

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 365 of the podcast. My name is Carey Nieuwhof, and I hope our time together today helps you lead like never before. Today's episode is brought to you by Pro Media Fire. Get professional help for your digital media needs at promediafire.com/carey. You can get 10% off plans for life. And by BELAY. You can just simply text my name, CAREY, to 31996 to get your free download of Things To Delegate to Save 15 Hours This Week. Who wouldn't want that?

Carey Nieuwhof:

My guest today is Cathy Heller. Man, one of the reasons I started this podcast, and a special welcome to all of you who are new. This summer has been explosive growth for this podcast, so I know a lot of you are new listeners. Here is sort of the heartbeat behind this podcast. I just like to interview some really interesting leaders from a whole variety of backgrounds and perspectives and try to learn in the process. I find the best conversations are never five minutes. This one is no exception.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Cathy Heller, who was kind of new to me when I was introduced to her, has one of the most popular podcasts on Apple Podcasts today. She's been given the number one spot on the iTunes recommended list of shows for the new year in 2018 and 2019. Each week, Cathy encourages thousands and thousands of listeners to find more purpose in their life and get paid to do what they love full time. Her show's been featured in Forbes, Entrepreneur Magazine, HuffPost, and Inc. Magazine. She's got, well, 10 million downloads and been featured several times by Apple themselves. She's interviewed some of the most fascinating guests in the world, and her book Don't Keep Your Day Job was released in November 2019, filled with all kinds of inspirational ideas. She coaches entrepreneurs, and helps people everywhere find deeper meaning and purpose. So, I think you're going to love meeting Cathy. This was a wide ranging and fascinating conversation.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I want to thank our partners for bringing this to you. We're just committed to doing this for free. As you probably know, you can even get transcripts to every episode. I love transcripts because I'm as much a reader as a listener, and if I want to go back and find a section I always get the transcript. Organizations like Pro Media Fire make that possible.

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Carey Nieuwhof:

Without further ado, how about we sit down for a fantastic conversation with Cathy Heller? Cathy, welcome to the podcast.

Cathy Heller:

Thank you so much. It's really nice to meet you and to connect.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It is. It is fun. We've had a good little warmup just getting to know each other a little bit and know some of the same people, which is fun. Like so many of our guests, this is sort of an interesting place to start, but I'm surprised 300 and some odd episodes in how often this pattern comes up. Highly successful person in podcasting, author, online courses, influencer online, and yet you had a really challenging childhood. Do you want to tell us what happened? You tell the story in your book, and it's hard not to cry when you read that story.

Cathy Heller:

And, Carey, you're so sweet because right before we were recording, he was like, "It really makes me tear up." There's nothing a person needs more than for someone else to just witness their pain and see them, so thank you for doing that. Sometimes that's all we have to do for other people is just be a witness and show up and sit with them.

Cathy Heller:

But I feel like having been on the planet, now I just turned 40, being here 40 years I've learned that so many of us have gone through so much, just so much. And my story was, you know, a lot of people have a similar story where my parents had a really, really lousy, scary marriage. There was a lot of violence in my house, and I grew up being terrified to be in the living room kind of thing. And then my dad left and never looked back. My mom was so sort of destroyed that she became suicidal. She had a few nights where I didn't know what was going to happen and had to learn how to call an ambulance. And as a child, I was doing everything I could to help, but it was almost impossible because I couldn't do it, and whatever I did was never enough, so I felt really invisible as a kid.

Cathy Heller:

I didn't grow up with any tools. I didn't have prayer in my life. I didn't have a connection to God as a child, and so it was just such a heavy, scary time. But what it did is, I think some storms, they wreck things and they destroy things. But some storms kind of clear a path also. And I think watching that, I felt like, "I won't let that be me. I'm not going to wind up like that." And what I wound up doing is, it's really interesting, and I don't usually feel comfortable telling this to most people because they don't get it. They look at me like I'm nuts, but you would be the complete opposite of that. When I went to college, I don't even know how I graduated from high school because I was barely breathing in and out, but I somehow did. And when I went to college, I actually became a religion major because I was-

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow. Wow.

Cathy Heller:

Yeah, because I was determined to figure out the answer to the question, which is, "Why the heck are we here?" Because my mom and dad, the model that I saw was that nothing has a lot of meaning, and everything is kind of random, and there's a lot of pain, so why would I want to grow up to be an adult who's not feeling like there's a reason to get up every day? That doesn't make sense. And so I was studying religion, and I found it fascinating that people, for thousands of years, have had such a sense of meaning.

Cathy Heller:

What wound up happening is there was a free trip to Israel, and I grew up Jewish but completely secular. And I went on the trip because a friend of mine was going to go. She's like, "Just go. It's a free trip. Just do it." So I went, and I was so engrossed that I couldn't stop crying. It was like something was welcoming me home, and I wound up staying for three years. That was the beginning of the rest.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow. So you found faith there, and it started to put some things together for you?

Cathy Heller:

I've found out that I was needed in the world. I found out that God doesn't make extras. I found out that every one of us is here to be an ambassador for goodness, and to make the world better. I found out that it's literally like, even twins, even identical twins have a different fingerprint, which means even a twin has a different imprint. And that if God made you, you are needed. And if you're needed, you have a purpose, and there's nothing anyone can ever do to do what you're supposed to do because no one ever was or will be you.

Cathy Heller:

People love diamonds and gold because they're rare resources, but there is nothing more rare than an individual because you're completely unique, original. And we don't value ourselves, we compare ourselves. We don't feel that inherently we have this love that's just coming to us. So living there for three years was like a control-alt-delete reset on my life. And I felt completely called to, one way or the other, come back to the States and be a light. I didn't know what it would look like or what form it would take, but I knew that everybody needed to know that they were needed. I went into the music business

to do that, to sort of put music in the world and tell those stories. And then, of course, the journey sort of evolved from there.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, and I want to get into that. But I want to ask you, if you don't mind, thinking back, because you write about this in your book to your childhood. I don't know how old you were, but my memory is maybe you were five-ish or six-ish, way too young is the bottom line, and your mom's using you as her counselor. Is that right?

Cathy Heller:

Yeah. That was my entire life since I was like, earliest memories. My parents would tell me the problems they had with each other. They would tell me what's going on financially. They would tell me how disappointed they were that their own hopes and dreams weren't happening. My dad would have an affair and tell me why that woman was better for him.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Cathy Heller:

I recently-

Carey Nieuwhof:

And you're how old when this is all happening?

Cathy Heller:

My whole life, five, six, eight. In fact, I just went on a workshop to a place called Onsite, which some of your listeners may have heard of. It's amazing. And when I was there, and I'm 40, and I've been in therapy since I'm 15 on and off, but the therapist at Onsite said to me, "I want you to go back."

Cathy Heller:

And for those of you listening, this might be really powerful because we all have different degrees and shades of a similar kind of a journey in different ways. And she said it to me. She didn't say it to everybody in the room. But she said, "Cathy, I want you to stand up and pick someone else in the room to be you as a child, and let them sit over here." And then she said, "Okay, now one by one," there were these big pillows in the corner of the room, she said, "I want you to hand this girl who's playing you a big pillow, and tell her something your parents would tell you, and then hand it to her." So I said, "Okay. Well, my dad would say, 'Your mom doesn't make me happy. I want to leave the marriage.'" And so she would say, "Okay, hand her a pillow." Then she would say, "What would your mom say?" Well, my mom would say, 'I want to die. I want to kill myself.'" "Hand her a pillow."

Cathy Heller:

She just kept going and until the stack of pillows was so high. And she said, "Can you see this? Can you see her?" This girl, Alex, was playing me. I said, "No." She said, "What do you want to do?" I said, "We've got to get rid of the pillows." And everyone in the room was crying. And then she said to me, "I want you

to walk over to Alex who's playing you as a child, and I want you to say, 'You don't have to live there anymore.' And then I want you to say, 'I'm coming to get you.'" And I could cry right now because-

Carey Nieuwhof:

You got me.

Cathy Heller:

Yeah, because how many of us as little sweet souls, eight years old, you could see yourself at eight with that little haircut. And this child is so deserving of a childhood and love and unconditional love, which, in Donald Miller's book, I was reading it on the way home, Scary Close, and he says something in the book. He had just gone to Onsite when he wrote the book, and he says, "I learned that love is not something you earn. If it's real love, it can only be given." And I think for a lot of us as children, we're loved if we're good. We're loved if we are helpful. We're loved if we're productive, if we get good grades, if we whatever. Fill in the blank. That's not the way God loves us. And that's not love. That is something else. And so we build these survival skills to not make waves, to be loved, to get the approval around the people that we want most.

Cathy Heller:

So, as a kid, I felt like I carried bricks on my shoulders, and I couldn't even carry them. It was impossible, so it's been my life's work to unwind that. But what I find fascinating about the way people show up in the world is that often our pain turns into our purpose. It's like the thing that we felt we needed is the thing that we can give. Because you can only help someone out of a well if you've been down there before. You have to be able to see the pain because you get it. You understand it.

Cathy Heller:

I think my mission has become making sure people feel seen and don't feel invisible and know that they're needed. And I think it's because I felt so invisible, because I was only a reflector for my parents. It wasn't like, "Hey, welcome home from school. Here's a bowl of tomato soup. How are you?" It was like, "Enough about me. What do you think of me?" Or like, "Give me some more help." You know what I'm saying?

Carey Nieuwhof:

I do.

Cathy Heller:

Yeah. They were just suffering. It's not like they knew any better. We hand these things down. These things get passed along, so we have to break the cycle.

Carey Nieuwhof:

How did that... I mean, our experiences, positive or negative, Cathy, they shape us. What obstacles did that childhood put in your path? And then what opportunities did that childhood, like... Because it always shapes us for good and for worse, right? It's both.

Cathy Heller:

Yeah. It's both. It's kind of like when you go to the gym. Certain machines are just resistance machines, and so it's sort of like you actually build, you literally build muscles sometimes from resistance. And I do see that. It's kind of like if you took a candle and you put it in the noontime sun, you can't even see it. But if you take a candle and you put it in the dark, it's so powerful.

Cathy Heller:

That's why when I meet people like you, and I meet people who are such an ambassador for God's light, the reason it shows up, I mean, it's a sad commentary, but it's actually beautiful, is because the darkness is actually part of what makes the light so bright. I think it's shaped me in the sense that it was so painful that sometimes when something is so painful it forces you into action.

Cathy Heller:

I also think it's shaped me in the sense that a lot of people I see today, younger people, were so fragile. It's like we don't have resilience. I don't think that we are aware that we can tolerate being uncomfortable. So, for me, I wasn't expecting to be comfortable in my adulthood. I wasn't expecting things to be easy.

Cathy Heller:

And I was able to build a multi-seven figure life doing work that I love, and I didn't have any help from my parents. They didn't help me come out to LA. They didn't help me pay for my apartment. Emotionally, they couldn't help me either. But that was a gift there because I was wired to show up without expecting this sort of like, "Oh, it's just going to be easy." So a lot of people today they'll give up when they get rejected a few times, or when they don't get what they want. They don't get a promotion right away. I think that that was helpful, actually, in a sense.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Isn't that interesting? Yeah, because I often think about that. If you really scratch the surface of successful people, there's often a story of pain there. But then you read somebody who's really struggled in life as an adult, maybe financially and career-wise and relationally, and they're not quite in the ditch, but they're not that far off. And they've had a really hard life too. I always wonder, and this is unanswerable. It's just an observation. What is the switch that flips in someone that says, "No, I'm going to channel this outward towards something better as opposed to I'm going to channel this inward, and I'm going to implode." I've never fully understood that.

Cathy Heller:

Yeah. No, it's fascinating. I think it's from perspective. I think that what great leaders, great teachers, great mentors do is they give us new glasses because when you can see... We will reach for the highest branch we can see.

Cathy Heller:

My friend is a teacher and she was telling her second grade class to draw what they want to be when they grow up. And she works in the inner city, and so some kids drew astronauts and some kids drew doctors and veterinarians. And this kid in the back, Michael, he wasn't drawing anything, so she walks over and she says to him, "What's going on? This is just free time. Just draw something. We're going to

share it. It's going to be easy. Just have fun with it." And he's like, "I don't know what to draw." So she gives him a pep talk and she walks away and he winds up drawing something.

Cathy Heller:

So when she asked the class to stand up and present, he says, "Pizza delivery boy." So she calls his mother that night and she says, "Christy, call me back. I want to talk to you." So she talks to her and she says, "Why do you think this is the dream?" And she says, "I'll tell you exactly why. Because his father is in prison, and his uncle is a pizza delivery boy, so he believes that that is the best case scenario." I start to cry when she tells me this. And what I realize is we reach for the highest branch we see possible.

Cathy Heller:

When I came out to LA, I wanted to get a record deal because I had all this stuff I wanted to share, and I didn't know how on earth I would do it. All I knew is that I loved singing growing up, and I was a pretty good singer. It was one of the things that people told me I did well, and I liked it. I thought, "Well, maybe if I could become like Amy Grant, like I become like a rock star, I'll be able to go through the world and sing and share these messages." I actually got a record deal at Interscope, and I wound up getting dropped a few months later. And I was so close. I was sitting in the room when Lady Gaga was recording Paparazzi, and it was so incredible.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, yeah. Don't speed over that. That's a fascinating part of the book.

Cathy Heller:

It's fascinating. But the point is that I didn't see another iteration, and I wound up, I think we all get led to where God needs us and where we're supposed to be. But the point is a lot of people give up because they think it's this or nothing. Right? There's no possibility, and so when you can see a possibility, then you reach. So sometimes that possibility looks like an actual path. Sometimes it looks like someone's showing you that you are actually worthy of reaching out your arms.

Cathy Heller:

I also think that what we all do as children is once we get hurt, we build this beautiful strategy. It's a survival skill, which is, "I know what I'll do. I won't want anything. I won't want to be in love. I won't want a dream. I'll just be very comfortable over here because then I won't get hurt." But when we see other people, again, a new possibility, who are in relationships and they're dreaming of dreams, and it's not always, you know, relationships are peaks and valleys and so are careers, but we see them thriving and staying with it. That again, new glasses. We will reach for that branch when we see it modeled. That's why it's so important that you're doing your show. That's why people who have a story to share where we can show a new possibility. It's so important, Right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. No, and totally. It's such a fun world. I've done a few interviews today. And the one common denominator is we're all sitting in our world headquarters, which is my basement. That appears to be a room in your house.

Cathy Heller:

Yep.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That was one of my first questions. Right? You got this massive podcast that's pushing 15 million downloads and the whole deal, and book deal, the whole deal. And it's just a whole new world. Right? And I'm so encouraged that you grabbed onto a branch.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So let's go to LA, which is where you still are, but you went for very different reasons than you've found yourself today.

Cathy Heller:

Right.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So talk about that trajectory. You're a girl who's had a crushingly difficult childhood, but you're like, "I can sing. I'm going to be famous. I'm going to go to LA. No one's going to help me." Walk us back to that moment.

Cathy Heller:

Yeah. So I come out here and I'm like, "I'm going to do this thing. It's going to be like a movie where this girl from the little town goes out to the big city. And I find out, "Oh, my gosh. I'm in over my head." And so I get a job, and I get a roommate, and I'm just trying to do the things. I'm writing music, and I'm writing mediocre songs. Some of the songs start to get better. And then I finally figure out how to set some meetings with some people, and the songs are getting a little better.

Cathy Heller:

Finally, like two and a half years in, I'm sitting there with a record deal presented to me, and I get a record deal. I'm sitting in the studio, and I remember that night when Lady Gaga was recording. I remember thinking, and I know you'll get it, I actually had this little tiny voice in my head that was saying to me, "Are you about to make a deal with the devil?" I'm not joking.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, wow. Really?

Cathy Heller:

Because the record industry is dark, and I was in a very pure place. I had just come from being in Jerusalem for three years. I had been in LA at that point two years, but I was still two years from being in the holiest place. And I wasn't sure if I would have to give up my soul. They were already having conversations with me about the kinds of songs and the kinds of things they wanted me to wear. And I started to feel a little bit like, "Oh, it's okay. It's okay." But I can feel myself like slipping away. I prayed about it, and I kind of felt like it probably really wasn't right.

Cathy Heller:

And what's interesting is I do think that there's mercy. So what happened was three months later I got a call from Ron Fair. I was driving on the freeway, and he said, "Can you pull over or call me back when you get home?" And I knew. And he said, "Jimmy Iovine isn't a hundred percent sure that your songs would be like a smash club hit. They're more like-"

Carey Nieuwhof:

This is Jimmy Iovine. I mean, he is a name in music.

Cathy Heller:

Yeah. Yeah, yeah. And he said, "But you've got something in you. I'm sure you'll be successful."

Carey Nieuwhof:

So you get dropped by the label.

Cathy Heller:

I got dropped. And then I went to another label. I went to Atlantic Records. Craig Kallman, head of Atlantic, super sweet. In fact, he wanted to do it differently. He had a son, he has a son, and his son at the time was about eight. And he had been doing music with Jason Mraz, and he said, "But wouldn't it be cool if we did something wholesome with you? If we did a record that was like Jack Johnson, Curious George soundtrack. And my kid could like it too." And I thought, "Well, this is better. This is better. This is good. I can still be me."

Carey Nieuwhof:

At least you're going to be in a lane you're comfortable with morally, probably?

Cathy Heller:

Yeah. Exactly. So he introduced me to the people at the Weinstein Company. They were about to do Fraggles: The Movie. And he said-

Carey Nieuwhof:

The Weinstein Company? Okay.

Cathy Heller:

Yeah. And at the time, Weinstein wasn't what it is now, but it was, in terms of all the controversy. So I go to Weinstein and he goes... He sat down with me. "Cathy Heller, he's Craig Kallman, head of Atlantic records. We want Cathy to do the music for Fraggles. And we'll create the soundtrack." And he's like, "Cathy, that's a great vehicle for you. It's a kid's movie. It'll be a smash hit." The movie never got made. My record deal ended, okay, so that was the end of that.

Cathy Heller:

So then I said, "I got to get a day job." And I guess that's the time where now I'm going to have to go get a job job.

PART 1 OF 4 ENDS [00:25:04]

Cathy Heller:

And it was very surreal because I had been in these moments where I was so close to doing something that felt so magical

Carey Nieuwhof:

Those are serious rooms. I mean, you've got Lady Gaga and the head of Atlantic Records and Jimmy Iovine. I mean, those are legends.

Cathy Heller:

It was great. And, and then here, I was like, "Eh," it kind of ended. So I got a job working for a guy who owned a lot of commercial real estate. My sister met him at the Cheesecake Factory online and he's like, "Come work for me. You have a good personality. We'll figure out something you can do." So he paid me well, I think I was making like 120 grand. I was like 26 years old.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, yeah. That's good.

Cathy Heller:

And it was good for me. And he was like, "You can eat all the sushi you want and you'll drive a cute little convertible. And all I need you to do is like call these different principal investors, set up meetings for me to grease the wheels, be yourself." And it worked. And then about a year and a half later, I walked into his office and I said, "I can't do this anymore. I don't even recognize myself when I get dressed in the morning and look in the mirror, I'm wearing like a pantsuit. My hair's blown out. I don't know what I'm supposed to do, but I can't believe that God would make this my mission. Like it's not me." And I quit. And now when I coach people, I don't say just quit. I say, "Build the runway," but I did quit.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And we're going to go there. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Build the runway.

Cathy Heller:

I wound up finding a way to do things that felt more like me.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Isn't that interesting? Okay. And then you accidentally, or kind of not accidentally, but you stumbled on something that surprised you. Right? Which opened up the door to what you're now doing. Do you want to talk about that a little bit?

Cathy Heller:

Yeah. When I left that job, I asked myself the million dollar question, literally, which was, "Is there any other way for me to do music? Any other way?" And I Googled it. How else do artists make a living besides having record deals? And the first article I click on, literally like a minute later was about licensing songs to film and TV. And I thought, "Oh, that's what Craig Kallman said in that meeting a year and a half ago about Fraggie Rock doing soundtracks. And he said I would be good at that." So I start looking at all this and I see that there's artists, who've written songs for Coca Cola and McDonald's and

Grey's Anatomy. And I say to myself, I never even thought about that. I didn't know. You could make 50 grand for a license, meaning you get to own your song, but you can license it.

Cathy Heller:

So I say to myself, "I'm going to just focus on that." So I use my cold calling gift that I had just learned at this commercial real estate firm. And I start to cold call Ogilvy, Deutsche, McCann, all these ad agencies. Then I was cold calling, trying to find the music person at NBC, Paramount, Lion's Gate. I was scared. I wanted to hang up. I hated it. But I used to say to myself, "Am I going to let this fear in this moment, keep me from what could be my life?" So I forced myself. And at first it was actually, it was hard. It was like sticking a round peg square hole, whatever you call it. Until I remember like eight months in, I was like, "Oh gosh, I'm going to have to go get another job. This isn't it. What's going on here?"

Cathy Heller:

At that point, I already had now had to move. And I had a roommate because I had to save the money out a little tiny bit of money left from my real estate little savings. And what I wound up happening was I finally got it. I asked this woman on the phone at NBC. I said to her, "I have music, but I don't want to pitch you any music. I'm just curious what you need. What story are you telling? What shows are you working on?" And she's like, "Oh, we're doing a new show. It's a pilot about sisters. And we need a song actually about being there for someone." And I said, "I'm going to go write it." And I go and write this song called Count On Me. And I had so much fun because somebody gave me an inspiration idea.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And said, "Here's the idea."

Cathy Heller:

Here's an idea. Go write a song. And I call her back and she says to me, "Cathy, this song is perfect." She says, "You don't understand. All day long," she's the music person at NBC. She says, "All day long, I get artists emailing me and calling me saying, here's my new record. Here's my new record. And it's all them, them, them, them, them. And then I got to see if I can fit my work into what they're doing. And usually artists are writing songs about breakups. They're love songs. So I don't have the song about overcoming. I don't have the song about celebrating. I don't have the song about being there for you. I don't have those universal themes. And so I get so frustrated." She says, "This, I can use, I'm going to give you nine grand." I go, "Okay."

Cathy Heller:

She goes, "Oh, and we're just using it. So it's your song." I said, "Oh right. That's how this works." I wound up making relationships with not that many people, even, maybe like 30 people across the world who worked in TV and some worked in ads. And I wound up licensing my songs to Kellogg's, McDonald's, shows like Pretty Little Liars, Switched at Birth. All these shows. The Office, SNL, NBC promos and trailers. And I wound up for a decade making three to 400 grand a year. And then I wound up being written about, full-page stories in Billboard, Variety, The LA Weekly. And what happened next is that other artists started asking me to help them, which started to pivot into something that was even more fulfilling.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Isn't that interesting? Yeah, because that was the pivot point to where you are now. I guess, theoretically, you could still be writing songs and licensing them, but you realize that, "Oh, wait a second. I could teach other people how to do this." Right?

Cathy Heller:

Well, what happened was exactly that. Is that I started to be asked to speak to artists at Berkeley School Of Music, UCLA music program. I was asked to speak at the Billboard film and TV conference. And then I got asked to be on music podcasts. And this is years before I ever even thought I'd have a podcast. And I'm at the end of being on somebody's podcast, I got an email from a girl, also a Christian. And she says to me, "I loved what you had to say. Could you create an online course where me being someone who doesn't live in LA, could learn from you?" And I said, "What's an online course?" I mean, this is 2016 only. Not that long ago.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, this is only four years ago. Wow.

Cathy Heller:

Yeah. I had never even heard Amy Porterfield. I didn't know what a webinar was. I didn't have an Instagram. I didn't have anything. I said, "What's an online course? I write music for Lion's Gate. I write music for Target. I don't know what you're talking about." And she said, "All you have to do is take all the knowledge you have and just do it online. Like Zoom." I go, "What's a Zoom, what's a Skype?" I didn't know what she's talking about. So I wound up looking into it and I say to myself, "You know what? I'll just do it. Well, how hard can it be?" And I created a course called Six-Figure Songwriting for Songwriters. And would you believe that class, I'm not joking, I mean made about \$2 million a year and out the gate. Out the gate.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Cathy Heller:

I've never done a launch of that class that was less than multi six figures. And all I did was be myself. I didn't have slides. It was just me. I couldn't believe it. And then the really cool part is that every time I would launch it, there'd be like between 300 and 500 people who would take it. And we would see these people start to ... the things would sprout. You know, we'd see this guy, John, he was struggling selling insurance, wanting to be a songwriter. He got a song in a Starbucks ad, 55 grand, he made. Anthony lives in Australia. He got a song in a Hyundai spot, made \$82,000. These girls in my program got songs on Grey's Anatomy. And I said, "Oh my gosh, I can't not do this." How could I have not done it? And then the big turning point that leads me to now is that one of my students, Amy, she said, "Oh, you should start a podcast."

Cathy Heller:

I said, "About what? Music?" I didn't get into the world of life, just so I could talk about the music business. And she said, "No, this is not about the music business. This is about helping people with a dream, to get resourceful, to figure out how to open the right doors, to figure out how to be empathetic and sell things without selling because that's what I teach and to make the work that people need you to

make." And she said, "You should start a podcast, just watch." And I started a podcast and within two weeks I was offered a book deal and Apple featured us. And I mean, it just...

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, that was weird. Talk about the Apple featuring, because I've a friend who just launched a podcast like literally this week. And you're, I know that process, I've launched a couple, I've kept one and you're waiting for the approval from Apple. And then you hope you show up in new and noteworthy, but like some actual people at Apple, for whatever reason, listen to your podcast, liked it and featured it. Is that how that went?

Cathy Heller:

Yeah. They featured it on like the carousel of those nine shows on the top of the whole thing.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. So you and Tim Ferriss and NPR you're up there.

Cathy Heller:

Yep. And then they featured it every three months since then. They have not stopped featuring the show.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And do you know how that works?

Cathy Heller:

This is what's amazing about, I mean, we can tell ... I'm going to give you two answers. Obviously the first answer, I just want to say, because it's so important is that there are times where you are kicking down a door and it's not going to open because it's not your door. And then there are times where it feels like the hardest lock to pick and God just goes, "Oh, it's open. That door is open for you because you're here. This is where I was waiting for you to show up." And if you look at my life, I didn't start a podcast till I was 37 and a half years old. So I had to go down lots of paths and endure a lot of "failure" until I finally found a door. And he said, "You found it. Welcome home. This is where you're supposed to be."

Cathy Heller:

So that's one thing. The second thing I will say is that I spoke at Podcast Movement when I first started, they wanted somebody who was just starting. And I raised my hand. I actually didn't want to speak because I was just starting a podcast. I'm like, "Why on earth would I do this?" And the reason I mention it is because I met the Apple people in the lobby.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh.

Cathy Heller:

And I had a four minute conversation and they were the nicest, like Midwestern kind, cool, really, really smart, but not pretentious. And I was like, "Okay," next thing I know my podcasts comes out and there's a feature. And I'm like, "Wow boy, did I get rewarded for being so brave." I was like, "Why would they want me to talk?" Oh, Podcast Movement wants to have someone to talk about starting a show when you're just starting. And you know how you're pushing through the fear of that. It's only going to be like a 15 minute thing and I'm like, "No, no, no. Okay. Okay. I guess I'm doing it. Oh my God." So that was one thing.

Cathy Heller:

And I think the other thing goes back to the same reason my career worked as a musician, which is empathy, because I'll tell you why. I am always thinking about how does this serve the other person. And I noticed that with Apple, the artwork that they use was very clean. And it was very much a lot of the things that Apple does is in support of people sharing their own gifts. And I felt like when I was naming my show, I thought about the Apple initiative, because I believe that Apple is where it really is at for a lot of the work that I do.

Cathy Heller:

If you're an Apple user, iPhone, think of the empathy in that. How smart is that iMac? It's about you, so when I was going to name my show, I kind of thought about, "Oh, I could name it a million things. It's about being successful. It's about finding work." And I was like, "No, it's really about the dream. It's not about a day job. It's the dream job." And I knew that Apple would get me if I got them. And so I thought about what they needed. I thought about the kind of contrast.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Seriously. That's a pretty sophisticated level of thinking,

Cathy Heller:

But I had been doing that with music, right? [crosstalk 00:37:07] Walmart.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That was your pitch. It's like, well, what song do you need? I'll go write it.

Cathy Heller:

Right? Like I wrote a song for Walmart called Let Your Color Shine, which wound up getting used for a bunch of other ads as well. Because I saw that every ad of Walmart was about people making their own color in the world, making their own splash. And that was another thing with Apple. It was like, I want to do work that they feel proud of. So on the logo, I had a picture of a ball of yarn and a ballet slipper. And it was all about making stuff. And they are really a big proponent of people being creative. So there might've ... I never have gotten confirmation on that, but there may have been a baby bit of that, thinking that like, "Oh yeah, you know what? This is a good ambassador for us. Like, this is why we started podcasts so that people would help people do their work in the world." Maybe. I'm guessing. I could be wrong.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow. That's really, really interesting. So I want to go back to what you said earlier when your first online course, which is really interesting. I've followed Amy Porterfield for years and you're right. There's lots of people who take, she has a free course where you can learn how to do a course. And then she has the paid ones, the whole deal. But you said you wanted to help people sell without selling, sell by serving. That's a philosophy here. But I would love to hear what that means to you.

Cathy Heller:

Yeah. I mean that is how you sell. Seth Godin has been on my show twice.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. And I'm going to ask you about Seth, so thank you for going there.

Cathy Heller:

Love Seth, so much.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Isn't he amazing?

Cathy Heller:

He's amazing. I'm telling you, I tell him he's like a rabbi to me. Like there are certain people who they it's just it's so beyond ... What he's doing is not marketing. You know what I mean? So I believe that selling doesn't happen at the sale, right? Everything is relationships. Everything is intimacy. We live in a time where there is an empathy deficit. So if you show up and you actually reach out your arms, that's it. So for me, when I was doing that first class, right, and now I have my own program for my podcast listeners and I still have the Six-Figure Songwriting thing, but I have a team that helps me run that. It's the same thing. When I launch something, I give almost all of it away for free. Literally I do a five day challenge where I teach for five days.

Cathy Heller:

And it is there's no ... I'm not holding anything back. I don't think people buy information when people sign up for a course. I think what people are buying is the implementation. It's the coaching. It's the connection. It's the accountability. All the information is out there for free anyway, but I want to give more. And I think with what I learned in the real estate world, and I also learned it with music, is that in order for you to just give somebody an offer, you have to have an emotional bank account with that person where you made deposits and deposits and this person already knows you and trust you. This is like business 101. The people go right to the sale. It never works. Like would you go to a dinner party and walk up to someone? "Hey, what's your name? I'm Tim." "Hey Tim, let me tell you about a great opportunity." It's like, that is a weird person.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's a person you stay away from.

Cathy Heller:

But if you make a relationship with someone and you talk about your kids and you generally start to hang out and you talk, then whatever's meant to happen is happening anyway. It's already going to

happen because it's meant to. So I'll tell you one thing, not everybody knows, which was really key for me is that when I was trying to break through in the music world and I just couldn't crack the code initially, I thought, "Oh my God, forget it. I can't even get through. I can't even, people won't even read my emails." And I realized, why would they read my emails? I was sending them these long emails, trying to prove myself, trying to pitch my music, listen to this, click this link. I have good music. It's like, that's all about me, me, me, me, me. I wound up, I had this random idea one day, which wasn't so random, but I didn't overthink it. That's one of my main strategies is like, "Be messy, just do things."

Cathy Heller:

So I made this little PDF and I put the top Mochas and Music and I put a little, this little cartoon picture of a girl with a guitar and then a plus sign and then a picture of a Starbucks Frappuccino. And I wrote, step one, tell me your favorite Starbucks drink. Step two. Tell me what day and time to drop it off. Step three, I'll leave you with some coffee and some music. And I sent it out to about 65 or so people whose email addresses I found online and I heard from about 25 people. Like, "No, thanks." Then there was a group of people who didn't even respond. And then it was literally 28 people who said, "Sure." And I went and brought them coffee and I didn't have the presumption that like, I would sit for an hour.

Cathy Heller:

I just literally came to bring the coffee. I was happy to bring it. And most of them said, "Sit down for a minute." And then when I sat down, I would just ask them, "I want to know more about you. What do you love about this job? Or how do you even get to do this? It's so cool that you're choosing music. What a fun thing." "Oh, it's not so fun. Part of it is." And we would talk. And like I said to you early on this episode, I would make them feel seen. And part of the beauty of the pain I went through as a kid is that I know how badly people need to feel seen and how much empathy is needed. And having a mother who's suicidal, I became her cheerleader and her constant, "You can do this, and I see you, and there's meaning here."

Cathy Heller:

So I was like a PhD in showing up and being an empathetic sounding board for people. So I think that actually helped me is just being a person before anything else. And I wound up at the end of that year, the reason I know it was 28 people is because I was in Billboard magazine, which is sitting on the wall in a frame behind my desk. It's like full-page feature. And that year Billboard wrote this article and said, "Cathy Heller had 28 songs placed last year." Every one of those people worked with me and they are still my greatest allies.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Cathy Heller:

I think a lot of times we don't do things unless we know there's going to be an immediate return on our investment, which is like the worst way. Brian Grazer, who [crosstalk 00:43:11]

Carey Nieuwhof:

He also interviewed. Yeah. Hollywood producer, Ron Howard, Brian Grazer. Yeah.

Cathy Heller:

He runs Imagine Entertainment. Him and Ron Howard have been partners for 35 years. They did every movie from Apollo 13 to A Beautiful Mind. Like they've won more awards than I think any team. And he wrote a book about having good conversations with people.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Is that his book on curiosity?

Cathy Heller:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I read that a couple years ago.

Cathy Heller:

It's beautiful. And he said, "My whole life has been, if I can just have a moment where I'm present with another person, amazing things come from that. Either from that, I learn a great story that I realize I want to write about. Or from that I find out that I'm going to take Mandarin lessons. Or from that I meet a business partner." He says, "But when you go in the room and you have an agenda, you miss so much because you're so busy on your agenda, who knows what that meeting really was about. Maybe that meeting was just about giving somebody some empathy, because somebody just lost their pet. Or maybe that meeting is about something you have no clue you're about to discuss, but somebody else has a better idea. And if you can close your mouth long enough to listen, there's so much blessing."

Cathy Heller:

When people tell me that they have an agenda or a three year plan, I'm like, "You're probably thinking small," because there's no room for God. There's no room for the moment between two amazing humans. So it is kind of cool how over time, I think the empathy and reaching out and building those relationships. So when you ask me, "What does that mean to you?" It's so obvious to me that a sale is like, it's scaling intimacy. It's like the more intimacy you create with people, you never have to sell.

Cathy Heller:

You ask them what they want and then you go make it. I think a lot of times we build businesses backwards where we're off in our little laboratory is trying to come up with the perfect book, the perfect podcast, the perfect app, the perfect candles, the perfect fill in the blank. No, it's a relationship. Make one thing, ask a question. "Oh, you want that? Okay. I'll make that for dinner. Great." That's such a revolutionary concept for most people. It's like, you don't have to do it all yourself. Care. And when you raise your hand to lead, no, you won't be the best, but that's not why you are going to be successful or not successful. You're going to be successful because you care. Because people value that. So to me, the sale is make a relationship and ask what they need.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So, man, there's so much there, Cathy. One of the things you said, I think it's so, I mean, you're right. It is kind of humanity 101, but it's also so counterintuitive to a lot of business models and you said something. We're definitely moving into the freemium economy or whatever you want to say, like 90,

I'm probably like you, 99% of what I do is available for free. And the 1% that's paid, funds everything else, which is a really interesting model I'm not sure actually existed for very long. I think that's fairly new.

Cathy Heller:

You're probably right.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. But again, it's that idea, somebody listening to you with a business hat on would say, "Wait a minute, you just said you gave away most of the stuff in the course and people still pay for the course? Why would they pay for your course when you gave it all away for free?" Can you unpack that a little bit more? Because I agree with you, but that is not intuitive to most people.

Cathy Heller:

Yeah, you're right. It's not. And I love how you just said it. Like the 1% that's paid pays for everything else. And I never thought of it that way, but it is so true.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Is that your business model as well? That's mine and I stumbled into it.

Cathy Heller:

Now that I think about it. It really is true. Yeah. Because I mean, I spend hours a week on a free podcast, which I genuinely believe is really, really worth it and it's free. Right. And I do a million other things to nurture my audience. So yeah. I hear you on that for sure. And what I mean by if you give it away and then why do people pay? Because what we want most, what we want most is connection. What we want most is to feel seen, what we want most is the implementation. You could buy Martha Stewart's cookbook off the shelf and bring it home to your house. I promise you're not going to make a scone, let alone open the book more than once. Right.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right.

Cathy Heller:

But if she was standing next to you and she said to you, "Okay, now take out the whisk. Again, now when you do it the next time, do it like this with your wrist. Right? So, and then fold in the dry ingredients slowly." I'm telling you that your ability to master that scone on your own versus having her next to you it's night and day. There is a difference because success leaves clues. And when somebody is coaching you ... I go to yoga very rarely because I'm not good at it. My husband is way better than me, but when I go to yoga, I always find it fascinating how I will be in down dog. And I'm like, "Oh my God, this hurts so bad." And then the teacher, once in a while, will come around and put her hand on my back and like adjust me like two millimeters. And I'm in so much more pain. And she goes, "That's down dog, by the way, whatever you were doing before that." And I go, "Oh yeah, that's a good stretch." And she's like, "Just as long as you can, but that's down dog." And you go, "How did I miss that? I think I'm doing what I'm doing." No, you're missing it. You're missing it. Why does Serena Williams have a coach? Do you not think she can go online and watch a YouTube video on tennis?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Video? Yeah. There you go. Serena.

Cathy Heller:

For example, which is just so good is we had Ramit Sethi on my show. Do you know Ramit?

Carey Nieuwhof:

I love Ramit. I follow everything he does.

Cathy Heller:

Love him. Okay. So he said something to me, which was so great. He goes, when I was at, he went to Stanford and got, he comes from really humble beginnings. You know, his parents are immigrants from India. They didn't have a lot of money. So one of his cousins says to him, "Why on earth are you paying a trainer \$185 a week to go to the gym with you? That is such a waste of money. Didn't your parents teach you anything about saving money." He goes, "Don't you know on YouTube, you can watch videos with trainers for free? You big dummy." And Ramit says, "Okay. Oh, I see. Okay. So the reason why I pay is because I want the results, right?"

Cathy Heller:

So Ramit says to me, "Cath, why would I pay less when I can pay more?" Because if I want to save money, that's one thing. But if I actually want this result, if I actually want to learn to play guitar, if I actually want to get healthier and that's what I want, not saving money, but I actually want that result checked off my list. I'm healthier this year than I was last year. I'm actually creating an online course. I'm writing music for NBC. And I actually want the result. There is no way I can do that without my actual trainer who's done it. Who has the results? I cannot do it watching from the sidelines. I am so sorry. And then, you know what I'll do. I will think I'm doing it, which is the worst because I'm not doing it at all."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh yeah.

Cathy Heller:

Right.

PART 2 OF 4 ENDS [00:50:04]

Cathy Heller:

So it's like the worst thing is 99%. Do you want a hundred percent? Because 99% makes you think you're doing it and you're getting no results. Right? So it's like, I think people know it from their own life. You're never really going to actually complete something unless you feel that there is a sounding board. What do we need? Feedback. You need that kind of redirection. The answer key. So yeah, you can learn algebra by yourself in your room, but you're going to get there much faster if somebody is checking your work and giving you tools along the way. So that's why.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. See, that's a really clever articulation. And I find one of the other cultural trend that's happening these days is content is everywhere. Like it's just exploded. It's free. You have YouTube, TED talks, podcasts like ours, yours and mine, et cetera, et cetera. But I don't know that you've ever felt this way. What you really want to do sometimes and there's different levels of access, et cetera. I read a Donald Miller book and I'm like, "I just want to sit down with Don and just ask him a question." Now that's where the real value is. It's the ability to cut through the noise and actually say, "Well, this is a down dog," or whatever. I watch yoga. I watch my wife do it. And I'm like, "Yeah, that's too painful." I will go for a bike ride. Yeah.

Cathy Heller:

But it's kind of like what you just said is you can listen, you can stream a Paul Simon song online for free, right? Or you can pay more money and buy an album. Now you have it. You can listen to it in your car, right? You own it. You downloaded the whole album. That's 15 bucks, or you can pay \$150 and go to a concert with 15,000 people. Or you can do that thing at the charity auction where you spend \$7,500 to be part of 50 people in a room with him. And it is not the same experience as listening to his songs streaming on your Spotify. Being in a room with him for \$7,500, you'll never forget that evening. And if you want an hour alone with him, yeah that's probably going to cost you a lot more because it's not even something he's going to offer, but there's a reason why. It's going to literally change your life.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It's a value inversion. The more people, the less value and the more restricted the access. Okay. That's really, really helpful. Why do you think, you talk about building an audience in your book and on your podcast, why do you think your course took off almost out of the gate?

Cathy Heller:

Because of the genuineness, because there's so much noise. If you want to be a category of one and you never want to compete with anyone, show up, be empathetic, don't hide behind the glossiness and the perfectness of your slides. Even if you have slides, but lean in to being a human, answer questions live, talk, share your heart. And also people will buy the thing, whatever you're selling, when you see the value in it. And I think so often we're fine up until the sale, but when Daniel Pink was on my podcast, who's a brilliant author and TED talks.

Carey Nieuwhof:

He's been on this show, too.

Cathy Heller:

He's great.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I love Daniel.

Cathy Heller:

Yeah, love him. And he said to me, "Cathy," he said, "If you do something that's going to make a material difference in someone else's life, I don't care if it's a piece of artwork that brings people to tears, I don't care if it's a piece of software that saves people time. If you have something that brings value," he said,

"I'm so sorry to tell you this, but you are morally obligated. It is a moral obligation. That is not yours to keep to yourself."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Cathy Heller:

And I'm like, "Oh my gosh." And he's so right. I'm at the point now where I have a program called Made to Do This, where people who listen to my podcast, they want the next step. It's a 90 day program. I'm in there. My own team. My full time team is also in there coaching. And we help people figure out what they want to do and how to actually validate that and turn it into a business and find their purpose and serve the world. It's beautiful. I'm at a point now, when I do that, when I'm putting out my five day challenge, I feel like I'm being selfish if I don't wave 15 flags and say, "This is available." Because do believe like, God's like, "Dude, I need you."

Cathy Heller:

"Okay. You, for whatever reason, tuned in your frequency and you can hear me so good, okay. Keep the receiver on. And like, you need to go and do this. It's not just for you. You can't keep it to yourself. That's not fair. Now go and help people, lift them up, raise them up, help them see themselves, help more humans come alive and make their corner of the world better." And so that's also part of it. It's like you have to genuinely believe in the value. If you found somebody's wallet in front of your house, would you ever hesitate to call the person and go, "I found your wallet?" Never. You'd be like, "Oh, that's so cool. I get to do this good deed, that makes me feel good."

Cathy Heller:

Right? But you don't feel that way when you're selling your product, your service, your whatever because you're questioning. See, we will find evidence for what we believe is true. So why is it that I can have 3,000, I think we have 3,500, five star reviews on my podcast, but there was a time early on where there was like 72 negative reviews. And that was what I listened to. Why? Because we find evidence of what we think is true. So whatever you believe, if somebody says something negative, you'll go, "See, that's really true. I am a fraud." But the more you start to believe and see the value in what you do and you say, "This is not about me. I got to get out of the way. If I can help this other person get a song on a Starbucks ad, which means they're a happier version of themselves, which means they don't have to work in insurance because they can write music. Which means they're going to be a better partner for their partner because they're showing up as themselves or whatever it is. It's like, how could I not do it?" And I feel the same way about everything now. And once you breakthrough that, Oh my God, it is not about us. And it's so freeing. There's going to be people who don't like us. There's already people who don't like us. I'm sure they're... Right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

You can do nothing and people won't like you.

Cathy Heller:

So that's okay. That's fine. You're not going to be everybody's cup of tea. And I think that people, like we were talking about before, you don't need the whole world to like what you're doing. I had 28 people.

28 people in the world who believed in my music and liked me and grew a relationship with me and that turned into multi six figures in a very competitive landscape. So do you need everyone? No. Find your little corner of the world.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's so inspiring. So you now have students, you're not just a solo printer. You've got students, you've got hundreds, thousands of people who are enrolled in your courses. When you are working with entrepreneurs or would be entrepreneurs, what are some of the things that they do, the repeated patterns that seem to be the well-worn grooves of success? Like you said, success leaves clues. So when you look at your students, it's like, yeah, they got a day job. They're kind of phoning it in. They're doing what you did. They're either being well paid, six figures and don't like it, or they're just struggling. Can't even really make rent comfortably month after month or they're starving artists. But then they start to find their own groove. And as your podcast and your book say, you encourage them not to keep their day job. What are some of the first things that they do that set them up for future success?

Cathy Heller:

So it's really about validating what you're doing, right? You got to figure out that it's a thing. And the way you do that is you have to be able to sell it to someone. Someone's got to be able to pay you for it. And what I remind people is there's a difference between a hobby and a business, right? If you have a hobby, because you like to be a potter or you want to paint, it doesn't matter if other people like it, it's for you. But a business by definition means that someone else is taking their hard earned money and giving you money because they need or want the thing you made. So it's all about the who. It's all about who are you serving. And then you fill in the what. You find out who you're serving. And then you say, "Okay, this is who I'm serving."

Cathy Heller:

"I'm serving moms who are dealing with wanting to be more mindful. Okay, I'm going to go to a mom. I'm going to find one person who I know before I have an offer that she's going to pay me for, who would be a version of that person? And can I sit with her and ask her questions? I'm thinking about doing a class on mindful parenting." I'm making this up. "What would you like? Or I'm thinking about making cake pops, but I'm going to think about who would the cake pops for? Are they for three year olds at birthday parties? Are they for vegan customers? All right. Who might be a vegan who I could have over and say, 'Can you taste the cake pop?' Now I'm going to get as much data from this person so I can make it exactly how she would like it."

Cathy Heller:

"Then I'm going to give her another sample. Then I'm going to see if I can find three more of those whose, and then I'm going to say, where do those people hang out? Where does my audience already go? What blogs do they already read? What stores they already visit? Oh, they all go to this vegan coffee shop. I'm going to go in the vegan coffee shop and see if I can talk to the manager. Maybe that manager would like to carry 10 of the cake pops and see if they sell. Now, I've got one customer who has a pipeline to all my other customers, because I could only fill in that blank because I asked myself, 'Who is it?' So once I know who is it, I know where they go. I know what they like. And I can go ask them more questions and I can find a way to value add what they need."

Cathy Heller:

So it starts with who am I making this thing for? The other thing that needs to happen is for a lot of people, they don't even know if it's cake pops. They don't even know if it's music. They don't even know if it's an online course they want to teach because we have gotten so far away from listening to our inner voice. We have silenced it. We have walked away from it because once we listened to it, there might be pain. It might mean we have to take action. It might mean we have to get uncomfortable so we don't listen. We don't want to let anybody down. We don't want to be in the unknown. So we don't even go there. So in order to turn the volume up on that, sometimes we need to do some brainstorming, which includes having feelings again. Like, take yourself out on the date without your phone, go to the beach, write in a journal, take a painting class.

Cathy Heller:

Even if you have nothing to do with painting, it just starts to make you feel more like a kid. When you were, if you go... My daughter's three years old, if you go to her preschool, there is not a single kid that doesn't like to play. And the reason why they play is because they're okay with paint in their nose and paint on their hair and their sleeves. They let themselves be messy. Sometimes you just need to brainstorm, make a list of the five dream lives. Or you write down on a piece of paper, "What would be 10 things I would do if they didn't have to do it perfectly?" Maybe you write down open a bed and breakfast. Maybe you write down, be a travel writer. And then the next step could be, "Do I know anyone who does that? Could I have lunch with them?"

Cathy Heller:

"Could I shadow them? Could I read a book on it? Can I take a class in photography? Is there one next step?" And then once I kind of have a sense of this is the project I'm going to choose, then I'm going to do the steps I said before, which is can I figure out who this might be for, get some information? And once I have the information that this is what they need, can I see if I can make the sale? And one thing I want to put on that as a button is that Seth Godin, we mentioned before, he's been on my show twice. He was just on like three weeks ago. And I said to him, "How do you know what your purpose in life is?" And he goes, "I reject the question." I said, "How come?" He said, "You know why?"

Cathy Heller:

"Because people get so caught up in like, 'What's my purpose, what's my purpose?' And then they don't do anything because they want like gods to come down and be like, 'This is your purpose,' right?"

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Cathy Heller:

So he said, "Cathy, if I was going to come up with my absolute purpose, I'd probably be teaching canoeing in Canada." That's what he said.

Carey Nieuwhof:

He can come any time. That's awesome. We would welcome Seth.

Cathy Heller:

Exactly. So he just said that on my show, you can tell him that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I got to check him out.

Cathy Heller:

Yeah. So he says, "But you know what? I didn't ask myself what's my one and only purpose." He said, "I asked myself a different question, which is, 'How can I be of use?'" And I love it because I agree. See, I think we're all here because deep down, when you do the research, we've had all these cool people on my show. Who've done the research on like what actually makes us happy and it's not being happy.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right.

Cathy Heller:

It's purpose and contribution.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Have that quote at the beginning of your book, that the opposite of depression isn't happiness. It's purpose.

Cathy Heller:

Yeah. And that's why you love doing the work you do. And that's why pastors feel so lit up and see, it's not about fun. It's not about happy. It's about meaning. It's about purpose. So I think he's right. I think that sometimes you're going to pivot in the way that you show up in the world, but the purpose never changes. The purpose for everyone is I want to make it better than it was before. I want to connect with people. So, okay. Maybe you start out licensing your music and you find yourself of use. And then you feel like you're pivoting into another place to be of use. So you teach an online class, then you start a podcast. My point is, it doesn't matter. It's not the vehicle, it's what's behind it. So I would encourage people to choose a project and then do those steps where you figure out who it's for, have some FaceTime with that person, offer them the class for free.

Cathy Heller:

Before I launched my Six Figure Songwriting class, there was a girl named Chelsea, also a Christian. And she said to me, "Oh, I wish you could teach me how you did what you did." And I said to her, "I have an idea," no joke. I said, "Would you come over to my house and just ask me the questions you'd want to know? And then it would be helpful for me," I said, "Because it will help me create my course." And she goes, "Sure." She's like, "I'll come with my laptop," and next thing we knew it actually turned into a week. I said, "Could you come every day for a week?" And her laptop died on the last day. And I bought her a laptop. Because I wanted to do something for her that felt like better than cash. And I got so much out of it because she told me, "I'm your who. I'm the student, I'm the girl who wants to learn." And because she asked me those questions, I knew what my curriculum was. So is there something you want to make and can you figure out who it's for and can you start to test it and try it and see what they need more of? And then can you see if you can bring it back and will they pay for it?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Isn't that interesting? Yeah. Not just market research. That sounds very Gallop-y and clinic-y, but just actually talking to real people and going, "What do you struggle with?" I've got this new thing where it's done for you staff meetings. I think by the time this is out, this will... But I talked to high capacity leaders who lead these large organizations-

Cathy Heller:

Forget it. The meetings, the amount of meetings. Oh my God. And they have meetings about the meetings.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Exactly. And they're like, "I know I got to do a staff training. I know we got to develop leadership development, but it's one more piece of content for me. It's one more book I need to read." And I'm like, "Well, what if I did your staff meetings for you?" And I said, "You're too big. You don't want to plug and play me." And they're like, "Oh no, no, no. We're down for that." And I'm like, "You're kidding?" And I said, "What if I did your staff-"

Cathy Heller:

So brilliant. They're brilliant. They should totally hire you because it makes so much sense. Oh my God. To have someone come in that can rally the troops and that's their specialty?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. And so we just shot videos all week here in my studio. And I'm like, "I've done that for you now." And then I give them a backgrounder, I say, "Here's where the issue is important. This is just for you. Here's some ways to unpack it. Here's some questions your staff may have, the agendas done for you. You can just hit print if you want. And then here are the discussion questions and the team application guide." And I got that, for two years now.

Cathy Heller:

I'm done. It's so brilliant.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You like that idea?

Cathy Heller:

It's like Stephen Covey on the go. It's so smart. It's like just bring in a person who really gets this stuff. Otherwise, you just take a manager at Toyota, right? And it's like, he doesn't know how to lead a team necessarily. He knows how to sell a car or how to crunch the numbers. Now he's going to go and empower everybody and have all the psychological bells and whistles. No, he's not. He's just trying to do his job for God's sakes. That makes so much sense to me.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So a lot of people in my ear for two years going, "You need to do a membership thing." And I'm like, "No, because often it's a cash grab, or often it's a this." And so I just listened for two years and thanks for the free consult by the way. And I'm like, "Okay, this is a pain point." And it's surprising because I thought,

"Okay, you get to a thousand people in your church, you get to a million dollars in revenue. You got this nailed." And they're like, "No, I have to do it. And I hate it. But I know it's important." And I'm like, "No-

Cathy Heller:

I'm obsessed with this idea. I can't believe that I haven't heard it yet because it is so brilliant. Because I just told you, I went to Onsite. There's so many people who's... The juice that they have is knowing how to bond people, knowing how to help people peel off the stupid ego mask and get to work and feel empowered. And it's like, "Bring in those people." Like, "Why would you try to do that yourself?"

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, thanks for the beta test and the validation. At the time we're recording this it's not launched. So we'll see if anybody buys. And then we're going to create a community and a tribe where I'm accessible, where we can take their questions. I'll do a live coaching call every month with the leaders in the Leaders Circle. And we'll just see what happens. But that was two years because I had pressure to launch something earlier and I'm like, "No, no, no, no, no, no." I just listened. And I'm like, "Wow, there's a hole in the market there. There's a problem. I produce a lot of content. I can package it." Some of it's new, some of it's actually like dusted off because the internet is a pretty large thing.

Cathy Heller:

I want to give you a tip, also.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Tell me.

Cathy Heller:

Every single company, Google, Microsoft, Coca-Cola do you know if you search, and you probably already know this because you're very successful. So you might be like, "Cath, of course I know that already." So I'm sorry. I don't mean to be the... But you know that every single company has people who literally their job is, their title is learning and development.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I did not know that. So thank you.

Cathy Heller:

If you go to LinkedIn and you type in Coca-Cola learning and development, there are people whose job it is, who were hired to find you and bring you into the company to help the staff. That's what they do. It's like a person whose job it is...

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's amazing.

Cathy Heller:

You just start Googling those. I'm Googling, email them through LinkedIn, this what I offer...

Carey Nieuwhof:

Can I help you out?

Cathy Heller:

And this is how I come in and help. So that your team is leading on a better level. They're literally budgeting to find you.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's brilliant. See, and this is just learning, trying not to be the expert all the time and being open. It's amazing what you can discover. And what I love about your approach is it's so real time feedback. And the next time I develop a course, I'm developing a couple this year, I think I'm just going to have someone come to the house and we'll sit there with laptops for a day and I'll buy them a laptop at the end of the week. That would be brilliant. That's a great idea. Because you know, often as leaders, we develop our products as entrepreneurs in a vacuum, and then we're so excited on launch day. And then we're like, well, nobody bought. Well, guess that a failure. Right? So this is genius, okay. Cathy, I have to ask you this. And I know we've talked about this, we've talked around it, but like you've gotten a massive audience, millions upon millions of downloads and lots of traction around books and articles and so on and so forth and online courses.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And I think a lot of what we talked about is fed into this, but any other tips on getting heard above the noise? Because it just gets louder online every year. One of the top questions I get now is, and I remember I owe this guy an email. I feel so bad because he waited around like an hour after I was done my talk. And you could tell he was fishing and I was kind of tired. It was the end of the day, been an all day thing. And he just said, "Hey, is it still worth launching a podcast?" And part of me it's like, "Wow. I feel like I won the lottery." I started in 2014 when it wasn't 2020. And I don't know if I did it again, whether we would have the kind of trajectory, but it is a pretty loud place. And you were fortunate and blessed and worked hard. Three years ago your podcast just took off and got noticed by Apple. Any thoughts about people who are just worried about, "Oh, there's so many online courses, so many podcasts, so much this," what do you say to people who ask that question?

Cathy Heller:

Yeah. I mean, I think that I can understand how when you're looking at it from the outside in, it seems really busy. But like you said, I mean, I showed up three years ago when it was already a pretty crowded space. And when you started hate to tell you, it was already really crowded.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, it was really crowded.

Cathy Heller:

It wasn't like there were [crosstalk 01:10:38]

Carey Nieuwhof:

And then saying, you know what kind of late.

Cathy Heller:

It wasn't like there were eight shows. There was thousands and thousands of shows. I think all those people were already there. John Lee Dumas and Joe Rogan, all those people.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh yeah. They were all there already. A hundred percent. Tim Ferriss, Pat Flynn, all those guys had been around. [crosstalk 01:10:55] And I felt I was late. I had the idea for two or three years before I did it.

Cathy Heller:

Yeah. I felt like I was late. And first of all, I'll tell you really a cool thing right now because I've gotten to become friends if I could say that, friendly with some of the Apple folks, which is really nice. Because they've got an office right near my house in Culver City. And if you go on to Instagram and you search Apple Podcasts, okay, you'll see that they have 26,000 followers under Apple Podcasts and zero posts. Okay.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Cathy Heller:

Zero, which says to me, they haven't even started yet. I know the way Apple works and they take their time. And what I know...

Carey Nieuwhof:

I just followed.

Cathy Heller:

And what I know is that we're way early. Most people who have a, I read an article that said most people who have an Apple iPhone don't know that there's a native podcast app. So that means most people don't even know how to find a podcast.

Cathy Heller:

So we're early. Okay. So that's one thing. Another thing I will tell you as a tip for you too, Carey, right now, I just like being a helper. LinkedIn is very overlooked and there's a lot of white space and you already have 300 episodes plus of content. I would be repurposing that if I were you and showing up on LinkedIn.

Carey Nieuwhof:

All right.

Cathy Heller:

What I want to tell people who were listening. If you're like, Oh, but I'm not Carey. I don't have," listen to me. There is space. What needs to happen is the squeaky wheel gets the grease. You need to become omnipresent. People need to start just getting those little touch points, hearing about you. Okay, here you are posting something on Instagram. Here you are posting them on LinkedIn and you start to create

some awareness and you have to be consistent. I just had Ryan Holiday on my show a couple of weeks ago. Ryan's like, "Cathy, it's only recently. I'm on the New York Times list." He goes, "But I've been showing up. I've been..." When I asked Seth Godin the other day, "How do you do what you just said?" He said, "Chop wood, carry water. Chop wood, carry water." It's the unsexy consistency, right? Here's the thing. You think it's noisy but 99% of the people are not consistent and they're going to drop out of the race.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And that is the podcasting, right? Like you have three quarters of a million podcasts. And the average has five episodes. And then like, well I quit.

Cathy Heller:

Yeah. It's called pod fade. Most people, that's right. They write the record up to seven episodes and they're done. So that's one. The other thing is I want you to go deep with the people that you connect with. So let's say you have 18 followers, but instead of just trying to get more followers, you ask those 18 people when they like something you don't just say, thanks for liking it. You ask them a question. What are you up to? You know what I do all day long in my DMS, no joke? When people like what I'm doing, I still do it. I don't have... I have 38,000 followers, which compared to my friends, it's like nothing. But I write back to every single person and I ask them questions when they write to me, "Oh, this was so amazing." I write back and say, "Tell me about you. What's your dream job? What's your passion? What are you struggling with?" And when you do that, it's gold. Amy Porterfield told me that. She's like, "Cathy, when I first started, I emailed," she goes, "I had like a 600 people on my email list when I first started. And so I would use that moment to make ambassadors for life. And if they wrote me, I would personally write them back." Seth Godin will write you back.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I have emailed Seth. It's amazing.

Cathy Heller:

Yep. He writes you back. So the point is that when you care, you then think you have 1,800 followers, but really 400 of them they're selling for you because they're like, "She really cares." My friend Morgan Harper Nichols. Do you know Morgan?

Carey Nieuwhof:

I don't. No.

Cathy Heller:

Oh my God. Amazing. Christian. So, so, so special. So special. She has like over a million followers. When I met her, she had I think 400,000 followers. When she started, she had like 1,100 people following her. And what happened was, talk about empathy. She tells this story on my podcast. One night she was feeling really down and she prayed because she was really feeling like she just hit the wall and she didn't know what to do with her life.

PART 3 OF 4 ENDS [01:15:04]

Cathy Heller:

And if you look at her work, it's just so absolutely beautiful. But she sat down one night, and she wrote to herself. She said, "When it seems as though the mountains and valleys you've crossed have got you to a place and you don't know where to go and you can't take a step further, think about where you've already come from, where you been." So she wrote this thing to herself, right? Posted it on Instagram. The next day, her friend says, "I don't know what you just did, but that was the most beautiful, vulnerable, sweet post."

Cathy Heller:

And what she did is she said to herself, "How would I ever be able to write something that powerful again tomorrow?" She said, "You know what I'm going to do?" She said, "I'm going to put a word out to my friends and family, and I'm going to write it on my Instagram," for the few people that followed her, 1100 people. This was two years ago, 1,100 people. She's now at 1.1 million. And she says to her small following, "If you're struggling with something, if there's something on your heart, email me, DM me privately."

Cathy Heller:

I will not share who you are. It'll be anonymous, but I will write a post for you. I will write something that day, and I'll tell you it's for you but privately." So every day she starts writing something to one person, and it's amazing because you can see it in her work, because it's so deep, what she's saying, that you can tell she's speaking. Because she said to me, "Cathy, how could I say something so poetic if I had to come up with it on my own? I couldn't. But I knew if somebody shared their heart with me, I would have something genuine to say to them, and I used it as the thing."

Cathy Heller:

And then, one by one, every day, people were writing her their stories, and she was writing back and it... She didn't have to do any marketing. She is sitting on a multi six figure, sorry, seven figure business. Because now when she prints her calendar or her book of poetry it's, duh, but it's amazing how empathy cuts through. And if you can ask a question and create a deep conversation, I mean, people wouldn't believe that from 38,000 followers, I have a multi seven figure business, but I do because it's the depth of the engagement and that's all you need. You don't need millions, you need like a small group of people who really feel you see them.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It's what Tim Ferriss says over and over again. He keeps talking to Kevin Kelly's thousand true fans. Right? Do you ever worry Cathy, about getting overwhelmed? When you email back and you're like, "Hey Carey, tell me about yourself. Thanks for the like or whatever. Thanks for the comment, tell me about yourself." And you message me. Does that ever get overwhelming or do you feel like you then have to keep up this relationship with people and that just doesn't scale? Or how do you handle that?

Cathy Heller:

I feel like it's amazing how people get so touched that I send them a voice memo. By the way I like the voice memo feature on Instagram DM.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Cathy Heller:

Because I can just go, "Hey, hi Sarah. That's so sweet." And people go, "Oh my God, that's so nice of you." I realized that I don't need to go back and forth a thousand times, people just felt that was cool. We connected for a second. And I said, "Tell me about you." And they tell me back. And I go that, "I'm so proud of you or I can't believe you've been through all that. I'm so sorry for your loss or whatever." And if people are for the most part really respectfully, it's not like you hear back over and over now for the next 20 days. But also anytime I'm making money in my business, I'm putting it back into my business and there is nothing more important than that.

Cathy Heller:

I think that most people have... They've duct taped their business. It's like it's being held together by duct tape. And if you really want something to grow, you need it... You can't scale to seven figures by yourself.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right. Yeah.

Cathy Heller:

If you want to make money, you need to have people around. But here's the cool thing. As soon as I made an LLC for my music agency, I was able to call UCLA, which is a pretty good school and reach out to their internship department and say, "Is there anybody who wants to get credit for interning with me?" And it was totally legit. And people were like, "God, I get a free three credit, A+ average for doing this thing for her." Now as a podcaster, I'm able to say, "Does anyone want to learn about podcasting?" God, they learn so much.

Cathy Heller:

And so often we hire then from those interns. Now my team has grown to about 11 people, but there's so many people who would want to do this with you and they'd gain so much by you just have them around. If it starts to get overwhelming, you can say, "Hey, let's do it together." I'll send the response and then you can say, "Hey, this is Anne, I work with Cathy. She was so happy to connect with you. And now I want to let you know about this free resource or did you know we're doing a free challenge and you should be a part of that?" And all of that stuff.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. And we've had to go there too. I never understood people who didn't answer their own correspondence, now I'm like, "Oh, now I get it." Yeah. It's like, "Yeah, okay."

Cathy Heller:

I still do a lot of it, but then there's also help. But I'm still in there to a certain extent, which makes it feel that there's an intimacy there.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Same. And usually a couple times a week through the public inbox, we get hundreds if not thousands of emails every week. Yeah.

Cathy Heller:

Of course, you do.

Carey Nieuwhof:

From just listeners and readers, every once in a while my team sends me a note and they said, "We think you should see this." And I'll jump into the public inbox and reply. I'll send DMs back to people. I'm trying to get into the practice of randomly just calling subscribers. And I've surprised a few people, it's like, "Can you get me their number?" And you just talk for 15, 20 minutes. Right? And it's awesome.

Cathy Heller:

It's awesome. And as you know, because you're very successful, but it's always your repeat customers who will be your big customers. So it's like, if you really look at the conversion, you only need like 2% of your audience, you need to really show up for those people. And they'll be the ones who support you til Timbuktu. So it's amazing.

Carey Nieuwhof:

How did you connect with Seth Godin? I'm just curious. Was that a cold call?

Cathy Heller:

When I first started the podcast, I emailed him and he wrote me right back and he said, "Give it a minute. I'm going to do your show, but I'm busy right now and hit me back." And I wrote to him again about a year later and he's like, "Sure." And he came on and it was beautiful, great episode. And then when my book was coming out, I wrote to him and said, "I'm wondering what you think about my book and the New York Times list and any advice for me?" And he was so sweet. And he said, "Back away from the New York Times list. Back up, back up, just back up and just you do what you need to do." And he gave me great feedback. And then he said, "Let me come back on your show. It's been a while. Let's do it again." And he came back and he said, "Can I use this interview to put it out to my audience?" And I'm like, "Yes." And we just had a great time and now we've become... He's really like a mentor to me. And he's so special.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. He really, really is, and such a unique voice. What a treasure and calorie dense sentences too.

Cathy Heller:

Calorie dense sentences, yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Holy cow, this is marketing particularly the second half of that book. It's like-

Cathy Heller:

Genius.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What isn't underlined? What isn't underlined?

Cathy Heller:

That's a really good way to say it. What isn't underlined? Yep.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. Cathy, this has been so much fun. The time has flown.

Cathy Heller:

I agree. You're really good at what you do.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, no. You have a powerful story. You tell it so well, lots of passion. And maybe to wind this down, there are some leaders listening who are like, "Cathy, I want to do what your podcast and books say. I do want to quit my day job." We've already talked about trying to find that minimum... How to find the product. In other words, go ask a bunch of questions that ask real people and refine, refine, refine. How do you know when you're ready? You said earlier on in the interview, you said, "Okay, I quit my day job literally. And probably that's not what I advise people to do anymore," but different stage of life, you probably weren't trying to support three kids, blah, blah, blah. But there are people listening. They're like, "Listen, I make 42,000, 68,000 a year. We need it to pay the rent. I'm really not having fun. I think there's something else in me." Do you have any milestones or anything-

Cathy Heller:

Yeah, totally.

Carey Nieuwhof:

... For people to pay attention to?

Cathy Heller:

It's beautiful. And I totally can appreciate that. Now we have three kids and they go to private school and there's a lot of stuff going on and I 100% think it's better to start a side hustle because everything I've done now, since writing music for film and TV, everything else, my course was a side hustle to that. My podcast was a side hustle to those two things. And then the courses I teach now is another side hustle to my podcast, my music course, my writing music and being a mother. What's beautiful about that is first of all, when you're busy, you get more done in less time. Secondly, you need to validate this stuff anyway. And that's going to take time. And what I see sometimes when people quit their job and they have all this free time, they give up and they go right back to a job because it's taking too much time to validate.

Cathy Heller:

And they're like, "Oh, forget it." And they're defeated. Better to keep your job. And instead of watching Game of Thrones or whatever you watch. Netflix is great but put it on hold for a minute and see if you can take the steps that we talked about before and start to validate this. I'll give you a great example.

One of my favorite examples. Oh my gosh. He's another great Christian. It's so funny how many people? I'm like, "Oh, and by the way." So there's a guy named Greg Franklin. He lives in Missouri. I wrote about him in my book. He lives in Missouri. He went to trade school. He wasn't taught that he would grow up and have a dream job. Just his dad was like, "You get a job, get health insurance," all this stuff. And he started a side hustle. He was working at a factory that made plastic bags for dog food. Can you believe that?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow! Yeah.

Cathy Heller:

That's a pretty-

Carey Nieuwhof:

Not a dream job for most people.

Cathy Heller:

Yeah. That's a pretty mundane job. He had actually tried to work in the Christian music scene before that, but it didn't take off. So he's working in this factory for eight years, standing in front of a machine that sells dog food. That's not a good place to be. He's listening to the show. He's starting to get inspired, just do something. I'm always like, "Just do something. Take messy action. Do anything." He makes a cheesecake one day, he forgets to use a cheesecloth. It comes out pretty crappy. He makes another one the next day, he has two now, and his wife says we're not going to eat two cheesecakes. So he winds up taking the second cheesecake to the fire department down the street in this town in Missouri.

Cathy Heller:

They said, "That was pretty good." The fire chief calls him a week later. "Can you make 12 of those? We have somebody whose birthday is coming up." Long story short, he starts to make it as a side hustle. He starts to go into people who might want what he's selling. He goes into coffee shops. "Do you want to buy 10 cheesecakes a week?" He then gets a few customers. Would you believe he told us this in real time, he wrote us in our Don't Keep Your Day Job Facebook group, "I got fired today." This is two years ago and today's National Cheesecake Day. Talk about a way from God. We all verified it. He goes like, "I got fired." And go to Google. Okay, he gets fired. His wife, they open up a cheesecake shop. He said, "if I can make the rent in a month, I'll keep it for three months."

Cathy Heller:

They actually made three times the rent in the first day they were opened. Another one of our listeners heard about him, said he owned a chain of grocery stores in the Midwest, started buying and distributing his stuff. He is off the chain. It's amazing. But side hustle all the way. I tell people, the beauty of pricing things, because there's already a market, is that let's say you're going to do professional organizing for people. And you're going to charge \$100 an hour and you're going to sell it in packages of three hours, a pop. There's already a market. You're not making up the price. There's a market for what candles costs. There's a market for what cheese cake costs. So if you want to leave your job and you say, "If I could start doing this for this many people..." I have a friend who went to NYU for theater.

Cathy Heller:

She didn't make it as an actress out the gate. She was waiting tables and all this stuff trying to audition. I said to her, "Hold up, why don't you teach an acting class to 15 children?" And it's 50 bucks a lesson, which is what it costs in LA to do anything. Piano, gymnastics, \$50. That's the market. She's like, well, "Okay, why?" I go, "Okay, why? \$50 times 15 that's \$750. If you taught two classes of 15 children in a week, that's 1,500 bucks a week for two hours of your precious time. That's \$6,500 a month."

Cathy Heller:

So validate it. Figure out the price. Once you sell it to one person. Now you go, "Okay, this is what this thing is worth. How many people do I need to sell this to so that I can now have enough coming in that I can leave this job?" You can get there. It's not out of reach. It's not lofty. People are thinking, "In order for me to leave, I need to make multi six figures." No. What if you made \$75,000 and now you leave your job and you have all the other energy because you validated it to just scale it?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Cathy Heller:

Well, that's it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

The other thing I found when I stepped out of my day job five years ago, as the lead pastor and moved into the founding pastor role, I insisted on taking a pay cut and the other stuff wasn't quite making up the gap. But I find if you have the time to focus, it's amazing how quickly that can change. And we had two kids in university at the time. It's like, "Woo, woo." Good time to make the job. But-

Cathy Heller:

Exactly.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, Cathy, what's up next for you? Like what do you see ahead for yourself?

Cathy Heller:

Every single day I just wake up and I do ask those questions. Where can I be of use? I try to break through like Gay Hendricks talked about on my show. I try to break through my upper limit and move through it, so I can just play bigger. It's always a daily thing. And I feel like what I'm doing... This new frontier is about being more visible, repurposing content. I'll be doing a lot more speaking on stages, get out behind the computer in the house and be out there more. And I'm excited. I think this program we launched is great. I'll probably do more launches of that. So I just feel so blessed.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It's a good feeling. Isn't it? Tell us a little bit where people can access your podcast, your content, your books, and we'll link to everything in the show notes.

Cathy Heller:

Yeah. So cool. Thank you for asking. And you can go to cathyheller.com. There's actually a free quiz you can take to help you figure out what you might want to do passion project wise.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh cool.

Cathy Heller:

Cathy spelled with a C. So cathyheller.com.

Carey Nieuwhof:

We'll link directly to that.

Cathy Heller:

Cool. I'm also at [cathy.heller](https://www.instagram.com/cathy.heller) on Instagram. And my podcast is wherever you find podcasts, Don't Keep your Day Job. And I'm in my DMs and I'm in my Facebook group. We have a public Facebook group called, Don't Keep Your Day Job. And every week I actually take stories that people post and I give them a shout out. And every week I say, "Go follow this person, she's just knitting her own dolls. Go follow this person, she makes water color. Go follow this person, she's starting her own whatever." And I get those stories from our Facebook group. So that's also available.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's amazing, Cathy, what a joy this has been. Thank you so much.

Cathy Heller:

Thank you so much. You're so good at what you do. And may you just continue to be blessed and have the opportunity to shine your light on people because that's what you're meant to do.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Likewise. Thank you, Cathy.

Cathy Heller:

Thank you.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, that was one of those interviews that I did before COVID hit and it was just fascinating. And I'll tell you, when we pivoted on the podcast to bring you some COVID and crisis related stuff, we pushed some of those interviews into the fall. Here we are in the fall, happy September everybody. And I hope you loved that one. It was rich and rewarding. You can get show notes at CareyNieuwhof.com/Episode365. There's also transcripts there, things you can share on social media. Would love for you to check it out and hey, more and more of you are doing that all the time, checking out the show notes.

Carey Nieuwhof:

There's also a whole website associated with that at CareyNieuwhof.com. I blog on a regular basis. And if you haven't yet signed up for my email list, text my name to 33777. I send a little daily dose of help and inspiration to about 70,000 leaders every single day. Next episode, man, I'm so excited. I sit down with Gordon MacDonald, one of the all time, most downloaded episodes on this podcast, happened a year ago when I broadcast a conversation and I thought we'd take it up a level and he sent me a document where he shared lessons that he's learned after eight decades of life. It is so profound. It's super long form. It's coming up next episode, give it a listen.

Gordon MacDonald:

Okay. Number one, a view from 80, put the most significant people in your life, your spouse, your family, close friends and mentors put them into the calendar first. Second, never, ever stop growing. Stay open to fresh ways and ideas that sustain your physical and mental health, that sharpen your working skills, that increase your knowledge. And of course enrich your wisdom and spiritual life.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That happens next time on the podcast. And in the meantime, it's time for What I'm Thinking About. And I am thinking about what you need to do to get momentum when you can't seem to find any. This segment is brought to you by Pro Media Fire, get professional help for your digital media needs at promediafire.com/carey. And by BELAY. If you text the word, CAREY, my name, to 31996 you get a free download of Things to Delegate to Save You 15 Hours This Week. And that's sounding pretty good right about now, right? Isn't it? What can you do when you can't find any momentum? And this is a season where a lot of organizations are struggling with momentum, the Coronavirus, the crisis isn't ending anytime soon. What I want to do is share a few principles that have really helped me.

Carey Nieuwhof:

The first thing I would say is pour fuel on the one or two things that are growing. Chances are you've got something in your organization, something at your church, something in your business, that's growing something. And you can just say, "No, we're not growing, we're stalled out," but that's almost never true. There's almost always something that is moving. And the Pareto principle, which is something I paid attention to for years is that 20% of your efforts are producing 80% of your results. And my guess is what you should do is find out where you got momentum and then pour more fuel on it. Well, for example, we had a lot of momentum on this podcast and what did we decide to do in the middle of Coronavirus? Because podcast listenership was dropping precipitously in March. You can Google that, people would stop listening to podcasts.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And I saw it starting to change so we pivoted. And we started to share just some principles about crisis management and the show took off and then we just kept building on it. And so we kept doing those episodes and now we're not behind, we're actually further ahead than we ever have been. And so you got to find wherever you got momentum, pivot and then pour fuel on that. Here's another idea cut or discontinue things you're manufacturing energy for. So there's a phrase I got from Andy Stanley years ago, it's called manufacturing energy. And you know, that thing that you're like, "I have to do that." Or, "Yeah, well, we've always done it and nobody wants to come to it, but we're going to do it." One of the best things you can do, is just stop doing that stuff. If it's not getting results, not making a difference, not accomplishing its mission.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And you're in a place where you don't even want to do it anymore. Don't do it. Don't do it. I had a friend of mine tell me a few years ago, he said, "Carey, you're great at quitting stuff." And I said, "what do you mean?" And he goes, "Well, if it's not working anymore, you just walk away from it." And I mean, I try not to do that in a relationally inappropriate way, but I think he's got a point. Well now I do two podcasts, but I used to do another one and it did okay. It had a hundred thousand downloads, but then I realized, "Wow, I get that many in one or two weeks of this show," so I killed it. I gave it to someone else. I resurrected it later, give it to someone else. And now I've got another podcast, ChurchPulse Weekly, that's got tremendous momentum, but don't be afraid to cut or discontinue anything that isn't quite doing what you hoped it would do.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And then a third idea is start something new. You ever noticed, like on... And again, I got this from Andy Stanley, but do you ever notice, you buy a tube of toothpaste that has new on it? It's like, "Wait, you're Colgate. You've been around for, since my grandparents and what do you mean new? Colgate isn't new." But most products it's, "New label, new formula, new this, new that." Why? Because new improved, improving really generates momentum. So what are you trying new? And often the answer for a lot of organizations is, "Nothing. We're trying some brand new stuff this fall. And to be honest with you, I don't know whether it's going to work, but that's the fun of new. And if it doesn't produce momentum, well we won't be doing it again, but if it does produce momentum, well, guess what? We discovered something new."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Just a quick recap. What can you do? You can pour fuel on the one or two things that are growing, cut or discontinue things that aren't, and that you're manufacturing energy for. And then the third thing is, start something new, just start something new. I hope that helps. In the meantime, it's been a joy to be with you. And again, welcome to all of our new listeners. Hey, if you haven't yet subscribed, please do so. And if you've listened to all the way to the end, and this has meant something to you, please share on the socials. We would love to interact with you there. I'm careynieuwhof on Instagram, cnieuwhof on Twitter and Facebook. Thanks so much for listening. We will catch you next time. And I hope our time together today has helped you lead like never before.

Announcer:

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

PART 4 OF 4 ENDS [01:36:35]