

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 299 of the podcast. My name is Carey Nieuwhof. And I hope our time together today will help you lead like never before. We are quickly approaching 300. Isn't that amazing? And I am so thrilled to have Pat Lencioni back on the podcast. So I flew to San Francisco for this to visit Pat in his offices. It was the first time I've ever been there, met his team. I've met his team on the road at different points and of course Pat, but to be able to hang out with him for the better part of an afternoon and capture what I think is one of my favorite interviews. This one has been great. So we're sitting literally around the table at The Table Group and Pat has influenced my leadership for over a decade, decade and a half.

Carey Nieuwhof: I started reading his books when he first started writing, and my goodness we're 10 minutes into this interview and Pat starts talking about a crash he had 11 years ago, and I'm like, "Wait a minute, wait a minute. I don't think I knew about that." And so we went there. And I think you're going to love this interview because the myth is... Here's the myth guys. Everybody thinks it's so easy for everyone else and it's so hard for me, and that's just not true.

Carey Nieuwhof: Most leaders who are very successful have come through some incredibly difficult times and Pat opens up about that. Plus we also talked about the motive of leadership. I walk through The Temptations of a CEO one of his first books, if not the first book. And Pat Lencioni as you probably know is a widely recognized leadership and business expert. He has sold over 6 million books, and we'll talk about this in the interview, but he says he's got this new book called The Motive. Well, anyway when I left the offices, Pat gave me a copy of that book. It was literally a Cerlox bound like printed out copy, not from the publisher but from their office.

Carey Nieuwhof: And I read it on the flight home, and I'll tell you it's exceptional. I can't wait for you guys to get your hands on this. It's available for pre-order, if you're wondering about that. So all that to say, I'm just thrilled you're listening today. Thank you for sharing. Thank you so much for letting other people know about this podcast. We continue to see more downloads than ever, and we're approaching our 10 million download giveaway so stay tuned for that. I also have some incredible guests. You can subscribe for free. Do that wherever you get your podcasts.

Carey Nieuwhof: And we've got the Ask Carey feature today. I'm tackling a question from Jamal who wants to know, "Are senior leadership principles different from, say if you're an associate or just starting out?" Great question. I'm going to get to that at the very end of the show. And in the meantime have you ever looked at your health insurance summary of benefits for your faith-based organization, had no

idea what you're reading, well, you're not alone. They can be confusing and expensive. And so that's why I love what Remodel Health is doing.

Carey Nieuwhof: They have poured back over \$7 million into not-for-profits bottom line by saving them on healthcare. And saving on healthcare with Remodel Health doesn't mean, "Hey, everybody. We got worse benefits next year." Actually, the benefits often improve or at minimum stay the same. And if you're interested podcast listeners of this show have already saved over \$625,000 that they plowed right back into their mission. And if you want more, go to RemodelHealth.com/Carey, C-A-R-E-Y to learn more. You get a free health insurance buyer's guide which will help you cut through the fog and they're happy to talk to you about that too.

Carey Nieuwhof: And also because 2020 is right around the corner, you know the grind of having to deliver fresh content week after week after week. I mean, the pastors have it so different than other people if you're a pastor listening because so many people like if you're a speaker, it's like, well, you use the same talk over and over again, and every once in a while you write a new one. Nope. Not so when it comes to preaching. Well, how about preaching through the Red Letter Challenge in 2020?

Carey Nieuwhof: It's something that 60,000 people have already completed. It's a 40-day church campaign and every pastor that's used it so far has recommended it. Churches that have used the Red Letter Challenge have seen small groups grow by an average of 40%. It's a turnkey program, and here's what happens. It's your sermon outlines done for you. It's small group curriculum done for you. It's graphics done for you all based on the teaching of Jesus. Plus, there's now even a Red Letter Challenge kids workbook so you can run everybody through it.

Carey Nieuwhof: So this works whether you're leading a small group and you need 10 copies or whether you're leading a very large church and you need a thousand or more. So if you go to RedLetterChallenge.com/Carey there are packages based on your church size ready to go. The link will get you between 10 and 40% off depending on size and they would love to help you. So go to RedLetterChallenge.com/Carey and join the growing number of churches that are really focusing in on the red letters, the teachings of Jesus which by the way are really popular with unchurched people too if you're into evangelism like I am.

Carey Nieuwhof: So anyway those are some of our partners today and the offers that they have for you and in the meantime I am so thrilled to bring you one of my favorite leaders, Patrick Lencioni and our conversation that we had together at The Table Group in San Francisco. Well, Pat welcome back to the podcast.

Pat Lencioni: It's great to be here, Carey. It's just great that our paths cross and we have so much in common so this is fun.

Carey Nieuwhof: We do. We just had a fascinating conversation about the church and Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, and we're here at The Table Group, world headquarters.

Pat Lencioni: Yes. And I'm proud to say I'm an Evangelical Catholic. And we actually have a lot... We have priests in common, and other people in the church, Catholic and non-Catholic in common and there's something moving. It's really good.

Carey Nieuwhof: It is. It is really good. I hope we can get to that. Maybe we'll save it for the end.

Pat Lencioni: All right.

Carey Nieuwhof: But it's fascinating here because I've been reading your books for decades as you know and to actually be at The Table Group is a real honor, so thanks for opening this up and we're sitting literally at the table.

Pat Lencioni: At the table and this is where we do our podcast so it's really fun.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. You just got into podcasting. We were talking about that last month when we were at Global Leadership Summit. And it is binge worthy. You've got six episodes so it's easy. Seven or eight now?

Pat Lencioni: I think we put up the seventh earlier this week and another one is going up soon.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. But that's great. So we're at the table of The Table Group, which is good. Pat, I want to go back to the beginning of the first book you wrote that put you on the map, because I think these issues are eternal and so we have a lot of leaders who are listening to this podcast, and I want to talk about The Five Temptations of the CEO. And I think what really surprised me most is I was pretty sure when I first read that book that it was going to be about greed and everything, but you surfaced a bunch of other stuff that a lot of us don't think about, that was pretty deeply convicting.

Pat Lencioni: Yeah. I didn't plan on writing a book. I was just working in a company and doing some moonlighting and other companies working with the CEOs of smaller companies because I was a consultant at heart. And in working with all these different leaders I started to notice behavioral tendencies that they had that were making things problematic for their organizations. And the first one I wasn't even thinking about a model, I said, "He just doesn't care enough about results. He's just all about ego." And then I was like, "Wait, this guy over here though, he cares about results, but oh, he doesn't actually like to push his people that work for him and hold him accountable. What about this guy over here?"

Pat Lencioni: I found that there were five, and so I just shared that with some of my clients and the other people that worked with me in the organization. A year later a

guy came back and wrote those five things on the board and I said, "Hey, where did you hear about that?" He goes, "From you, a year ago." And I was like, "So you think it works?" "Oh, yeah, it works, and you should write a book about this because somebody else is going to."

Pat Lencioni: So I decided I would tap into my fiction writing skills. I took a screenwriting class in college and so I wrote what was more like a screenplay about a fictitious CEO and what happens. I wrote that, I didn't think it would ever get published. We started our firm. Somebody's best friend's brother-in-law's sister read it and she worked at a publishing house and she said, "We want to sign this. We think it's good." And I was like, "Wow you're going to pay me to print this for me? This is awesome." And it went from there.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's incredible. And how many books later and how many copies later?

Pat Lencioni: I was just at a talk yesterday and they introduced me, and I think that they said I have 11 books and I think six million sold.

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow.

Pat Lencioni: And we have another one coming up which will be the 12th, and all but two are fiction. I have one called The Advantage which is a classic business book and then one which is more like a workbook that sells a lot. It's about how to overcome team dysfunction.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. So let's talk about those temptations, and you talked about the first one which was so paradoxical to me because you think he becomes CEO, senior leader, senior pastor whatever your title is, but you finally get to the place where you either start or get promoted to being in charge of an organization. And you said the first temptation is to stop really caring about the mission or results which is weird.

Pat Lencioni: And results is not just money. Results is whatever we're trying to achieve. And again I was working with a leader who thank God for him he showed me this. The company he was leading, a public company would fail to make its numbers. And honestly we would think he's going to be in a terrible mood. We'd go in and see him in his office and he'd been a great mood because he went on CNBC and they asked him about it, and he looked really good. They liked him, and people are like, "Man, you did a great job." And he was able to blame it on some economic downturn or something else. And as long as it didn't make him look bad personally, he was really happy. And I thought, "Oh, no. I'm at the wrong company because this guy really doesn't care about what he's supposed to care about." It's about his career, his status, his public image and there's frankly a lot more people like that than I ever would have imagined.

Carey Nieuwhof: And the paradox, Pat is it's the drive over results. So your argument is when they're younger and in the organization at a lower level, they're like results, results, results. Look at this quarter, look at the stats, look..

Pat Lencioni: Because they have to to survive.

Carey Nieuwhof: Right. Then they get to the top and all of a sudden it's about image.

Pat Lencioni: Well, what it comes down to is why were they working so hard all those years? And for many of them if you ask them, and this is what my next book this coming out next spring is about is what was he motivated by? The book is called The Motive. Are you motivated because one day you want to get someplace where you can finally do things on your own terms or are you motivated by serving, and one day wanting to be in charge so you can love on more people and help them achieve their goals. And there's a truckload of people in politics, in sports, and in business whose goal is to make it so they can finally be the king.

Carey Nieuwhof: Is that conscious or subconscious?

Pat Lencioni: It's definitely not not overtly conscious, but when you ask them, the early readers of my book have been shocked at how much it moves people to evaluate themselves. So I think it's not overtly conscious but when a person actually looks at it, it's pretty easy for them to go, "Oh, crap. That's me."

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, and I haven't read the book yet. I can't wait to get my hands on it.

Pat Lencioni: We'll give you an early copy.

Carey Nieuwhof: I will read it on the flight to Phoenix tomorrow. That'll be fantastic, Pat. I got to tell you. I have questioned my motives over and over and over again just being totally transparent.

Pat Lencioni: Well, we all flip.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, yeah. But I'm like why am I doing this? Why am I doing this? Why am I doing this? And some days I have a good answer and some days I don't have a good answer to that question. And I guess my question is on the motive. How do you know whether your motives, because I want to talk about that anyway, but it might as well go there because it's the first temptation.

Pat Lencioni: Right.

Carey Nieuwhof: Right? How do I know that my motives are pure? How do I know that they're right?

Pat Lencioni: And I'm what I'm about to say I believe, I don't do it every day although I'm trying to start. I think that as a follower of Jesus, I need to wake up every day and let him order my day in terms of what I choose to work on and why. I heard a great speaker yesterday say, "If you understand your, why you'll endure any how." This was this guy named John O'Leary.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, that we were talking about.

Pat Lencioni: Yeah. You were on his podcast. And the thing is we have to wake up every day if you're follower of Jesus and say, "I want to do what you want me to do for you, not for me, for the kingdom and the power and the glory are yours not mine." So if we can check ourselves that way, but if we forget to do that over time even the most well-intentioned person slips and starts to get caught up in, "What is this day going to do for me? Or what is this week going to do for me? Or maybe the reason I like this job is because it makes me well-known or popular or people recognize me," and that's super, super dangerous. So it's almost a daily stripping away of because otherwise it attaches.

Carey Nieuwhof: How have you dealt with that? I mean, you've been extremely successful. Millions of millions of books, a very influential leadership ministry you could say or group, consulting group. How do you guard that in your own heart?

Pat Lencioni: It has been a an annual and monthly, and weekly, and daily, an hour-by-hour struggle. And what I mean by that is because you get caught up in things. The world tells you, you should be enjoying this and you should enjoy it but in the proper perspective. But there's been times in my life where I think that I lost sight of it and I actually crashed and burned about 11 years ago. And I think it was because... You have a lot of faithful people that listen to this, right?

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah.

Pat Lencioni: If I talk about my faith, that's okay.

Carey Nieuwhof: It's business and faith leaders, 100%.

Pat Lencioni: Jesus said you can't serve two masters which is really man/the world and God. And I was going to prove that I could do both.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, wow.

Pat Lencioni: And that's the danger. And I was like, "No, I can be humble servant in my work but also hey this is pretty cool that this is going well." And if you try to do both he says you're going to hate the one and love the other or vice versa. And I got to the point where I was like, "God, I don't want to care about the worldly stuff anymore. I know that it's preventing me from being happy, from having peace." And I actually went and sat, and knelt down after communion at mass one day and prayed that he would humble me. And I when I say that, I mean I was

humble on the outside, but deep down inside I valued it too much and I felt him say, "Are you sure? Because it's going to be really painful for you." I really felt that.

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow.

Pat Lencioni: And I felt like Peter like where else can I go? I mean, yeah, I have to do it. And I went through a year or two of ebb and flow depression because I was losing my ability to enjoy it for the right reasons, and I got to a place where I just finally bottomed out and I said I can't do this anymore. I'm getting no joy out of any of this from family, from work, from writing, from anything. And it was then that I was totally on my knees, totally empty and I said, "Okay, God. You saved me. I can't do this on my own. It's not my will. It's not my humility. It's not my virtue. It's all about you."

Pat Lencioni: And since then I've been coming back from that and it's a whole different world. And I still have to avoid it attaching to me but that was when I bottomed out, and I'm so thankful that it happened and I hope I never go through it again.

Carey Nieuwhof: To the extent that you're comfortable talking about it and I'm somebody who's been very public about it. It was 13 years ago for me. We're the same age, but 13 years ago for me I went through this incredible burnout, so you're speaking to a fellow survivor.

Pat Lencioni: Wow.

Carey Nieuwhof: And a lot of that was God ripping away at my ambition, ripping away. I was right around 40, I think 41. Can you take us back to the extent that you're comfortable sharing to the narrative in say 12 years ago? What was going through your head like, "Oh, this is really awesome, but I'm really trying to be pure about my motive." Can you take us back to the narrative before you hit the crash, what surfaced during the crash and then how you've dealt with it since? Just take us through that.

Pat Lencioni: You know what's interesting?

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah.

Pat Lencioni: What I would say is so I never cheated on my wife, thank you God. I never took drugs or started drinking or gambling, but I have total empathy for people who have done all of those things because when we do those things, we do them out of emptiness. And I think God knew I was not strong enough to endure that so he prevented me from it, but he said, "I'm going to let you feel the same amount of emptiness and pain as a person who did those things, but I don't think you can come back from that. I think you're too frail." Because that would have crushed me.

Pat Lencioni: And so what was going on in my life on the outside, no one would have known. No one would have known. And I was on top of the world and yet what was going on with me is any disappointment that I experienced, some of the most minor stupid things you would imagine and people would say, "Why are you so bummed out because something little happened to you that was bad?" And it was because I had become so addicted to success that it had all become about avoiding failure and there was no joy in the upside anymore. So little things would go wrong and my world would fall apart, and people say, "Why are you so focused on that one thing?"

Carey Nieuwhof: What would be a little thing that unravel that?

Pat Lencioni: Okay. I'll tell you. I was coaching my son's soccer team, and who cares if your son's soccer team wins or loses. But if they lost a game that they shouldn't have lost I would be beside myself. And I know people now like their fantasy football team does poorly and they're pissed off at Aaron Rodgers of the Packers. And I'm like, "You realize you have God, and that he's all that matters? You know your wife loves you, right?"

Carey Nieuwhof: Right.

Pat Lencioni: "You know your kids love you? You know you've got a home roof over your head?" But when we are not living for the right thing, even the smallest setbacks can throw us for a loop. And that was God's way of humiliating me and humbling me, but I was humiliated that I am feeling a lack of peace because we lost a soccer game and my kids were 11. That was my alcoholism, drug addiction, cheated on my wife, gambling, caring about something that was worldly. That was the thing that pierced me. And there were other things like that, but that's the most humiliating and crazy.

Pat Lencioni: When my wife would be talking to me like, "You realize that doesn't matter?" I'm like, "I know it, but why am I so empty?" And the answer was because you don't see yourself as a child of God and he makes you who you are, not your status as a soccer coach, even a parent. Sometimes your kids are down on you. You have to go, "That's okay."

Carey Nieuwhof: What was so seductive about success prior to that moment?

Pat Lencioni: I think like any addiction, I'm convinced that all of life is addiction. When you're not right, for me that's right with God. I think that's true for everybody. And I think it wasn't seductive, it was I needed it. You know what the definition of an addiction is? You need more and more of it to feel less and less happy.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, wow.

Pat Lencioni: Because at some point a person is like addicted to drugs or sex, they're not getting pleasure from it, they need it to avoid being completely desperate. So it

wasn't that success was addicting to me, it was the lack of it seemed intolerable. So it wasn't like if my kids won the championship game. I mean, I can't even believe I'm saying this because it's so embarrassing.

Carey Nieuwhof: No, I get it.

Pat Lencioni: And it wasn't that I would be like, "Yes, we won." I'll be like, "Okay, good. That one went well. What's next?"

Carey Nieuwhof: So there wasn't even happiness in the victory?

Pat Lencioni: Oh, no. Most people I know that are wildly successful, athletes and these people that fall off the cliff, they don't... They've asked these athletes. Mike Singletary was the coach of the Bears, and then he played for the Bears, was the coach of the 49ers. And I actually got to meet him a few times. He was a very quiet guy, very humble guy and he came to his faith when they won the Super Bowl. And he was so unhappy. He said, "Is that it? Is that all?"

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow.

Pat Lencioni: And you talk to people that have had huge successes in their life and they almost always go into a really deep depression because they're like, "I thought that would make me happy." So you have a choice at that point to get on your knees and rid yourself of all that and say, "This isn't going to work. We're going to go for more." And so many people keep doubling down. And eventually it's totally empty.

Pat Lencioni: Justin Bieber of all people was just having this, and he just said he just needed more and more and got more and more miserable, and started treating people poorly and feeling terrible about himself the more successful he got. And what I always tell people is the best thing that happened to me by succeeding was realizing that it doesn't satisfy.

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow.

Pat Lencioni: And I just want to tell people that think that they're just one rung on the ladder away from being happy or two rungs away, that I've been there and it's not what you think it is. So please climb back down the ladder and find it where it really is.

Carey Nieuwhof: I want talk about the downward spiral because statistically we're going to have X percentage of listeners, leaders listening who are right at that point where you were 11 years ago or I was 13 years ago. What was that like? What did it feel like? And what were some of the ways you started to recover or move through it?

Pat Lencioni: Well, I would say the number one feeling I had was terror or fear. It was the scariest I'd ever been in the world because all these fake underpinnings of my success or my stability were gone, and all I said was... And I didn't know what I was going to do. Henry Cloud is a friend of mine. I loved Henry. In a desperate call, I called him to get his advice and he's helped me since then, and other people have. And I remember I got ahold of this priest friend of mine and I said, "I don't know what's going on. I'm totally scared." And he said, "Well, you know God loves you." And I said, "I don't feel it." And he said, "Well, I'm here in his place to tell you that he does."

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow.

Pat Lencioni: And I collapsed on to the floor in tears, and it was the most liberating and terrifying experience I'd ever had. So I've never been so scared in my life. I've been in other situations where they should have been scarier than I was like, "Well, this is okay." That was the point where I was staring through the abyss realizing none of this is me. I can't do this on my own. And until we get to that place of total submission and surrender, man we're just white-knuckling it. I should say that's how I felt. I've been white-knuckling my whole life and I needed to truly bottom out.

Carey Nieuwhof: Was it impostor syndrome or was it... Because people talk about that.

Pat Lencioni: There was certainly that. There was certainly that. Who am I? And there was also just like, "When this is over? When do I feel I can rest?" What did St. Augustine say? "Our hearts will not rest until they rest in God." I am a testament to that. I remember I was talking to my brother and he was down, and I was telling him what I was going through, he goes, "Oh, if I were you I wouldn't have any problems. Look, you have a great wife and your kids, and you you make pretty good money, and your job is good. I mean, what do you have to complain about?" I was like, "I know. So why am I so miserable?" And I had a big hole in my heart that I wasn't really allowing God to fill and allowing myself to feel his love.

Carey Nieuwhof: If you can take yourself back to that point 11 years ago and you look into-

Pat Lencioni: Wow. I should be paying you for therapy. This is awesome.

Carey Nieuwhof: I don't know. I just thought that you're comfortable with that.

Pat Lencioni: Nobody's ever extracted this from me like this so this is fantastic.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, having been there.

Pat Lencioni: Yeah, you're right.

Carey Nieuwhof: Having been there, I get it. And I want to know if you're comfortable, what was it like, Pat, to be at that bottom to be terrified? Did you look into the future and worry that all this stuff was going to go away? Did you hope it would go away?

Pat Lencioni: Here's the thing. The fear is that it will never go away. It's like I'm okay suffering, and that's one thing about society. We need to realize suffering is part of life and it's even redemptive and good for us in many ways. But when you think it's never going to go away, that's when I panic, and that's what I didn't know. So I will tell you. Literally, a miracle. I've had three miracles that I would... I mean, many more than that I'm sure, but three really distinct miracles that have happened in my life that I'm like there was no explanation for that. So here's what happened on mine.

Pat Lencioni: So I am met up with this guy who was going to help me exercise and get feeling better about myself. And he said, "What exercises you want to do? We can go bike riding, we can go row boats, we can go out at the harbor?" And I said, "Let's run. I'm a runner." And so he said okay and he met me. And he'd been through a lot of stuff in his life. And so we were out running randomly and following a path. And he's telling about his life, and he's telling me about this man who wrote a book called Soul Renovation, and about how we have to understand how God loves us. And he's telling about this guy, "You should meet him. He's a wonderful guy."

Pat Lencioni: And we're running along the beach and suddenly these two people come walking by us on the beach, and he says hi to them and talks briefly and then we keep running. And as we're running away he goes, "Do you know who that guy was? That's the guy who wrote the book." And he said, "We should meet him someday." I said, "Are you kidding? We should meet him right now." And we turned around and sprinted down the beach and met the guy, and he told me his story and he prayed over me, and I was like. How did it happen that that guy happened to be there? This was not a hoax. This was totally random and that was God saying, "I am here for you."

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh wow.

Pat Lencioni: Because that was at the peak of my fear and of my terror. We're running on the beach, this guy is telling me you need to meet this guy. That was the guy.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's unbelievable.

Pat Lencioni: It is. That is truly unbelievable.

Carey Nieuwhof: So the book is called Soul Renovation.

Pat Lencioni: Soul Renovation.

Carey Nieuwhof: Do you remember the author's name?
CNLP_299 –With_Patrick-Lencioini (Completed 10/24/19)
Transcript by [Rev.com](#)

Pat Lencioni: I don't remember his name.

Carey Nieuwhof: We're going to link in the show notes. We'll find it.

Pat Lencioni: I do know he was one of the people who bought radial keratotomy here from the Soviet Union, the eye surgery. And I should remember his name. It's been years, and he was an eye doctor who went through his own conversion and wrote this book and he takes you through the Bible and just said, "Here's all the places where God tells you he loves you and you gotta quit listening to the lies that says he doesn't." And that's exactly what I needed to hear and there he was.

Carey Nieuwhof: When you look back over those first 42, 43 years, whatever it was up to 11 years ago where I look back on my own childhood there was like performance addiction, where I was just totally a performance addict and the better I did the more I was loved. It was a lie.

Pat Lencioni: Absolutely.

Carey Nieuwhof: Were there things, looking back on it now that you see clearly?

Pat Lencioni: Absolutely. In fact, it was Henry Cloud just recently I saw. We were speaking together. He said, "Pat, you've got some childhood wounds you haven't dealt with."

Carey Nieuwhof: He said to you like last month?

Pat Lencioni: Yeah. This was three months ago.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, three months ago. Oh, yeah.

Pat Lencioni: So I started to recover, but then I told him... And then I read this book called Be Healed, Be Healed and right now because I'm talking on a podcast the guy's name is Dr. Bob Schuchts.

Carey Nieuwhof: Okay.

Pat Lencioni: Bob Schuchts. Fantastic book. And then I went and saw a faith-based psychologist and all three of them said, "You have wounds you've never dealt with."

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, wow.

Pat Lencioni: And I'm like, "Okay. Bring it on." And what I came to realize when I was really young, I was in a childhood situation of pretty much loneliness like desperate. My parents, they did the best they could. They're awesome people. Rest my

dad's soul. But I was not... I was kind of in a place. And when you're really young and you realize that's what goes on, you often turn to anything to distract you and for me it was achievement and worry. And so from that age on, not wanting to acknowledge that I was afraid and this sounds... This is real, and I'm not like pity me, this is just what happened. I realized I substituted the fear of not being loved with achievement and worry.

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow.

Pat Lencioni: And everybody said, "You're a worrier." Then they said, "You have OCD." All which was true but it all stemmed from the fact that that's how I kept myself alive in a world where I felt largely unloved." And again I don't want any pity from anybody because my parents did their very best and they had their own stuff, and their parents had their own stuff. But until I came to realize, "Oh, that's..." And so in the last three months of my life I've begun to actually identify the source of this and be able to go there and go, "Okay. I can sit in that and I can actually deal with the fact that I felt like that when I was a kid, and that it's not going to kill me." Because when you're three years old or four years old or five year olds, you think it will kill you.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, I'm sure it's that desperate... I had the same thing where I just felt alone a lot, which was really weird.

Pat Lencioni: I was with a group of leaders the other day at a big company. And one of the things we do to go through to help them build trust is to be more vulnerable. So we asked them just to tell us their stories like, "So where did you grow up? How many kids were in your family? And what was the hardest challenge of your childhood?"

Pat Lencioni: And it was amazing. This is one of the largest companies in America, and these were really neat people, nice people. They are all grew up very poor and with very difficult challenges in their childhood. And I think so many achievers in the world that's what they're doing is they're unknowingly trying to overcome that.

Carey Nieuwhof: Do you know how common that is? So we're 300 episodes in on this podcast, Pat. And this is like a case study thing. We're talking with people about their stories. I don't know. I don't think I've ever had a guest who was born rich. Maybe one or two, they were all like-

Pat Lencioni: Well, if they were hopefully, they just had no love. That might be their motivation.

Carey Nieuwhof: But it's like there's always a deficit, there's always a wound that you're leading out.

Pat Lencioni: And when we can acknowledge it, accept it and trust God through it, then we can do things for the right reasons. And if we become successful it's because we're being obedient and joyful not because we're running from failure.

Carey Nieuwhof: One of my greatest fears when I was at the bottom, and I remember there was a day in my counselor's office where he said, "Remember how you feel right now," because I was almost suicidal. It was so dark, and I thought my life's over. I build this great life and now it's been destroyed. And nothing had happened on the outside. It was all going great. It was just me imploding.

Pat Lencioni: That's almost worse because then you don't know what to attribute it to, you think you're crazy.

Carey Nieuwhof: Exactly. And for me, he said, "Remember how you feel." He says, because you're going to get out of this, but a lot of people won't. And then I turn around. For me, it was the moment, I remember I was pulling off the highway and I had a rare moment of clarity that summer and it was, "Oh, this is all in your head. You have a wife who loves you, two boys who love you. You have a church that loves. You've got friends, you've got family." And that was just the beginning. That was the first little ray of light. What was a turning point for you or what was the little glimmer of hope 11 years ago?

Pat Lencioni: I think that miracle was huge.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, yeah. Meeting that guy in the beach.

Pat Lencioni: That was that moment when I was so desperate and there I am standing on the beach. This old man who I had never met, God bless him, him and his wife, and I told him my story and he tells me exactly what I'm feeling. I mean, he knows and he starts praying over me. And it was just like God does care.

Carey Nieuwhof: So that was the beginning of the turnaround.

Pat Lencioni: And that's what I would say to people listening to this it's like whether you're a person of faith or not God does care. He is real. Suffering is not without purpose. And had I not suffered, I would have never got to the other side. So it's so often in life that we can go... Like I heard that guy, John O'Leary who got burned over his entire body at age nine. He spent five months laying spread-eagle in a hospital, couldn't see because his eyes were swollen shut, couldn't eat, could barely breathe, couldn't talk.

Pat Lencioni: He laid there in pain for five months, but he could pray and he could listen and he now says, "Remember, there's a purpose for all this and God loves you." And now he is spending all of his time helping other people who are feeling empty. And it's one of those things where you just go, "Oh, until I understand that nothing is going to satisfy." So suffering has a reason and when you're in the midst of it, you're never ever, ever alone.

Pat Lencioni: Mother Teresa used to walk by hospitals and say, "It's so sad." She'd look at the... And they'd say why and she said, "Because there's a lot of people and they're suffering and they don't know that there's a reason for it, and that they're loved." And our society today, I think maybe at the heart of the brokenness in society is that we think any form of suffering is something we've done wrong and that it shouldn't be happening, and we despair. Where there are other people I meet... I have a friend right now who's been in bed for six years with a back problem.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh my.

Pat Lencioni: And he doesn't know where it's going on. He's been to doctors even through surgery and yet he says, "Hey, I'm offering up my suffering for you." And he has children and he's joyful. He struggles with it but he hasn't lost his faith or his hope. And then I think gosh, I have three bad days in a row and I'm starting to go, "Why me?"

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. No kidding, Pat.

Pat Lencioni: So it's one of those things that I really want to encourage people that you're not alone.

Carey Nieuwhof: How has your leadership been different in the last 11 years?

Pat Lencioni: And I'm not perfect, but it's certainly been... And it's probably why I wrote this book. It's certainly been far more focused on others and not on myself. And I say that knowing that I've had days and weeks when I've failed, but I just know that this is not about me. And even when I have to be... My big thing it's tough for me to be tough on people and so my guilt makes me even tougher. And what I realize now is if my intentions are good and I care about that other person I can love them enough to be tough on them and know that it's okay.

Carey Nieuwhof: On your bad days, how does the self-talk go? What do you say to yourself?

Pat Lencioni: Well, I don't forgive myself for making mistakes. And I get very... I lose sight of the fact that I'm supposed to serve other people and it's not supposed to be easy and I get grumpy that other people are making it hard for me to serve them. And it's like like, "Hey, I'm trying to help you darn it. You're supposed to be making this easy for me."

Carey Nieuwhof: Some clients don't do their homework when they-

Pat Lencioni: Or people that work for me or somebody that I'm trying to help in their life or maybe even somebody in my family. Clients I'm a little different with because for whatever reason I think that it's the curse... I say this lightly. The curse of unconditional love. It's like, "Well, I can get mad at my kids for this because they're going to love me, but if I do that to a client they might not keep working

for me. So I better be patient with them." Whereas I realize now I should be more patient with the people closest to me in my life.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's good. Well, you talked about not wanting to hold people accountable. That's one of the temptations. You talked about that in The Five Temptations of a CEO. Where does that come from? You link it to people pleasing and so on, but that's another thing.

Pat Lencioni: Well, I think ultimately what it comes down to is not having true esteem knowing that God loves you because the reason why I don't hold people accountable is because I'm afraid they're going to be upset with me and that I'm going to be convinced that I'm a terrible person. So you know what I do is I avoid it and then eventually I get mad. So instead of saying, "Hey, Fred. You didn't do what you're supposed to," kind of frustrates me. "I need more from you. There could be consequences for this, but I'm going to let you know I'm a little frustrated with this."

Pat Lencioni: What I do is I go, "Hey, Fred. You're doing okay. Hey, Fred. What about that? Oh, that's okay." And then it comes out just because I'm so pissed off I can't keep it in anymore. That's really bad economics or math. So I'm trying to be nice when they need tough love. By the time their tough love comes out, I've held it in so long, it comes out way too tough.

Carey Nieuwhof: And you say in the book, and that that's why I so appreciate it, I think these are human problems not like this is going to be around 20 years from now, 100 years from now, it's just the temptations and the difficulty of leadership. But that's why you say, "Okay, everything's going great." And next thing you know the CEO is firing the person, right?

Pat Lencioni: Right.

Carey Nieuwhof: And so I wouldn't deal with conflict but now all of a sudden, "Well, Fred. You're fired."

Pat Lencioni: And it's not like they're going to come back and say, "Hey, CEO. Thanks for not telling me about how you made me feel. I got fired now and I don't have a job."

Carey Nieuwhof: I felt really good until that moment you let me go.

Pat Lencioni: Exactly. And I answered this question yesterday, I was talking to an audience and they said, "What happens there?" They said, "How can you change that?" And it was the day I realized that me not holding Fred accountable was an act of total selfishness. I used to justify and say, "But I care about Fred. I don't want him to feel bad." It's like, "No, no. I don't want him to blame me for feeling bad and I don't want to have to be around him when he feels that way." Once I realize that not holding Fred accountable was not an act of love or charity or mercy, it was actually an act of selfishness for myself and he was going to

ultimately suffer. I was saying I don't want to suffer a little and I'll trade that off for you ultimately suffering a lot. And when you realize that as a leader most people will go, "That's really bad."

Carey Nieuwhof: So we suffer from this in corporate and we have a lot of company like marketplace listeners, but is the not-for-profit or churches the worst?

Pat Lencioni: Oh, the worst.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. Let's go there.

Pat Lencioni: And as a follower of Jesus, somehow I mistranslated the Bible to be nice to your neighbor as yourself. And it's love your neighbor as yourself and to withhold information and perspective that they need to hear to make themselves better as a worker, as an employee, as a friend, as a spouse, as a parent to withhold that from them is not an act of love at all, at all. Now, that doesn't mean you go up to somebody out of the gate and you just rip them one. But you lovingly tell them what they need to hear even if they punish you for it. See, that's the thing. Am I willing to suffer to help them?

Carey Nieuwhof: What does that look like? What do you mean by somebody punishes you for telling the truth?

Pat Lencioni: They're defensive in the moment and they accuse you of, "Well, you didn't tell me so it's not my fault." And you're like, and you have to go... Or "Well, you're not very nice or you're not very supportive of me. Or they just look at you. And they go tell other people, "Well, he corrected me, but who was he to correct me?" And I said, "Oh, I'm your manager and even though I'm not a hypocrite, I've had people do that for me before and I needed it and you need it, and even if you're not in a place to thank me for it I'm going to do it." Because that's what I want people to do is go,

Pat Lencioni: "You know something, Fred? You need to get better at that." "Pat, thank you for being such a great manager and telling me that. I'm going to run right out and do that." And when they don't do that, I'm like, "Well, what the heck?" And I have to be like that's okay.

Carey Nieuwhof: It's okay not to be popular in the moment, to be misunderstood.

Pat Lencioni: Exactly, totally.

Carey Nieuwhof: And again, that feeds into temptation number one wanting to appear successful, wanting to avoid pain.

Pat Lencioni: Absolutely.

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow.

Pat Lencioni: Absolutely. That avoidance of pain causes so many problems that we end up trading off short-term pain that's in our best interest for longer term pain that's not.

Carey Nieuwhof: Okay. Question for you. Do CEOs as well... Because this is... I've been having numerous conversations like pastors love to fudge the numbers. They love to pretend the church is bigger than it is, that the offering is better than it is.

Pat Lencioni: We have 45 ministries. How many people are going to those ministries? Three, but there's 45 of them. How about four ministries with 200 people? No.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah. Shading the truth, pretending things are better than they are, blaming the economy rather than your own performance. To what extent is that an issue in leaders that you consult with?

Pat Lencioni: In the church or another place?

Carey Nieuwhof: Both.

Pat Lencioni: Both.

Carey Nieuwhof: Let's just go there.

Pat Lencioni: Most leaders do not sit around a room smoking stogies going, "Hey, let's cook these books." People think that greed is what motivates CEOs for doing that. It's not greed, it's pride. I had a client once who cooked the books, and he'd spent some time... And nobody knew it. Even his CFO didn't know. It was purely him. That's one of the other things people don't realize. So many things that happen, that they're corrupt, leaders do it themselves.

Carey Nieuwhof: Right. Not a team.

Pat Lencioni: And everybody thinks everybody around them knew. They didn't know. There was a CEO who did this, and you know what, it wasn't because he wanted to be rich or have a bigger house, he came from a tough background and he wanted to be successful and he wanted the people that worked there to be successful, and he wanted them to have more money. He was cooking the books so he could be their hero.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, wow.

Pat Lencioni: And everybody wants to say, "It's greed. These people are greedy." And sometimes they are but most of them want to be held in high esteem and the

idea of failing. It's like most people who cheat in a game do it because they don't like the idea of feeling less than somebody else.

Carey Nieuwhof: Right.

Pat Lencioni: And what they're really struggling with is pride. Pride is the root of all sin. Greed, lust, envy, anger, sloth, there's one more. But all of those are ultimately functions... When people cheat on their wife it's usually not pure lust is they don't feel good about themselves, they need to feel a sense of importance or a sense... It's usually pride.

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow. And again, I don't sense that pastors are intentionally trying to lie or leaders are trying to lie, they're just like-

Pat Lencioni: Oh, they want to be a good pastor.

Carey Nieuwhof: It's a little bit better and I'm just afraid to admit it's what it really is.

Pat Lencioni: Oh, yeah. And they want the people in the church to feel good about it and go, "Come on. Isn't this great?" "Oh, no doubt about it. I think sometimes in churches it's really hard. We have to know what we're really measuring and the problem is in a church you can't measure. Because what's the purpose of a church? To bring people to Jesus. Numbers don't tell that story. There are churches that are full. And I'm not saying this is always true, but they have a great band and great music, and great doughnuts. And it's fun and it's hip, and the message is really well done. The depth might not be there. People might not really be ingesting this stuff.

Pat Lencioni: And there's some little tiny churches where people are totally transforming their lives but nobody is going to write a story about that. There's 250 people in this little parish or this little church who are on fire for their faith and it's in a little town and they are loving on the people in that town and turning their lives around. But that church with 50,000 people a weekend at the thing, and I'm not saying it's necessarily bad, but we can measure the wrong things.

Pat Lencioni: Just like a company that makes more money but does so at the expense of their customer satisfaction and their employees. There are companies who get away with that because of market dynamics. That's not necessarily success. You got to know what you're measuring. And it's really hard to measure the depth of people's faith in the church. So we look at things like how many people are coming and what's the collection and who wrote an article in a church magazine about.

Carey Nieuwhof: Right. And even employee engagement like getting your volunteers and employees to actually rally around the mission, feel good about it, give their lives to something that's bigger than themselves, do you think that's changing in corporate too? I've had a number of conversations over the last few years

where you look at Millennials coming into the workplace, Gen Z coming into the workplace, they don't just want a job. They don't just want to pad the bottom line.

Pat Lencioni: You know why?

Carey Nieuwhof: Why?

Pat Lencioni: Because they're lazy. They're all lazy. No, I'm just teasing. That's what people want to say.

Carey Nieuwhof: I agree.

Pat Lencioni: And they're not.

Carey Nieuwhof: No.

Pat Lencioni: No. They have a different paradigm and they want a purpose. And they want a reason. And they want some freedom and how to do that. I like to say, "Give them a goal." First of all, don't hire anybody. They have to actually want the mission. And then if they do, show them what goal you want from them and turn them loose to do it and let them know if they're doing it well or not. We've got Gen X'ers. No. I'm a Gen X'er I think. We have Gen Y here and Millennials or whatever. Now, there are Z's. Hey, listen. I don't care how old they are, what generation they're in. If they're into the mission and they want to do a good job they're humble, hungry and smart as I say, turn them loose. And everybody wants to talk about what's your gender, what's your ethnicity, what generation you're in. That's just so lazy.

Pat Lencioni: Human beings are human beings. I'd rather know their Myers-Briggs type and their family background in terms of their wounds and how I can inspire them to want to do good work. Are there lazy Gen X'ers, Gen Y'ers, Gen Z'ers, Baby Boomers, greatest generations? Absolutely. And every one of those groups has great people. We have to manage them a little differently based on how they grew up. I mean, how can I complain about Gen Z'ers? I raise them.

Carey Nieuwhof: Exactly. What's wrong with these kids? I don't know, Pat. You're an expert in them, you raised them so you tell me.

Pat Lencioni: And by the way we had one of my sons come work here this summer and it was so wonderful to see him. He's 21 and he is becoming a man. Is he different? Yes. But when we gave him stuff to do, he did it well. There were times when he did it differently, and I'd go, "Why are you doing it like that" He like, "Dad, just trust me." And the outcomes were great. I have to adjust how I manage them. If I think they have to adjust how they work to suit their manager, that's not the right way to lead.

Carey Nieuwhof: What are you finding that generation needs, freedom?

Pat Lencioni: Well, I find that their hunger for truth is actually great. I love to hear what they're attracted to. They are the post-marketing generation. They don't believe any of the BS they get now in marketing, and I like that. And so what they need is authentic, non-glossy connection to what you're really trying to do. And I think that's a wonderful thing. That's a wonderful thing. And I think the problem is for those of us that are... In other words, they're skeptical but I don't think they're cynical. They just want it real.

Pat Lencioni: And I think those that are used to managing a corporate world where you say, "Wah, wah, wah," like the parents in Charlie Brown, "The customer is always right and quality is job." When they're like, "Oh, that's a slogan on a freaking t-shirt." They're like, "Tell me the truth." And the unvarnished truth usually inspires them. Some it doesn't, some it does, but I find that this generation, I think we're seeing a return to wanting truths. And that's where the church is so important.

Pat Lencioni: And, oh, when I take my kids to church if it's mediocre or the homily or the sermon isn't good, they're just like, "Dad." And then somebody without dressing it up, without fakiness, without dressing slick just tells them the truth, they're like that dude or that was amazing, and I love that. I love that. I actually think part of the problem is we're still trying to... Baby Boomers and Gen X'ers are still trying to serve Gen Z'ers and Gen Y'ers the way they thought they needed it. Like youth groups drive you nuts. "I'm a youth group pastor and I'm cool." And the kids are like, "You're a ninny." And you know what I do when I talk to youth?

Carey Nieuwhof: What?

Pat Lencioni: I talk to them like adults about sex and drugs, and problems in life. And they're like, "Oh, dude. This guy is actually listening to us." And the people that are organizing like, "Oh, you can't talk to them that way." I'm like, "Hey, everything they're seeing on the Internet is that way. They're going to R-rated movies or watching them in their house. Why don't we just tell them the unabridged truth about what's good and they'll respond to it." And then you see this guy like, "Look at me, I'm wearing clothes."

Carey Nieuwhof: Skinny jeans.

Pat Lencioni: "I look just like them." And the kids are like going, "Oh, please. You're insulting me." So I really don't hear any more about experts on Generation Z, I just want to hear authentic people saying authentic things to people. Anyway, sorry. That was my little...

Carey Nieuwhof: This is great. You talked about I would rather know the wounds of my team. How do you foster that conversation?

Pat Lencioni: Well, you know it's interesting, I never thought about it this way, but since I started my company, the biggest question I ask people is, "What's your weakness?" And I say, "I don't want to know what your weakness is, like well, I'm so conscientious that I..." Because that's what-

Carey Nieuwhof: I will overwork.

Pat Lencioni: Exactly.

Carey Nieuwhof: I work too hard for you, Pat.

Pat Lencioni: I work too much. And I tell them that. I say, "I really want to know what it is." And I love it when people will say, "Yeah. You know something. Sometimes I'm a little flaky because here's how I was before and I don't want to be that way anymore, but I do that." And I'm like I can work with anything. Amy who was the co-founder, well, gosh, she told us that "I really don't have confidence and I really doubt myself, and I can be a little weak at times." I remember when she told me that. I knew where it came from and she told me about that, and I saw it, and I'm like, "I can work with that." What I tell people about me is I'm really impatient and I get emotional, and I don't like it but I do.

Pat Lencioni: And I don't mean like I'm impatient so I get things done early. I mean, I can be ridiculously impatient and I'm going to act that way, and you're going to say, "Hey, stop it." And I'm going to listen to you and that's okay. In other words, what's really your weakness? And so we talked about interviewing. We ask people. And every culture has certain weaknesses that just won't work there. At our culture here is like forgiveness has got to be built into our culture.

Pat Lencioni: I used to interview people and say, "So how do you deal with it when somebody makes you mad?" And there was this one guy I was interviewing once, and he was like, "Oh, I'm fine." And I just didn't trust it and I said, "Well, what would you... If your friends do something that makes you angry, what do you..." "Oh, I'm fine." And I just didn't feel it. I said, "If I asked your wife would she say you're a grudge-holder?" And he said, "Oh, yeah. She'd say I hold huge grudges."

Pat Lencioni: And I knew it. And I knew that he wouldn't fit. It was in his best interest and mine. So anyway that's a long answer to a short question, but I really like to understand people's wounds because Amy was weak for a reason and I'm impatient and too emotional for a reason. Once you understand where it comes from you can work with them.

Carey Nieuwhof: On my team, we have one of our members who has shared with the whole team, and first with me that she really struggles with anxiety. And she was starting to go under and had to go see a professional about it. I could sense the fear in her eyes when she was telling me that, and it actually just made me

accept her more, embrace her more. And I'll ask her, "How are you doing?" And it's a game-changer.

Pat Lencioni: And you know what happens if you don't know that?

Carey Nieuwhof: What?

Pat Lencioni: She's not vulnerable. If Amy doesn't tell me she sometimes lacks confidence and she doesn't know that I sometimes get impatient, all this, we commit what's called the fundamental attribution error. The fundamental attribution error says that if that woman who works for you looks like she's worried all the time, you'll go, "What's wrong with this person? She's anal. She doesn't trust people." And you'll make an erroneous attribution about her character.

Carey Nieuwhof: Yes.

Pat Lencioni: But the fundamental attribution error also means that when we have a problem, we attribute it to our environment. We know what causes it ourselves.

Carey Nieuwhof: Right.

Pat Lencioni: So a guy cuts me off in traffic and I say, "He's a jerk." I literally will look at him and judge him. "That guy is a selfish jerk who doesn't care others." I cut him off in traffic and I go, "I'm having a bad day."

Carey Nieuwhof: Right. You have to get in the airport.

Pat Lencioni: I'm in a hurry. And that's human nature. I mean, like Saint Francis. Yeah, he said, "Seek to understand more than to be understood." So to understand somebody you have to know about them. So now when this woman gets a little freaky at work, you go, "Oh, she's having anxiety. I can love her through this and understand she's not anal, she's not untrusting, she's anxious and there's a reason for that. And I go, "Hey, are you feeling anxiety?" She'd go yeah. And when Amy waffles on something, I go, "Is this one of those times or you're feeling lack of confidence?" Yeah. Now, Amy and I have worked together for 22 years.

Pat Lencioni: We are in the best place in our whole relationship in 22 years. She's gotten grown and she can call me when I'm impatient, and when she's... But if we didn't understand where that came from, we'd have walked away years ago. So if don't know where it comes from-

Carey Nieuwhof: It's made her feel so comfortable and it's like you can just say whenever like, "I'm struggling and we're behind you a hundred percent." And of course she's a rock star. She's just great at what she does and it made her better at what she does because she doesn't have to hide.

- Pat Lencioni: Exactly. And she can be loved, and she can say to people, "Hey, you guys I'm having one of those days." The forgiveness guy, I knew there was something. That was one of those traits there.
- Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, yeah. That's a... I don't want to say it's a character thing, but I know what you mean. It's hard to teach someone how to forgive as part of the job description. Is that what you're saying?
- Pat Lencioni: Yes. And there are places where he could work that wouldn't demand that of him, and that would be better for him.
- Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, that's fair.
- Pat Lencioni: But to work with me that would just be... The third month it would be like, "Oh, no."
- Carey Nieuwhof: So the third temptation, believe it or not, 47 minutes in, we're on number three, but we're going to go through the last two quick is to be correct rather than clear. Correct rather than clear.
- Pat Lencioni: And I'm sure there are certain Myers-Briggs type of personalities am I like this and that is... It's a human thing. Leaders that want to make sure when they say this is what we're going to do that they're right, that's pride of making the right decision. And the best leaders are the ones that go, "I'm going to make a decision after listening to everybody. I will break the tie because that's my job, and we might be right, we might be wrong. We'll learn. But it's better to have clarity in the moment and act on that clarity. And then when we discover we're wrong, if that happens we'll correct it then."
- Carey Nieuwhof: But that all goes back to number one where you're just afraid like, "Oh, what if I'm wrong?" And so you say in the book you're trying to get more data, more data, more data. Well, you'll never have enough data.
- Pat Lencioni: But the first one is all about perception and status.
- Carey Nieuwhof: Okay.
- Pat Lencioni: The next one is about being well-liked. The next one is about being correct. So some people, I don't care if I'm wrong as long as people think highly of me. Now, they can be tied together, but this is a much more intellectual one. This is much more intellectual like I'm an engineer and we need to find the right answer. And it's like, "You know something, the right answer is not available, but an answer is better than no answer." And there's some CEOs that will allow their companies to spin because they're waiting for the perfect data to come in, and it's like what people want is just clarity.

Carey Nieuwhof: Okay. Number four, a conflict, avoiding conflict.

Pat Lencioni: Oh, I love talking about this one. This is huge.

Carey Nieuwhof: You have a great podcast on it too where you talked about it on your podcast about how to do conflict, but let's go there because I would have... Well, no. I'm just going to let you talk. Go ahead.

Pat Lencioni: Well, there's just not enough conflict in most organizations but it's good conflict which is what we call ideological, conflict around ideas. Is that the right plan? Is that the right way to approach this? Is that the right way to go about this? People should be debating that if they trust each other. They have to be vulnerable and trust each other. If you trust somebody, conflict is just the pursuit of truth. If you don't trust them it's politics because you're trying to win. So we have to say that.

Pat Lencioni: But most organizations, the vast majority of organizations have far too little conflict because they've been taught in society that disagreement is uncomfortable and you should avoid discomfort. I mean the truth of the matter is, Carey, you and I have been sitting here talking. If I said, "Gee, my favorite movie is this movie. It's Raiders of the Lost Ark," and you didn't like, you would be uncomfortable to go, "I didn't really like that movie." I mean, think about that.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's right.

Pat Lencioni: If you don't have discomfort in life, you're not going to actually learn. And we go to meetings and we work together and churches are the worst at this and go, "If we're having any conflict then there's something wrong." And people do that in marriages, and it's like, "No, no, no, no." Cody and I, a colleague of mine, he and I had a great talk and it was really good for me. He was talking about how he and his wife disagreed and how you can get upset and have good conflict. And that's how the better decision comes.

Carey Nieuwhof: Don't you tell that story. I don't know that that was in a talk or that was in a book about you and your wife used to go with this couple when you were first... And you would disagree loudly and they never would. Can you tell that story?

Pat Lencioni: It was my sister-in-law.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, wow.

Pat Lencioni: My wife's sister married my roommate from San Francisco when he lived in the city. And so I thought this is awesome, my buddy. He and I were good friends was going to be my brother-in-law. Well, Laura and I would always argue. I'm Italian and Irish and she's a convert. And she's an arguer too. And we would go

to dinner and we would argue about something, "Why did you say that? Why did you do that?" And then we'd make up it and they agreed on everything.

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow.

Pat Lencioni: Then a year and a half after they got married the year after we did, he left her. They got divorced. And when I went and talked to him he said, "Yeah, Pat. I always thought you and Laura had a bad marriage because you argued, and I realize now we had a bad marriage because we couldn't argue. Not that we always do, but that you can't go there." Because if you can't go there, you don't grow. And companies that avoid conflict the executive teams don't grow.

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow. So how do you manage that within boundaries at The Table Group?

Pat Lencioni: Well, I'm the only one that oversteps the boundaries, and that's the truth. Let me tell you. If the majority of people in life don't go beyond that, and what I tell people is this, if you never go over the boundary, you don't know where that boundary is. And by the way, when you do go over the boundary, that's when you get the beauty of apologizing and actually coming together and forgiving.

Carey Nieuwhof: What would be an example of going over the boundary?

Pat Lencioni: Oh, gosh. I mean, let's just replay my last two weeks here. To say this somebody like you're sitting in a meeting and somebody says, "Well, I don't think we should do that." And you say why, and they go, "Oh, I don't know." And I might go, "You know something, just tell us why." I might be annoyed. And I get what would they call here "the face." And let's just say I might say, "Do you not have the courage to tell us or do you really not know? And why are you still arguing?" And people go, "Whoa, what's going on with you?"

Pat Lencioni: And that's where I have to go, "I'm sorry. I think I'm a little frustrated. I feel like you might be holding. My bad though." And then the right answer comes out. Now, I'm not saying you want to do that every time you talk to somebody, but let me tell you if that happens once per meeting that's a way more interesting meeting. The person can apologize, everybody gets safer like, "Hey we could actually survive that." Suddenly people come to meetings and they're like, "I'm not worried about stepping over the line."

Carey Nieuwhof: And you're soliciting you're craving real feedback even if you don't agree with it.

Pat Lencioni: Exactly.

Carey Nieuwhof: And so you're not talking about like having a volcanic meltdown, everybody goes home angry and you have to apologize for that. You're talking about just pushing people beyond the lines of social acceptability.

Pat Lencioni: Yes, and an occasional volcanic meltdown is better than muted responses for a year.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, wow.

Pat Lencioni: I mean because you can recover especially if the person is vulnerable enough to go, "Whoa, gosh. You guys, I was having a terrible day."

Carey Nieuwhof: I blew it yesterday.

Pat Lencioni: Now occasional, if it's happened every week or every month that's a problem. But here's the thing. I would rather see people lose it every once in a while and recover than never go up to that line because what happens is... Here's the thing. People will go, "Well, how can that be?" The cost of never going up to that line is bad decisions that affect people's lives. If you're in a church or a business, you're constantly making decisions without good information and without people's passion because you're saying, "Let's never go there." And that's death by paper cut. It's like "Oh, yeah. I've never broken my leg, but I've never gone outside."

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, you're right. So, Pat, I got to ask you this because you're going to get questions about it, I know you're a big Myers-Briggs person ENFP. Is that right, your type?

Pat Lencioni: Yes, ENFP.

Carey Nieuwhof: So am I. Do you know Enneagram at all? Do you know what your type is?

Pat Lencioni: I know a little bit about it, I think I'm a three, you'll tell me what I am. You'll probably know. I'm exploring the Enneagram. I've got some questions about it. I know it's getting very popular and there's still some lingering questions I have about underneath its validity. And I'm learning about it.

Carey Nieuwhof: You think you're a three, performer?

Pat Lencioni: I think I'm partly that, and then what's-

Carey Nieuwhof: The challenger. I'm an 8.

Pat Lencioni: Oh, definitely.

Carey Nieuwhof: What would you say Cody?

Cody: I think eight. When you read the description somewhere in the eight with like a seven.

Carey Nieuwhof: somewhere in the eight with like a seven wing says Cody.

Pat Lencioni: Oh, yeah. What's the wing? What's the seven?

Carey Nieuwhof: That's your secondary type, your secondary type.

Pat Lencioni: And what's seven?

Carey Nieuwhof: I'll have to introduce you to Ian Cron. He does a lot of-

Pat Lencioni: I know there's some really good things in this.

Carey Nieuwhof: ... Enneagram stuff. And I'm an 8 with a 7 wing, so I'm a challenger. On the good days we're saving the world. We're Martin Luther King. On the bad days, we're Joseph Stalin and everyone's dead.

Pat Lencioni: You know what's funny. That's how I am at work, but when I don't feel the pressure to be the one pushing, I think I have a part of me that I might enjoy the three a little bit more.

Carey Nieuwhof: The performer?

Pat Lencioni: Yes.

Carey Nieuwhof: So performer, it's a three. So seven wing is... An Enneagram seven is basically the fun type, the adventurer.

Pat Lencioni: Oh, yeah. That's me.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, yeah.

Pat Lencioni: That's me.

Carey Nieuwhof: You strike me as that. You would probably be a seven with an eight wing.

Pat Lencioni: I think that's me.

Carey Nieuwhof: Or an eight with a seven wing, wing seven, I should say.

Pat Lencioni: But with a little bit of stress. Look, I'm a leader that likes to lead by motivation and ideas. When I have to be the one pushing people and calling people on deadlines and stuff like that, that's not my thing.

Carey Nieuwhof: I'll have to make that introduction.

Pat Lencioni: Oh, yeah. That's great.

Carey Nieuwhof: That'll be fun. Okay. One last question then we're going to wrap up because we've just had so much fun today.

Pat Lencioni: Yeah. This is great.

Carey Nieuwhof: Pat, so the fifth type is vulnerability. The fifth temptation is vulnerability, the unwillingness to be vulnerable with your team. And you have been unbelievably vulnerable in this interview, which I'm extremely grateful for, but that is hard for a lot of people isn't it?

Pat Lencioni: Yeah. I mean, we were taught not to be. We're taught not to be. Don't let him see you sweat. Whereas I think it's so much more liberating to just raise up your arm and point out that armpit and go, "Check this out. I'm sweating like a pig here." And I've learned that over time. It's just hiding and so many leaders are trying to protect that and it's a misery because every day you come in and you're not real. And it's much better to say to people, "I have faults. I am not perfect." I will call that out.

Pat Lencioni: When I make a mistake, I'll be the first one to say so. And as a result of that, people will trust you. And that's the problem is leaders who don't like to be vulnerable can only be trusted as far as they're open to their own mistakes. And so vulnerability is at the heart of this. And it's countercultural. There's other people talking about it right now. Brené Brown talks about vulnerability a lot, and I just think... I've thought for years that this is the thing that makes a leader strong.

Pat Lencioni: Biblically, St. Paul said right, "I'm weak. I'm strong when I am weak because I am weak. It's not me, it's God." And I think as a leader when you think it's about you and you think you have to be on and you have to prove yourself all the time, and you have to be something you're not, people see right through that and they stop trusting you. And when you're the leader that comes in and says, "I know who I am." I'm not excusing at all. I'm going to try to get better, but I know I'm imperfect that I make mistakes. Other people say, "Well, then I can be open to that myself."

Carey Nieuwhof: Has it gotten easier for you to be vulnerable in the last 11 years? Did it crash?

Pat Lencioni: Oh, yeah. No doubt.

Carey Nieuwhof: How so?

Pat Lencioni: And there's moments when it's not. Overall absolutely, because when you realize it's not about you anymore, and the achievements don't define you, then you're like what do I have to lose? But back then, before then, it's like, "I have to preserve that. That defines me. That's my bank account, and if somebody destroys that, I am through."

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow.

Pat Lencioni: I have these funny fantasies of everything falling apart and me living someplace where nobody knows who I am, and I work in a coffee shop, and I just have to get really good at making bagels. That's when I would know how good I was if I could do that joyfully and not have any less sense of myself. Do you see what I mean?

Carey Nieuwhof: Yeah, no. I think we all have those alternate careers. How does that play out in your mind? What is that like on a stressful day? Do you think about that?

Pat Lencioni: No, actually on a day when I'm not praying enough, I think you really need to go someplace and break it down to nothing. If I get too caught up in things. I think after I give a talk to a big audience I'm really drawn to the people that work in the kitchen and the people that work in the back. And I'll go in the back of the house and I want to just talk to them because it's like... Let's put it this way. Anybody that talks, any rock star, and I'm not a rock star. But if I speak to a big audience-

Carey Nieuwhof: You speak to tens of thousands of people at a time.

Pat Lencioni: Well, I have before yes. And it's not real. I mean, it's so fake.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, what's not real about that?

Pat Lencioni: I mean, the applause and the attention. If you give them good value that's totally real, but the whole feeling of like, "Oh, I'm special" is so not real because all you have to do is go home and your kids and your wife talk to you, and you're like, "Oh, I have to do this." So right after I leave stage, it's very uncomfortable. I'm like don't don't let yourself believe any of this. So I really want to go have an authentic conversation with the A/V guy or the people serving the food, or go back to my room and talk to the person cleaning the room because you realize no one person is more important than another and you can get really caught up in that.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, wow. That's good word.

Pat Lencioni: There's an NFL player, God bless them, but he was wearing a \$2 million watch at practice the other day.

Carey Nieuwhof: My goodness.

Pat Lencioni: And putting it on Instagram and stuff. And I just think, "Oh my gosh." I say that, that's a weird example, but it's like when I hear that I feel so bad for them because they think this is what makes them special.

Carey Nieuwhof: So your new book is called The Motive. It comes out next year.

Pat Lencioni: The Motive. It comes out in March.

Carey Nieuwhof: March. I cannot... Well, I'll get one in a few minutes.

Pat Lencioni: You're going to get an advance copy.

Carey Nieuwhof: I can't wait. I can't wait, Pat. What a gift. Last question. Is there one question that you always wish someone would ask you and nobody ever asks you?

Pat Lencioni: Gosh, I cannot imagine that you didn't ask me a question that I... No, I don't think so.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's okay.

Pat Lencioni: I should have a great one like yes, you should ask me-

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, that's for next time.

Pat Lencioni: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's great. Pat, people want to find you online. Where are you most active and what's the best website?

Pat Lencioni: Tablegroup.com is our company's website. Table Group like kitchen table, tablegroup.com. There's all kinds of resources there and stuff.

Carey Nieuwhof: Tons of free stuff.

Pat Lencioni: Yeah. And we're doing that podcast now and you can find that anywhere podcast. It's called At the Table with Patrick Lencioni, this very table. We're starting to do more on Instagram and LinkedIn and all that stuff, but mostly just go to our website, send us a note. This has been so much fun. Time has flown.

Carey Nieuwhof: Pat, I can't thank you enough.

Pat Lencioni: I will have to tell you though, I feel kind of bad.

Carey Nieuwhof: Why?

Pat Lencioni: Well, I think when I spend this much time talking about myself it feels like okay, that's-

Carey Nieuwhof: No, no, no. Seriously part of the heartbeat of this podcast is the idea, and all of our interactions have been super personable, but it's like we want the story

behind the story and if we were just going to have dinner tonight, if we were just going to sit around at a coffee shop we talked-

Pat Lencioni: We'd talked like this yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof: We would talk like this. And you must have this too. There's hardly any CEO you haven't met in your life that you would want to meet. You've met with politicians and top leaders from around the world, and at the end of the day we're all just the same.

Pat Lencioni: Totally. And that's why I think sometimes it's something like this. I'm like people listen to me talk a lot. I'm not right about everything I said and I'd like to listen to all your listeners and see what they think because I really don't think that I'm worthy of that but I appreciate the fact that it's interesting and maybe it can help people.

Carey Nieuwhof: It's been a huge gift to me. Thanks, Pat as you are. I appreciate it.

Pat Lencioni: Thanks for having me, Carey.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, that was rich and powerful. I mean isn't it just good to know that you're not alone, that the struggle is real and everybody faces it. And Pat, thanks so much for being so transparent on that. If you want to know more about Patrick Lencioni or get the transcripts for this episode or any of the links that we mentioned, you can head on over to the show notes. Just go to CareyNieuwhof.com/Episode299. We got everything there including transcripts for free. We also have a few of our back episodes on YouTube, and you can just search Carey Nieuwhof Leadership Podcast or my name on YouTube. You will run into them. We are building that archive up as we speak.

Carey Nieuwhof: And in the meantime don't forget that I'm doing Ask Carey at the end of this podcast talking about what leadership principles are different between a junior leader and a senior leader. So we're going to be handling that. And also you'll want to check out Remodel Health before the new year hits. Go to RemodelHealth.com/Carey to save pretty big on your healthcare costs and improve benefits at the same time.

Carey Nieuwhof: And lots of churches are jumping on board with the Red Letter Challenge, a 40-day turnkey campaign for your church regardless of size. And works for small churches, mega churches, and everybody in between, and you get a big discount as a podcast listener so head to RedLetterChallenge.com/Carey to learn more.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, next episode I am so excited to bring you, well, really a deep conversation with NT Wright. He is one of the greatest theologians alive today. So I know we got a growing number of business listeners. Some of you are involved at your church. Some of you, you're like I'm not sure about Christianity. I just listen to this podcast. I think you're going to love NT Wright.

Carey Nieuwhof: In a world where everything is so polarized, he makes so much sense of our faith to me, my faith to me and he has written like a ridiculous number of books, and well, one of the greatest living theologians alive today. And here's an excerpt from my conversation with Tom Wright.

NT Wright: Just like no, that's not what it's about. That has never bothered me. The thing that worries me is that the people who do get hung up about that or who bend over backwards to try to explain rationalistically why the Bible is in fact inherent in every jot and tittle, and they are routinely missing the big biblical story itself. That's the joke of it. So that the people who are most worried about, say a Darwinian account of origins versus the Genesis account of origins are often part of right-wing movements in America and elsewhere who actually are deeply Darwinian themselves in the sense of Might is Right philosophy.

Carey Nieuwhof: That's coming up next week guys. It is absolutely free for all of you who subscribe. Also, coming up we've got Albert Tate. Man, Albert Tate is a lot of fun. Steve Green who is the president of Hobby Lobby. And well, who else do we have coming up? We got a lot of people coming up. We've got my own longtime assistant, Sarah Piercy is back on the podcast. She was on a while ago along with Dillon Smith. Two of my teams, we got something fun coming down the pipe for you in November. Carlos Whittaker, Rebekah Lyons, Louie Giglio, Francis Chan, Larry Osborne. Liz Forkin Bohannon. She's talking about Beginners Pluck.

Carey Nieuwhof: Chris Lema, John Ortberg. Jon Acuff is back on the podcast and oh, yeah, who else? Oh, yeah. We got Jasmine Star, John Mark Comer, Jefferson Bethke. So many more, guys. It's going to be a great lineup coming up and if you subscribe you get it all for free. So on to Jamal's question. Is it Jamal or Jamal? I don't know is that Canadian? I don't know. Jamal if I got it wrong you just let me know, okay? So Jamal wants to know, "Do you think that lead pastor principles directly translate to associate pastors? So in other words do senior leader principles translate to let's say you're not in the top suite or like kids pastors, student pastors, exec pastors, next gen pastors of the world need their own specific leadership principles. Thanks for answering this."

Carey Nieuwhof: Jamal, I love your question. So here's my take on that. See what you think, but I would say leadership is the same no matter where you're at. I think the principles, yeah, there are slight variations but I really think if you focus on what is the same, you will probably do a lot better at life. So I'm going to focus in because our guest is Patrick Lencioni. I was thinking about how do I answer this because I have literally tens of thousands of words on leadership, so how do you distill it?

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, Pat was asked to do that many times over and in his last book *The Ideal Team Player*, he boiled it down to three words. He said the great leaders, the really great leaders are these three things: Humble, hungry, smart. Humble, humility is really a rare characteristic in leadership, and I think it gets you far. So

humility is teachability. It is a willingness to say you're wrong. It's not valuing yourself too highly, it's putting the team ahead of you. And it doesn't mean that you feel bad about yourself.

Carey Nieuwhof: I love C.S. Lewis's definition of humility. "Humility is not thinking less of yourself. God may have gifted you immensely. It's just thinking of yourself less." So I would say, number one, be humble. Number two, hungry. That's your drive. That's your like, "Wow, I'm ready to go." And what I think about my own staff and obviously I've been in the senior leader seat my whole leadership life so I didn't spend a lot of time in the other chairs, but when I look at the staff that I really admire, they're hungry. They're self-starters, they want to learn, they have a can-do attitude. When they get knocked down like when they make a mistake, they don't grovel in it, they get back up again.

Carey Nieuwhof: And that's sort of the hungry part. It doesn't mean like a blind, selfish ambition, it just means you're hungry to advance the cause that you're working on, the mission of the church or organization. So humble, hungry, and smart. Now, we'll link to this in the show notes but Pat Lencioni in his own podcast, he's got a great podcast does a whole episode on these three characteristics. But by smart, he doesn't mean IQ, he means EQ. And I think that's a really important differentiator in the workplace like do you have the ability to work with people? Do you have the savvy to try to figure out, "Okay. Where do I speak up? Where am I quiet?" And also, do you have the ability to really nurture the team that you're responsible for?

Carey Nieuwhof: And so when I look across the organization and I see whether that is a volunteer who doesn't get paid or whether that is somebody who's an intern or whether it's someone who is at a mid-level in leadership, if they are humble, hungry, and smart, I agree with Pat, those are the characteristics that just translate across the board. And you know what, when you are the senior leader, you are the one most likely to forget those. That's actually what Pat's next book, *The Motive* is all about.

Carey Nieuwhof: It's a fantastic book just about CEOs who get it wrong and why they get it wrong. And they lose their humility, they lose their hunger, and sometimes they lose their intelligence as well though, their emotional intelligence. So Jamal, I really hope that helps and keep your questions coming guys. Just use the #askCarey on any of the social platforms. We will peruse the interwebs for that stuff and bring you some great questions. So we do that in the end of every episode. I really appreciate you, guys. Episode 300 is next with NT Wright 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.