carey, and they will present you highly qualified candidates. Not like, "Hey, we hope this works out," but highly, highly qualified candidates.

Carey Nieuwhof: You can get started quickly and you can get started affordably for as little as 10 hours a week because some of you, when you hire someone, they relocate, it's like, what if it doesn't work out, or what if I don't need this many hours? All that stuff is handled for you by BELAY because you can start at 10 hours a week, 15, 20, just little increments here and there, and you can find the staffing solution that's right for you with highly qualified candidates. Head on over to belaysolutions.com/carey, C-A-R-E-Y where you can learn more.

Carey Nieuwhof: Without further ado, let's jump into my conversation with Ruth Haley Barton. She is an author of multiple books, she is the founder and the CEO of the Transforming Center, which is a ministry dedicated to really strengthening the souls of Christian leaders, whether that's in the marketplace or in ministry. She's also a spiritual director and she's got a lot to say about taking care of you. Here's my conversation with Ruth Haley Barton. Ruth, welcome to the podcast, thanks for joining us.

Ruth H. Barton: Great to be here.

Carey Nieuwhof: We haven't really met before, but I was a reading your most recent book and kind of fascinated, and convicted, and taken in and owned, and all of that. Something is going on in our culture today with hurry and speed, and you've got a number of writings, not just your latest book, that really encourage a very different view. Talk to us about that and how you got interested in Sabbath and rhythm and rest and retreat, all these things that none of us know anything about anymore.

Ruth H. Barton: When people ask that question, the answer is always the same and that is because I needed it so badly. I got into this because I was dying and I had been shaped like all of us have been, in a very high performance culture where drivenness and activism are the way we do life and there's very little pacing. It's just all out all the time, seven days a week, and none of us are built to sustain that, God did not create us to sustain that. These writings definitely come out of my own need and my own wrestling with pace of life and lifestyle and my own drivenness and leadership and really grappling with God about my own calling and my own way of life. All of these works really come out of my own wrestling, really.

Carey Nieuwhof: Paint us a picture of the Ruth who needed this message very badly, like how long ago was that, what were you doing?

Ruth H. Barton: It's not pretty so are you ready?

Carey Nieuwhof: I'm ready, I'm ready. Let's go.

Ruth H. Barton: In my early 30s, I'm a pastor's kid, and in my early 30s I had already been in ministry for 10 years because I started right out of college, if not while I was in college. I had three kids by 30 and was serving on staff at a church that I loved, yet I was noticing that there was a performance oriented drivenness that I wouldn't have known how to name at the time, but I wasn't living well and I knew it. The people that I loved didn't feel like they were getting the best from me, I wasn't living well in my body, I wasn't particularly healthy. Even though I knew it would be better for me to take some breaks and just stop, I couldn't. There was a compulsion to it that was really real and frightening. To feel when you're business is compulsive, that's really frightening.

Ruth H. Barton: Then no space for the deeper questions of my life that were stirring and so there would be emotions that I could acknowledge and sometimes manage, but I couldn't fully control them. Sometimes a burst of anger about some of the things that I had witnessed and seen in the church, because children's of pastors see a lot.

Carey Nieuwhof: And that was your background, children's pastor?

Ruth H. Barton: No, no, no. The children of a-

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, the child of a pastor sees a lot. Got you, understood.

Ruth H. Barton: Children of pastor-

Carey Nieuwhof: I was going to say that's actually one of the most complicated jobs in the church, period, if you had that one.

Ruth H. Barton: Being the child of a pastor, you see the seamy underbelly of the church, you see bad stuff. I was raised in a very conservative environment, women weren't treated particularly well either, so I had anger about that. There was sadness too, but I had never really been taught how to deal with sadness very well, how to be with God with sadness. Sometimes I'd be ambushed by sadness or tears, but I wouldn't know where it was coming from or what to do about it, so as a person who was already a rising, little rising, star, my star was rising a little bit in ministry, it was unnerving to acknowledge these truths and realities about myself.

Carey Nieuwhof: What was your ministry at the time, what were you doing?

Ruth H. Barton: I was director of women's ministry at the time, but I'd done other things too, I'd served in the church in every way we can. By the time I'd gotten there, I had

worked in lots of different ways in the church and because I'm a pastor's kid, it was the only life I really knew. It was the only vocational aspirations I had and it was the only experience I had really had was my life experience in the church, so it was frightening to have to acknowledge that my life in the church was not contributing to health and wholeness, but it was really causing me to burn out. I joke with people that I am an overachiever and by the time you are 30, if you burnt out at 30, you are an overachiever, even in terms of your burnout. I was really concerned for myself and knew that the life that I was living wasn't sustainable and would not be sustainable for the long haul.

Carey Nieuwhof: Did you have people knocking at your door telling you that, or was that a self ... did you have to hit the wall to figure that out, or how did that work out for you?

Ruth H. Barton: It was my own wall and it was in a ... because I was already in administrative leadership, I was already on staff at a church, questions that I had even about theology and practice, I didn't have any safe place to ask those questions and to journey with God with those questions because leaders after all, in the church are supposed to be pretty certain about everything, we're the answer, not the question people. If your performance is being evaluated in your church as your job and as your work, where does a leader have to go to discuss their own questions that might be threatening to others around them? It might have caused others to question your capacity for leadership or your fitness for leadership and so I felt very isolated as well.

Ruth H. Barton: No, people weren't knocking on my door telling me but I did have one friend though who knew some of my struggles and she was the one who recommended a spiritual director, which was a life saver at that point. I think encountering the spiritual director was the second most important thing next to my conversion experience.

Carey Nieuwhof: Really, what did that look like, a spiritual director?

Ruth H. Barton: A spiritual director is someone who's more well versed in the ways of the soul than we typically are, someone who's been on the path for a while, someone who's well versed in many Christian disciplines so they can guide you into the disciplines that are the right for you at a particular time. My whole journey into solitude and silence, which I wrote about in the book, Invitation to Solitude and Silence, came from a spiritual director saying, "Ruth, what you need is to sit still long enough for the sediment to settle and the water to become clear." That was my invitation to solitude and silence and it came through a spiritual director far outside the ministry settings that I was in. Today, solitude and sounds we're talking about that quite effortlessly, but 20 years ago, I'm telling you, no one was talking about it within Protestant evangelical circles.

Ruth H. Barton: In fact, people were quite threatened by it, they thought you were becoming a Buddhist or that you were embracing new age philosophy or something like

that. Even that was not a safe thing to talk about in the settings where I was ministering, the spiritual direction relationship was my safe place.

Carey Nieuwhof: Jesus must have been very busy in the wilderness for 40 days, I'm sure he was highly productive, right?

Ruth H. Barton: I do not know why it is at times so threatening. Well I do, I have some ideas about that.

Carey Nieuwhof: Go ahead, what are your ideas?

Ruth H. Barton: One idea is that in solitude and silence we give up control, that that's one of the most profound things that we do in solitude and silence is to give up control and allow God to be the one who knows what we need and to take initiative with us, and I think for leader types in anything that requires us to give up control feels highly threatening. We'd rather keep putting our lives together our own way, controlling what we do, controlling outcomes, thinking through everything and making our own strategic plans, that feels like we're more in control. Solitude and silence you literally give up control and let God be the one who initiates with you.

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow. Yeah, that's profound. So this was you a decade or so into ministry, firm halt, and in the book I really appreciated it, you kind of hooked me in 'cause I think to be fair as a writer, and I'm not saying this in a critical way at all, but you look at invitation to retreat and you're like, "Well, that's not me, I don't need time away." And you're talking about Brad within a few pages, who is a pastor leading a growing church who feels empty inside and disconnected at home, and then you're like, okay, well I'm not in ministry. And Jeremy, a gifted entrepreneur who leads a fast growing company but has all this dysfunction inside, and I'm like, oh, you just summarized my 30s, this is not fair. This is not fair at all, and the majority of the listeners to this podcast can resonate with those examples.

Carey Nieuwhof: This is a challenge for people, sometimes you're in a season where things are flat or down into the left, but when they're up into the right, it's not always great. Talk to me, talk to the Brads and the Jeremy's or the women who are exactly where you at in describe where you were at 20 years ago. Describe their world.

Ruth H. Barton: I think it really is very much about coming to a place of realizing that all we're doing and all of our success and even if our star is rising a bit, that there can be an emptiness inside if we have become disconnected from the presence of God deep within and the very relationship, the very love relationship that drew us into ministry or into our work, that passion can actually wear us out as well and can actually become an obstacle to the intimacy that we seek. And one day we wake up and we think, "Oh, I'm so busy doing all this for God, but I've lost my relationship with God." And that is a shocking, shocking moment.

Ruth H. Barton: When a Christian leader gets to that moment or someone who's been a Christian for a long time and remembers intimacy 20 years ago or 10 years ago, but hasn't been intimate with God for a long time, it's been a long time since they've heard a word from the Lord, it's been a long time since they've had an encounter that was satisfying in any way, since they've heard a personal word from God through scripture, since they've said anything honest to God and they realize, "Wow, I'm very busy in God's service, but the relationship itself has really gone away in some ways, the interest is just not there." That desire can be stirred then, the desire for intimacy again. I would even say, I'd go so far as to say that desire, we can allow it to deepen into desperation and that desperation is a really good place for a Christian to be.

Ruth H. Barton: It sounds really funny 'cause there's all this victorious talk that we have, but when one of us is desperate enough for the presence of God, again, that were willing to change our lives, that we're willing to seek, no matter what the cost, that is a really good place to get to.

Carey Nieuwhof: You talk about the emptiness, the disconnection. I've known some leaders who are just not that interested in making a change, or who say, "Hey, this is just an occupational hazard." What would you say to those leaders who say, "No, Ruth, this is normal."

Ruth H. Barton: When I'm being nice?

Carey Nieuwhof: You can be both those, okay.

Ruth H. Barton: First of all, I don't think they're always being honest, honestly, about what it's really like on the inside or they are so busy and distracted that it's been a long time since they paid attention to what their soul really wants to say to God and to what's really true on the inside. Or they're still too early in the process where the pain of that emptiness has not overtaken them yet, but if we continue on a path that's not sustainable we will get there. It's not my job to push anybody to a place or that kind of self awareness, my job is to tell the truth about my own life and then to seek God with all my heart, and I've tried to put a few things down in print, and for it to be there. When someone hits that place where they realize, "I am empty on the inside. No matter how much success I'm experiencing in my external world, in my internal world, I'm not experiencing the presence of God in a way that satisfies anymore."

Carey Nieuwhof: I was on a coaching call this morning with a leader who actually as a pastor of a very large successful church, said he had found himself growing empty and not like ... there's no scandal, there's no offense or anything, but he ended up recommitting his life to Christ and telling his church about that. I was sharing my own, my burnout's 13 years in the past now, but I found myself at the end of 2017 thinking that my ... I've read through the Bible every year for 20 years, pretty much nonstop but it was starting to feel like a checklist, you get all those

streaks or new version. Last year I slowed down and I said, "God, I need to find you again. I need to not just read about you, I need to know you."

Carey Nieuwhof: I actually cut down to a couple of verses of the Psalms every day with a bit of Tim Keller and Cathy Keller, and that was it for six months, just a few verses of scripture and some space. Then I added some new testament reading in once July hit, and now I'm back onto the one year Bible. But it feels fresh and alive and intimate again. I guess from time to time, you need those resets even if you're moderately healthy, right?

Ruth H. Barton: Yes, absolutely. There's a courage sometimes to change it up a bit, like what you did. To say this is getting raw, it's getting routine, I want to change it up. Even things that are as worthy as reading the Bible through in a year, sometimes you still need to change it up like you did and even change how we approach it too. In one of my books I write about the practice of say, Lectio Divina, which is a much slower reading a scripture because many of us who have been raised in Protestant Christianity have done the reading through the Bible in a year or three years and all we're really trying to do is check the box. We're not hearing anything from God, but it feels really good to check the box. I remember those days in my own life as a young 30 year old where I was reading through the Bible with this reading plan and I think it was a three year, but if you wanted to really be a star student you would do to in a year.

Ruth H. Barton: I never remembered anything I read, but I loved the sensation of checking off the box because I'm a person who likes to perform and achieve, it felt really good to check off the box. We have to watch for that and when we know that that's where we're at, we need to change it up.

Carey Nieuwhof: It was weird because as I struggled with this and it took a little while, like I had experimented with more of a liturgical prayer calendar for a while, and that helped for at the beginning. But then I was like, "This isn't really me." But there was a voice in my head that said, "You're being unfaithful by not reading five passages of scripture every day and not reading the Bible this year." Then I thought, I don't know whether that's the voice of God, and in the end-

Ruth H. Barton: That does not sound like something God would say.

Carey Nieuwhof: No, it doesn't sound like something God ... But there is something in you, the achiever that says it's all about achievement. We're on a podcast. All right?

Ruth H. Barton: Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: I'm going to assume that this also describes the world of a lot of people listening. You also talk about Andrew Sullivan who wrote a book or wrote an article called, I Used to Be a Human Being. It sounds like he probably worked for Mashable or something like that in the early days, where he was blogging multiple times a day and on his social media feed and we all to one extent or

another, live a digital life. Frankly, if you're listening to this podcast, you have one or maybe both feet firmly in the digital world. He wrote about his addiction to tact and he said, "I'm not even a human anymore." And he had to go into a radical detox. What are your thoughts on what constant connection is doing to our souls?

Ruth H. Barton: For one thing, it's keeping us stimulated so that there's no time to quiet down and hear the still small voice of God or the voice that our own soul trying to say something to God. The way that technology is functioning in our lives right now, it's keeping us all riled up, all stirred up, and reactive and to what's going on the outer world and disconnected from what's going on in our inner life.

Carey Nieuwhof: Can you say that again? That was a big drop, I want you to just say that again, 'cause it's keeping us what, connected?

Ruth H. Barton: Distracted.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh yeah, distracted with the outer world.

Ruth H. Barton: With the outer world rather than being in touch with our inner world, where our soul has something true to say to God and where God is wanting to say something true to our souls. Someone has said you'd be surprised what your soul wants to say to God, you would. But when you're as busy as we are, your soul never gets a chance to talk and you never hear it. The soul doesn't compete, the soul is not going to shout and yell about all the other distractions we're allowing into our lives. It's a very serious matter to become disconnected from one salon to stop hearing what your soul wants to say to God and creating space for God to speak back to your soul.

Carey Nieuwhof: I want to come back to that, is there anything else on Andrew Sullivan and the constant tech thing that it's doing?

Ruth H. Barton: I can keep going, I can definitely keep going on that.

Carey Nieuwhof: Keep going and then I want to come back to what your soul wants to say, but keep going.

Ruth H. Barton: One of the things that I think is so powerful about Andrew's story is that he talks about this detox experience of going into a long silent retreat and all of this, the genius is distractions, how hard it was to settle down. But then when he does settle down, he confronts his grief, his grief about family of origin and childhood grief and he is doubled over in tears and in pain because being distracted, I think one of the reasons we actually do distract ourselves from technology is so that we don't have to pay attention to the unresolved pain within us. God never gets access to that place and we never really get healed because all we're doing is stuffing it down and repressing it.

Ruth H. Barton: It's a very powerful description, and he had a wise spiritual director speaking of ... there was someone there who was available to people and his spiritual director was very wise just to tell him to stay with it. He did, and eventually he touched something deeper and truer within himself, and that's the way grief and pain works. There's no way to get through it except to go through it and solitude and silence provides us a chance, retreat provides us with a chance to get through our grief rather than to suppress it and repress it.

Carey Nieuwhof: Was there a part of you when this journey started that was afraid to go there?

Ruth H. Barton: Oh yes, oh yes. I remember getting ready to go on my first extended retreat. I was going to Washington DC to take this retreat with a particular group of people guiding me, and I was a young man at a time, I just want to say that. People think that I write about solitude and silence now when I don't have any kids in the house. No, no, no, no, no, my invitation to retreat and to solitude came when I was the mother of a seven year old, a five year old and a newborn. I don't know why I didn't want to dismiss me because they think that I don't understand because I do and I want to say to God, are you kidding me, couldn't this invitation have come at a better time? This is really not the time for this invitation to come.

Ruth H. Barton: But it was the invitation and God was inviting me into solitude and silence and I remember beginning was shorter periods of solitude and silence, but then feeling very drawn to a longer retreat period. It required a plane trip and I checked my bags and I made all the arrangements for my kids and all that sort of thing. Then as I'm sitting there at the gate waiting, I am ambushed by fear, just ambushed by fears. I pulled my journal out, I thought, I've got to do something to keep myself from running out of here, 'cause if my bags hadn't been checked, I probably would have...

Carey Nieuwhof: If it was carry on, you were gone.

Ruth H. Barton: I had already checked my bags and I really didn't have any choice so I began just writing out my fears and there was fears of being bored, because I'm used to being really busy, like, am I going to be bored, am I going to have trouble sleeping, am I going to like the food, is anything going to happen, is God going to meet me, or is God going to meet me and show me things about myself that I don't want to see? All sorts of fear just ambushed me. I think we all have fear and when I lead retreats now, I always guide people through an experience of paying attention to what they're experiencing on the inside. I invite them to pay attention to their anxieties and concerns, to write those down on a slip of paper, to let it all just come without fighting it.

Ruth H. Barton: Then on the other side, I invite them to reflect on their fears for themselves, the fears I just mentioned, will God meet me, will he not meet me, what will that mean about him, what will it mean about me if he doesn't, the fears of being bored, of not being cared for, of not resting, all sorts of fears. Put those fears on

the other side and actually tuck that piece of paper into an envelope, March, trust. If there's an altar around, which we always have an altar, when we're on retreat to gather around for our prayers, we invite people to literally put the envelope on the altar as a way of saying, "I'm trusting God with my cares and concerns, and I'm trusting God with myself while I'm here doing what God is inviting you to do and that it is, be on retreat."

Ruth H. Barton: Retreat, by the way, Jesus invites his disciples to retreat when he says, "Come away with me and rest a while." I want to be really, really clear that when we hear this invitation to retreat and say yes to it, we do so as Jesus' disciples. I'm one of Jesus' disciples, Jesus invites his disciples to come away with me and rest a while and when I refuse, I'm actually refusing Jesus' invitation to me. I would say that to some of the pastors that you mentioned before. You're going to tell me that you don't need retreat when Jesus said to his 12 disciples, "Come away with me and rest a while," when Jesus himself retreated, you're gonna tell me you don't need this? Because it's there.

Carey Nieuwhof: That exercise of writing down your fears in your journal, that's interesting.

Ruth H. Barton: Or on a piece of paper that you actually put in an envelope and set somewhere, that's a sacred way of saying, "I'm trusting myself to you God."

Carey Nieuwhof: I am not sure that 99% of people listening to this have ever done that. I've heard you talk about that, I've also ... Tim Ferriss, I listen to the Tim Ferriss Show, different use of language on that show than we would have on this one, but some really interesting ideas and he calls it fear setting where basically you write down what is the worst thing that could happen. All of us ... your fears are so irrational and they control your emotions and when you write them down, he says, almost like we do goal setting, but he said, you do fear setting, you write it all down, he says they have a way of losing their power. What are your thoughts on that?

Ruth H. Barton: I agree because I think many times our fears are held at an unconscious level and so then they have power over you precisely because they are unconscious. Whereas when you bring them to consciousness and then even moving them beyond your consciousness to writing them down outside yourself, then first of all, they get rightsized, where you can see the ridiculous or irrational or whatever, and that's a good thing. Then in our case, in a Christian environment, what I'm guiding people to do is to take it one step further and not just acknowledge, but to actually trust it to God and to let God hold it.

Ruth H. Barton: That's an expression of faith right there, which is what the journey is about, do we trust God with our cares and concerns, do I trust God that if I'm being invited to retreat and I say yes and I go, that God loves my children, that God loves my husband, that God cares about my work, that the conflicts that are left unresolved, or the money issues that I'm wrestling with, do I trust that God can care for those things while I'm away doing what he's inviting me to do? The

battle is the Lord's, this almost says. Do I trust that the battles of my life are God's and if I leave, God's still there taking care of it? I think that the invitation to retreat takes us up to the edge of our faith, do I trust that God can care for the things that concern me while in a way and then beyond that, do I trust that God has good things in store for me? Can I trust myself to God?

Carey Nieuwhof: It's an interesting observation, I've often wondered is constant busyness the lack of stillness in your life or even constant activity or connectivity, is that actually at some level a lack of trust? What would you say about that?

Ruth H. Barton: Yes. Something as superficial as FOMO, fear of missing out, if you're going to disconnect, you're going to have to trust that you're not going to miss out on something that you weren't supposed to be a part of anyway, or you have to trust your friends not to get together without you. You have to trust that nobody's going to fire you while you're away on retreat, you have to trust a little bit that fear of missing out. Then beyond that, you are trusting yourself to God in a much more radical way than when you are all busy trying to keep your own life together. In retreat environment, we're trusting God to order our lives and to do the good things in our lives that we don't even know to do for ourselves.

Carey Nieuwhof: You've also done some work on fatigue, tiredness. Most people, I mean, the articles over the last decade are pretty unanimous in one direction, we're an underslept culture, we're an exhausted culture, we're an exhausted people. You make a distinction between good tired and tired, can you talk to us about our fatigue?

Ruth H. Barton: When we talk about dangerously tired and good tired, I like to draw people's attention to the dynamic and the atmosphere of normal ... the development of normal rain clouds and rain versus the atmosphere conditions of a tornado. When there's a tornado on the way, it's dangerous and you have to get to your basement and there's a siren that goes off and the sky is green and it gets eerily quiet and you know, I'm in danger, then I have to do something different. Dangerously tired in our lives is like that where we have gotten to the edge of something where if we do not pay attention, bad things are gonna happen.

Ruth H. Barton: I really help people to think about dangerous levels of exhaustion in really concrete ways that ... when we're compulsive in our work, when we can't stop, when we can't disconnect, when we're restless and bored, when we distract ourselves through busyness and through the kinds of activities that are really aren't good for us, like escapism whether it's shopping or spending or overeating or pornography or fantasy novels, whatever it is, that causes a person to choose escape rather than choosing life giving activity, that is a symptom of being dangerously tired. When we understand that our spiritual practices are good for us, but we can't show up for them, we just don't think that we can face them, we just want to sleep, wanting to escape our lives somehow and have a fundamentally different life, daydreaming and escapist fantasy, things like that, all of those kinds of things are indicators that we are

edging towards being dangerously tired and probably towards a burnout situation, very dangerous.

Ruth H. Barton: In both of my books, both in Solitude and Silence and also in Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership, I actually give people real assessments that they can take so that they can determine whether or not they're teetering on the brink of dangerous levels of exhaustion. Good tired is normal, it's normal for us to live in our sacred rhythms and to be refreshing, replenished enough to get out there, do what's ours to do, give it our best, leave it all in the field, but because we have rhythms in our lives, when we come back to a place of Sabbath keeping, we come back to a vacation, we come back to good nights of sleep, and we replenish ourselves, let God replenishes and then we're back at it, that's a healthy rhythm right there.

Ruth H. Barton: Dangerously tired accumulates over time and in very subtle ways and it usually as a result of many things, including not having sacred rhythms in our lives, including repressed and suppressed emotion, things that we haven't dealt with and using our energy to suppress what's real in our lives. Those are slow leaks and that kind of thing accumulates over time.

Carey Nieuwhof: Are those assessments or one of those assessments, are they available online anywhere that we could link to in the show notes?

Ruth H. Barton: Yes, if you go to the home of the Transforming Center, which is my organization, there's a place right there on the homepage to take the assessment.

Carey Nieuwhof: Awesome, we will link to that in the show notes.

Ruth H. Barton: It's also in the back of the book in printed form, in Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership.

Carey Nieuwhof: Awesome. I don't know that these are the right categories, you can use whatever words you want, but there are themes that you keep coming back to like Sabbath, rest, retreat, all these things that don't seem to fit into North American or western life particularly well these days and busy people would say, "Ruth, I don't have the time for that." Like, thank you very politely, but no, I haven't got the time for that. Tell us why these are so foundational and crucial.

Ruth H. Barton: Before I do that, I want to say that the various statements that you were making when we say I don't have time for that culture doesn't allow it, that is a place I think of cultural conformity for Christians. It's a place where Christians are conforming to the culture rather than being a transforming presence in the world and I believe that one of the most countercultural things we could do is to get this right, is to establish rhythms that keep us healthy and whole rather than continuing to conform to life in our culture. We have got ... as Christians, we've got to drive some stakes in the ground and not let the culture tell us what's normal, not even the Christian subculture.

Ruth H. Barton: There's a Christian subculture to that is very performance oriented, very performance driven, and we can't let that culture tell us either because the biblical culture, Jesus' message to us and God's example to us even in the Old Testament is that God worked six days and rested on the seventh. Do you think God needed the rest? I'm not sure, but what I do know is that he did rest and he did feel like that was the sacred rhythm for him, her, if you will. God, out of who God is, worked within rhythms of work and rest and people want to call Sabbath keeping a Jewish practice. It's not, Sabbath keeping is rooted in the person of God, God choosing to work six days and rested on the seventh. Then when God chose a people for himself and cultivated and a people for himself, he taught them about the Sabbath and it became a hallmark of their identity.

Ruth H. Barton: It doesn't originate with the Jewish people and originates with God and how God chose to do God's creative life and creation. When we are practicing Sabbath rhythms of work and rest, we're godlike in that way, when we say yes to the invitation to come away with me and rest a while, we are being Jesus' disciples and doing what Jesus asks his early disciples to do and what he wants to teach us how to do. This is a place where we can actually take back our cultural conformity and do something that actually confronts what's taking place in the culture right now. Of course, I think it's going to be one of the hardest things we do because with the onslaught of technology and its ubiquitous nature, it's radical to disconnect from technology and then the stimulation that comes through technology. It's going to be very radical for any of us to make choices around that.

Carey Nieuwhof: Can you give us some models or ideas for Sabbath? I had and we'll link to it in the show notes, but I asked Eugene Peterson this question when he was on the podcast and he had a really simple routine where he and his wife Jan would just go hiking and they'd be silent in the morning. They'd pack a lunch and then on the way back they would talk about what they saw, it was a pretty simple, wonderful routine, but what a rich life. Jon Tyson who was on last year, on the podcast, talked about his rhythm for Sabbath and some of the other guests have as well. We'll link to those in the show notes, but I would love for you to talk to us about what you think constitutes ... what are some reasonable practices for Sabbath?

Ruth H. Barton: I write about my own journey with Sabbath in the book Sacred Rhythms because it was ... it's really been almost the last hold out for me. It was in my early 40s after I had been practicing other disciplines for a long time and I just thought Sabbath was too hard, I had put it in the too hard file. My husband is a banker and his bank was open on Sundays, my children were all athletes and so they were all in sports on Sundays, I was in ministry and so Sunday was the busiest day for me. It was just a can of worms I just didn't want to open and so I just left it outside of my awareness in the too hard file.

Ruth H. Barton: At the same time though, as I was recognizing these dangerous levels of depletion, my longing for Sabbath was growing and in fact, when I would read

books like Wayne Muller's book Sabbath, I would literally weep at the practices that you would describe that were so gentle and so restful and gave us ways to practice trusting God and gave us ways to practice savoring the God's good gifts in our lives and creating space for the soul to come out and to say true things and to sit with your family in a loving way without everybody having to rush off somewhere. I read the readings and I would weep with longing for it, but I just didn't think it was realistic in my life. Then, when I was no longer on a church staff, I thought, oh great, now we can go to a church and we can just be a normal family, we can go home and have dinner together.

Ruth H. Barton: But this church that we were attending at the time, they did everything on Sundays. They put all their activities and to Sundays, the youth groups, junior high, high school, congregational meetings, small group meetings, choir practices, small group Bible Studies, all of it happened on Sundays. I think they were afraid they wouldn't get people to come back if they-

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, there's that theory.

Ruth H. Barton: ... didn't schedule everything on Sunday. I understand it, but what it did was show me that it's not just the secular culture that prevents us from practicing Sabbath. The church culture does too, if we're not intentional, because Sabbath keeping is intended by God to be a communal discipline, not just my own private solitude. It takes place within the community of people that I'm sharing faith with, our life together has to make it possible for me to practice Sabbath, and it's not solitude because it takes place with your family, it takes place with the people that you're closest to. I think it's lovely if we can build some solitude and silence in, but I started wrestling with these issues when I had children in the home. So, it's not a time when I leave my family and go be in solitude, it's a time when I'm with my family, but in a different way. It's a communal digital, let's not forget that.

Ruth H. Barton: My own journey, which was actually quite harrowing was that I got run over by a car at one point, I had been riding my bike and I got run over by this van that was powered by being driven by an older man whose reflexes were not so great. It was after that, when I just got right up off that pavement almost and went back to work that I had a friend say, "You know Ruth, you did just get hit by a car. You could take a day off." She nailed me, she just absolutely nailed me because I didn't even stop after that traumatic experience to let my body and my soul heal. I realized, man, I've been on this treadmill for a very long time and it was during that time that God brought some of Wayne Muller's readings back to me and I thought, "I think God's bringing this to me, I think God is using this accident for his purposes. I don't think he caused it, but I think he's using this for his purposes and he wants me to face the issue of Sabbath in my life."

Ruth H. Barton: It's a significant part of my spiritual journey, how God brought me to a place that I could take Sabbath keeping out of the two hard files and actually incorporate it into my life as a person with children and a husband whose work

required him to be at work sometimes, that has since changed thanks be to God, and really confronting what it is in the church culture that keeps us from practicing this together and supporting one another. I understand now Sabbath to be all about rest, worship and delight. Those are the three things that Sabbath is supposed to be about so those are the things that we embrace and incorporate on Sabbath.

Carey Nieuwhof: Rest, worship, and delight.

Ruth H. Barton: And delight, yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: Can you break that down a little bit more, and I've got to just underline what you said about Sabbath being communal. In my lifetime, at least in Canada anyway, I don't know whether it's the same in the US, I still remember where you had to gas up on Saturday because the gas stations would be closed on Sunday. You might find that one that was open and you're not buying milk unless it's like \$10 a gallon at that one store that's open, but that has all been blown to smithereens in our lifetime.

Ruth H. Barton: Yes, and now the Sundays are seen as being a time for consuming so consumerism is alive and well, it's time for sports, it's a time for catching up on everything you didn't get done during the week on your human things. Here's another thing about Sabbath that I think it's really important that in the practice of Sabbath keeping the way we're offered it in scripture, the seventh day is the day for rest but that means that you have to really order the rest of your week so that you can have that seventh day. That means that the five days you need to get your paid work done in five days, and then you need that sixth day for the work of being human.

Carey Nieuwhof: Like mow your lawn, wash your clothes, whatever.

Ruth H. Barton: Mowing the lawn, picking up the dry cleaning, going shopping and all those things. The six day becomes pivotal that you really do have a six day for the work of being human so the seventh day can really be a day of rest. I think that's really important and I think-

Carey Nieuwhof: That is, you would say, the God ordained rhythm or the natural ... the better rhythm of life.

Ruth H. Barton: Yeah, yes. That's very Godlike by the way, that corresponds to how God chose to do it so I love the fact that we can actually participate in God's nature and God's character by practicing Sabbath. I love to shut down on the night before in ways that are consistent with the Jewish practice, 'cause it would be sundown of the night before where they would begin by lighting candles and having a special meal and blessing each other and things like that, so that you just began to shut it all down. You work really hard during the day, but you get towards five o'clock and six o'clock at night and you're shutting it down and that's the

beginning. To start with restfulness I think is really important because even gathering in community is in some ways effortful.

Carey Nieuwhof: Especially if you're in ministry.

Ruth H. Barton: Yes. Even for introverts, for instance. To have to put your face on and get out there and interact with people, that's not restful. I'm an introvert and so I had to get up for that, I have to store up for that and then I'm tired afterwards. To begin with resting is almost essential in my mind to actually engage, worship and delight from any good place. Does that make sense as I say it?

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, yeah. Let's walk through that, let's walk through the three ... what you see as the three purposes of Sabbath.

Ruth H. Barton: We rest our minds and our bodies and our souls so in ... let's see, probably it's in the book, Sacred Rhythms. I actually walk people through the exercise of thinking about what's restful for them at the physical level. You get some extra sleep and you should, you should take naps. Furbish it, always include a nap, always, always, always, or laying on the couch under a blanket or laying in that recliner but being comfortable on restful in your body is part of it. Taking bubble baths, wearing your comfortable clothes, eating beautiful food, the best food on a Sabbath, all of those things have to do with the rest for the body. Then rest of the mind, we refrain from getting involved with things that taxes at the level of the mind.

Ruth H. Barton: So we don't work on taxes, pardon the pun, we don't ... planning like wedding planning, I have three daughters and they all three had weddings. I was practicing Sabbath by that point and I said, "No, we're not doing wedding planning on Sundays. I know that wouldn't be convenient for you, but I don't do that kind of thing on Sundays." Hard conversations with a spouse, get some rest first and then have those conversations on the way out of your Sabbath time. That's consistent with what you described with Eugene Peterson, they're quiet in the mornings and then they hike, get on the way then they start to talk about things. We're not at our best when we're exhausted and we don't bring our best to the conversations with our loved ones so do that after Sabbath out of that resting, then the hard conversations.

Ruth H. Barton: Budgeting, budgeting conversations, those are stressful, those make me work hard, it's a level of my mind. Even the hard things that are going on like sometimes when you're in the middle of a conflict, I have sometimes told myself on the Sabbath, "I am going to set that conflict aside, I'm not going to work on that mentally today. It will still be there tomorrow, today I'm going to rest myself in God and I'm going to trust God to take care of that thing." That's a way we rest the mind.

Carey Nieuwhof: Other than scripture, would you read a book?

Ruth H. Barton: Yes. Yes, and spiritual readings that are not your work. For me, there's a fine line there, you can imagine.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, pleasure reading, I guess I would say.

Ruth H. Barton: Pleasure reading, or what you think that God is using for you to connect you with your own soul at the soul level 'cause I think that that's an important part of Sabbath too, is to connect with soul again, to connect with what's most essential in you, that place where God is present to you. Poetry is a favorite practice of mine because I love, love, love words. I have to be careful because I'm a writer, thereby I worked, but reading poetry, I put that in the category of delight, I guess. It's just utterly beautiful to see what people do with words and poetry. We choose those things that delight us rather than tax us and make us tired.

Carey Nieuwhof: Then worship, what does worship look like?

Ruth H. Barton: That's where ... I have two ways of looking at that, I actually loved the idea of having worship on the night before. I practice Sabbath on Sundays because it's the only day that it's even possible for me in our culture, so churches that gather on a Saturday night have their service at 5:00 on Saturday and actually begin their Sabbath practice worship together communally. Then after that you have a nice meal, but then you wake up the next day and you stay in your jammies till noon, you have that second cup of coffee, you're not getting up and rushing to get dressed and rushing your kids into the car and all of that. There's something really delightful and really right about churches that gather on Saturday to begin the Sabbath with worship, and then the families can stay together and be together without stress all the way through the next day.

Ruth H. Barton: Or, we can reverse it a bit and say, if you begin shutting down and letting down on the night before, which would be Saturday for me, then you're somewhat rested then, you've already started your resting. You come into worship on Sunday in a more rested way, you've let go of cares and concerns and you're open to the presence of God. Either way, you want to find a way for all of this to be restful and not hard work. When I'm on retreat with pastors and clergy, we have to really wrestle with Sabbath for the clergy. I have ideas about that, and I do talk to people-

Carey Nieuwhof: Go ahead, there's a lot listening so give us the overview.

Ruth H. Barton: First of all, because Sabbath is a communal discipline, I think clergy need to live into their own desire for Sabbath and really get it at that level and realize that if they don't, they're going to suffer and they might not even make it for the long haul. To claim it at that level is first, and to begin to try to find a way to practice it. Then, we can begin to guide our conversation or our congregations in these things and begin to order our lives around Sabbath. I think the pastor needs to teach about Sabbath, it's a very biblical practice, it's not a Jewish practice. It's a

biblical practice, in my humble opinion. Sabbath was so significant that Jesus didn't teach on it because he was assuming that people were practicing Sabbath because he was a practicing Jew. He and his disciples practiced the Sabbath, they didn't need to talk about it, they practiced it.

Ruth H. Barton: There's so much biblical basis for it, and then Jesus was just a practicer of the Sabbath. Biblical teaching, and then if there's changes that need to be made, one suggestion I make is that the only thing you do on Sundays is worship, you don't throw in committee meetings and youth group meetings and you don't bring people back. After Sunday morning, everybody goes home and gets back in their job pants and eats good foods and take naps and have sex, with your spouse, Sabbath sex is really a great practice that the Jewish ... it comes right out of the Jewish tradition, it's how they applied it. You've got a lot of religion like that, right?

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah.

Ruth H. Barton: You do things that are delightful, maybe you watch movies, maybe you go for long leisurely walks, maybe you read a novel or you read poetry like I mentioned, you land lie onto your blankets, you light fire, you sit in the sun on your own patio, you linger with the people that you love rather than having to get up and jump and run, if you love to run, you get out and take a good run, if you like football or sports and that being competitive is just good for you, then you have a pickup football game or a pickup basketball game or something like that. But you do it for delight, you don't do it for accomplishment or achievement. Do you know what I'm saying?

Ruth H. Barton: Then the rest of the day just unfolds, people always ask ... oh, so let me finish with pastors, what I would say is you have worship, but by 12:00 or 1:00, everybody including staff is heading home. Nobody comes back, everybody's now Sabbathing together, because pulling off church services cannot in any way be considered a rest, it is work for the people who pull it off. I would suggest that they're starting their status at 1:00, and then they go through 1:00 the next day and you just make sure your phones are manned, but all the staff Sabbaths until at least 1:00 on the Monday, or maybe the whole Monday is taken off depending on how much output you do on Sundays.

Ruth H. Barton: You give this to the staff and then you begin to also think about how many services you have and how much you're requiring of volunteers and how are we helping our volunteers to practice the Sabbath, those are hard and challenging conversations. Many churches really do require a lot of volunteers to carry off all that they do, so how are you going to teach your volunteers about Sabbath and Are you going to talk about Sabbath when it comes time to adding another church service? Does anybody raise the question, well, how does this help our people practice Sabbath, will this prevent us from practicing Sabbath? You have this as a part of the conversation all the time, and I'm telling you, when I facilitate a conversation around this it is lively as you can imagine because it just

confronts us and how we're even doing our Christian Church life in a very busy way.

Carey Nieuwhof: It's interesting because what you describe as a rhythm for a pastor on Sunday describes how I have spent my Sundays for 23 years, when I was a lead pastor. No meetings on Sunday, nobody comes back with me, I'm not doubling up 'cause I'm in town. It's like you go back, you hang out with your wife, your kids or do something fun, you relax. I guess I grew up in a somewhat Calvinist home so we weren't allowed to do anything on Sunday and I've kept that, Sunday's not a day for cutting the grass, it's not a day for detailing the cars.

Ruth H. Barton: Or for scheduling meetings, just because you think it's the best time to get people back to the building.

Carey Nieuwhof: Absolutely.

Ruth H. Barton: I'm saying, "I don't think we should give in."

Carey Nieuwhof: I think that's interesting. Wow, that is a good deep dive into that and I think that's a good guide because people can get into legalism. I enjoy biking, it's my own form of exercise I love so Sunday afternoon ride on a sunny day. Do you use restorative as a guideline, like what restores you?

Ruth H. Barton: Yes, what do you find replenishing and delightful, because I believe that delight is a very replenishing thing to experience, when you have delighted in something like you've delighted in your children, or you've delighted in that bike ride in the sunny day. Delight is a very replenishing kind of an experience, I think.

Carey Nieuwhof: I'll just sneak this in, smoke a brisket, people, that's what you need to do.

Ruth H. Barton: Yes, that'll teach you everything you need to know.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, that's it, that's it. We never quite got to talk to what does your soul want to say to God, but does it in those moments that you really begin to hear the core of your being say something?

Ruth H. Barton: Yeah, exactly. If there is any way for you to have some time for some silent listening and journaling, some people will do an examine on the Sabbath, you can do a daily examine, but some people rarely find time for that in a daily way so on the Sabbath, when time's a little bit more spacious they'll do an examine which is simply to look back on your week and ask God to show you where God was present with you and you responded and you sensed his presence, to thank God for his presence with you, invite God to reveal places where he might've been inviting you but you ignored him, and to maybe even confess then if there were places where God was at work and you refused to respond, to really allow a silence of fullness about the fact that God has been with you in ways that

were actually very surprising and to let prayers develop out of that place and to thank God for God's presence with you.

Ruth H. Barton: Or other kinds of journaling too, maybe the scripture that was used in the sermon really sparked you and you were like, "Man, I got to get with my journal and I got to listen to God some more about that scripture because that really penetrated my heart." But what is God saying to me, and get that down in a journal entry. I find that when I get into a deeply restful place, poetry does come out of me. There's always ... in my books, there will always be one original poem and it always comes out of these deeply restful times. Wendell Barry had his whole series on Sabbath poems because poems just came out of him on the Sabbath because we get to that place where we're touching the soul.

Ruth H. Barton: You're helping us to, you know, to finish the trilogy of resting body, mind, and soul, what's restful for the soul. What's restful for the soul is just to be with God was what is, to finally have some time and space to be with God was what is, whatever it is to be with God even if it's painful.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. I was going to say, and even if you're in a season where you're working through something tough, like a relationship that's failed or a past pain.

Ruth H. Barton: Yeah, but you're present to the grief, you're present to the difficulty of it, you're present to what your soul is saying about it, you're present to your own deep truth and to the truth of God's spoken to you, you're present to your life on the Sabbath and there's room for your soul on the Sabbath. If you're hitting on all those cylinders, you're practicing Sabbath in a deeply replenishing way.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, Ruth, we're at the end of our time together today, but I want you to speak to the mom or the dad who's got five soccer practices this week, 17 meetings, and to-do lists that never gets depleted, who's like, "Thanks for the theory, where do I even start?" What would you say?

Ruth H. Barton: That is such a beautiful question, I want to say again that all of these invitations came to me when I was in that life stage and I had to figure it out there first. The first thing we do is pay attention to our desire, and I know that sounds funny, but you've got to let yourself want it, you have to let yourself want it badly to rearrange your life. Go all the way down to the bottom of your desire and trust God to meet you there. I think many of us are afraid to say, "Oh, what she's talking about, I want that. I want that so badly." Go to that place of desire and then let God meet you in that place and out of that place of desire, not odds or shoulds or legalisms or anything else, but because you want it really badly and you have a sense that God's inviting you to it.

Ruth H. Barton: Then say, "God, what are we going to do about that? How am I going to get to rearrange my life for this?" And then you allow yourself to be guided. Some ways that we've been guided in our own lives, you say yes and no to these committee meetings and these committees and you decide, can I afford to add

that into my life? Will I still be able to have the life I'm longing for in God with my family? You say your yeses and your nos based on your deepest desire. What do I want more, do I want to be on this committee or do I want to be home with my kids for dinner, do I want to do that or do I want to be at my kid's games?

Ruth H. Barton: I will say, we had three athletes and they were all three sport athletes and at one point when our one daughter was emerging as a soccer player, she ended up really having quite a soccer career through college, she decided that she wanted to play in a league that played on Sundays. We said, "We're going to let you make that choice because you're a young adult already. You can make that choice, but we're not going to be packing soccer bags and grabbing chairs and water bottles and going and sitting on soccer sidelines on Sundays." She found rides, she did it different ways, different times, it was her choice and she learned of her choices too. She has a real perspective herself now on the fact that she really needed one day a week not to be an athlete and not to be competing and not to be pushing herself so hard, she learned that by her own opportunity to learn and to try.

Ruth H. Barton: You go down to desire, you say your yeses and your nos based on what you really long for in your life. I think parents have to be really brave and not let their kids lives drive them. That's a crazy thing we've gotten into in our culture where now all of our aspirations for our kids is to be high level athletes, people have three year olds and they're enrolling them in all their sports and letting sports drive their adult life. I don't think we can do that, we cannot afford to do that. We want to do enough so that our kids have opportunities, but we can't let their desire to be involved in everything or our aspirations for them to be Olympic athletes, drive every choice we make and hijack our whole lives. I think we need to get together, talk about this stuff and be radical with it.

Carey Nieuwhof: What's fascinating is, I was talking to my son who just turned 23, he used to play fairly high level hockey. It was a couple of nights a week and all over the province, that kind of thing and I asked him, now that he's in his early 20s, "How many of your friends who went on to go even to that next level actually made it to pro?" He's like, "Nobody."

Ruth H. Barton: We all sacrificed ourselves for it and look what we got.

Carey Nieuwhof: I'm not saying that's bad, that was a good childhood and the kids really enjoyed it and team sports is good but I think sometimes as parents were just convinced that we've got the most talented and gifted kids in the world and they're all special, your mom thinks you're special, that's good, my mom thinks I'm special, but we sometimes kill ourselves in the process, which isn't always healthy.

Ruth H. Barton: I find nuance in what you just said is team sports are great, they are good for kids and I don't know where we would have been with our kids and what would have happened to them if they hadn't had the opportunity to be in team sports and it made them better people. There's a difference though between playing

team sports and the kind of competitiveness that has parents running around like crazy and spending their whole life on this-

Carey Nieuwhof: And fighting each other in the parking lot, which we saw once or twice.

Ruth H. Barton: I don't want to in any way diminish athletics because I have daughters and so I think that their relationship to their bodies is better because they were athletes, it's given them a relationship beyond sexuality with their bodies that they're seen for something else. They know they can be strong in their bodies, they know they can be strong mentally, they know they can compete, they can be a part of a team, there's so many benefits, but it's this competitiveness that allowed ourselves to get into that has started to drive the family's lives and drive our schedules in such a way that we don't have any downtime with each other and with God. Anyway, I could go on and on about that.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well we could, but I know people are going to want to do a deep dive so I will link to some resources I produced on the other side of burnout called the high impact leader but people are going to want to find you and your resources as well. Where's the easiest place for them to go if they want more?

Ruth H. Barton: I'd say you can order any book on amazon.com, that's a great way to get books these days. We also have an online store in the Transforming Center, where everything is available. The books that go out from our online store are all signed by me so if you're somebody who likes to have a signed book, I know I really treasure my own books that have been signed by the author. If you order from us, it will be signed and it'll come to you immediately, it'll go into mail the next day after you make your order. It's pretty quick and you'll have a signed book on the other side of it.

Carey Nieuwhof: The website is?

Ruth H. Barton: www.transformingcenter.org

Carey Nieuwhof: Perfect. Well, Ruth Haley Barton, thank you so, so much, we'll link to all that in the show notes with transcripts and everything. Super helpful, very challenging and very refreshing.

Ruth H. Barton: I hope so, thank you so much for a good conversation.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, I'm hoping that really spoke to your soul and if you want more you can head on over to careynieuwhof.com/episode260, 2-6-0. You will find transcripts there, you'll find the show notes there. You can also just Google Ruth's name, Ruth Haley Barton and my name and you'll find it, or head on over to leadlikeneverbefore.com and just search Ruth Haley Barton in the search bar and everything you are looking for will show up. Hey subscribers, you're not going to want to miss them, by the way, subscribing is free, so if you haven't done it, just. Whatever you're listening to this on, hit subscribe because next

week is killer, Michael Hyatt is here. When I finished my conversation with Michael Hyatt, I just thought, I think this is like more leadership per minute than any other guest I've ever had on the podcast, it is like calorie dense in brilliant ideas.

Carey Nieuwhof: He talks about how to focus in a distracted world, he's got a brand new book called Free to Focus, plus we talk about some other things like succession in leadership and what his challenges are in leadership, it's a fascinating conversation. That'll be next Tuesday and of course, if you subscribe for free, you're never going to miss it. Here's an excerpt from my conversation with Michael Hyatt.

Michael Hyatt: That could change your life more than anything, is when you publish a book, but just to give you an example, this is why last year ... the whole premise of this book is the total productivity system to achieve more by doing less. Last year, my business grew 62%. We're a multimillion eight figure business, we grew 62%, which by any measure is huge growth, but, get this, Carey, I took off 160 days last year. No contact with the office, I didn't think about work, I didn't read about work, 160 days. That included weekends, but that was 11 weeks of vacation. I took more time off than ever, and I grew my business.

Michael Hyatt: Our average business coaching client, which by the way, 10% of our coaching clients are pastors, but it's our business accelerator program, in the first 12 months, our average client grows their business by 67% while shaving 11 hours off their workweek, which is exactly the premise of this book and what we're after.

Carey Nieuwhof: Fascinating guys, think you're going to love it and we're back next Tuesday with more. Thank you so much for listening, whatever you are doing right now, whether you are cooking, cleaning, maybe getting your yard ready for spring, working in the garden, on a ride, on a run, thanks for listening. You guys mean the world to me, thanks for making this such a rewarding journey. We're back next Tuesday with more, 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.