

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 353 of the podcast. My name is Carey Nieuwhof, and I hope our time together today helps you lead like never before. Man, we are into a riveting conversation with Henry Cloud about mental health and stress and leaders. I don't think the timing could be better because some of you are listening to this on summer vacation right now and you're like, "I'm still stressed." Well, you've got to listen to what Henry has to say about leading and staying healthy through the midst of the crazy that is the world today. Today's episode is brought to you by The Global Leadership Summit. Henry is an alumni of that faculty.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You can get \$20 off the individual ticket rate for the Global Leadership Summit now through August 6th, when you use the code CAREYPODCAST at GlobalLeadership.org. So on checkout, just make sure you put in CAREYPODCAST. Listen, this is a unique discount. Make sure you check it out. It's brought to you by CDF Capital. Text NEWERA to 44222 to get a free, three-part video series designed to help churches move from having just a digital presence to a digital ministry.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So man, oh man, in the What I'm Thinking About segment, I'm going to talk a little bit about my take this summer on mental health and de-stressing and why I don't think sabbaticals work, but I don't want to take away from what Henry Cloud has to say. I've had an opportunity to talk to Henry on numerous occasions since the crisis started earlier in 2020, and he's just been a lifeline to me. I mean his stuff in leadership has been some of the best stuff I've read, I come back to again and again. I have recommended Necessary Endings as a book over and over again, given away copies.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Henry, if you don't know him, is a clinical psychologist, a New York Times bestselling author, he consults with some of the top, well 50 Fortune 50 companies in the world and is also a pastor to pastors as well. So, he started as a clinician. We're going to talk about that a little bit, and has become a leading voice on issues of mental health and leadership on a global scale. He lives in Los Angeles with his wife, Tori, and their two daughters and as you may hear in this podcast, his dog. So anyway, that's exciting.

Carey Nieuwhof:

2020 has been a year like never before. And this year's Global Leadership Summit will be a Summit like never before. I'm so excited. Craig Groeschel, a good friend, friend of this podcast is going to be leading the charge this year. And the theme is You Have Influence. So there's 15 world-class faculty, including Craig, Nona Jones, Nike Director, Beth Comstock, Sadie Robertson-Huff, Bishop T.D. Jakes, Lysa TerKeurst and so many more. We've never needed more encouragement, inspiration and skills to navigate the future. So it's going to be a little bit different. It will be telecast live in HD from Chicago to hundreds of host locations across the country on August 6th and 7th. And podcast listeners, you get a pretty cool discount, \$20 off the individual ticket rate now through August 6th, by simply using the code CAREYPODCAST when you register at GlobalLeadership.org.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And then CDF Capital is an organization I've been getting to know, and maybe you are wondering, "Okay, we're online, but how do you turn this into a digital ministry?" Well, they put together, because they specialize in resourcing leaders in the church, an incredible free resource. It's a three-part video series designed to help churches like yours move from having a digital presence to a strategic digital ministry. It's free. You've got nothing to lose. And all you have to do is text NEWERA. Now is that my Canadian accent? Era, era? How do you say that? Leave a note in the comments or on social. NEWERA to 44222. The first video launches July 16th, so you want to act today and get in before it's too late.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, I'll tell you, I'm so excited to have Henry back on the podcast. Our conversations are never boring and the stuff he talks about is so good. How to stop taking failure personally, I want to remember that. The three P's, how to prevent burnout and how to become healthier in the midst of a crazy year like this and how to change your thinking for the better. We cover an awful lot. And you can get the show notes when it's over too, over at CareyNieuwhof.com/Episode353. Without further ado, thank you so much for tuning in today. Here is my wide-ranging conversation with Dr. Henry Cloud.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, Dr. Henry Cloud, welcome back to the podcast. I was joking with you. I'm seeing you more than I see my regular counselor now. We're just on all these calls together in this season, but it's good to have you on my leadership podcast.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Well, that's great because I can screw you up and your regular shrink and fix you. It's a team effort.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's a great plan. Oh, man. Well, Henry, in some of the conversations we've been having during this Coronavirus season, which seems to be extending, I'd love to start here.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

It's not a season. It's gone into this is how we live now.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, exactly. Because it's like, "Well, vaccine." Yeah, at some point. Man, one of the things you and I have talked about that I want to bring to leaders listening to the leadership podcast is this collective loss of control. I don't think there's ever been a season where the world has felt probably more unknowable, uncertain, and this loss of control. How does the loss of control impact leaders in particular? What challenges can that bring, Henry?

Dr. Henry Cloud:

You know, Carey, it's one of the biggest challenges. And I would say this, negotiating that challenge is ... You always hear the saying, "What's the most important thing?" Well, I don't know. Air, water or food? Which one do you want to pick? But one of the biggest things that leaders have to negotiate well, and what I would say, and what I see in my CEO type clients are the ones that do do this well are the ones that are doing really well. Now I'm going to back up for a second and just start with why. We always

make fun of people being control freaks, but the reality is God has made you to be a control freak. He's wired your brain to be a control freak.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

If we take a toddler and let's play the little game where I hit the hammer and I say, "Watch me Billy," and he's watching and we hook a brain scan up, he's watching me do it. And his brain's kind of got some activity. But then I say, "Okay, now you do it," and I give him control, his brain just explodes. Now think about this. That's the image of God. God is omnipotent. You are potent without the omni. And so you're wired to have control. Now, here's the problem. We fell, and when we fell, the wish was to be omni. So we want to control everything, instead of the one thing we were designed to control, which is the fruit of the spirit, ultimately self-control. So leaders that get this change the world.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

And here's what you've got to do. See what it does is when you lose control and you have less choices, you usually could call a meeting, go to a restaurant, let's set up an off site. You've lost all those choices. And what happens is that really screws with the brain and it hits a shutdown mode and it goes into a known place called learned helplessness, where your brain just starts to think, "Well, there's nothing I can do. I don't have control anymore." And that really, really, really, really stops your brain from working. That's why people feel lethargic, they're in a daze, and all of this kind of stuff. So we've got to reboot that system and get you back in control. Of what? Of what you can control.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Now, what can you control? You can control yourself. All right. Now here's what I want them to distinguish. See, people think, "Well, I've got control of my company." No, you don't.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Even in normal times, right?

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Even in normal times. You have stewardship and responsibility and control of your company. I understand what you mean by that, but just like you have control of a car. I've got control of the car. Well, actually what you've got control of is the steering wheel and the pedals. That's what you have control. So if they can distinguish, okay, here's the car, here's my church, here's my organization that I am in charge of, or a team or a department, and realize, but what drives what I have control of, this organization, what drives that is what I truly have control of, and that's my own activities. How I turn the wheel. When I hit the brake, when I hit the pedal.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

So here's what the great ones do. They stop being an omni controllers. And when they see something in their sphere of control, the context for the control, their stewardship, that's not working, they don't freak. They ask the question, "What can I do that's going to move the needle on what I'm seeing?" Those are the winners, because they're not freaking out. They don't feel powerless. They realize, like one of my clients said, I quoted this in *Boundaries for Leaders*, he was saying, "My team's got bad morale." And I said, "Why is that?" And he said, "Well, I hired this guy from another company." I said, "Well, why is that?" He said, "Well, he had been about" ... I kept saying, "Why is that? Why is that? Why is that? Why

is that?" Because I was driving him to a point. And finally he looks at me and he goes, "Okay, I guess I am ridiculously in charge. Right?" I said, "Yeah, you are."

Dr. Henry Cloud:

So what are you going to do that's going to move the needle on all of that? And when they get that, then they start to make themselves calm of what I have control of and what are the key priorities, the needles that I want to move. And then from there, what are the specific brake pedals, steering wheels, activities that are going to move that needle? When they get that right, they change worlds and they have fun and they calm down.

Carey Nieuwhof:

See, that's so helpful. I love your driving analogy because I think you're right. In normal conditions, we have control of the brake and the pedals and the steering wheel. And these aren't normal conditions. So I'm Canadian. I guess in California, you guys have rain occasionally two or three days a year-

Dr. Henry Cloud:

But to make the analogy complete there, in normal case, you always have control of those things. In normal conditions, you feel like you have control of your route, of the speed you're going to go, whether you stop for a sandwich on the way. And Canadian, what happens when a blizzard comes in? So you find it out, I don't control that, but I still have control of the steering wheel.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Exactly.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

And I've got to change my activities to negotiate that context.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's why I love that analogy because I think you're right. It gives you the illusion of control. It's a beautiful summer day right now while we're recording this. And so we'd be in normal conditions, but a thunderstorm hits or in the winter, a blizzard hits and anybody ... I have two sons, I train them to drive in the winter. They both happen to have winter birthdays. And I always thought those people who learn how to drive in the winter have an advantage over those who turned 16 in the summer when you can drive, because I had to teach him how to drive in the worst possible weather.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

That is so smart. You know, the Navy SEALs have a saying that nobody rises to the challenge. That is a total 100% myth. And when they study sports, people, like you want him to take the last shot at the buzzer, and some people, and they do the stats. It's just not true. That's the guy that would make the shot anyway. So here's the thing. Nobody rises to a challenge. Here's what the SEALs will tell you. You fall to your level of training. All right. That's why the Bible uses the word test. It's like a fishing line. We're going to test it. We're going to find out what its capacity is. Not asking it to make 1600 on its SAT and rise to the challenge when they don't know their math tables. That's not going to happen. So what you're doing there is you are training them at this level, and summer comes along and-

Carey Nieuwhof:

They're like, "Oh, this is easy compared to what I learned in January."

Dr. Henry Cloud:

They can pinch their girlfriend if they want. They can handle taking their eyes off the road for a second.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay, well this is fine, Henry, because I've been always looking for words of encouragement and hope. It's the Stockdale Paradox. You never lose hope, but you confront brutal reality. But I hadn't had this thought, that's why I love these conversations with you for young leaders listening, and you've got thousands of young leaders listening. For some of you, this is your first year. You're probably being trained right now at a level that people like me who entered under normal conditions wouldn't have to face. Could that be an advantage if you're in the early years of your leadership and you're trying to pivot and move and change and adapt in the middle of this? Can that actually work to your advantage longterm?

Dr. Henry Cloud:

It can work to your advantage as long as ... and this is such a great question when you think about this. It can work to your advantage if you don't let the context shape the basic disciplines. All right. So think about this. If you're teaching somebody skydiving, or you're teaching, even the driving analogy or whatever, you don't want them ... So I'm a competitive golfer and I have been since I was a kid. That's been my life. You go on the range where there's no wind because you're learning to get it right in the basic disciplines. Then to have to negotiate and include in your training all these difficulties is great and fantastic, but you don't want to let that context build the disciplines because then you're ... it's like if you learn to run on a pebbly road, you're going to develop a weird gait. Now if you have a good strong gait, then you can negotiate a pebbly road.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

But I like, like the SEALs, let's learn how to block and tackle first, and then we're going to put you out there and let some 275 pound guy come at you. That's great training. But I don't want to be learning how to go on the field like this. I've got to get the basic disciplines. That's why basic boot camp disciplines are so important. One quick example of this, Carey.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, this is so good.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

I had the dream of a lifetime happened earlier this year. I got an invitation to fly out to Palm Beach and spend a day with Jack Nicklaus and play golf with him.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh my gosh.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

And then spend the evening at his house with dinner and just talking and ask him anything.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, Henry.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

And so I was asking him all sorts of questions. There was a small group of us. And I said, "Did you make any big swing changes?" And he started laughing. He said, "I read about these guys. They get a new teacher and change it." He goes, "No." He said, "I would always make adjustments to get back to who you are and the way that you're formed." Now if you've formed in a wrong way, that's another story. But here's what he told me. I think he said it was 1979. He says, "The worst year I have had ever," he said, "I don't think I won a tournament." You know what he did? He went back to his childhood coach, Jack Grout, and he said, "Teach me the game again."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, wow.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

He's the greatest player in the world. He won tons of major tournaments. He said, "Teach me again. Let's start with the grip and then I want to go to the stance. And he went back to those fundamentals that grounded me." He said that year he won two majors, either that year or the next year. And see what happens is the war gets us out ... You play in the wind long enough and you're-

Carey Nieuwhof:

You're leaning over. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Yeah. So that's a good question. It's good, but don't leave the basics, guys. Don't leave the basics. Don't leave the basics. Please don't leave the basics.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So I don't know how to answer this question or ask this question, but let's just say to the leaders who are in year one, two of their leadership, which is a good chunk of people listening, the graduating college, they got their first jobs in the marketplace or in the church world. And they're like, "Well, this is really abnormal. So how do I learn the basics when it's this crazy?" What would you say to them?

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Say that again.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh well, to those leaders who are learning how the first time. I literally have gotten messages from leaders who are like, "My first day as a pastor was March 1st, 2020." Yeah, exactly.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

"Hi, I'm a deck hand, Captain of the Titanic. Are we going for a ride?"

Carey Nieuwhof:

So the question is, what do you say to them when there's no natural conditions?

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Well, that's a great question. And this is where if you are the leader and you're starting there, don't take another step without finding a or a couple of really, really, really good strong mentors and coaches. Don't take another step. I think the way in the Greek, the Greek says, "You don't know what the hell you're doing." That's not bad. You're just new. Now you have an advantage because you're going to learn in some really interesting times. You're going to know stuff that 30 year veterans don't know, but you've got to have ... Think of a rose bush growing up. What do we do? We put it on a lattice, and a lattice is a structure, and it grows up according to that structure. That's why we use training wheels, kid doesn't develop bad habits. That's why all sorts of things happen with a structure. The word structure, literally the etymology of the word is basically it means to build, like a building is a structure.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

So you've got to have some basic structures and disciplines that you're probably going to have to get from somebody who knows what they're doing. Get a coach, get a mentor. I hope you've got some elders sitting around you that didn't just fall off the truck, some business people that have led things, and get some people to develop you. It's the best thing you can do. It is the best. If you read my book, Power of the Other, there's a whole list in there of super high performers, super high performers. And it lists their mentor right next to them. And each one of them has that name and they have talked about it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I want to go back. That's really helpful. I want to go back to loss of control and what that does to your brain circuitry. What are some healthy ways to seek control? And I love the focus on self-control, both theologically that's what we're designed to have by God, but also it makes a lot of sense, of course. It shouldn't be a surprise that it does.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

You have kids. How much control do you have? Do you know what I mean?

Carey Nieuwhof:

None.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

I go crazy when I hear these parents say, "Well, the most important thing with kids is you've got to get control of them." Are you kidding me? Is that what you want? You want to have control of your kids? Or would you rather you have kids that have self-control? Because if they don't have self-control, Bubba, you can't leave the house. Right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

You're right.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

I want them to have self-control. So what do I have control of? Exactly what Galatians 4 says, "The children are under guardians and managers until the date set by the father." Well, what does that mean? You guard them. How? By your own activities. You set limits. You have consequences. You guard them from regression to immaturity and avoiding being dropped off at school when they're afraid and have a school phobia, you keep them from regressing to an earlier stage and you guard them from trying to be bigger than they are and driving the car at 12. So you protect them, but you also manage them. And that's what a leader has.

PART 1 OF 4 ENDS [00:23:04]

Dr. Henry Cloud:

You manage the process of their getting results through controlling what you can control, the coaching, the resources, the rewards, the incentives, the outcomes the putting the teams around them that they need. You have control of a lot of stuff, but they have to have self-control of producing, and that will get you out of a lot of anxiety.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I've heard you talk about the three Ps. So this has been an extremely discouraging season for a lot of leaders, highly challenging, and a lot of leaders listening are bumping up against failure. And sometimes failure can look like, "I'm not sure we're going to make it, or we're out of money, or I'm just exhausted." Sometimes it can look like, wow, "We're not as big as we were, or it's just so uncertain, I don't know what's going to happen." You mentioned three Ps that happen.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Actually, probably all that list is true, right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. Yeah.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

You have outliers that have tons of money in the bank and all this, even the big companies I work with in their early days, number one, number one, number one, number one, number one was first thing they did is preserve cash. You can't run out of fuel. Even the biggest, and highest and most successful, ones and so they went into preservation. So don't feel bad if you find yourself with that list that Carey just said.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And so in light of that, I've heard you talk about three Ps when you bump up against failure and I'd love for you to talk about that. I think the first one is personal and then I'll let you tell the story, but that has really sunk with me. And I'm like, oh, I look back on all the times I've taken hits even under normal conditions. And when I get into self pity mode and I get into that bad sink hole, those three Ps are so true for me.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Yeah. It actually comes out of that learned helplessness rates which I was talking about earlier that they found when people feel like things are affecting them that are outside of their control then, as I said, your brain shuts down. And with that shut down, you have clinical symptoms, right? Depression, anxiety, stress, burnout, your sleep patterns will change. Your energy levels will change. Your libido will change. Your appetite will change and your concentration will change as well as what we call the executive functions, which are creativity, problem solving, linear thinking, ability to sequence, ability to release resources in the right amount at the right time, ability to have wider range of options in your head than a few, and all a bunch of stuff. Those are all biochemically empowered. Your computer's got to be plugged in. Okay?

Dr. Henry Cloud:

So when the brain changes at an out of control state, it's like having a power outage. And that's why, that's why you feel like you do, it's how God wired us. So that's why I talk about rebooting the system. Now that's the hardware side of it. What Carey has just referred to. Do I talk to you or them?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Talk to them. Talk to them, they're listening.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Carey, what you're referring to there, we'll have this conversation, is the software. And so what the software does is it changes and then it interprets data. If you have software, you put in data, Excel spreadsheets going to do something with that, right? There's a formula and it takes it to a Psalm or something. You get a piece of data. You go online, you look at how many people do we have attending online on Sunday and that number's down. Or you ask, how are donations, that number's down. Or you ask, what was the feedback on my sermon, that number's down. Or when I got to the middle part, I felt like was my main point, we didn't see any happy face. Whatever the piece of data is. All right?

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Your new software in this mental state, that's changed because you've lost control, your mental software interprets that with three Ps. Number one, you personalize it. You personalize it. Whatever made me think I could preach. "I knew I should have had more, I should have done that capital campaign and raised all that money before. I should have hired... Why didn't I think, why didn't I study more for that?" But some way you end up feeling bad, not good enough. That's the first P, you personalize it. Second P..."Well, it's not just a sermon. I mean, it's the finances it's the team I've hired. My elders, I picked a wrong, the elders suck. The city, I mean industries. Why did I even this town being a pastor is horrible. I hate my life."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yup.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

It all goes back. That's the second P, it's called pervasive. Now that one little bad input has the button for subjectively, it's all bad. And there's a reason for that. It's coming out of certain part of your brain that has no sequencing. It has no categories has no ability to objectify things. I just all feel like everything's bad, right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yep.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

And then you go, "I bet next time it's not going to be different. In fact, I'm in a month from now, it's not going to, I don't know if we're going to come out. And I don't know if we're going to get better." Now, the third P is permanent. So now hope is gone, and you're done. Just feel like crap. And you can't move, you don't know what to do. That's why we have to reboot the system.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. I just want people to hear that. Henry, I've heard, you mentioned that a few times and that's why I wanted to share it with this audience. It's personal. Yep, I go there, "It's me, I suck." Pervasive. "Everything sucks, and everybody does, and it's the whole industry and why did I even do this?" And permanent. "I'll never change, this is my sentence." And I just think there's so many leaders who are in that place right now. And now I want to know how to reboot the software. So thank you. That has been such a gift to me. And I can look back on two and a half, three decades of leadership and go, "Oh, that's what that was," because I can end up in that sink hole unless I'm really careful. So what do you do if you're there?

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Well, can I suggest a couple of resources?

Carey Nieuwhof:

A hundred percent, yeah.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

I'm not going to try to put an ad here, but if you go to Boundaries.me, Boundaries.me, that's a platform where I become kind of your online coach and one there's three subject areas that all that content is around. One's clinical, how you feel, there are depression, anxiety, and all that. The other is relationships and thermos performance. And there's a lot of stuff in there that would help this. Now specifically the three Ps on their own, that's in there too. But to the program we're talking about here, that you're referring to Carey is I wrote about it in Boundaries for Leaders. And so if you take a look in there, it goes into depth. But to answer the question, there's basically four things of how to reboot the system.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

The first thing is you must get connected in your vulnerability. See connected, we all go to parties, but we dress up in a tux at a wedding or a suit or something, and that's not connection. That's at the surface level. Where we get where the brain starts to change is when we, we put those who weep, when we're in our weakness, where Paul said he was so depressed. This is Paul, he's reaching out to God and he said, "But God who comforts, the depressed sent me the evangelical list. Why are you praying more? You memorize scripture." No, that's not what it says. It says, "God who comforts the depressed sent Titus to me." You hardly can go very far without reading Paul's letters where he starts or ends with, "I was refreshed by the coming of so and so."

Dr. Henry Cloud:

And I've seen leaders in crisis just over and over and over get rebooted. When I've done projects, for example, with big companies, in '08 on Wall Street, I designed a program to get stockbrokers, 10,000 of them in small groups around the branches, all over the country. We flew 500 branch managers into Dallas for three days and I designed a small groups program for their highest performers. And they started sharing about what they're going through, how much anxiety they feel, what their brain's doing. So connection is number one, where you need the support, but from a vulnerable place. Number two, you've got to get back in control of what you can control. It's what we talked about earlier, we won't go over it again. But you make two columns here's all the crap I can't control, the economy, when's the vaccine going to come, when is it going to open up? All that stuff I can't control. And then you make the list of the priorities, but the activities that you do have control of that are going to move the needle in some way. Okay?

Dr. Henry Cloud:

The third thing is it's very important to realize the thoughts you are having that are negative are not real thoughts. Okay? Those are biologically created farts in your head, and you think their thoughts, but they're farts. When your stress hormones go up, the brain farts negative stuff, because stress hormones are by definition activating the system that fears. That's why God is honest, and when a train's coming you jump off the track. All hell is breaking loose. It's designed to be negative. Or you would drown.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

So what your brain does is starts to produce thoughts that explain why I feel this way. "Well, it must be because I suck. It must be because the whole world is bad." And if you treat those as thinking then you're done, right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

But that's not thinking you're right.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

It's not thinking. Have you ever been under stress and awakened at three in the morning and had the thought of, "Can't wait for tomorrow. I'm going to win the lottery." You've never had a positive thought that your stress brain created. You never, it doesn't, it won't do it. But, that's hardware. Okay? There's a difference between your brain and your mind. Your mind is not hardware, it's not biochemical, and it's not physical neurons sitting in a big marshmallow on top of your head with an endocrine system driving it. That's material, your mind is immaterial.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

So the people that get out of their mind can't make it. The people who get out of their brain and into your mind, make it. Now you've got this whole new industry out there called mindfulness. Well, aren't you guys smart you invented this thing called, no, you didn't invent it. Go back to Psalm 139. And God says, "Get above your thoughts." God observed, try my anxious thoughts and see if there's any hurtful way in me. What are the paradigms that are... And we get above our thoughts we become mindful and you get above them and you don't pay attention to them other than to notice them, it's like a bird flying over your head, you can't stop a bird from flying over your head, but like the baptist preacher said, "You have a lustful thought, you can't stop that from coming." But you don't have to capture the burden, help it build a nest in your head either, right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

So you're going to let all that stuff go by and you're going to have what the New Testament calls the mind of Christ. Taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. That takes us to the third thing. I want you to log all of your crazy thoughts.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Like write them down?

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Write them down, literally write them down. I had Barron's top 50 performers writing down their negative thoughts. It kept him from picking up the phone in calling a \$20 billion client. You think about that. They told me, "I can't pick up the phone, I know the client's going to hate me." Okay, write that down. My client's going to hate me. So then on the other side of the column, you're going to write down truth that disputes, that thought, because that puts a limit on it. Okay? There's so much research behind this.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Well think of the three Ps - "I suck. I'm not good enough." Ephesians 2:10 says, "You are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for that very work that you say you suck at, and that work has been laid down and beforehand that you should walk in them." That's the truth. You shut up thought, my mind is going to rule you. Romans 12, by the transforming of your mind. So we're going to the second one it's all bad. Come on. Are you kidding me? What flood? What lions in the den? What water rising around the mountain tops? That's not what the book says. This isn't a problem. "In the world you have tribulation, but take courage I have overcome the world," Jesus said. So we're going to have your favorite verses here.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

I'll do it right now. Okay? I'm a little bit of in one area in life, I'm a little bit of a germaphobe because I got food poisoning one time and went in the trauma center and didn't think I was going to live. So that's the only area I kind of have germ issues around, how long's the chicken...

Carey Nieuwhof:

How long's that chicken been cooked? Yeah.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Exactly. My wife laughs at me. But in COVID, I noticed I started to generalize, "Where's the bug," you know? Well, every morning and every night, every morning, every night, since this hit, I meditate on Psalm 91. Psalm 91 says, "The plague will not touch you. It won't come near your tent." God was going to... So it says, "You won't fear the plague that comes there or the pestilence at the midday and the plague that comes at night." Every time I get germaphobic out there, I go to the store and I touch something and I go, "I'm not going to fear the plague that comes at night. I'm doing the things that I can control. I'm washing my hands, I'm not touching my face." It's gone.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

So you've got to, this is really, really important to rebooting the system. And then also adding some structure, adding some structure, scheduling things, having a routine every morning. And I mean, guys, I am the least OCD, anal color coded socks and underwear. I don't usually know what day it is. I'm so right brained, I can't find my way out of a phone book. We don't have phone booths anymore, do we? I mean, literally. But, I have found that there are certain, you don't have to get an anal about this, but I have certain structures that calm the machinery. Every morning I put a worksheet out there, pretty much, these are the four things, three things that I've got to drive forward today. And these are the two or three activities or steps that each of those are going to entail doing. Keep it small, keep it big, keep it simple. Keep it small, small lists, big important things only.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right, stuff you need to move.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

That's simple.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Yeah. Your brain will work better. If you get through that, that list, you don't know the future. I love to think about how to deal with the uncertain future in Martin Luther's terms. They asked Martin Luther one time, "How do you find the will of God?" He goes, "Well, first I go to the word because a lot of it's really, it's right there, you get the answer." He said, "If I don't find it there and then I'd go to prayer, then I pray about it. Then if I don't know, I go have a few beers."

Carey Nieuwhof:

That is such a Luther quote.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

You got to let it go, man, you got to go hang out with your buddies and say, "I don't know, I've done all I can do."

Carey Nieuwhof:

I know in one of the early lockdown conversations you and I had, I think we were probably weeks into the crisis, and everything was at that time feeling like it was spinning out of control. And I made a joke with you, for those of you who are watching this on YouTube, behind me is my library and like you I get books sent to me almost every day by publishers and authors and a lot had accumulated and I'm a little more OCD. So I just organized everything, I took out about 200 or 300 books that I thought it's time to give away. I made sure that everything went back to a color coding system. And I thought, "You know, I can't control all that and I don't know what's going to happen, but now I got my bookshelf organized."

Dr. Henry Cloud:

But didn't your brain settle down a little bit?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, it felt great.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Yeah. Yep.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Because I've tried to control people it doesn't work particularly well. I learned that, that was lots of therapy along the way. And trying to control your wife, trying to control your kids, trying to control your staff, that's a bit of a disaster. And so I try to keep my control on cutting the grass or organizing my bookshelf or things like that.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Actually you're not cutting the grass. You're pushing a lawn mower.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, you're right.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

That's what you have control of. Right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

You're right.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

What if the engine breaks down? Now you can't cut grass.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Now I'm going to get stressed out about that, yeah.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

But wait a minute. What do you have control of? "I can put the lawnmower in the truck and go to the mechanic," so there you go.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right? Right. No, I love how you did that, but you said little things like that can actually be therapeutic that reprograms your brain. I remember you telling me that when I am finished the library reorganization.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Absolutely. But, but just to, a few other things if you're feeling this way, first of all, you need some space. If you're feeling this way, sit down and be quiet and build that in. Unplugged, sit down, have some quiet time. Okay? Warren Buffett sits, I think it's, I think it's an hour and a half a day. His whole

career. And he has on his calendar that he sits and looks out the window. That's it. Tony Blair told me when he was Prime Minister, he would take a half a day every week and go sit by a pond.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Just to let his head clear. Okay? Quiet. Find some quiet time. Number two, observe your thinking. Start thinking about your thinking. "Have I gotten negative? Have I gotten hopeless? Am I thinking in weird terms? Have I gone critical? Have I gone powerless?" Start to observe your thinking. Make the two columns that I talked about, about the activities in control, make sure you're connecting. De-catastrophize whatever's going on and get into a, this is huge guys, get into a larger narrative. That is brain science I'm telling you, but it's also, Carey, it's almost like the person who wrote the Bible understood the brain and studied neuroscience. That's really interesting. He tells to connect. He tells to worry about today and not the future. "You can't add one cubit to your life or one day or one hour," he says, "Today has enough activities of its own you got to worry about."

Dr. Henry Cloud:

But the other thing that he did was, and this gets things out of your subjective negative brain to the positive side, because it connects it out of subjective emotionalism to linear sequencing, which is very important to reengaging your prefrontal cortex, language, meaning, planning, all this kind of stuff by the simple act of putting today in a larger narrative. A larger narrative. The bite when I said, "Whoever wrote the Bible understood the brain." What does God tell them every single time, every single time? Remember, "I'm the God that brought you out of slavery in Egypt with a mighty hand. I gave you these ways so that if you walk in them, you will always prosper. I parted the Red Sea. I did this." And then he gives you the end of the story. Okay?

PART 2 OF 4 ENDS [00:46:04]

Dr. Henry Cloud:

So, picture yourself like this, you're in your den, all of us are doing this right? I hope you're watching some movies every now and then. You've got to unplug.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

So I'm watching Netflix, I hit pause. What happens? The screen goes like this. It removes me out of that scene and I get back here in God's view where there's no time. I can see the whole movie and it's in scenes. All right. There is some scene in that movie where Jack Bauer or Indiana Jones, it does not look good. Or James Bond or Jason Bourne. It does not look good if you're in that scene. All right? That's all we're in right now. That's all we're in. This is a much longer movie. We've already read... I know who wins. Right. But in our scene, we can't see what's coming, but we do know the writer, and he's told us what's coming. And he also said, "As bad as this is, I'm going to bring something good out of..."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

So we get into this larger narrative. I'll tell you, in the crash of '08, I'm seeing young gazillionaire people in finance that are early thirties, for example, ready to jump off of buildings. And I'm putting them together in groups with these guys that are 65, they've been in the industry for whatever. And these 30 somethings are... Literally, some of them were feeling suicidal, literally. The 60 somethings, you know what they were saying? "Well, I remember when this happened in '87, Black Monday in '87. And in 2000 when the bubble burst." And they were painting this narrative, says, "Here's what you do at those times. Here's the activities." Because this is what's going to... Here's what the trends and the patterns we know. And this is... They were organizing their activities of what you do in a crash, what you did. So you are the author of Jason Bourne in that scene because you're Jason Bourne. Or Wonder Woman. You get to, "Okay, what do I want my character to do in this scene that's going to prepare them for the rest of the movie?"

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Because there's a big party coming at the end, where James Bond and his honey are out there sipping champagne, floating on an island somewhere. You want to make it there, but it's going to depend on what you do in this scene. But in a larger narrative, you're going to be fine. I was telling Carey earlier, remember we were talking about, I spent 12 years building a health care company.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, yeah.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

And I built this... I thought that was what I was going to do for the rest of my life. I had 40 psych hospital treatment centers and outpatient clinics all throughout the Western United States. It was a sizable company. We were doing great. Until managed care came along, and the healthcare industry went away, and they no longer funded psych. Everything I had done for 15 years was... All of a sudden, I couldn't do it anymore.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

And that's where you guys have got to realize the essence of what you do is not, not the same as how you do it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

If the horse and buggy people had realized, "We're not in the horse and buggy business, we're in the people moving business," then they could have morphed to trains and airplanes and all this other stuff. But some of them stayed stuck. Borders went away, right? "We're in the book business." "No, you're in the getting information to people's eyeballs business or their ears." If the record companies hadn't said, "We're in the record business." They would have done what Steve Jobs did. No, we're in the getting music to people business.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

So if you're thinking, "I'm in the gathering big groups together on Sunday and sing some songs and deliver a message business," then you're going to really be despairing. But if you realize, "No, that's not the business I'm in. I'm in the however you define it, making disciples, or healing marriages, or building families or reaching the lost." You hit the essence of your DNA. Then you can change the mechanism and the how. But if you get stuck in the scene...

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, that's so helpful. There's a couple other questions I definitely want to ask, but I would love to think about healthy coping mechanisms. So this interview is airing in the summer. It's sort of a reset. I think we know going back into the fall that, "Okay, things are not going to be anywhere near what we would hope they would be any time soon." So as leaders prepare for the long haul-

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Or if we've reframed them. If we've reframed hope into not so specific about, "I hope it will go back to the way it was." And we have hope that, "I hope that God is going to lead me into a way of doing what he's called me to do that's thriving." Then we're going to have a much greater chance of finding the realization of that hope than if it's tied to something. It's sort of like somebody's in love with their prom date. The person's an idiot, but they're smitten. And they're hoping, they're hoping this relationship will work out. Well, God's got better plans for you. Ditch the buffoon, you're going to find a better one. But we can't see it in the moment sometimes. Right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Henry, there's been so much good stuff so far. I mean, sitting in a pond, making the list, sort of what your crazy brain is saying. And then what you know to be true. Taking some space to breathe. What are some other healthy coping mechanisms for leaders who say, "Okay, we're going to have to prepare for a journey here." What can they do to make sure they've got the energy, the focus, and the health to move into the future?

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Well, let's just review the ones I've already said, and I'm going to add some.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Because you added a lot, yeah.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Space, quiet, observing your thinking, defining the activities you can control and not control. Getting connected, opening the system to other voices. You're not going to come up with the answer in your head, you got to get with other leaders. And you got to get with the leaders from other industries because they think differently than the church.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

And so you're going to find some things from somebody who works at Amazon, that's going to help you, maybe. You got to get out of this closed circle. You've got to stop de... Or you've got to start de-catastrophizing.

Carey Nieuwhof:

De-catastrophizing. Is that the word? Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I've been accused of sometimes catastrophizing.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

End of the world. But in a bigger narrative, look at your own history of when things have crashed before and make a little journal of, "What did I do? How did I get through that? I've been... Wait a minute. I've been here before. How did I get through it?" Remember the history of God's deliverance. That's what he tells us to do. Okay. Open up the system and also look at what other people are doing that they're doing it successfully. That's a bunch of stuff. Then we're going to add a few things.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

I want you to see this as a preparing yourself for what's coming next. Okay. Opportunity favors the prepared. So for example, one of the things that I've really, really been doing in this time is doing a lot of study and research on how can I do everything I'm doing digitally? How can I do it in different ways? Whatever the ways you need to be prepared, just starting to think about, whatever's going to happen, I've got to be ready for it. I think that's an important part of this.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Next thing is again, remember we don't know the future, but we do know the one who knows. All right. And so one of the things you've really got to be doing in this time is talking a lot to God. He's going to reassure you. Okay. He's going to tell you, "What are you worried about? What are you worried about?" I mean, I don't mean to be trite here, but in terms of our work, I mean, it his work anyway. It's your company. Great. You want to shut it down? Fine. You're the owner.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

There's a way of which we're... I mean, are we servants? Do we belong to him? Or is this mine? If you want to hold onto this thing, however you had it, then he might have to rip it out of your little fingers because it really is... I work for him. If he wants to have everything I did go up in smoke because he wants to use me in a different way. Yes, sir. I might not like it. It might be painful. All I'm saying is, be grounded in him.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Now there's another important step right now. It's really important. Really important for you in the future. Make sure you're building reserves. Make sure you're building reserves. All throughout the scriptures, all throughout the scriptures. The ant prepares in this summer for the winter. Okay. Joseph saw the hard times coming, and he took a portion of the grain, and he built up his reserves. Reserves are financial, they're people, they're alliances. Okay. And what I've learned in my life is whoever came up with the formula, "Well, you need six months of reserves," was on crack. Are you kidding me? I mean, we're already almost four months through this thing. So in all those areas, you've got to think of, "What are the stabilizing resources underneath me that if we run out of food, I'm not going to run out of food," metaphorically speaking. And it's not just money, but it's relationships and alliances and options and all

this. So you know, no matter what happens, I haven't limited my options into, "I hope this thing breaks. I hope this thing breaks. I hope this thing breaks."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Margin gives you options. I think that's true. Personally, I think it's terms of rest. I've taken my sleep really seriously in the last 15 years. My exercise a lot more seriously. And if you have a little bit of physical, emotional, financial, spiritual margin, you can spend it in a crisis. If you don't, you go in on empty and then it's minutes to burning up or whatever.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

And that sends you into panic itself.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It does.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Because it just... Jesus said, "Nobody starts to build a tower without first counting the cost." Because you don't want to get halfway through and can't finish it. Well, we have to think of our, not just project tower, but we also have to think of we're building a long tower here. And so, like you're saying, Carey, this has got to be your physical stamina, your health, your finances, your spiritual margins, your relationships, your alliances, your options. Some of you are one phone call away from your next job, because you built a safety net. Jesus told a parable about this. A guy's about to lose his job, but he went and stole money from his boss and gave it to a bunch of other people, because he made friends... Your network is a big part of this.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, it's huge. Yeah. I've always wanted to preach that one. And I'm like, "I just don't..." Every time I read it, which has been many times, I'm like, "Yeah, I don't know how to preach that one, yet." But I'm sure I will at some point, which is fascinating.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Henry, I want to shift gears because it's been so helpful. One of the things we're all struggling with, and I've led remote teams for years and done digital for a long time, as you have in different ways as well. But we're all in this intense virtual leadership period. So church is online and even when it reopens, it's still going to be online for a lot of people. Leading teams, I think the future workforce is much more remote, distributed, flexible than the past workforce. So we're all going to be doing this a lot more.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

I hope so, because I am not proud of how many millions of airplane miles I have.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I know, I know. I've got. For those of you who are watching, hang on. I want to show you the most useless thing I have in my possession right now. This is my super elite Air Canada tag. So, what does it mean?

Dr. Henry Cloud:
What does it mean?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Absolutely nothing. That's what it means. Because our border is closed for another 60 days or so. So, it's top tier status with my airline out of Toronto. But yeah, we're all going to do this for a lot longer than we were used to. What does that do to your brain? What does that do to your energy? There's science around Zoom fatigue, et cetera, et cetera. Do you want to just talk about the dynamics of leading virtually as opposed to in person, whether that's church or staff leadership?

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Yeah. I think that a lot of us kind of know it from experience, but I'll highlight a few things. I think there's a good side of it because... The good side of it is, in some ways, I think there's more connection in one way, because people are kind of panicked about the non connection, so they're connecting more. Right. And so they're doing more of these things because it's front of mind, "I don't see this person in the hallway, better..." And so it's almost like they've added a little structure that gets them more connected. And I think the other thing that is increasing the connection is that everybody's feeling a little vulnerable right now. And when we're coming together from our weaknesses and fears and all of that, that's, that's creating a lot of good connection. So the good side is I think there's more connection.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

The bad side is I think there's less connection. And what I mean by that is I really worry about... and there's research about this too, but there's things that happen incarnationally that don't happen digitally. There's literal... The non-understandable mind-body connection that God has wired into, when he breathes spirit into flesh, that we need flesh. Okay. We need touch. We need people's presence. There's things that happen in mirror neurons. There's things that happen in the biochemistry of being in the energy spheres of people. I'm not getting new-agey here, we can measure this with machines. That builds a baby's brain, for example, the connection, being held, that you couldn't do on Zoom calls and being in Mommy or Daddy's presence. I worry about that some people aren't getting enough of that.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

And I also worry about the brain in this way, and I think, because this is the way we're working, that people are also spending a lot more time online because their whole world has kind of gotten right here. Go out in the yard, man. Go walk your dog, go walk in the park, sit in a chair, do something tactical, shoot some baskets. But there's this pull because we're having to work this way, it's kind of like our whole life is being lived right here. I think that's not a good thing. We're losing out on just life experience. And so I think we have to worry about that.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Another big thing is I do think that, from a brain perspective, it's got you too much online. And so also when we're online, we really have to... And this is what the great performers do. You have to guard yourself against your brain turning into an ADD brain. Because you're constantly being bombarded outside of what you're supposed to be focused on. And so you've got to have, that's why I said the priority sheet that I make, the activity sheet. If I've got to really do something that's important, that requires what we call deep thought, shut down your email, shut down your texts. Okay. Shut it all down, and focus, and don't let your mind... Because it's going to get hardwired. We're talking hardwiring. It's

going to get a hardwired to be like this. Because if you stay online all day, that's kind of what happens. You don't want a brain like that. You can't function like that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And so sitting by the pond or staring out the window. You know what I'm finding, too-

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Or shutting down your browser and your alerts and all that to focus on your sermon.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I've found that too, because I was on planes a lot and in meetings a lot in person. So my life was highly digital, but also analog as well or physical. And I've found since we've gone into lockdown that I almost instantly crave, like I got to close the laptop. I just got to go into the yard. Even if it's pulling weeds in the garden or I'm going to wash my car by hand rather than run it through. But doing something with my hands, something physical, is really good for me. So I would echo that.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Well, ask yourself this what would I do if I didn't have a phone or a computer?

Carey Nieuwhof:

And go do that.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

But a lot of people will go, "I don't know." There's no life apart from the digital life. And another thing is that I think you've got to... And we can talk about this a little later. I can share some of my practices. But one of the really important things is, I think, the natural boundaries we have in life are time and space, right? So you used to have time and space around work. I went to work. It was a place. And I was there from 8:00 to 5:00 or whatever. And then I came home. And that was at work, that was my life, my personal life.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Well, time and space are gone with the internet unless you create them. So I learned a long time ago when we first had Olivia, our oldest, I was working at home. I had sold the company. I was working at home. And quickly learned I didn't need a physical space for meetings or anything like that anymore. I needed a physical space for my brain to create a space that work happened in. Okay. And I needed a time space. So I made some very clear boundaries around time and space. Work happens here in this spot, and it happens at certain times. Now, now we're a lockdown. So work is in my study. But I made some rules that I live by, and by and large, started back then. No writing, no email, no email, no work email. No email after six o'clock at night.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So you literally leave the figurative office or the room. And then it's like, I'm home. I'm done.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

I'm done.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Almost like you were in manufacturing. Right? I'm more and more morphing into that space. You can't work on the assembly line when you're at home. Yet the problem we have is these devices follow us everywhere. So you can work till the moment you go to bed. Difficult.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

That's right. And it's just not good. And the whole virtual thing, it's great. It's great, and it's horrible. So, are you going to master it, or is it going to master you? We hear these phrases, but they're actually important. And time and space is a big one.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow. Can you walk us through a few more of your personal boundaries as we wrap up? What are some ones that have really been meaningful to you? I mean, you wrote, literally wrote the book or a series of books on boundaries and are the authority on that.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Do you mean in life in general? Or now, especially in this time?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Let's do it in semi-lockdown, new normal-ish territory. What are some boundaries? Because I think a lot of people, even their old boundaries, it's like, that was my other life.

PART 3 OF 4 ENDS [01:09:04]

Carey Nieuwhof:

So talk to them in this life.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Okay. At the risk, Carey, of sounding like evangelically correct. Because I don't mean it like that at all, but my number one most important one is my time with God, especially now. And I don't want to say I'm evangelically weird, but I have really, really, really tried to guard that time. And in that time I sit, I actually start with Psalm 91 every day, and I pray through it. Go read it, it's incredible in this time period. I start there, and then what I do is, I'll just give you the reality of the practices if you want. I read three chapters of the Old Testament as I'm working my way through it again, read three chapters there, I read a couple of Psalms, I read a chapter of Proverbs that goes with that day of the calendar. So today's the 10th, I read Proverbs chapter 10. And I read a chapter of the New Testament. And what I try to do, I don't always have time to this, because all of this will take a while. If I do it, I like to do it, it takes about an hour and a half.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

I have a journal that as I'm going through that, I'm writing down the things that, call it apply, in a deep way that... And so then I do that, and then I have a daily prayer sheet. I'll pray for this area of life on Monday, these people on Tuesday, the company on Wednesday, our church, just stuff. I'll go through my list and then I try to... I'm not perfect about this, I'm just giving you...

Carey Nieuwhof:

No, that's super good.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

And I try to have a time where I just try to connect and listen, and there's three things that I'm always, always asking for in this time, very, very specifically begging God for is, I pray for, he says, "Seek the gift of prophecy." I pray for prophecy, I pray for wisdom, and I pray for gifts of knowledge. Because in a lot of my work, I need supernatural revelation and he gives it to me.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, wow.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

And I see that, especially in my consulting work or whatever. But I beg for that. And I always ask for, especially, my work is in the wisdom, knowledge feeling. I don't mean to sound weird, but that's the gifts that I pray for. And I ask him every day in a pretty extensive way. According to Ephesians 2:10, where it says, "We are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works that he laid down beforehand that we should walk in." So I pray every day and ask him, "Continue to help me be the tool that you need." And I pray, when he built the temple, it's just that God supernaturally gave to the workers skills for their particular job. The artist sends the brick layers, all of them. He supernaturally gave them that ability for whatever their job was. I beg for that.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

And David said, "God, you strengthen my arms for battle." I really want God, especially in this time. "I don't know what's going to be required of me, but I don't have it, and will you please give it to me?" And I find that he answers. And so specifically, Carey, I pray for, "I don't know what's coming up next week, but give me the content that I need." I'll come across an article or a weird link to some piece of research that was totally random. I go, "Oh my gosh, there it is." He gives us manna by the day. So I don't know how to go through a time like this without abiding. And I don't mean to sound weird, guys, I do this out of weakness, inability and fear, just fear. I need God right now. I don't know where this is going. But anyway, so that's the big one.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

My other big boundary is around the schedule. We have had such a rich family time in this time. I'm so busy. I'm busier than I've ever been. But we've really set up a routine, and we stick to it. So, we get up in the morning, we'll gather in the kitchen, take the puppy out. We're raising a new puppy right now. I got to work, treat it like a regular day. I go to my study, I emerge about noon, we hang around the island and we all meet there. Lunch, everybody's making their own sandwich or whatever. I go back into my study, I'm there until about 5:30, I'll unplug, and that's my time.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

And I got to wind down, do different things at different times, but everybody knows, don't bother me. After 45 minutes to an hour, if I'm lucky, we all meet in the kitchen, and we prep dinner together and have a glass wine, talk, we have dinner together as family. The kids are having a little different schedules now with some stuff. But most nights we'll have some sort of game night as a family. Or if the kids don't

do that, Tori and I will go binge out, we'll binge on a show or something? So the routine, those boundaries have been really, really important. And the boundaries of not letting the urgent crowd out, the vital of talking to the people I need to talk to, really important.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Do you think, final question, there will be permanent changes, as you look forward, we're all learning something in this season by involuntary lockdown. Do you think you'll go back to super top tier platinum status, will you scale back your traffic? What will you do?

Dr. Henry Cloud:

I don't think so, for two reasons, one's external and one's internal. I think there's some character changes that I know that have happened in me. Now, when I say character, I don't mean moral character-

Carey Nieuwhof:

I know what you mean.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

... Evangelical [inaudible 00:07:10], come on, that's a five year old permission to play. I'm talking about character in the Bible sense of, I wrote a book called Integrity. And it needs to be integrated where all the parts are working together. The character in the movie, what are they like? Are they impulsive? Are they big picture? Are they detailed? That's what I mean by character. Well, the word character, the history of the word, it means an engraved mark, the experiences. In the New Testament, experience.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

So our experience has engraved upon us a makeup. I don't think any of us is going to come out of this experience without being engraved some things on us. And I think some of those that are going to stick with me is, I think I've been able to really get a different revelation on some of the Martha activities, as opposed to the Mary activities that's gone in a little deeper way. I think some of the experiencing, again, in a deeper way, the richness of some of the ways our family rhythms have happened. It's like Jack Nicklaus went back to the basics in 79, right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Teach me how to golf.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

"God, teach me how to be a human again." But I think workwise, I think with a lot of my work, I'm going to be saying, "So do you really think we need an offsite for that, or can we Zoom?" I think a lot of people are going to be saying that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I'm with you.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

And the other thing is just in terms of digital, I mean, I'm in the digital training world, that just been able to use this time to create new offerings to people and new ways that we can do training, new ways that we can do hangout stuff. I know there's a lot of stuff, I hope that I don't take forward and new things that I do, and I think everybody's going to be like that. And I don't think the external world is going to want to have as many meetings as they used to.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I think you're right.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

I think your people are really like, going to church in their underwear.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, that's hard to get out of. And it's interesting talking about the physiological, the moral changes, character changes. My son lives a couple hour flight away, and so we can't see each other right now. He's on the East Coast, and we did about a 90 minute FaceTime last week. And he goes, "Dad, you're different." He says, "You've slowed down, you're more present, you're listening more, you're not as rushed or distracted." And I'm like, and that's something I don't want to lose. I don't want to lose as a result of this season. So I echo that and I'm loving the family rhythms. And frankly, I hope I get downgraded three or four levels of status on the airline in the next year. That would be okay, that would be just fine. So, Henry, this is rich. Boundaries.me, and then you also have Churches that Heal, which people can get at ChurchesThatHeal.com.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

If you're in the church world, go to ChurchesThatHeal.com. Because what I've tried to do is put together, and really, we've been working on this for two years, a comprehensive program to help churches deal with the hurt that's all around them. We call it mental health crisis, but what I'm talking about is really hurting people. And there's great harvest to be had. If we have a few tools to know how to open the doors of the church and message it in a way where hurting people want to run towards the church, instead of away from it, where people that never would come to church are invited, because they're anxious, or depressed, or struggling in a relationship. And it's a program that, I won't go into all the details, but it starts with helping the pastoral staff, then it goes to community-wide events and outreach, it's all right there available on the big screen, and then it goes to small groups and individuals. So ChurchesThatHeal.com, and there's a lot of training videos that are put in there for pastors.

Carey Nieuwhof:

We will link to everything in the show notes, Henry, as always, it's a joy. And I think you really helped a lot of leaders redeem their summer and the season today. So sincerely, personally, thank you.

Dr. Henry Cloud:

Well, thank you, Carey, it's always good to be with you, and we'll do it again sometime.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You bet you. Well, I just want to say a word to those of you who are new, we are having a record year on the podcast with more of you tuning in than ever before. And if you enjoyed that conversation with

Henry Cloud, let me just tell you how we like to resource you. So, first of all, if you subscribe, you never miss an episode. If you really loved it, would you leave a rating and review? We just have, I think, there's over a thousand now on iTunes. I read every one of them. I'm so grateful when you do that. And we have show notes for you, including transcripts. All of that is free, thanks to our partners. So you can find more at CareyNieuwhof.com/Episode353, or just search Henry's name and my name, and you'll find us on the Googles, we won't be there. So we do show notes for every episode. And again, transcripts are available within the show notes, absolutely for free.

Carey Nieuwhof:

If you really did enjoy today's episode, share it on social. You can tag me on social. I'm Carey Nieuwhof on Instagram, [cnieuwhof](#) on Twitter and Facebook. And then also, if you're new, one of the things we do is we email leaders, almost 70,000 leaders, I think it's over 70,000 now, every morning. But what you can do, if you want a little leadership nugget is just text my name, CAREY, to 33777, you'll join 70,000 subscribers to our leadership content. And I do a lot of writing as well as this podcast as well. So it's just a little nugget to help you on your day, solve the problems that we're all facing.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, What I'm Thinking About is coming up next, I want to talk to you about why you don't destress during your vacation and why time off never seems to be enough. And this is brought to you by our partners. So excited to have Global Leadership Summit on board. And these are the people that we believe in that make this free to you. So make sure you head on over to GlobalLeadership.org, and use the coupon code CAREYPODCAST at checkout, get \$20 off your individual ticket rate to The Global Leadership Summit. And we thank CDF Capital for coming on board too. Text NEWERA to 44222, get a free three-part video series designed to help you move from digital presence to a strategic digital ministry.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Next episode, we have, who do we have coming up? Man, we got so many great people, but we have Jo Saxton coming up. We recorded this awhile ago. And she said something last year at The Global Leadership Summit that blew me away. Because it's so much of my personal story, "You have one body, and your leadership lives in it." And I got to know Jo, I'm so excited to share this interview with you, and it's our next episode. Here's an excerpt.

Jo Saxton:

I think I have a different kind of courage now. I think back then, a lot of my, "Let's do this," was actually fear. Because I think that kind of drive can be fear-driven of what you don't get, of what you miss. Again, I was fighting to be equal. Now I know I'm equal, I know God has gifted me, and I know that as leaders, we're healthy in places where, what we bring to the table is celebrated, not just tolerated. And there's a peace that comes with that. And so the courage now is different. I think, for sure, I get afraid. But there is a Lord, I just want to serve you. And I want to be part of teams, and environments, and organizations that are going on this journey together, where I don't feel like I'm hiding the things that I can contribute just in case it's too much. And that is very freeing, very freeing.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So that's coming up next time. Now, what am I thinking about? Well, maybe you're on summer vacation right now, maybe you're at an incredible beach, or in the mountains, or you rented a little cabin

somewhere, or you're staycationing at home and you're like, "Okay, I got to destress, I got to destress." And I've really been thinking a lot about this for many years. And it's been a very personal journey for me. And I do not do well at taking time off, but I'm at a different season of my life. Actually, this summer has been probably the most relaxed, despite the horrible things going on in the world, the most relaxed personally that I've had in a long time. And it's given me some time to think about the nature of rest. And I just want to say, every single leader I talk to is tired right now, really, really tired. But your vacation probably is not going to solve your problem of chronic stress. And why is that? I want to share just a few thoughts with you in this segment.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Time off doesn't work, because time off won't heal you when your problem is how you spend time on. The problem for most of us is not how we spend our time off. Maybe you're great at that, right? We even, maybe every Saturday, you're like, "Oh, yeah, we're going to the beach," Or "We're just going to hang out in the backyard," or "We're going to get together with friends." Maybe you're great at that. Or you take two or three weeks in the summer, or five weeks, or whatever. But the fundamental problem for most leaders is not how we spend our time off, it's how we spend our time on.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And I remember, the worst year in my leadership happened in 2006. I was burning out and I was hanging on for a vacation that was happening in July. I had three weeks scheduled and I thought, "Good. Now I'm going to get better." And I didn't get better, I got worse. And that's what burnout does sometimes. And I was convinced that my time off would heal me, but my problem wasn't how I was spending my time off, it was that I had spent so much time hyper stressed on, that any amount of time off doesn't really work.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And so, what do you do about that? Well, your time off can't save you if the problem is how you spend your time on. If you're exhausted, how you spend your time off isn't the solution, you've got to figure out a new way to spend your time on. And this is also, by the way, why sabbaticals and leaves generally don't solve burnout. I think sabbaticals can be great. I've never taken one, but I've seen so many leaders who are like, "You know what? I'm so tired, I need a sabbatical." Well, the problem that I've seen over and over again, and I wish I had stats on this, but I couldn't find any. But think about the people you know, how many people do you know, took a sabbatical, and they said, "I'm so burned out." And then they got better on their sabbatical, and then they came back and they were gone within a year. Why? Because the problem wasn't the sabbatical, the problem was how they were living.

Carey Nieuwhof:

A sabbatical isn't the solution for an unsustainable pace. A sustainable pace is the solution for an unsustainable pace. And you got to ask yourself the question heading back into the fall, do you have a sustainable pace? Well, I want to walk you through a few things that can help. And I've got a lot of resources. Again, you can just text my name, CAREY, to 33777, if you want to get on my email list. But a few things you can do.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Number one, make some categorical decisions. We make decisions as leaders every day. That's what you do, you probably make 100 decisions a day, but I've learned that categorical decision making is

really, really helpful if you want to leverage your time. Because what I've found is if someone says, "Hey, do you want to have breakfast?" Or "Can you grab lunch?" Or "Can we do this meeting?" Or "Do you want to speak here?" Or "Can you do this?" You have more opportunities and time available.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So I learned how to make categorical decisions, and there are some categorical decisions you can make. So here's an example. If you're in ministry, maybe you just say, "I'm not doing weddings or funerals." And you're like, "Oh, that's terrible." Pastoral visitation, breakfast meetings. "I don't do breakfast meetings as a rule anymore." Or lunch meetings. So maybe even meetings over an hour, or maybe you just decide, for example, I got hit up for so many interviews and webinars this spring, when the crisis hit and I was pivoting my own podcast, making sure everything was fine here. I just made some categorical decisions like I'm not doing any guest podcasting, I'm not doing any media interviews and I'm not speaking at any online events, period. Just categories made. So then when we get five or six requests a day, people would say, "Hey, would you do it?" I and my team already said, "We're very gracious about it, but it's like, no, we already made that decision."

Carey Nieuwhof:

And if you don't do breakfast meetings, then when somebody asks you, "Hey, you want to have breakfast?" You're like, "You know what? I just don't do breakfast meetings." Categorical decision making is a game changer, because with one decision you make so many other decisions in that moment. And so I would encourage you to think about what categories can you eliminate?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Now, maybe you want to do weddings and funerals, maybe you want to do breakfast meetings. That's up to you, but what categories can you eliminate? This will also help you equip your team, and this will also help you focus. If you're worried about FOMO, fear of missing out, don't worry, just make it time limited. Say, "For the next three months, I'm not going to do breakfast meetings," whatever that is.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So number one, categorical decision making. And then the other thing I would say, and I'll leave it on this, is just ditch the endless workday in work week. So with the office changing as radically as it has in the last decade, you used to go to work but now the work goes to you. Let me say that again. With the office and the nature of work changing as radically as it has over the last decade, you used to go to the office, but thanks to technology, now the office goes to you.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And your phone will interrupt you anywhere, anytime. You're watching Disney+ with your daughter, and a coworker says, "Hey, did you get that project done?" I mean, it's just frustrating. What you need to do is decide when you're going to be finished your work day. And that can be a great thing. Just put your phone away, set it to silent, do not disturb, and go enjoy your family. Particularly if you're still working at home, I've worked at home for 25 years, you just need a cold close. But the endless workday is not a sustainable pace.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So hope that helps you. Man, I'm so grateful for you. Thank you so much for listening. We are back with a fresh episode soon. And remember, if you want a daily dose of leadership goodness, just text the word

CAREY, my name, CAREY, to 33777. Thanks so much for listening, and I hope our time together today helps 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.

PART 4 OF 4 ENDS [01:31:14]