

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 318 of the podcast. My name is Carey Nieuwhof, and I hope our time today helps you lead like never before. Today's podcast is brought to you by a new podcast called Leaders in Living Rooms. I'll tell you all about that, and also Red Letter Challenge. My guest is Jennie Allen, and if you don't know Jennie, you're gonna be glad you tuned in. She is the founder and visionary behind IF:Gathering, a massive organization that equips women with resources, events, community, and I'll tell ya, it's a really interesting model if you're looking to engage your audience listen in. She's a sought after speaker. She has taught at major conferences across America and around the world. She's the author of several books, has a Master's degree from Dallas Theological Seminary, and well, I'm really glad to have her on the show today.

Carey Nieuwhof: And, we have a lot of new listeners, so I just wanna say, "Welcome." Really, really glad you guys are here. We have had a massive January on this podcast, so if you're new or just tuning in for the first time, welcome, really glad you're here. What we try to do on this show is bring you behind the scenes leadership discussions you would want to have if you got to sit down with some of the incredible guests we have the privilege of talking to. And I always, for years, enjoyed green room conversations and just got frustrated enough one day that I'm like, "I need to bring these to everybody." And that's what we've been doing for a few years, so 318 episodes into it, really glad that you've joined us, and if this show is meaningful to you, let us know what else you might want to hear in the comments. And then share it with a friend, too. We're always watching on social and trying to interact with you. I'm Carey Nieuwhof on Instagram, just my full name. Cniewwhof on Twitter and Facebook. So, I'd love to connect with you there. Also on LinkedIn, so if that's your favorite platform, which it might be, hang out with us there, as well.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, January, for me, is a month of podcasts. I love listening to podcasts, and one that I've added to my person repertoire is a new one called Leaders in Living Rooms. And that's because I've gotten to know Sean Morgan the last couple of years. Sean, I always joke with him, I think he is the most connected, least well-known leader in America. He's knows everybody. He knows absolutely everybody, and most people have no idea who he is. He's a fascinating guy. I remember the first conversation I had with him. It was like, "So, who are you, Sean?" And he's like, "Oh, I'm just flying a fighter jet over Afghanistan." He goes, "What are you doing?" I'm like, "Nothing compared to that." But he's hyper connected and hyper passionate about leadership transitions, which is a major issue in business. It's a huge issue in the church. And, he knows a lot of founders like me, and then spends a lot of time with their successors.

Carey Nieuwhof: On Leaders in Living Rooms, he has backstage conversations, living room style conversations, with Jud Wilhite, Brady Boyd, Aaron Brockett, David Kinnaman, Kenton Beshore and he even interviewed me. It's a a new podcast you can get, of course, for free, on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, or you can go to CDFcapital.org/Leaders-In-Living-Rooms. You can go there, too. And, of course, we'll link to everything in the show notes. But, if you're looking for a new podcast to connect with, add Leaders in Living Rooms to your list.

Carey Nieuwhof: Now, Easter, believe it or not, is here before you know it. And, if you're like me, you've got a lost of message grind going on right now. You just had your big New Year's series, and if you work at church, you know what a big challenge content can be. Well, what if you could something that incredibly engages your church and is done for you? A growing number of churches are adopting the Red Letter Challenge. It's a 40-day turnkey church campaign that will give your church really incredible results and effectively help produce more disciples. It focuses on the Red Letters, the teachings of Jesus.

Carey Nieuwhof: Red Letter Challenge has worked with more than 300 churches, more than 75,000 individuals with professional small group video studies, study guides, sermon manuscripts and videos, graphics, even a kid's curriculum now. In the fall of 2019, 100% of the churches that used Red Letter Challenge, grew their small groups and they had a 100% recommendation rate from pastors who had used the program. Also, Easter is one of the most strategic times to do the challenge. You can do it leading into Easter, coming out of Easter, and if you implement it, it really is turnkey, and so it will help you with message prep and all those things.

Carey Nieuwhof: So, you can go to RedLetterChallenge.com/Carey for packages for whatever size church you lead. And depending on what you get, you'll get between 10% to 40% off. You can start with as few as 10 copies, and they can customize and scale it with however large your church is. So, they'd be happy to help you, go to RedLetterChallenge.com/Carey.

Carey Nieuwhof: Well, so excited to bring you this conversation. We go all over the place, and I'm really interested, this has come up a couple of times with Liz Forkin Bohannon, and now with Jennie Allen in the last month. But, engaging the audience to be really marketers and evangelists in your favor. Women do this really really well in leadership, and I am taking notes. So, without further ado, here is my conversation with Jennie Allen. Jennie, welcome to the podcast. It's just great to have you.

Jennie Allen: Thanks for having me, Carey.

Carey Nieuwhof: You say you never expected to be doing what you're doing. You're a podcaster, author, speaker, the person behind this massive thing called the IF:Gathering, a quarter million people, mostly women around the world. Do you mind telling us a little bit about the journey on how you got there?

Jennie Allen: Yeah, that all still feels pretend. One, all of this is a giant group project. There are so many people that have been part of each of these things that have made it come to fruition. I love that. That's probably my favorite part of my job is that I do get to work with such incredible leaders in each space and to get to build content for people who are wanting to follow God maybe for the first time or who have been following him for a long time. That is helping people love God. That is really what I wanted to do with my life ever since I met him.

Jennie Allen: I didn't know that that could be done in a big way, the internet. When I met Jesus, the internet wasn't a thing. There was no aspiration originally in this. I just knew I felt called to ministry. I knew I felt very called to discipleship, life-on-life discipleship. What that became over time was truly a fruit of that work in a local context. I'm such a fan of the local church. I am such a fan of life-on-life discipleship. I use every platform I have to trumpet both because I believe that is where life change happens in small groups of people eye to eye.

Jennie Allen: All of it started for me with the people that I was mentoring and discipling and investing my life in and it grew. As it grew, I saw these as helpful tools to help other people that are making disciples and that are in their places and building with their people. It really was never complicated and certainly was never this big vision and I never have cared about the means. Podcasting wasn't a thing 10 years ago. I never would have dreamed that I would be on people's walks and on their drives and hanging out with them the way that we get to do with this medium.

Jennie Allen: I knew I just wanted to help people love God. All of these vehicles to me are not even that flashy. I see them as Paul's words of saying by whatever means possible so that some may love Christ. That is what I get to do and it's so fun. The mediums we have at our disposal in this generation are crazy and they've worked. We have reached the world and I know that's an act of God and it's a unique moment in history where we can talk in a microphone in our closets, in our living rooms, in our ... right down in a little bitty tucked away office. We can do that and it reached the world. It's mind blowing, but I still don't feel like I'm doing anything that differently than I was when it was a living room full of people. I really don't.

Carey Nieuwhof: This is one of the things. We've had previous guests, some of your friends Annie F. Downs, Ann Voskamp, Lysa TerKeurst just to name a few who are in similar space to what you are. I'm trying to be a student to learn and to grow from some of the amazing women leaders we have in this space. One of the things that's common for all of you is guys often talk about the size of their tribe or whatever we trotted out, but you guys just have these massive followings that are unbelievable and that takes tremendous leadership to learn how to scale and to build that and even respond to it. If you don't lead well, the audience doesn't stick around, right?

Carey Nieuwhof: We're all our own caps on our own growth. What have been some of the challenges that have happened as this whole thing has exploded the way it has, Jennie?

Jennie Allen: I think just not losing the heart of what got me into this. I remember the first time I spoke to tens of thousands of people, it was at Women of Faith and it was back in some of their final years. There were 11,000 people. I remember I stood at the end of one of my last times of speaking there and I looked out and I thought to myself, "Okay, if this is all it ever is, this might be the pinnacle of people that I speak to, am I okay?" and I was like, "I am okay." I am not thinking about the numbers.

Jennie Allen: I am always thinking about the mama on the front row that got a babysitter for two days because her marriage is falling apart, because she has no hope, because she's going to show up at this conference with just a shred of hope. She's clinging to some remnant of hope that maybe God has something for her that maybe God still sees her, that maybe there is a way to restoration out of anxiety, out of her paralyzing fears, out of her difficult marriage into something that's healthy and thriving. Maybe, maybe, maybe.

Jennie Allen: I always have just seen that girl. I've seen her and I see her when I post. I see her when I record a podcast. I see someone looking back at me that says, "Tell me that there's true hope, not some Christianese version, not some like little talk you prepared because you had a speaking engagement. Tell me this is real. Tell me my God is real. Tell me that my problems, he sees them, that he loves me, that he's in it with me," and I feel an urgency over my life and everything that I've been given to do to fight for people, to just fight for them to have faith, to fight for them.

Jennie Allen: I don't know how many people it is. You know what I mean? That's the cool thing about podcasting. You can see downloads, but you don't know how many people are out there. I know that girl is out there. I know there is somebody that was like me as a young mom with a marriage falling apart with young kids that depended on me for every meal and every breath and every diaper change. I know that girl and I know what it feels like to struggle with anxiety. I know what it feels like to be hopeless in a hard marriage. I know what it feels like to feel like you have no purpose because all you can do is like get up and change diapers and make sure everybody eats. I know that.

Jennie Allen: I think that's the gift God has given me, is just this laser focus on the one rather than the many.

Carey Nieuwhof: How do you keep that kind of focus?

Jennie Allen: Well, all the things I always preach which is real life discipleship in my own life. This morning, I led a devotional with 15 girls in my office that I care about deeply that I'm making sure are spiritually on track and growing. I've got my

kids. There's a lot of grounding material in my life. There's really very little time to ever sit back and say, "Look at me. Wow, this really did well." I never have time because there's ... My best friend several years ago had a massive stroke. I remember I was going to Catalyst to speak, a huge event and the night before, she had just come back home from rehab and she's in a wheelchair still.

Jennie Allen: We're trying to unpack her pantry in a new house and she's going through a divorce. People asked, "How have you not gotten ego?" and I'm like, "Well, because everything that is public is tied to something private that is grounding and real. This isn't a show to me. I'm not in this for the money. I'm not in it for the fans. I'm in it for the glory of God because people are dying and they need hope and they need help." I don't know, I think God's gifted me with enough difficulty in all of the good that the good doesn't feel as flashy as it would without it, right?

Jennie Allen: I'd probably would have been like, "I'm going to Catalyst tomorrow. What am I wearing?" instead I'm helping my friend in her wheelchair unload her pantry. I can never thank God for someone else's suffering, but I'm thankful I got to be close to it, right? I'm thankful that he let me into some of the darkest parts of people's lives so that I could love them and be with them in that. I think that's my real life. Everything else is like, "Well, the biggest hope and goal I would have for all of it is that it would cause genuine fruit that goes on forever, right?"

Jennie Allen: All these numbers, it seems like social media channels change every day. It all feels like chasing the wind if you really love it and the notoriety of it and the money of it. It feels to me like chasing wind. I'm very rarely sucked in because I'm like, "I feel empty." It's not that I've never been sucked in, but when I do get sucked in and I start to chase it, it feels empty almost immediately. It doesn't feel satisfying. It doesn't feel like a meal. It feels like wind like Solomon wrote. I think that I love that.

Jennie Allen: I love that God viscerally helps me feel the reward of real life ministry and hopefully what you see publicly and all those things that I guess sound a little cool or impressive is that those things would literally be fueled and fed by real-life people and real-life ministry that's happening in the context of my local church and my real life. I want to do well there. If everything online does great, I don't think that's going to be what I get to heaven, I'm rejoicing about and I think I'll be rejoicing about the disciples I made while they were babysitting for me and we were folding laundry together.

Jennie Allen: I really feel like that is the real stuff and anytime I'm doing the other stuff I'm always checking myself, "Is this an overflow or am I just trying to feed a machine?"

Carey Nieuwhof: This is so helpful. If you don't mind, I want to drill in a little bit more on that because I've seen this certainly with pastors particularly as things take off, whether they take off online or in person, but I've seen it in CEOs and senior

leaders as well. The best ones when you meet them or look at the case studies that say a Jim Collins or somebody would do or Pat Lencioni, Frank Blake comes to mind. He spent an awful lot of time turning around Home Depot, actually walking through stores and talking to customers.

Carey Nieuwhof: Often, because you lead a complicated organization that reaches millions of people, it would be very easy to just be insulated in some mythical C-Suite and never really meet people and have your calendar so micromanaged that it's been five years since you helped somebody fold laundry. That's why I think this is really helpful, Jennie. I want to know how you have avoided that and yet you continue to scale. Can you talk a little bit more about that because that is a rare quality among leaders? Honestly, there's a lot of people listening who lead a lot less than you do who would rather be in the C-Suite insulated from all that and I feel those tendencies in me too. I'm just curious how you do that.

Jennie Allen: I look back and I think, "What means something to me personally?" Let's take this selfish. What you're saying is like, yeah, we're all tempted by this, right? That's a fast fix. When you look at Instagram and your post got 8,000 likes, that's a quick fix of approval and all the things we all pray, right? That's okay. That's how God built us. We deeply desire each other's connection and approval, but it's a very shallow representation of what we're actually craving and I know this is true. I tell myself this all the time. So much of this is just reminding myself of the truth, sitting in the truth of God's word, believing the power of what God is saying, which is do life with a small group of people in submission.

Jennie Allen: That's a big word for me, submission to my elders and submission to a few core people that have a lot and submission to my husband. That will probably get tons of feedback. You'll get some emails, sorry, but it's worked for me and it's worked for me in this way. It's not abusive for me to do that. Those people are for the kingdom of God and they're for me. It's a safe place. For some people, it's a very dangerous place and I don't think that. That is not what I'm talking about, but there's been protection that if I did get a big head, I have at least 10 people that would tell me within 24 hours.

Jennie Allen: I have not surrounded myself with yes people. I have surrounded myself with, sometimes they're just flat mean. I love it because there's a submission and an accountability and a check. Let's go back to the selfish nature of all of us, right? Nobody's unique. I'm not above anybody else. Of course, something is in it for me. What is in it for me is I've found God's way to be the best ways and God's way is this local life-on-life, leaning into suffering, not being afraid of it, connecting with people over meals, serving people in a real authentic way. Those are my favorite parts. We were built for it. As we go after the other stuff, it just falls flat over time.

Jennie Allen: You see some of the burnout rates of authors and speakers and all that. There is a burnout rate to anything that doesn't have the backbone of what God meant it to be which is accountability, mutual submission, right? I'm accountable to

them. They're accountable to me. I've got people counting on me in real life. All of the grit of my life I think is it's from God. It's the best part even though it's not always the fancy part and it actually over time has proven the most satisfying. Now, there were times in my ministry and I would say I got really close to burnout a few years ago and there's several reasons for it, but one of them was I was not doing enough life-on-life.

Jennie Allen: I just started to lose my compass. I started to question God. I started to wonder what I was doing. It just felt like I was losing my soul. I've seen this in several of my friends, some of the ones you just named where they are ... Annie majorly committed to the people she disciples in her local church. Ann same way. Lysa same way. She basically travels with her pastor a lot. There's a lot of us that are like ... We lose that, we don't have anything in ourselves. I'm not sitting here thinking people are listening to this because I am special or fancy. I think people are listening to this because they know I love God and believe God and I'm trying to give them God.

Jennie Allen: I'm not confused about what people are coming to me for. They're coming to me because I'm the extra smart. They're not coming to me because I have a corner market on some knowledge that nobody else has. They are coming to me because they want to see somebody that actually believes God is true and God is real and they can go, "Okay. She believes it." I do this with Tim Keller. I do this with my people, right? I put Tim Keller on. Why? What? Because he's a good preacher. Yes, he's incredible communicator, although his voice never changes. It's really incredible, but I put him on because he's like, "Okay, he's saying this is true. Okay. It's true." It reaffirms something in me.

Jennie Allen: I think knowing my place and what I'm called to do, it helps me be really sober about why people are coming to me. They're not fans. They want hope. I'm never confused when somebody comes up to me in the mall. My kid has said this to me because people will come up to me in public and my daughter said one time, she goes, "Mom, I'm so glad you preach Jesus and teach the Bible and you're not like a rock star or it would bug me." I was like, "What do you mean?" I said, "How does that make a difference?" She goes, "Well, when they come up to you, they don't talk about you. They talk about what God's done in their lives," and it makes me cry because I'm like, "That's it. Let that be true of us that they don't talk about it."

Jennie Allen: What they want to tell us when they see us is what God did in their lives, not how great a writer I am or how great a speaker I am. I don't care. I'm like, "I just don't care whatever means possible so that some may find Christ." That is it. I'm consumed and I think God did that. I don't know. I'm grateful and it feels clear to me. It doesn't feel confusing. It feels like I know why he's giving me this, I know what to do with it and I hope that I never lose that. I hope that when I die, I feel this fixated and clear as I am today.

Carey Nieuwhof: This is such a refreshing conversation, Jennie. One of the challenges that just the age we're in and I don't want to go to a particular case, unfortunately there are many of them, but people who lead large ministries or large organizations falling and this happens in the church. It happens outside the church. It happens in sports. It happens in business. You've hit on a couple of, I think, really important things that I can see how this happens. Do you have any thoughts? Again, nothing specific, but what are some of the warning signs in your own life that you can sort of see in some of those other stories and go, "Huh, I wonder if this is what happened"? Can you just talk about it?

Jennie Allen: Oh, gosh. All the stories are way too close to home. Are you kidding? Exhaustion. None of that. All that sin, we all have a proclivity to all of it, right? We are all one decision away from jail. This is all of our reality. If we're not in touch with that, then you have a different problem called pride, but I'm very in touch. I could literally have a glass of wine, drive home and accidentally have a wreck and end up in jail. That is all of our realities. We're always a decision away. I say that specific story because I've done a lot of prison ministry and I met girl that was 10 years younger than me, that was in for 17 years for doing exactly that. She just had a little too much alcohol and she drove home and killed two people.

Jennie Allen: I give that story specifically because I walked out. I've looked in people's eyes in prison, I'm like, "This could be me." We all are one decision away from that. The big sins and the big falls and the big prides and the big mistakes don't surprise me ever. That never surprises me. What I always do when I see something like that happen is I thank God that there is redemption. There's redemption for him, and for any way I'm like he or she, there's redemption for me. We are all safe even if our whole life falls apart, even if sometime the story reads, "Jennie Allen is in prison," I am okay because my salvation is secure and my heaven is secure and I can freaking do prison ministry. We'll figure it out.

Jennie Allen: I think sometimes we make too much of people's public sin because we've made too much of them as a public figure to begin with, right?

Carey Nieuwhof: That's good.

Jennie Allen: Let's be realistic about it. Yeah, that's a disappointment. Donald Miller one time said to me, I was interviewing him for something and he said, "Jennie," he said, "All public ministry is the tight rope got higher. You are always on a tight rope, but now if you fall, there's just more on the line." It's not any different than a dad falling in his home that has a small company. It's still tragic. It's just the number of people that are impacted are more. Let's be realistic that these men and women that have fallen for whatever reason, they're just like us.

Jennie Allen: However, I will say the things that I feel guarded and protected about, go back to things like confession, submission, local church accountability, being very known, not living into my power, but laying down my power and continually

choosing the more costly honest way. Thankfully when I've done that, I find myself a happier person anyway. Again, selfishly, it works for me too to confess because I love the forgiveness I receive after that. Selfishly, it works for me to live in submission because I love the protection I received in that. Selfishly, I love to be known because I love friends at a table that actually know me, not the pretend Jennie Allen online, but me.

Carey Nieuwhof: I hear what you're saying. A lot of that is if you don't insulate yourself, if you're actually in life with people who know you well and you know them well, it's just a very different thing. You also though now lead this fairly large, fairly influential organization. When you put the Jennie Allen leadership hat on, what have been some of the structural challenges, the personal challenges of, "Oh, this isn't just me behind the keyboard all by myself anymore wondering if anybody will read it or me behind a microphone there. All these people showed up," what have been some keys to navigating that journey?" I think that's what almost took me under in my 30s. It was just fast growing and my answer was more hours and that was a bad answer. How have you handled that with your leadership hat on?

Jennie Allen: Like you started with, I never really saw myself here when I started out. I certainly didn't see myself as an organizational leader. I had vision. I love God. I wanted to help people do that, but the means were really up in the air for me. As IF:Gathering took shape and I realized it was going to reach pretty far which we didn't realize until it was reaching far, we were literally building the plane in the air, had a whole host of awesome people helping me do that, but that recognition of, "Oh, I'm going to have to learn to lead in front of everyone," I'll cry again talking about this, it probably was the hardest to lay down my ego and just fail in front of everyone.

Jennie Allen: I remember just wanting so badly to be able. "Do you even have the capacity to pretend that I was cut out to do this?" It was too big, too fast and I was too young and too inexperienced and I had to just be weak in front of people. I think the greatest gift I learned in leadership was to be weak and to embrace that weakness and rather than fight it, to own it and to not hide it and to speak of it. We announced IF:Gathering. We said we want to reach a generation. It was a big vision.

Jennie Allen: Then, we charged \$250 per ticket and Barry's like, "You want to reach a generation and nobody can afford to go?" There's a video of me out there, probably still on the internet of me saying, "You guys, we're going to strip the cost of the ticket and we're just going to back this thing up and we're going to do, pay what you can, and trust God to provide." We had no donors behind us. We had one family member that had written a check that covered a portion of someone's one person's salary.

Jennie Allen: We had no fallback. The event would cost \$400,000, when it was all said and done, the live stream to the world and we had nobody underwriting that and we never charged a dime. Moments like that you just, it's a wing and a prayer and

you do it trembling and you do ... Everybody says, "How do you know if you're hearing God?" I'm like, "When it happens." You don't know the other side. You think you are, I thought I was, but it also was crazy and wise counselors in my life were saying, "You can't do this financially. You can't do this. You're going to owe people money. You just can't do it."

Jennie Allen: I felt like God was giving me the pattern for us to follow. This has never been a strategic genius of a group of people. This has been God saying, "Go left, go right, back up. Say you're sorry. Do it again." It is literally just been like, "Next do this and next do this." When I look back at why like all leaders like Moses and all the crummy leaders, we all say like, "Why me?" The only answer I could ever give to that, the only like I have, he knew I loved him so much I just do what he said. I hope that's still true to me. There's one leadership principle. Now that I try to follow is to not let institution trump the voice of God.

Jennie Allen: That takes an entire team living that way because even just a few weeks ago, we led an event for our leaders and it was so beautiful and God moved. There was confession. It was so powerful. For leaders to get a safe space to just decompress, it's so powerful. God was present. I wake up at 5:00 AM after it's over and I'm lying in my bed and I was like, "You know what? We're meeting in the wrong venue for biggest," which is thousands and thousands of people. It's our biggest revenue generator and I'm sitting there thinking, "We need to strip it down and put it in a church and not go to our fancy venue and we need to simplify the thing."

Jennie Allen: I'd tell my team, I was like, "I need to talk to you this morning," and I know that they've already made plans, they've already booked hotels. This is all in motion. It's months away. I pulled them together and I praise God for Amy Bay and Brooke Mazzariello or Jordan Perry and all these people that have been with me from the beginning. I said, "I just think God wants us to do this." I don't know. I never say I know. I always say I think because I don't know, but I think and I sat before them and they were like, "Well, then let's do it."

Jennie Allen: We changed our venue. Such a disaster. It was so much work for people, but it has produced peace in everyone. It is the right move. When we announced it, people were just so grateful because they're hosting in their places. IF:Gathering the way it's so big is that leaders are hosting in thousands of locations all over the Earth at the same time. All these leaders felt this huge sigh of relief of like, "I don't have to get fancier or better." I love God because he just keeps, I think, saying, "Hey, let's do this differently." I would love it if it was my brilliance, but it's not. It literally is not. It's just God being kind enough to redirect and show us the next step.

Jennie Allen: I think right now that the goal and the passion of my heart is just not ... We are big and we are staff now of, I don't know, almost 20 people. It's not easy to turn the ship, but I feel called no matter what, keeping that same heart as we grow

that we'll never be known for how excellent and awesome we are, but we will always be known that we follow Jesus and we make him known.

Carey Nieuwhof: Two questions. What happened to that first event when you went pay as you go? How did that turn out?

Jennie Allen: We raised, I believe, it was a few hundred dollars over what we needed.

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow. Just right there.

Jennie Allen: Right there.

Carey Nieuwhof: Amazing.

Jennie Allen: That's about how it's gone ever since honestly, Carey. I wish it was like, "And now we are massively in the black." We were just trying to get to the place where our resources equal our vision, but that it is. God has provided and we've paid our bills and our people.

Carey Nieuwhof: Now, I got to ask you this next question and I hope you hear the heart behind it. I've asked other guests this before. You hear about people who say, "Oh, I've heard from God," and sometimes that doesn't end well, but when you hear from God, how do you sense it's God? How do you sort that out? That's a question I always have in my own life as well.

Jennie Allen: Honestly, what's the difference in an idea that I generated and an idea that God generated, one of them I think is smarter than the other, right.

Carey Nieuwhof: How do you know it's not you? How do you know it's not just the pizza?

Jennie Allen: I don't. When I sat before my team and I say, "I think this is from God," they know I mean that. They know I'm not sitting there going, "I know this is from God." You know what? It's 5:00 AM. I am exhausted. I just led over a thousand leaders for two days. I'm waking up about 5:00 in the morning to change a venue. That doesn't make sense. There's nothing about the world that would say, "You know what? Dial it back and simplify it. Don't do the LED screens. Don't be fancier."

Jennie Allen: That's not from me. I am the girl that's like, "Impressive." I watch every year and I love Shelley and Louie and they're ministering to a different group of people, college students. You need to impress that. Keep their attention. You have to impress them. What they do and how they do it is the most brilliant thing and I watch it every year. Sometimes, I get to go, and sometimes, I'm watching it from my computer, but I remember one year watching it and seeing the astronaut livestream into the conference and then they had a drone crossed. Of course, every college student, they can't talk about anything else. It's perfect for them.

Jennie Allen: I want to be so clear. I love what Shelley and Louie do. They're great friends and they're following God and doing what God's telling them to do, but that's always three weeks before my event and every time I call my team and I'm like, "Do we need to up our game a little?" I think, "You know what? No, God's like led me with a still quiet voice and know it is not a booming voice. It is just a sense that this is where we need to go and it doesn't usually make sense to my flesh and it doesn't usually make sense to the world."

Jennie Allen: I think that's often how he likes to work because then he gets all the glory. Nobody's listening to me right now and was like, "Wow, this girl, obviously, she built this organization." Everybody's listening to this and they're thinking to themselves, "Do I listen to God like that? Do I follow God like that? Does God really lead like that?" Because that's who's led it. I'm sitting here asking myself, Carey, "Is this too spiritual? Do you want me to just tell you how we built our emails?"

Carey Nieuwhof: No.

Jennie Allen: Even that, I'm like, "You didn't have marketers." We're a bunch of people trying to follow God. I don't have another story, but I do think what's cool is he really ... Yes. Is it a voice? No. Is it a prompting of something that doesn't totally make sense? Now, I've learned to roll my eyes and be like, "Well, crud. That's probably from God and we probably need to do it." It doesn't usually sit with me as like, "I can't wait to do this thing." It's usually like, "Pay what you can and we're not going to hit our numbers and we're going to be bankrupted and I'm personally liable because we're not an organization yet and my credits on the" My credit is on the ... That's about how we founded the organization. It usually feels a little bit like, "Oh, crap." Following God for me has been a little bit like, "Are you serious?" and I love ...

Jennie Allen: I feel like the year IF:Gathering launched the song Oceans came out, which is so old now, but I think it was the same year because I remember hearing it for the first time and going, "Oh, my gosh. They wrote a song about my life," and it's that, "I'm out where feet may fail. The waves are everywhere and I'm walking on water and where feet may fail." That's what I have felt the whole journey is just this decision. It could shrink us. We could never get off the ground, whatever. Every moment has just been moments like that.

Carey Nieuwhof: I really appreciate it and I love the honest answer and I love the transparency. Thinking about that a little bit deeper, there is probably a little bit of strategy in the mix. How do you navigate that then because-

Jennie Allen: I'll give you the strategy. The strategy has always been clear to me. Women were craving more and the church was underutilizing them and so we stepped on the scene when there was great hunger among women to do something for the kingdom and we gave them the vision. We put it in their hands and we said, "You go do it and we're here to help you and we'll put tools in your hands."

That's all we've ever been. That's the strategy. That's why it's grown." It's not marketing. It's all these women out there that said, "Yes, I want to be a part of something. I need a sisterhood to be a part of. I need a mission to live. I want to do it in a way that matters for eternity."

Jennie Allen: I'm very clear. We'll do coaching for our team and we'll bring in advisors and all that, but everything ultimately comes back to those leaders on the ground. We call them IF:Local leaders and they are in the trenches, in their local churches, in their neighborhoods, on college campuses. They're the ones that are sitting out there going, "I want to make a difference. We've put tools in their hands and said, "This is how you can do it."

Carey Nieuwhof: There is so much in what you just said and I want to be sensitive to the variety of people listening and yet I think one of the common stories we're seeing in the massive rise of women's platforms these days is exactly what you hinted at. There wasn't a lot for them to do in the local church and you can take that however you want. We empower them to do what they were called to do. How do you empower that many women? What are some differences because that's something I see in the names that we already mentioned, Annie or Ann or Lysa, yourself? I see an awful lot of empowerment and an awful lot of ownership in the tribe for lack of a better word.

Carey Nieuwhof: I don't want to make gender differences, the subject of this. I don't think male leaders are that good at that. That is something that is some secret sauce that a bunch of you have tapped into that I think we should just open up our notepads and just see what's happening over there. What are some keys to empowering women?

Jennie Allen: I love that you started the episode by saying some of your friends and you knew we were really friends, Annie, Ann and Lysa. They are not public figures to me. I know their kids. Annie doesn't have kids yet, but I talked to Annie this morning on the phone. These are my friends. Ann has been with me from the beginning of IF:Gathering. Lysa's been an advisor, had me in her office multiple times. I just saw her two weeks ago. These are my real friends. I say that not to brag, that sounds really braggy because they're awesome, but I say that because it is genuinely relational. We are innately and genuinely relational people.

Jennie Allen: I have two sisters. I was born into a family I was the oldest, but quickly I had two sisters. Those sisters have defined the way I do ministry in life. We are sharp with each other. We are critical of each other. We are for each other. We are in each other's business. We are in each other's lives. There's no pretending. There's no placating each other. It is as real relationship as you could possibly imagine on Earth between sisters. There's no other goal. You absolutely know you would die for each other. You absolutely know nobody will be at your door faster. I think that idea of sisterhood is so in us, in most women, not all women, I've definitely met women that are like, "I want more of that," but I wasn't raised that way.

Jennie Allen: I think a lot of us I think that probably would be a common theme among those of us that have ministered to a lot of women that we really see each other as sisters. My team, when I'm with my executive director that runs IF:Gathering, the day in and day out of IF:Gathering, I was with her last night. We were catching up and getting dinner. When I'm with her, I feel the same affection I feel for my biological sisters because she is my trench friend. We know each other in and out. She has done life with me for many years. I've never pretended with her. She's always seen the real side of things. She's heard me cuss. She's heard me in my sin. She has seen me in my sweetest moments of obedience.

Jennie Allen: There is a sisterhood mentality among us that is so genuine that we don't have to work hard at convincing people we care about them. They're watching us care about each other. They're watching us care for them and it's not some show for us. It's like everything else is just an overflow. IF:Gathering is literally an overflow of friendship that were already in place, and almost every person has ever been on the stage, I can call a friend in some way. There's an authenticity to what's happening, not because we're crafting authenticity, but because it's actually authentic.

Carey Nieuwhof: I hear what you're saying.

Jennie Allen: We're backstage crying and praying and hugging and dealing with life issues. I think that's what would be unique to women is different with guys, but I do think there's a little bit more of a singular mindset like, "I am the leader. I am the pastor." I don't feel that way with IF. I'm like, "There's a lot of us. There's a sisterhood." Brooke Mazzariello is leading the ship right now, incredibly. I don't have an ego about being on mission with a big group of people serving God together. It feels right to me. That's how I feel like it's supposed to be. I'm not even thinking about guys. I'm just telling you what's on my heart.

Carey Nieuwhof: I hear what you're saying.

Jennie Allen: I don't know men. I don't know if that's different. I don't know.

Carey Nieuwhof: Oh, yeah. It's a little bit different, but this is refreshing and I've enjoyed the conversations I've had with the three of the people I've already talked about, with yourself. I think there's an awful lot to be learned there in leadership in general. I think it's actually a healthier way to lead. Whether that's three people or 3 million, I think that's a healthier way to lead.

Jennie Allen: Let me give you a great example of something that really worked that I had seen fail miserably in other settings. We started a racial reconciliation group with Latasha Morrison who was a good friend of mine in Austin, Texas. She didn't lead a racial reconciliation ministry. In fact, somebody else started the group. We all came together in the midst of that and we didn't even know what we were doing. Racial reconciliation was on nobody's tongue. Ferguson had not

happened. It's precursor to all of the big public things that have gone on in news in the last several years and yet Ferguson happened in the midst of us meeting together.

Jennie Allen: After Ferguson happened, of course, other events happened right after that. IF:Gathering fell within a few months of that. I thought, "Why don't we do what we've been doing in private in front of everybody?" We all got up there and I told Latasha, I was like, "This is going to be a lot of people that watch." When I say this, I'm just saying it publicly. I didn't know of conversations like this happening. We had Asian Americans, Latinas, African-Americans and Caucasian Americans all in the same place. What we were able to do on the stage was just an outflow of what was happening in our real life.

Jennie Allen: I think what everybody sniffs out and what I think is hard for people is when they feel like you're doing something on a stage that you aren't doing in real life. That's limited what we can cover and address at IF:Gathering because we can't cover and address every injustice and everything in real life that we put. There's a lot of things we don't address, but I know God had brought us to a place on that day where we had a sisterhood that was safe enough to have a conversation in front of everybody. Latasha led it. From that, groups started all over the US.

Jennie Allen: Now, she's got thousands of bridge-building groups that are happening across the world. Why did that work? It worked because she had lived it out in her real life first. When she stood up and spoke about it, it was something so personal, not just because she lived as an African American woman in the context of America today. Yes, that was essential, but also because she had worked through reconciliation in a private way through very hard circumstances when Ferguson comes up for the first time. I think it rang as authentic because again, it was.

Carey Nieuwhof: One of the things I really appreciate about your writing, you've got a new book *Get Out of Your Head*, but I've seen it in some of the other writings as well of Annie and Ann and Lysa is you're very real, very real, very present tense, very honest, very in the struggle. That comes naturally to you? Can you talk about why that style of writing resonates the way it does?

Jennie Allen: I'm always surprised that it does. I remember the first time ... I was actually a Bible study writer first and I had written multiple Bible studies and people are getting saved and my husband was like, "Why don't you go to a writer's retreat and just see if God wants to use this further than just," we were self-printing for other churches and he was like, "Just go see if publishers would be interested." Well, they were and they also were like, "Could you write a book?" I was like, "Hey, I'm a Bible study girl. I don't know if I can write a book." I remember, I was like, "Well, I'll try." I literally kept the advance because I was like, "I don't know if I can write a book."

Jennie Allen: Again, it was just a medium to me. It was like, "What are the mediums and how do I give away God?" I sat down and I sent her the first few chapters and it was Anything, my first book. I remember sending them and I'm so embarrassed because I was like, "If she says this is a book, this is too easy," because this is just my journal. This is just what I'm learning and how God's changing me and the war between who I want to be and who I am and how good he is and how worthy. It was just my journal, not written to people, no, to myself. I sent it in and she wrote me back and she didn't make one edit. She was like, "Keep going."

Carey Nieuwhof: Wow.

Jennie Allen: I was like, "This is a book. This is what it is." I don't have another. I haven't studied every way to write a book or gone to writer's conferences other than that one I went to. I haven't figured out a method of writing. I fight for people. If I'm speaking, I fight for people. If I'm writing, I fight for people if I'm leading and vision casting. To me, it's just another means to fight for people. Yes, it is probably pretty raw. I'm sure sometimes my family has been like, "Jennie, some things need to stay in the." It's just it is. It's all out there.

Jennie Allen: Here's what I do. I think about heaven and I'm like, "I want to leave it all on the field." If my weakness, which he says over and over again throughout scripture, right? He says, "Boast in your weakness because then God gets the glory." If my weakness helps people, which I think it does more than my strength, then why would I not put it out there? Two, I remember my husband when I first was being pursued by these publishers before I signed, I remember I showed up at a fancy dinner and they were paying for it.

Jennie Allen: I said, "Tomorrow, we've got 20 people coming and I had no platform," which was unusual at the time. I don't know why. You'd have to ask them why they did this for me, but they brought in 20 people from every department of their and I called my husband. I said, "Honey, I think they think I'm something I'm not like. I'm very uncomfortable with tomorrow. I don't know what to do." He said, "Then you go in as your least fancy version of yourself. If they want you, they want you. If they don't, they don't."

Jennie Allen: I remember it was the best advice because the next day I went in and I think I dropped like some cuss words. I cried. I talked about why I love God and where that comes from and what I hope for our generation, which I still feel all those things. I don't remember if I said, "I'm going to write a book this way." I don't think I said any of those things. I just told them I love God and I wanted to see a move in our generation and I believe we could do that through all these means. This generation was being lost. I was watching women just glazed over at Bible study because they didn't want to fill in the blank because they were sitting there facing massive debt and depression and they were filling in blanks at Bible study.

Jennie Allen: I was like, "There's got to be a better way," and I shared my vision for how to reach the next generation of women. I've just trusted that. I'm like, "God, you'll shut me up and sit me down when you're done and I'll be great with that because I'll just go back to what I still do which is local disciple-making and we'll be good. I don't care, but in the meantime, I'm just going to go. I'm going to write with everything I've got." Some of the best stuff I have is the darkest stuff I have, right? I don't want to hold something back for my pride or ego that could help other people. It always felt like that to me like I would be holding back to self-protect or something.

Carey Nieuwhof: We all have these negative messages that show up in our head. Obviously, you're not exempt from them. Talk a little bit about why you wrote the book and give us an example because you've been incredibly transparent, Jennie, but just of how that battle happens in your life, the negative voices in your head.

Jennie Allen: Well, every day, right? I think this is the enemy's great ploy is to do it where nobody else can combat it in the dark. For me, it was a great ploy because I live pretty guarded. Like I said, I'm pretty quick to confess. I've got great community around me, so big obvious sins get brought to the light pretty fast, but my thought life for months and months and months, I accidentally let lies take such hold of me that I was borderline losing my faith. You've heard my faith. It's very robust. I do really love God, but that was what the enemy came for.

Jennie Allen: For 18 months, in the middle of the night, I'd wake up every night at 3:00 and I would question, "What are you doing in your life? You're missing your kid's prom and all these fun things because you think this is true. Are you sure it's true? What does it just fade to black and you're giving your whole life to this?" It just was little subtle thoughts that probably, I don't know. I would think everybody sometimes in life have, but it was pretty consistent every night over the course of months. I think what God used that season for, which got pretty dark eventually, 18 months of not sleeping and waking up and it turned into a pretty paralyzing fear of death.

Jennie Allen: It turned into a loss of passion for ministry. It turned into constant fears even in day of like, "This isn't true." Eventually I, I said it out loud, "Praise God," and began the process of healing and retraining my mind. The first thought I had when I said out loud was, "This is stupid." I actually believe God. I believe him. I don't even believe the things I'm saying. Then the next thing was, "I've been under attack." It hadn't occurred to me for 18 months that that was the enemy attacking me. I think where I went after that, which that was a couple of years ago now, was just this wake up.

Jennie Allen: All of a sudden it was just like I could see the war in our generation for our generation in our minds. It was as if it was the biggest problem that we were facing and I didn't hear anybody saying that. Certainly, there have been books about our mind lots and in fact I've read, I feel like almost everyone from a science perspective and a Christian perspective. I wanted to go fight for people's

minds. I just saw it constantly in my friends' lives. I've watched them struggle with the same things year after year after year, not day after day, not week after week, but year after year, fears, insecurities, anxieties, depression.

Jennie Allen: Certainly, mental illness is not one of those things we can will our way out of, right? I'm not talking about physical imbalance here. I'm just talking about the typical thought life of our days which all of us tend to [inaudible 00:55:08] thoughts a day. That's a lot of thoughts, right? That's tens of thousands of thoughts-

Carey Nieuwhof: That's a lot.

Jennie Allen: ... that are running through our minds and yet I was sitting there not governing them, not thinking to myself, "Gosh, this could be a way that the enemy discourages me, attacks me," and yet scripture is really clear. In 2 Corinthians, Paul talks about, this is ... Hold on. He says, where he says, "Take every thought captive," and that same passage it says that we destroy strongholds, that we'd been given divine weapons to destroy strongholds. I was like, "We have power over this. This isn't something that we're just reluctantly subject to because our thoughts are what they are and we are victims do it and we can't control it."

Jennie Allen: It's like, "No, we can change this. We can actually interrupt our thinking and redirect our thinking and set it on things that bring life and peace rather than the opposite." It was life changing to me and it was one of those things where when I realized I had the power to interrupt. I was up last night a lot and there was a point that I was bugged by it. And what I realized was, "If you're going to wake me up, devil, I'm going to go fight back and we're going to cause damage to the kingdom," because I feel like he took me out and down for so long. It makes me mad.

Jennie Allen: I see that in other people's eyes. I see that. I see that men's eyes too. I spoke recently about this to a pastor's conference actually and I had men coming up to me afterwards and said, "There's nothing different about what you're saying in my life. I feel like when you talk about this, it's like a physical weight is lifting off my shoulders. I think what we believe is that we don't have power over our thoughts, that we were just subject to and we're subject to our feelings." If I told somebody to stop feeling sad, they'd be like, "Well, I can't stop feeling sad." It's true.

Jennie Allen: That's not really effective, but if I told you can take a thought captive, you can change a thought, you can interrupt a thought, you'd also be like, "I don't think I can help that." I'm like, "Well, minus the chemical imbalance, it might need medical attention. You can't." Like science, I did all the work with science. I'm like, "Scientifically, it backs up what scripture says, which is, 'We have authority over our thoughts, that we can redirect our thinking, that we don't have to stay stuck in these toxic spiraling patterns.'"

Carey Nieuwhof: You know what's funny? I had one of those moments in your book you say about, and again from the science, that about 70% of the thoughts that a typical person has over the course of a day are negative which is astonishing. I'm working on my book. I'm halfway, well, three quarters away through a second draft and I've got serious rewrites and I'm reading the comments of my editor who's amazing, but you know what editors do. They're like, "Okay, you got to rethink this and you got to change the tone." I was ready just to quit. I'm like, "Okay, I do not have a book in me. This is not the right season." I'm there at 6:00 AM, got up early to work on it because I got a deadline and I'm like, "Ah, I'm just going to throw it out."

Carey Nieuwhof: I didn't do that. I went to work, named it and then I'm like, "Actually, this isn't that hard to turn around at all." Is that the battle? Is that what you're talking about?

Jennie Allen: It's exactly that. That's actually one of my stories. It's exactly that, same thing. I opened a bunch of ... The way I dug out that day was I called a friend. I think we've got to realize we don't have to spiral in isolation with all of this negativity in our heads for eternity. That's what I hope. Yeah, one of my big stories is a huge story of a Christian ministry leader doubting her faith to the point of near atheism. Yeah, it's pretty dramatic, but I tell that story because at the end of the day, we aren't prone to see the cost. We aren't prone to see how tragic and desperate and urgent this problem is unless it's framed in such a situation as losing your faith, I mean something that big, but it's that urgent. It's chipping away.

Jennie Allen: All those 18 months, I didn't see it as urgent. It was just random little thoughts passing through my head in the middle of the night, but I think that's what we've got to realize is he's shutting us down. This is strategic and intentional and he is shutting us down. Scripture does not use sweet little language about it like, "Oh, don't think about these things anymore," although it will say those things. It takes in 2 Corinthians war language of saying, "We're not battling flesh. We are battling spirit and there are strongholds and we are giving you divine weapons to fight those." It is war language. I think that's what I want us all to feel.

Jennie Allen: I want us to fight back. I want us to not just think these thoughts are subtle, no big deal, everybody has them. It's like, "Well, yes, everybody is having them, fact, but 70% of our thoughts are negative. Yes, we're all bought into this very toxic full of lies, negative thinking, but there is a different way and it does not have to be that way for the rest of our lives."

Carey Nieuwhof: I know there's a whole book on it, one that people should read, but naming it, breaking the pattern, interrupting things, saying it out loud, calling a friend, any other things that leaders, because I don't think there's a single leader listening who doesn't struggle at some level with negative thoughts every day, whether you don't have what it takes or you should just throw in the towel or you're not

really making a difference, whatever, whatever those thoughts are. What are some other things that you think can really help people turn things around, Jennie?

Jennie Allen: I think we've got to start paying attention to our inputs. We are an input generation. From the moment we wake up, we are getting more inputs than any generation that has ever had. That's very compelling, right? Ultimately, we're all talking about marketing. That's the reach and all that. We're all savvy at saying strategic things. Marketers are good at that. We are being sold things to believe from the moment we wake up to the moment we go to sleep. That's not news. What it might be news is that you have believed those things more than what is true about you. You have believed those things more than what is true of God. You have believed your purpose is the size of your following or the money that you make. That's where it gets dangerous, right?

Jennie Allen: It's a subtle thing that's happening over time. The inputs matter because if we just go with the flow and we don't ever interrupt with truth, what we know will happen over time is we will believe lies as our truth, right? That's where I think it got dangerous for me in the middle of the night was when I started actually believing those things. At first, it was just questions, but then it started to creep into, "Is this true?" I would start to question truth because it was starting to take root and hold. I think that's where we get into trouble is we don't spot lies anymore. We don't call each other to the truth anymore. We are all sitting in the muck and mire of the world.

Jennie Allen: Romans 8 says, "Set your mind on the flesh and it will lead you to sin and death. Set your mind on spirit, it will lead you to life and peace." We've all set our minds on the world to where the things of the spirit sound crazy. The things of the spirit sound like, "Woo," whatever. Too spiritual.

Carey Nieuwhof: Nobody actually believes that.

Jennie Allen: Right. It's like dumb that down as these practical things. I'm like, "Well," but the problem is the things of the spirit aren't practical. The things of the spirit do require focus and they require presence with God and time with God and things that have become less and less important to us, and our soundbite, more is better, productive society. It's what is. It's not like we can change all of society, but we can know what's true and what's not. That was true back then. I was just talking to somebody this morning and they're like ... My dad just called me this morning. He's like, "I'm just so worried about you. The world is so dark and dah, dah, dah, dah."

Jennie Allen: I was like, "I don't know what news channel you've been watching," but that's not new. Nothing is new. There's nothing in our day that wasn't true of Roman times. In fact, it was worse. They had Christians hanging in the streets. Nothing's that new or that extra troubling. The darkness is dark and the light is light, but we are bombarded with it in such a way and maybe this is the part that's new,

that the indoctrination series ... You're a leader. You probably have an indoctrination series email that goes out if you run an organization, that series of emails that goes out, that's indoctrinating you into something is happening moment by moment, hour by hour and it is for the world.

Jennie Allen: I think that's what, as a Christian leader, every Christian leader is called the fight. It's like, "Hey, there's another way. Hey, look over here. It's in the woods. It's in the wilderness. You can need a hatchet, but we can go. Come on. Let's go." That's what I feel constantly is there's a highway and it's leading to darkness and it's our minds completely fixated on ourselves and our possessions and our identity and our production and how awesome we are. There's a little like wilderness road that you can let go, cut with me and it's worth cutting, but it's a lot more work and you're going to have to go, put on some slush boots and get in the mud and fight for it because it's not a highway.

Jennie Allen: It is not the easy way. It is not what is anybody's going to help you do. You're going to have to want this and fight for it. I think that's what I see happening in our generation. I have so many people that I lead that are like, "I'm in. I'm putting on the boots. Give me the hatchet. Let's go. This highway has not worked for me. I am anxious. I am depressed. My relationships are broken. It's not working. I'm willing to go on the wilderness road because this way isn't working." I think that's the grace of God that we get to the end of ourselves, that we see it's empty, that it doesn't work and we're willing to take the hatchet.

Jennie Allen: Let's be clear what the hatchet is. It is real life accountability. It is waking up and spending time with Jesus, actually doing that prayer, all that. That's the way. Out of that, things do begin to change, but you got to really know how much you're up against.

Carey Nieuwhof: Jennie, this has been so refreshing honestly, just really, really good, really rich, really challenging. Anything else you want to share with us and then tell us where we can find you online?

Jennie Allen: Well, I hope everybody listening feels encouraged. I hope they feel like, "Hey, maybe this is simpler than I thought. Maybe I'm not having to dig myself out of years," because we all do this, right? That's what I hope everybody feels is like, "We're all in the same lot. We're all in the same lot. We all are distracted by the same things. We're all tending to self-promote and do all the things. We all are in this lot. How do we fight it together?" I hope that you leave going, "Okay, I need to make one phone call, call one friend and say, 'You know what? I want to fight this better. I want my mind to be set on better things and I'm going to have to fight to do that. I'm going to have to get the hatchet out and go do it.'"

Jennie Allen: I hope you're encouraged to do it and I hope it feels delightful, right? I hope it doesn't feel like you get off and you're like, "Golly, I need to spend more time with God." I hope it feels like, "You know what? Maybe he's better than I think.

Maybe this would be a better way because it is." God's so kind. He didn't just feed what's good for us. He feeds our desires too and our desires are for life and peace and he knows how we get it.

Carey Nieuwhof: Jennie. Wow. Tell us about the book, where they can find it and where they can find you online.

Jennie Allen: Sure, JennieAllen.com ,J-E-N-N-I-E, A-L-L-E-N, .com is where I have for everything is. The book is there, everything else. Get Out of Your Head is the name of the book and you can get it anywhere, but I hope it encourages you. I hope you feel fought for in it.

Carey Nieuwhof: Jennie. Thank you so much.

Jennie Allen: Thank you, Carey.

Carey Nieuwhof: Really appreciated that conversation with Jennie Allen, and if you want to get transcripts or anything else, you can head on over to the show notes. And you can get those at CareyNieuwhof.com/Episode318. Or just go into the little search bar and search Jennie's name. So, hey, super excited that next time we're back on the podcast, we've got Craig Groeschel back. And I am so pumped for that. We have just a really transparent conversation. He talks about having anxiety attacks for the first time about a year ago, what he's doing about that, how he's hired a leadership coach to make him more effective. It's really a performance coach. And then we talk about high demand leadership, how to avoid entitlement, and of course if you subscribe, you get that all for free.

Carey Nieuwhof: Make sure you do check out Red Letter Challenge before Easter. Head on over to RedLetterChallenge.com/Carey to get the best offers. And then also, do subscribe to the Leaders in Living Rooms podcast with Sean Morgan. You can get that anywhere you get your podcasts, and of course get a link in the show notes, as well. So here's an excerpt from the episode coming up with Craig Groeschel.

Craig Groeschel: I walked to the kitchen to prepare breakfast and then I go back to the bathroom. I walked to the kitchen to get some stuff. I literally limit my trips across the house, which sounds like nothing, but I'm making the distance between the I'm getting out of bed to where I actually start reading scripture and prepare my heart. I'm shortening that distance. It's ridiculous, crazy things like that even to the place where people just call me borderline crazy. In my office, I don't think I've been out to a lunch in a restaurant on a workday. I've got my team in here who could probably verify it. If it happens once a year, that would be probably more than it happens. It's just lunch is in my office. It's brought into me. I don't think about what it is. If there's a meeting, it's in my office, so there's no travel time back and forth.

Carey Nieuwhof: So, that's next week on the podcast. So excited for that. It's real, it's real. And hey, have you ever noticed it's hard to get good people? Like, maybe you're trying to hire, build a team. There are so many reasons why it's so difficult. There's a talent war going on. The internet, right? People have options. They know they have options. The gig economy is growing. A lot of young leaders rather working for you will just start their own thing. And what's behind all that? How do you stay competitive as an organization? Well, I really believe the future workplace is a flexible workplace. And this week, my High Impact Workplace course reopened for new registrations. In fact, for a limited you'll get the best price ever. Price is gonna go up, but you can jump in. And we've already run several hundred leaders through this, and the feedback has been incredible. We are so excited to open this up to new enrollment.

Carey Nieuwhof: And, what is The High Impact Workplace? Well, it's basically training on what's changing in the workplace, very practical resources you can use to increase employee engagement and team engagement. And about 70% of employees are disengaged at work. So, if you sign up for The High Impact Workplace, this is what you get. You'll get the skills you need to attract and keep high capacity leaders who would otherwise start their own businesses. You will learn the currency that motivates young leaders, and that is a growing part of the workforce these days. You'll figure out, because I've got real tangible guides, on how to navigate flexible work arrangements. People want to work from home, and how do you do that in a way that honors the entire team?

Carey Nieuwhof: I will give you a list of the questions every great manager asks their team, how to create a workplace that multiple generations can thrive in, and figure out how to keep your company or organization relevant to the next generation of leaders. So, you can head on over to TheHighImpactWorkplace.com now, and this week, you'll get the best rates ever. I'm so excited the course is back open. I love doing online courses. It's my best content, and I hope this one helps you. So, check out TheHighImpactWorkplace.com, and thanks so much for listening today guys, I really do 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.