

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 388 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 Pushpay and Community Church Builder, you can increase connection and encourage giving with their new product ChurchStaq by going to pushpay.com/carey and by the 2021 Church Leader Toolkit. I got a brand new free resource called The 2021 Church Leader Toolkit, you can get it for free by texting the word Toolkit to 33777 or just go to churchleadertoolkit.com and because you're listening, guess what I'm going to do? We're going to give you some free Starbucks, okay?

Carey Nieuwhof:

It has been a meat grinder of a year and so we just want to say thank you. Thanks for an incredible year. So listen to the end of the episode, I'll share how to get some free Starbucks on the house from us, come out of that quarantine, come out of whatever you're doing and get yourself some free Starbucks before the year is over. We are here today with Alli Worthington and I'm going to talk with Alli about what successful leaders did to thrive in the crisis, how cheerleaders can harm you as a leader and overcoming negative thinking.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Alli has coached business and ministry leaders throughout 2020 and beyond. She's a business coach and co-founder of Called Creatives where she coaches writers and speakers. She's a well-known speaker and host of the popular podcast The Alli Worthington Show, she has a no-nonsense guilt-free take on business, family and balance. She's been on The Today Show, Good Morning America and her new book Standing Strong is available now. She lives with her husband Mark outside of Nashville and man, we had a fascinating conversation. I particularly loved the beginning of it where we just talked about mindset. And actually, I'm going to share a little bit more about that at the end of the show when I tell you about the Starbucks giveaway about small thinking mindsets, and how they can limit you, just some things I've seen in myself and in other leaders.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So thanks to our partners, man, we've had some great partners. And we picked these fairly carefully, very carefully actually. And so if you hear me talk about them, it's because we are partnering with them intentionally. And they are the ones who bring you all this stuff for free. So make sure you check out what they've got. Pushpay and Community Church Builder realize that everything's converging and if you want to encourage giving, nurture community and find a suite that will also help you share your message all at once, that's what Church Stack does, it brings all the digital tools you need together for a seamlessly connected experience.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So all you have to do is go to pushpay.com/carey to learn more, that's pushpay.com/carey and then I got some guests for you just because thank you because you're listening at the very end of the year and

because you guys are awesome. So we put together a 2021 Church Leader Toolkit. That's some training, free training, PDFs, articles, videos about preventing your team from burnout, about how to communicate effectively to a camera when there's no one in the crowd, and actually how to do a job when more people are watching it through the lens of a camera than will be in the room with you because I think that is the future.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I've also got a segment on how to strengthen digital engagement, online engagement and how to make the best decisions for the future when everything's still uncertain. All of that is in the 2021 Church Leader Toolkit, you can get it absolutely for free. And yeah, there's no bulletproof formula, but I think this can guide you. I'm recording this week's in advance, but over 5,000 leaders already signed up for the toolkit. If you haven't jumped in, it's free, available for a limited time, text the word Toolkit to 33777 or go to churchleadertoolkit.com, so that's toolkit to 33777 or churchleadertoolkit.com.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Remember to listen to the end, we'll show you how to get some free Starbucks, but in the meantime, and that's on us, my conversation with Allie Worthington. Allie, welcome to the podcast. It's so good to have you.

Allie Worthington:

Thank you, I am thrilled to be here. So excited.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You do a lot of coaching with leaders, mentoring with leaders, working with leaders, it's axiomatic to say this has been the year that no one expected, it's been insane, only apparently getting insane or as probably we speak. What are some of the common struggles you have seen leaders wrestle with over the last 12 months?

Allie Worthington:

It's a great question. I work with two main types of leaders, leaders who are somehow brick and mortar base. Now, I consider church's brick and mortar, retail obviously, restaurants, even physicians groups, legal agencies, all brick and mortar and then there are the ones who are primarily digital. Now the brick and mortar clients that I work with, this is the year of struggle whereas people who are digital first, generally business is going through the roof.

Allie Worthington:

Depending on the business they're in, but I think the common theme is managing how we deal with the uncertainty. Of course, for anyone who's brick and mortar, you're dealing with staff, how do I pod people together in a certain way? So somebody comes down with COVID, all the dominoes don't fall and how do we make adjustments in that way? But even for the people who are digital first, the uncertainty around this year, especially in spring, I feel like it was overwhelming for most people.

Allie Worthington:

So for me as a business coach, I would be on a call with a client, this is early April, everything shut down, this client has a surgery center, I'm going through "here's strategy, here's how we're going to get

through this." But then I would get off the phone and it would be everything I could do not to cry myself because I was afraid of how long are we going to be shut down? How do I coach clients through when they can't do procedures, and there's payroll to pay. So whether it's me or the clients I'm coaching, I think collectively, everyone in Spring had a bit of a meltdown.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Alli Worthington:

And I think it opened our eyes up to the fact that not only do we want to be smart about strategy this year and systems this year, but we have to really invest in ourselves so we aren't a stumbling block. I think there's never been a time that mindset is so important for leaders.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, it's interesting because you can almost discount that, everybody says it. And yet, I would 100% agree with you, mindset is really critical. What are some of the different mindsets that you've encountered in leaders, particularly in maybe those first 90 days, right? Because we are going to talk about the conversation we have with ourselves, but what were ... Let me further refine the question. What were some helpful mindsets that you saw and some others, it's like, "You need to stop thinking that way." What would be an example of that?

Alli Worthington:

I think to some degree, people have a set point and our set point is either "things are going to work out, let's figure it out how we're going to do this, what's going to happen next, let's do next steps," or the set point of, "Well, everything's on fire. It's all going downhill, I'm going to lose my team, I'm going to lose the building and I'm going to live under a bridge." And there's nothing like a crisis to show us which part of the spectrum we fall on, but it is crisis that really will bring it out, all their leadership, all of their experience, great leadership, great experience, they've been great with their teams, they build great businesses, something like 2020 comes along, and all of a sudden, it's, "Well, I'm moving under the bridge."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right.

Alli Worthington:

Yeah. So it's managing that in ourselves and figuring out where that comes from. That's really important.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Because you make a really interesting distinction, it was much harder and churches fit into that category. We have a lot of business leaders listening to some Fortune 500 leaders listening the whole deal. We have a pretty diverse audience. But a lot of churches would say, "Yeah, we're in the bricks and mortar business." And a lot of them now heading into 2021 would be, "Well, we're in the online too." I've been encouraging leaders it's like, "Think of yourself as a digital first company." I'm not getting a whole lot of support on that, but I'm going to keep banging the drum.

Carey Nieuwhof:

My question is did you see more of the bricks and mortar people go into "the world's on fire and I'm going to go live under a bridge" and more the digital people move into ... "Well, what does this make possible?" Or was it divided that way or did you see evidence of both mindsets in both spaces?"

Alli Worthington:

Both mindsets and both spaces. It depends on the severity because everyone's experience of 2020 is so individual. Bricks and mortar churches, retail, all of these, they had it way worse and people in the event industry, way worse than everyone else. So you're going to have more people going, "Okay, everything's on fire, everything's falling apart." But there are those people with built-in resiliency who go, "This is terrible, but let's roll up our sleeves and we aren't going to let this beat us."

Carey Nieuwhof:

What did some of the bricks and mortar people do in the first say, six, eight months of the crisis that in your view was super positive, got them into much better space quickly?

Alli Worthington:

Well, from a really practical perspective, and I don't mean this ... I don't want to bring any politics into anything, but the PPP program was very, very successful because that is what kept people from having to lay off their staff.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Alli Worthington:

And it came in quickly. That combined with being able to pivot restaurants going take out first, counselors and attorneys, counselors going telemedicine all of a sudden on a dime, attorneys switching all their work from home. 20, 30 years, it's all done in offices, yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I have lawyer friends who did the same thing. It's like it's all virtual, we have a couple of friends we have dinner with regularly. He's the CEO of a capital firm in Toronto, and she's a lawyer and they pivoted to digital almost immediately and he was a new CEO, too, and it was just fascinating. They're not having a hard time right now and then others ... So it's really that flexibility and agility and the ability to pivot in the circumstances.

Alli Worthington:

Mm-hmm. Absolutely. And again, like you said, we hear mindset so much that we go, "Oh, mindset." And I'm someone, I've heard it so much that I tend to negate the value of it too, but it's the mindset underneath everything that will give us the strength to be able to believe that we can pivot because if we don't believe we can do it, we're going to take ourselves out of the game before we ever get a chance to play.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What did you say to some of your clients who saw the sky falling and were going to just write their own eulogy before they'd even died? Can you coach them out of that? What do you what do you say? Because there's some listeners listening right now, leaders who are like, "Yeah, I've got that scarcity mindset, I've got that ... I don't know how we're going to get through this and going back to normal is going to be my salvation. And now heading into 2021, clearly normal isn't coming back anytime soon." Can you pivot that mindset? Or how do you do it? What did you tell those clients?

Alli Worthington:

I think for all of us who are going through a hard time in this year, it's important for us to remember that the vision God's put on our hearts, the work that God has given us to do, the future that he's given us glimpses of and nudges just to see in the future, it's all relevant. He's not in heaven looking around going, "Who would have thought that this was going to happen? I had such great plans for him, I had such great plans for his company, I had such great plans for this church, but now COVID here, so none of it matters."

Alli Worthington:

And I think when we remember that first that God's not surprised by this, things may be terrible in the short run. But the vision that he's given us, the work that he's given us to do, the people that he's put in our lives for us to serve through our work, it still remains, it just may take a little longer, and it may be a little bit harder than we wanted it to be.

Carey Nieuwhof:

If I'm drilling down too much, let me know. But I'm really interested in what we started within this conversation because I see this all the time. My team and I talk about it all the time. The difference in mindset between leaders who pivot quickly, they're agile, what would be some things you saw your clients who had a really good 2020, whether they are bricks and mortar or digital. What did they do when they hit adversity and then what did the ones who struggled longer or are still struggling? What did they do? I want to think what were some of the action steps that your clients who are thriving right now took?

Alli Worthington:

Well, I think one of the things that hurts everyone is panic. No good decision is ever made when we panic. And one thing that I did for myself and I recommend that clients do, anyone who has so many people relying on us to make decisions and to coach them and to lead well through crisis, we have to still manage our emotions especially when things were really scary for us in Spring. What I had everyone do is I had them schedule a quality freakout time, so.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay.

Alli Worthington:

Imagine you're leading a huge team, you're leading an organization, you've got campuses all over and you have to be strong, and you have to provide vision. If we don't schedule time to freak out, it's going to leak out of us. So I would literally, I did this for myself end of March and I had clients do this, put time on your schedule to pray about things, to worry about things, to read all the epidemiologist list on

Twitter, to read all the research, to read the economist and freak out for a little bit, but then put a limit on what we do. And then later in the week, when we want to freak out, when we want to fall apart we go, "Oh, Tuesday afternoon from 3:00 to 4:00, that's the quality freakout time and I'm going to channel it that way." Because if we pretend like we aren't feeling the emotions we were feeling, it's going to come out in unhealthy ways. But we can't let that take over all of our time and we literally scheduled it on the calendar.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I'd never heard of that.

Alli Worthington:

That was a COVID idea of mine. And it just happened to work really well.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It's a great idea. I think by nature, I'm not a freaker-outer. I'm not. I just spend a few minutes on it, get it out of my system and on I go, but you're right, it's containing because we all feel it, but it's how to contain it.

Alli Worthington:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Carey Nieuwhof:

Did all your digital businesses do well or did some of them struggle and obviously, you said some of the bricks and mortar people, they pivoted pretty quickly. But digital wasn't a pass through this, right? It wasn't like, "Oh, well, you're digital. So you haven't got a problem." And the reason I'm going there is I think there's a lot of leaders, Alli, who are like, "Well, if I had your business, I would be pivoting too." Or, "If I had their church or their location or their industry, I'd be doing a lot better." Talk about the difference between even in the digital space those who really had a good year and those who continued to struggle.

Alli Worthington:

Well, so much of it. Remember Psychology 101 back in college. We studied Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Alli Worthington:

And what 2020 has done is it's made us really focused on these bottom parts of the hierarchy of needs. Not many people right now are spending a ton of money to self-actualize. People are spending money to feel better and to feel safe and to feel secure. And it's a 2020 trend now. I would imagine it's going to continue for the next couple of years because things have been rocky and we see these changes in people. So when we have a business that's based on the lower end of the spectrum, providing security, comfort, helping people make money, helping people feel better, helping people be with their family and feel okay, anything that falls in that line, it's going to go skyrocket.

Alli Worthington:

But if we have something that's just not in demand because of the season that we're going through, we are going to struggle. One of my clients has a digital first company where she sells products to people to take vacations well, lovely journeys. She's struggling right now, she's going to struggle until this is over. There's no magic formula. There's no magic system to make it any differently, 2020 is going to be a struggle. So when we think about just trends that we're seeing in people because of what we're all living through, it makes sense. It's like for me I'm an author, I know in books right now, frugal livings doing really well, children are doing really well.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Sorry, which is doing right now?

Alli Worthington:

Frugal living.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, frugal living, got it.

Alli Worthington:

Yup, saving money, children's books, books on how to build a business, things like that. Now, there are there other things that aren't doing well right now and to some degree as business owners and leaders, we can't get around what's happening in the world. It back to what I was saying earlier, the vision that God has given us for the work that we're doing, for how he wants to work with us and how he wants us to outwork his vision in the world. It still remains, it just may be a little bit harder and take a little longer because of what we're going through.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. Have you seen clients totally change industries? I was listening to ... Well not industry, kind of, yeah. So Donald Miller Story Brand, soon to be rebranded and those other podcast, but he interviewed the Canlis brothers who run that high end restaurant, and I think it is Seattle. And he's had them on before, but I listened to an episode toward the end of 2020 where they talked about pivoting their whole business model to fine dining is based on the experience, the candlelight.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Anyway, we'll link to it in the show notes, but they basically they started a university, they started a college, then they did these other things, then they went fully to take out which high end dining places do not do, right? You're not there taking your food boxed up, but they would deliver candle sticks and tablecloths to people and I thought that was really fascinating. So they basically became a different business. Have you seen that happen?

Alli Worthington:

I love that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Isn't that a cool idea?

Alli Worthington:

One of my clients, we've been able to make subtle pivots, but to keep the same business model, but be able to do it really well.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, the other thing I would say just what I've seen in my own company that I lead doing this podcast and writing and all that stuff in the leadership space is and I'm interested because I'm trying to get the mindset for 2021. We're noticing that content either really hits or it really misses. There used to be like a general. And it's like, "Man, if I write something and I hit the target, it takes off. And if I miss it by even a few degrees, it just falls with a thunk." And it's been a good year for us, it's been a great year for us. But we noticed that with podcasting too, right? Episodes either hit or they miss. The middle is missing. What are you seeing in the market for lead?

Alli Worthington:

I definitely see that. I see that with all products, I see that with media consumption. If I think about it, I do that myself. I think that there's something about this year where we don't have a lot of emotional capacity. We don't have a lot of attend extra attentive capacity to anything that isn't going to hit right now.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. I think there's a principle under that. That's why I wanted to go there. Any other thoughts on that?

Alli Worthington:

Yeah, for all of us to pivot well and to lead well and to make sure that we're not only taking care of our people, but we're developing products and services that work right now. We need to have a lot of empathy for the consumers, empathy for the listeners of the podcast, empathy for the people that we serve and go, "Okay, what will best serve them right now?" Maybe it is education, maybe it's entertainment, people need to ... I've listened to more comedy podcasts in the past six months and than I think I have the past three years just as an escape.

Alli Worthington:

But thinking about "is what I'm about to produce, is it in need? Do people need it?" That's how we know if we're going to be successful through this time because we have to either solve a problem or entertain and sometimes, when people are stressed out about life, entertainment is solving a problem.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Any idea on how to figure out what hits and what misses if you were advising a client? I have blogs, so I post a couple times a week, and it's either hit or miss and it's a pretty short life cycle. But I can see pastors getting into a three-month series and it's like, "Whoa, this one's really missing." Or launching a whole new product line you've invested six figures into and it's not doing anything. Any thoughts on some principles that would help leaders figure out, "Okay, what is going to hit? What is going to miss?"

Alli Worthington:

Yeah, early on in my career, Jim Collins, I got to spend some time with Jim Collins, great leadership expert who is just as lovely in person as you can imagine and he coached me on making sure that I measured everything, that data was everything, whether for me it's a message that I'm preparing or a product that I am getting ready to release in the world, I had to test it and have data before I did anything.

Alli Worthington:

So he has this great example of you fire your bullets before you fire your cannons, you don't want to waste your cannonball. So you make sure that the bullets are going where you want them to go before you fire your cannons. So for any ... Whether it's a sermon series, we need a group of 10 to 15 people that don't just tell us what we want to hear to get feedback on this idea, to really go, "Okay, Is this good? Is it not good? Where is it boring?" I do this with the books I write, I send it to multiple people and go, I need you to rip this apart, don't tell me it's great. I want to know exactly in this chapter where you got bored and you wanted to stop reading.

Alli Worthington:

The products we create, we have to test it out. I'm a big fan of surveys, surveys using friends on our email list, friends on social media, but also paid marketing surveys that aren't that expensive, but can keep us from developing an idea that people just aren't interested in.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I think this is a really fruitful line of thinking. I've done a lot of work with David Kinnaman and the group of Barna this year and David and I were talking recently just about some research that we had for a particular large US city, I don't want to say which, but and they had data in that city what people were struggling with and then what pastors, what leaders thought people were struggling with, and there was a massive gap. And we have this thing called People Pollster, something they can use to poll their people to see what they're struggling with. But I think you're right, I say all that to say this.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I think we're moving into a season where you need to be data-informed and probably experiment a little bit more and fire a few bullets before you fire the cannon because you think, "We're going to hit this huge felt need." And then you just miss, right? And it costs you so much.

Alli Worthington:

Because we're all living in filter bubbles. We see it in election season, people are shocked that anyone would vote for the opposite person. We live in filter bubbles with people who feel the same way we do. One thing that's worked for me really well is knowing that my husband and my friends are not my target audience. They are going to think everything I do is great because they're invested in me. One thing that I do to protect my business whenever it's a product, or a service, or a book idea, whatever it is, I hire people that don't personally care about me who are experts in the field to help protect me from getting too involved in an idea that's not good.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Can you explain that? That's fascinating. I'd love to know more because you're right, we intuitively reach out to our network. And then you can eventually get to that point. I remember giving feedback to a

particular leader on his leadership podcast and I'm like, "I didn't like what I was going to say." But I'm like, "You asked me for feedback. So I'm going to tell you the truth." But that feels awful. So can you explain that process? Because I'd love to learn more.

Alli Worthington:

Yeah, absolutely. For me, I'm a business coach by career. So my job is disappointing clients sometimes. I've gotten really good at it, but I've done this for long enough. I know if an idea is good or not. And when I don't think an idea is good, I go, "Let's get some data on this." But I'm only able to do that because I do it for myself too. So with books for instance, I hired someone who is a terrific author with my last book. I said, "I don't need you to write anything." Because he helps people write.

Alli Worthington:

I said, "I love your vision, I want to send you chapter by chapter this book and I will pay you and I will pay you well, but I need you to rip it apart for me because I need the book to be good." So that's what I do with my writing with any products that I want to put together. I will pay people to be in a focus group who don't care about me, they don't want to impress me, they don't want me to like them, it is a business transaction, they are in my target market, they are in a certain age and demographic that I want to sell to, to give me feedback on the idea and to rip it apart until the idea is perfect.

Alli Worthington:

And that I think, that combined with the Holy Spirit because God has told me, "Don't create that" about a lot of things. That saved me so many times from creating something that I personally love that I thought was brilliant, my friends thought was brilliant, my husband thought was brilliant, but wouldn't have sold.

Carey Nieuwhof:

How do you know they're right? When you think it's brilliant and your spouse thinks it's brilliant and your friends do, how do you determine? Because this is really interesting. I think you're right. We're all in filter bubbles, we're all in feedback loops. So what makes you trust that person?

Alli Worthington:

Well, it would have to be a multitude of counselors. So like I told you, I hired somebody to help with the book. There were also about five different other people who either were experts in the area or who represented the target market who were also giving feedback. So it can't just be one person, it has to be a lot of different people. When I do surveys, I've done surveys of people, I think one of my biggest surveys was 25,000 people.

Alli Worthington:

The most fascinating thing about the survey is after I get 100 answers on that survey, the ratios don't change much, you just know. And if 100 people, 75% of them are saying, "I don't like this, I like this." I know it's not going to change up to tens of thousands of people. And so with that, I have to go with it. Unless the Lord specifically says, "No, it's this." Because I'm not going to go against what I feel like he's leading me to do, but that's very rare.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I was going to say, "How often does that happen?" Because there are some leaders who would say, "Every time I have an idea, the Lord told me to do."

Alli Worthington:

No, it's very rare. I have lots of ideas and he actually often says, "Don't focus on that." Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So helpful. So you've got a new book, speaking of writing, and it's all about the thoughts that go through our minds. Now, my understanding is you went through a really tough season before you came into a really good season. Can you, do you mind talking about what happened? And I'm sure with every tough season, there's a lot of leaders listening here who are in a tough season right now and they're counting themselves out. Do you want to walk us through that season a little bit to the level that you're comfortable sharing?

Alli Worthington:

Yeah, it's a wild story. So let's go back to 2012. I am running a large events company. We host conferences in Toronto and Nashville every year, very successful, successful enough that my husband was able to retire from his job. So we have five sons, that way one of us could be focused in on the kids. And I went in 2012 to Catalyst West and whoever was speaking at the time said, "We're all going to pray about our careers and our churches." Great, I'm going to pray about the event for next year, God's going to give me a download, it's going to be amazing and he said "quit" and I knew what he meant.

Alli Worthington:

He provided all the context, I knew I was to quit. And as I prayed about it, I felt him lead me to give my part of the company to my co-founders who ran the event with me. So I fly home to Nashville, preparing to tell my husband what I've heard, preparing for my very practical MBA husband to go, "I don't think we need to do that right now. That doesn't make sense." And he said, "Well, you better do it. You better call them." And gave it away, went into business coaching because I have a knack for coaching and consulting with some large companies.

Alli Worthington:

And about a year later, Christine Caine, amazing evangelist, came into my life. We met socially at an event, she walked up to me and said, "I hear are who I'm supposed to talk to you about what I want to build next." And of course, I'm a coach and a consultant so my answer was, "Yes I am." Now we exchanged numbers and her and her husband Nick flew to Nashville a couple of weeks later and asked me to build this vision she had which turned into Propel Women's Global Ministry. I was able to work from home, ran the team out there, we build Propel up huge, it was the dream job.

Alli Worthington:

And in my mind, I thought, "Okay, everything I did before was leading up to this, this is amazing. This is what I'm going to do the rest of my life." Until early 2017 when I was praying about work, and the Lord said "leave." And the worst part of "leave" is I knew what. He was talking about, sometimes He just illuminates everything in your mind. The worst part about it for me is I realized that I was going to appear flaky and my ego was too wrapped into how I appear because why was I the woman who always had to leave good things.

Alli Worthington:

I gave my company away to do this, now I'm going to leave, what's going on? And so to be honest, I spent a year wrestling through it. "Am I going to leave? Am I not? Can I do this again?" My husband while I was at Propel Women, my husband developed an illness that he almost died, very stressful for our family, we had run through our savings, I had a month savings left and for me, the idea of announcing to them, "God told me to leave, I'm going back out on my own." And just popping up online one day and going, "Guess what everyone? I'm opening my business again, come work with me." Terrifying.

Alli Worthington:

And in that year, I had to wrestle with self-doubt and uncertainty and the question in the back of my head, "Is God going to provide?" Because I didn't want to get stuck in either "I'm going to do this all on my own" which we do as leaders or "I'm going to just be still and know that God will provide, because I know that God will get us across the finish line," but we got to tie up our laces and start walking and partner with him on it. So my story is one of wrestling through those obstacles that tried to keep me back.

Alli Worthington:

And as a leader, so many of us, God will give us a vision for what he wants to do next, whether it's in our organization or maybe we're going out on our own, or we're moving on to another organization, but it's the fear and the self-doubt that holds us back and we aren't able to take that step. So this is my story of me being able to take the step, and what it looks like for all of us to overcome self-doubt and move into what God has for us with confidence.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I want to drill down in your book, you talk about these six voices that we hear these six messages that we get, and I'd love for you to walk us through them. One of them is you forget where your power comes from and a lot of leaders have this, I can fall into this trap. "It's all up to me man, it's all up to me." What is behind that? And why is it dangerous?

Alli Worthington:

Yeah, I think the thing with this is we forget that God has created work as partnership with him and us. That we think that he only cares about work that's in ministry because of course, we highlight ministry leaders and church leaders, but God cares about accountants, he cares about teachers, he cares that engineers are making sure that cities have fresh water, he cares about the big and the little and the things that seem important and unimportant. And work with him is a partnership and when we either have a partnership mindset as we're going about our work or a loner mindset as we're going about our work and it's the loner mindset that gets us in trouble.

Alli Worthington:

Because the real source of power and courage and strength we know is from the Lord. But as we go about our daily work, we forget to partner with him. And I think about Noah and think, "Maybe we know of Noah because Noah said yes to partnering with God on building the ark." Maybe God asked other people. Noah could have woken up the next day and go, "I don't even know what rain is. And I think I ate some bad dates and I'm not going to eat." And I think about him slinging that hammer, or whatever

he built the ark with and you're 30 and questioning if he was crazy or you're 79 or you're 115 and questioning if he's crazy.

Alli Worthington:

And I think for so many of us, we forget that the work that we do is very important to God whether it's his ministry work, whether it's work in the marketplace, and that he wants to partner with us on it and we don't have to do it on our own. But it's so sexy right now in our culture this lie that "You are the hero of your own story. All of your success is up to you so you better pull yourself up by the bootstraps." As if all of our successes aren't built on the shoulders of everyone that came before us and built from all the people that know us.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So how does that work? Because I'm a big responsibility person and I would probably lean on the "it's all up to me" thing because I've seen a lot of people who like, "Well, if God wants to do this, he's going to do this." Or, "If it's going to happen, it's going to happen." Where is the line?

Alli Worthington:

Well, I think we're always feeling out that line. So for me, after I left that role and I started my company again on April 1st of all days which is a wonderful day, I worked for six weeks, six days a week, doing 60, 70 hours a week, went through savings, got alone, built everything back up. I was hustling constantly to make sure that I could provide for everyone. I was doing my part, but God was doing his part. If I had sat back and been like, "God told me the last season was over, and I'm moving on to the next season. And I'm just going to wait and see who God sends me." We would be under a bridge.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, yeah.

Alli Worthington:

Because God comes with us, he partners with us, he gives us the wisdom we need, he gives us the courage we need. He gives us very often, he's the one that allows us to have the skills and the talents that we have. Of course, some are innate, but he allows us to continually be learning and growing. It's all partnership, but we're not going to get across the finish line that he's going to get us across if we don't start running on our own.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So many leaders struggle with the second barrier that you talk about, being afraid to disappoint others. I think a lot of us are people pleasers and particularly in ministry, but also I've seen a lot of business owners, they just don't want to let their clients down. They don't let their team down and there's this lie that, "I'm just letting everybody down." Can you talk about that?

Alli Worthington:

Yeah, this is a tough one because really what it comes down to is do we have an unhealthy fear of man or do we have a healthy fear of God? Because it's that fear of man that hurts us every time. And I wrote a book on busyness years ago and boundaries and I started reading the Gospels for, "okay, how did Jesus live?" And I found this great story that has to do with disappointing other people in Luke 4. So he's

in Capernaum, he's being Jesus, he's amazing. And all of a sudden, he looks around and he tells everyone, "I've got to get on down the road. This is why I was sent."

Alli Worthington:

He's going to tell other people about it, so. And it's just very short because Luke is so concise that the people tried to get him not to leave. And I read it that day, knew the first time and realized they were disappointed that he was leaving. They were sad that he ... Who wouldn't be sad? I would be a mess if I had Jesus in my living room with me and he said, "I've got to go to Memphis now, it's been great." Right? And that was this moment for me of realizing that Jesus, of course, we know he lived a sinless life, he disappointed people.

Alli Worthington:

Therefore disappointing people isn't a sin, disappointing people is a natural part of us living out our calling. But if we feel like disappointing people is a sign that we're not living out our calling, we're not going to be able to do what God has for us to do in that season.

Carey Nieuwhof:

How do you know who to disappoint and when to disappoint?

Alli Worthington:

Okay, now that's a terrific question. I think that it's very individual for the situation because sometimes people are disappointed because they have certain expectations that aren't yours to meet. Sometimes people are disappointed, and they're rightfully disappointed and it's something that you need to make right. And I think that comes with experience and discernment. And again, having a lot of people around us who can help us see our own blind spots because if we think that we know what we're doing all the time, and we think that we don't have blind spots, and we think that we've got it all under control, we're headed for disaster whether in business or in ministry.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, you hinted at it already that many counselor's idea, particularly for solopreneurs, small business owners, small church staff, you can easily get into your head and not escape it and make all the judgments and for years now, I've relied on other people. I'm like, "You know what? I'm thinking no, but what do you think?" So that helps. Okay.

Alli Worthington:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's good. Another thing, another negative thought that people struggle with: "I feel confused and on my own, I'm unsupported." There's a loneliness to leadership. Is that what you're driving at with this one?

Alli Worthington:

Yeah, for me what happened in that year when I was preparing to obey and to go back out on my own, when I had just lost my ability to see that this is what God wanted and I could do it, I got sick and lost my voice, completely lost my voice. Now mind you, God is very

Carey Nieuwhof:

Physically sick?

Alli Worthington:

Physically sick.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow. Oh, and physically lost your voice.

Alli Worthington:

Physically.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh God, okay. Not like, "Oh, I didn't know what to say." It's like, "No, I couldn't talk literally."

Alli Worthington:

Yeah, doctors didn't know what was wrong with me, but God was very clear with me on where he wanted me to go in the future and everything he wanted me to do in the future depended on me talking. So here I am trying to trust him, him asking me to step out in faith, that everything that I needed to do was dependent on my voice, but because I wasn't obeying him, I managed to get sick enough to lose it. This is such a perfect example. Now, not every leader loses their voice, but we do figuratively.

Alli Worthington:

We feel like we're not understood, no one understands us and what happens is we tend to shut down. Instead of doubling down on self-awareness, communication, making sure that we are doing a good job in communicating our vision and communicating our expectations and our needs with other people, and making sure that they understand as well because when communication breaks down, no one has a voice.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What was it that happened your voice?

Alli Worthington:

They don't know, doctors don't know. I spent three months in terrible pain, chest pain, stomach pain, coughed around the clock and basically got better when I left. But I still have residual effects from it. When I did my audio book, I had to rest my voice for a couple of days. So the doctors go, "We don't know what caused it, you're always going to have to keep an eye on it." But for me, it's a bit of a thorn in my side. And I go, "Remember that time when I didn't trust and I waited too long." And it's good to keep me obedient.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, no, that is a fear. I lost my voice literally, physically about 15 years ago and I was quite nervous about it, and then found out there was a medical explanation. So it was a hiatus or anything anyway, it's all better now. So okay, what about insecurity and doubt? "I don't have what it takes." That John Eldridge has been on this podcast, he's talked about that question that that's what every guy asks, I don't know about women, "do I have what it takes?" So what is what is behind that negative thought?

Alli Worthington:

Oh, absolutely women have that thought? Well, here's the thing. When you think about how you should think of yourself, we aren't meant to think that we are just worms because if we are so hard on ourselves that we tear ourselves down, we essentially partner with the enemy to tear ourselves down, we're not going to feel like we have the strength to do what God's calling us to do, to lead well, to release new products, to build organizations, to serve people well. We have to have a healthy self confidence as opposed to tearing ourselves down because if we're full of insecurity and self-doubt, we become self-focused.

Alli Worthington:

And even when we are focused on ourselves because we're criticizing ourselves, or we're tearing ourselves down, it still means that we're self absorbed. We need to have enough confidence in the Lord that He is going to partner with us that we can do whatever He's called us to do so we can go out and do it. So I think that there's a healthy amount of trust in the Lord that whatever He's called us to do, he's going to partner with us on it and let that be a healthy confidence that we have in ourselves because we are strengthened by him.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Where is the line between having a healthy sense of what you do or what you've been gifted with or what your capability is in being proud about it? Like hubris.

Alli Worthington:

I think when we forget that is a gift from Him and it is a partnership from Him. When we believe that we are naturally amazing and that God has completely given us over to do this on our own strength. That's where it gets dangerous, but do I want my heart surgeon really confident that he is great at performing surgery and when he performed surgery, he is doing what God has given him the power and the skills to do? And he is amazing at it? Yes.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Mm-hmm.

Alli Worthington:

Yeah, you don't want your heart surgeon going, "I don't really know whether I should have done this with my life and I'm really not that good at it." Yeah, you're right.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, I think it's a heart posture. Are we putting God above ourselves? Are we putting ourselves above God?

Alli Worthington:

And again, there's attention in a dance and we probably would need to keep an eye on it in lots of different ways in different seasons of our lives.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay, final one. "They said I was a failure;" listening to the voice of others. So this is another negative thought leaders struggle with.

Alli Worthington:

Yeah, this is big because we all are surrounded by voices in our lives, right? I like to put people in three main categories. They are the cheerleaders that are always going to hype you up, they are the naysayers that are always going to tear you down and then there's the slow adopters, and we often will overvalue what the cheerleaders bring to us. We will undervalue the naysayers and the naysayers do have value even if it's just to help us, help keep us humble.

Alli Worthington:

But it's the slow adopters that we really want to turn up the volume on in our lives because we have to suffer the slow adopters a little bit because when we bring an idea to them or a concept to them, they're not going to jump up and down like the cheerleaders. They're not going to automatically tell us that we're brilliant and this idea is great, they're going to ask a lot of questions. And this is where humility comes in because when you're a humble leader, you will sit through the questions and you won't go, "You just don't understand my vision, right?"

Alli Worthington:

So it's telling the slow adopters the vision, working them through all of the things that you want them to know about this idea, answering the questions, submitting yourself to going through this questioning process and when the slow adopter goes, "I like it. That's good. I think you should do it." Then you know it's a winner because a cheerleader is always going to tell you it's great, a cheerleader is going to cheer you on while you drive that car right off a bridge. And the naysayer will say I knew you were going to drive off the bridge.

Alli Worthington:

But it's the slow adopter who will go, "Can we talk about some different scenarios about driving this car off a bridge and steer you the right way?" And sometimes we don't give the slow adopters enough volume in our lives.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, and that goes back a little bit to that filter bubble you talked about where it's probably easier than ever just to surround yourself with people who think like you, applaud all of your ideas. Do you think there is a role for naysayers in your life that you need to have a couple of them? Or do you think-

Alli Worthington:

Oh absolutely.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Alli Worthington:

Yeah, it keeps you humble.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right. So how do you cultivate that without it being completely discouraging or defeating? What would that look like?

Alli Worthington:

Well, how do we cultivate the naysayers?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, well, how do you make sure you have the right naysayers around I guess is the question.

Alli Worthington:

I consider all naysayers to be in the same group.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay.

Alli Worthington:

They are valuable to keep you from getting too big for your britches.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right. So do you have friends who are naysayers or staff who are naysayers or how does that practically work?

Alli Worthington:

No, you don't ever want naysayers on the staff because they are a cancer to culture. They're a cancer to culture. Naysayers are generally out in the world and family members.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Who you can't release?

Alli Worthington:

You can't. But that's enough naysayers because no matter what you do, it won't be good enough.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Should you have them on your board? The naysayers?

Alli Worthington:

No.

Carey Nieuwhof:

No. So not on staff....

Alli Worthington:

Have slow adopters on the board.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Slow adopters on the board. Okay.

Alli Worthington:

You don't want cheerleaders or naysayers on the board. Only slow adopters.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Really? So your board should be pretty much slow adopters?

Alli Worthington:

Mm-hmm. Because you want every decision thought through, you want every idea ripped apart and put back together. You want to see where there are weak points. I always think of, remember the first Jurassic Park where you have this fabulous, the velociraptor trainer who unfortunately eats it pretty soon in the movie and he talks about how the velociraptors are so smart. They're testing the fence for weakness.

Alli Worthington:

We want people testing our fences for weakness all the time and submitting yourself to that even as a confident leader who knows "I'm gifted by God to bring what I'm bringing to the world." Submitting yourself to a group of slow adopters, to rip those ideas apart, to hit every bit of the fence idea and to test it for weakness, that's how you know your heart is in the right place. You're having the posture of humility as a leader because once we get a little bit of success, it's way too easy to filter those voices out and any board, any team that's made up of cheerleaders will drive the bus right off the bridge.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Where do the cheerleaders belong then? Do they belong on your staff? If they don't really belong on the board-

Alli Worthington:

Cheerleaders are great on staff. Cheerleaders are amazing. Naysayers know, naysayers can not be on the team in any way, shape, or form because to be a naysayer, you're always negative. You're always going to be difficult. You're always going to cause friction. Yeah, cheerleaders are great employees. But it's those slow adopters that will make sure that you stay on the right track.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So your staff should be a combination of slow adopters and cheerleaders, your board should be basically slow adopters and yeah, you're right. There seems to be an infinite supply of naysayers.

Alli Worthington:

We don't have to cultivate them or look for them, they're around.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. To what filter do you use for naysayers? Because sometimes, we have a negativity bias, right? Psychologists talk about that, that you get 100 positive emails, you get one negative, it's the one that you loop on all day. So is there any guidelines on how to filter naysayers to take what is good and then discard the rest or what does that look like?

Alli Worthington:

Yeah, that's a great question. I think that we will often think that a slow adopter is a naysayer. So it is important for us if we're not sure about the person that we're engaging with, that's why it's so important to have that heart posture of humility to go through the process because not every idea slow adopter is going to warm up to hopefully, and anyone that's speaking into your life and speaking into your business or your ministry, if they like all of your ideas, then I don't want their opinion.

Alli Worthington:

So a slow adopter isn't always going to warm up, but as you get to know people, you can figure out the difference, you can discern, "Is this person always going to be negative?" And that's their default or, "Have I just not had a good enough idea yet that I need to work through this person?" I had a coaching client at one point, she brought an idea to me and we tested it and we went through the whole process and I said, "This is amazing. This is a go." And she said, "That's great, because I had been mad at you for six months."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Alli Worthington:

Because I kept pushing back because the product wasn't there yet, we weren't ready to move forward. And what that does is protect her business. It's so important for us to protect our organizations, to protect the work that God has given us to oversee by surrounding ourselves with people who care enough about us and our work to go through the discomfort in the uncomfortable period with us and are strong enough because they don't want to impress us or they don't just want to make sure that they stay in a position of power that they will push back because it's so much easier to be gracious and kind and cheer lead.

Carey Nieuwhof:

When you consult with leaders who are running things, churches, businesses, et cetera, et cetera. Do most suffer from having too many cheerleaders? Not enough slow adopters, too many naysayers. What are the common patterns and corrections that you end up suggesting?

Alli Worthington:

Well, here's something interesting. For entrepreneurs, entrepreneurs tend to be cheerleaders/slowadopters. We all start as cheerleaders and then we learn, "Oh, okay, we need to get into testing and adopt these ideas a little bit slower." In the ministry, the ministry is almost always a

leader surrounded by cheerleaders. And it's difficult. Okay, I'm going to say this and I may be too honest, it is much easier to work with an entrepreneur or later in the corporate space than it is to work with a ministry leader who is surrounded by cheerleaders because they are so shocked by pushback.

Alli Worthington:

And I think the healthier a leader gets, the healthier a ministry leader gets, the more they're willing to allow pushback and allow conversation and not think everything automatically is naysaying.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Why do you think ministry leaders get themselves in that trap? I'm not disagreeing with you. I think I see that to why our ministry leaders so resistant to any feedback, even helpful feedback.

Alli Worthington:

I think that unfortunately, for so many of us, we have an odd sense of honor in our church circles. And we don't want to say anything negative to leaders that could be dishonoring because God has placed them in a leadership position. So who are we to push back on an idea that the leader has. So it comes from a good place and if a leader isn't careful, a leader can lose the heart posture of humility, and say, "God has put me in this place of leadership, all the ideas God gives me are amazing."

Alli Worthington:

So it is a cyclical environment where the team is trying to be gracious and serve well and do a great job and be honoring. The leader says, "the team loves everything I do, this is amazing. God has given me the ability to have only amazing ideas" and it just continues on and on and on. When I think that something that could be healthier is for every leader to go, "I need to find people who aren't personally invested in me, who are experts, who can help me make sure that I see the blind spots, that I don't drive this truck off the bridge." To use that analogy again, and to make sure that I'm not stuck in a cycle because it's a pleasant cycle to be in when we're in it until things go bad.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, and if you're successful, you may not even know, you're like, "Look at it, I really do walk on water." If you're failing or really struggling accomplishing your mission, I can see how that works where you're thinking, "Well, everyone says I'm doing a great job. So I'm just going to keep driving that bus right off the cliff, right?"

Alli Worthington:

Exactly.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What would be a good break point if someone is like ... I've heard Craig Groeschel say, "If you haven't had significant pushback in the last two months, you're probably surrounded by 'yes' people." Would you agree with that rule? And then how do you break that cycle if a leader is realizing, "Wow, I am surrounded by cheerleaders." Under whatever guys, what would be a good first step to break that cycle?

Alli Worthington:

First step is to always bring in an outsider whether it is a church consultant, a business coach, business coaches where administrate business same because we're all dealing with people, but to bring in someone who is not invested, not personally invested in you, they become personally invested over time of course, but someone whose main job is to poke that fence and find out where the weaknesses are and see what's going on. It's great whether we are ministry leaders where we're leading in the corporate space or we're entrepreneurs, it's especially important as an entrepreneur because we don't have teams of people keeping an eye on us. It's us and our laptop and our systems in the cloud.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. No, I think you're right, you pay someone to tell you the truth. And then if you want to adjust your team, so you have a small team, how do you make sure that they're not all cheerleaders? Are there anything you look for in the hiring process or anything you look for in the recruitment process that make sure you get some slow adopters?

Alli Worthington:

Yeah, one thing that I do with all my clients whenever we're hiring, I say they are hiring, whenever they're hiring, whether they're bringing in someone who is in a sales position or bringing in a surgeon in a center, I have them give everyone an Enneagram and a DISC test because I want to know, enneagram tells me motivation in someone's heart, the DISC will tell me all of the details. Now, and there's a lot of pushback on this because people are, "Oh, personality test, they don't tell you everything." But they do tell you a lot and it's a great starting point.

Alli Worthington:

One thing I look for a DISC, you want people with enough D, enough dominance who aren't just going to roll over on their bellies and say everything's great all of the time. So there's some little clues like that, yeah. You don't want someone that is all the way high on D, they're so rebellious that they're never going to be able to work well underneath you. It's you have to go for that happy medium.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Any final thoughts on a leader for a leader who needs to push past a lot of insecurity to get to that place where they can hear opinions they disagree with?

Alli Worthington:

Yeah, I think it's important for us to remember that God has given us the visions that we have for a reason, God has given us the work that we're supposed to do for a reason whether we are overseeing a factory, or a church or our own company. And as believers, as people who are submitted to His will, yeah, we're going to be hit with self-doubt, we are going to be wracked with insecurity sometimes. This is all part of it, but to realize that those things don't mean that we're not meant to be good leaders, those things don't mean that this is just how we lead and this is how we're going to be stuck.

Alli Worthington:

What it means is we're on a process to get healthier, we're on a process to have the Lord transform us and partner with us all of the time to make our companies and our ministries and our organizations as healthy as they can be so we can fulfill this vision that He's given us because all of the work of our hands

is done to make the world a better place, is done in partnership with Him, but sometimes we just have to get out of our own way to do it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Any final thoughts?

Alli Worthington:

I had an idea or a final thought, but I think you asked me to say something different. If anybody's listening, and you are going through a season of pain and discomfort and you're thinking, "I thought God called me to this, but it's so hard, it's so painful, it's so difficult that this must not be what God has called me to. I want you to keep your hand on the plow." What happens is we think, "this is my field. This is what God's called me to." And we get to it. And it's rocky and there's vines all over it and it's terrible. And we go, "Oh, well I thought it was my field, but I need to go find a better one that feels right."

Alli Worthington:

But I think that God is calling people to be like, "Well, I think I'm going to go get a backhoe. And I'm going to put on my work gloves. And I'm going to keep my hand on the plow and I'm going to prepare this field for it to be what God has called me to." Because way too often, it gets difficult, it gets hard. And we take that as a sign that we're not supposed to do what God's called us to do. When really, it just means that it's hard.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. Yeah. Almost nothing worth doing is easy, right? When you really look at it. Yeah. Okay, so the book is called Standing Strong. And tell us where people can find you and the book online.

Alli Worthington:

Yeah, I'm Alli Worthington, I am Alli Worthington on Instagram. I am @alli on Twitter, alliworthington.com and my podcast is The Alli Worthington Show.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Awesome. Alli, thanks so much for being with us today, I really appreciate it.

Alli Worthington:

Thanks for having me, this has been fun.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, here's to a better mindset heading into a fresh year and it's nice to see some hope on the horizon, it's nice to see vaccines rolling out who knows what the news is going to hold by the time you hear this. There's always a gap between when it's recorded and when it's brought to you, but we got an incredible year lined up for 2021 and we're going to kick it off with Andy Stanley. So I sat down a little while ago with Andy and talked to him about his framework for decision making.

Carey Nieuwhof:

If you thought 2020 was hard, 2021 is going to require more decisions as well. Andy Stanley is one of the best decision makers I know and so we deconstruct that. Here's an excerpt from the next episode.

Andy Stanley:

I was surrounded by extraordinary people who in their sphere, really genuinely were more ... They were smarter and had a greater insight into their lane than I did. So why in the world would I feel like I have to be the leader in all the lanes and try to lead in areas where I don't have competence? Because again, the goal is to get in our lane, stay there, that's where we make the greatest value-add and to let the other people drive their lanes, support them, remove obstacles, but not try to make decisions for them.

Andy Stanley:

So, early on at North Point, I was surrounded by some really, really great people, smart people, people who, "Hey, just give them the resources, get out of the way, watch them go and make sure everybody gets the credit."

Carey Nieuwhof:

So that is the next episode. And also, right after Andy, we're going to hear from Patrick Lencioni, Rachel Cruze, Lakers GM, Rob Pelinka, Hannah Brencher, Seth Godin, Craig Groeschel, man, we are doing our best to bring you the very best in 2021. So if you Subscribe, you get that all for free. And if this episode has helped you, would you tell your friends about it? Just let us know on social, we follow along too. You can find me at Carey Nieuwhof on Instagram, CNieuwhof on Facebook and Twitter. And quick Google will get you there as well.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So very excited for what's coming up in the next year. And now it's time for What I'm Thinking About and our Starbucks giveaway. So hang on, I'm about to show you how to win. But this segment is brought to you by Pushpay and Church Community Builder, you can increase connection and encourage giving with ChurchStaq by going to pushpay.com/carey and by the Church Leader Toolkit to access my brand new resource, it's absolutely free. Text the word Toolkit to 33777 or go to churchleadertoolkit.com and listeners, hey, you've been amazing. It's been a record year for this podcast.

Carey Nieuwhof:

We have just seen so many of you jump on board and so we just want to say thank you. It's been a tough year and we're going to give away a lot of Starbucks over the next few days. So if you're listening to this episode live or a few days later, head on over to my social media channels, Carey Nieuwhof on Instagram, Cniewhof on Facebook and Twitter, you will find some barcodes you can use at your local Starbucks.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It's just a small way to say thank you, we really care about you. We're grateful for you, you guys make the show and we'd like to do that every once in a while. Been a while and we're like, "Nah, let's finish off 2020, kickoff 2021 with some Starbucks." So again, we got links to everything in the show notes too. So you can just find me and even if you misspell my name, you will probably find it. It's a weird one. So anyway, giving that away and that's for podcast listeners.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So we're really, really grateful for you guys. So I want to talk to you about mindsets because what Alli talked about in this conversation I think is a very real thing. If you think about it, what you bring to your job, whatever you do in business or in ministry is your brain, right? If you're doing this kind of work, and I can get very negative with myself sometimes and I hear a lot of ... Well, I talk to a lot of leaders and sometimes I'm like, "Man, your thinking is so limited."

Carey Nieuwhof:

And so I want to just highlight five small-thinking mindsets that can really cap your potential. One of my favorite quotes is from Henry Ford who said, "Whether you think you can or think you can't, you're right." And there's a lot of truth in that, right? If I'm like, "Oh, there's no way I can then, yeah, I'm going to start acting in that direction." So here's here's a couple of limiters that I hear regularly and I have to make sure I don't find myself saying.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So small mindset number one, "what works there will not work here." Do you hear that? I hear that all the time. People are like, "Well, you see, you don't you don't understand, that works over there, but it's not going to work in my country. It's not going to work here. It's not going to work in my context, it's just not, okay?" And that leads us to limiting belief number two: "My context is different."

Carey Nieuwhof:

I have heard this. I'm not making this up. You're going to be like, "That's crazy." It's like, "Well, you see, that's in the West part of the city, in the East part of the city, that's not going to work because my context is different." I just hear that so often and you know who I never hear that from? I never hear that from leaders who are crushing it. I never hear it from growing organizations. I only hear that from people who are trying to justify a lack of progress.

Carey Nieuwhof:

"Well, the reason that doesn't work is my context is different. You see, that works over there, but it doesn't work over here." Another limiter, "if you build it, they will come." Now that's a little bit of a right turn. That comes from Field of Dreams years ago, but many people thought, "What my problem is we just don't have the right location." Or, "And location is important, but it's not critical." Or, "If we just had \$2 million to build this out the way we want to build it out, then we would grow."

Carey Nieuwhof:

A building can help you grow a facility can help you grow, but it won't make you grow. Okay? There are a lot of things, including churches, restaurants, businesses that have had lousy locations, and they got to line out the door. See, you can lead a growing church and a dying building and a dying church in a great building. There are a lot of dying restaurants, dying gyms, dying churches, dying businesses that have amazing real estate, they just don't have the vision to support the facility.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So it's not this idea that, "Hey, if we're going to build it, they're going to come." How about this? "People don't give" or fill in the blank. "People don't buy ___ or people don't purchase ___ or people aren't interested in ___ or people don't listen to podcasts," okay? As soon as you get into that, "Well, people

just aren't ..." it's like, "Okay, well like maybe if you're selling 19th century blacksmith tools, yeah, that's a pretty small market." But if you're doing what a lot of people are doing, it's not that people don't, okay? Just because most people don't give or just because a lot of people you're like, you can't get your podcast off the ground, or you can't get people to subscribe to your YouTube channel, it's not like people are not watching YouTube, they're watching YouTube, they're just not watching your YouTube.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So I have to prevent myself from categorical thinking and rather than saying "people don't," then I have to say, "Well, why aren't people subscribing to my YouTube channel?" Or, "Why aren't people giving to my cause?" Or, "Why aren't people subscribing to my show?" Or things like that. Or, "Why aren't people attending here?" Right? So it's not that people don't as a rule, it's not like people don't work out, it's like, "No, why are people not working out at your gym or in your classes?" That's really the question you've got to ask and that requires self-examination.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It moves blame from the culture, blah-blah-blah-blah-blah to responsibility. It's like, "Okay, obviously I'm not leading them properly." And then finally, "people don't like big _____," okay? People don't like big churches, people don't like big retailers, people don't like ... Well, yes and no, but tell that to Amazon, tell that to Netflix, tell that and even in the church world where a lot of us camp out. Ed Stetzer was on this show, I think it was the beginning of last year, maybe 2019 and Ed said and we'll link to it in the show notes that despite what everyone says popularly, the reality is it's the big churches that are growing, right? Big churches keep getting bigger.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And so there's a lot of myths out there. But again, that falls in the category of "people don't," people don't like big churches, people don't like churches like ours. It's like, "Well, that's not even true." So once you get into categorical thinking like that, those are small thinking mindsets that can really hold you back and I don't want anything to hold you back next year. So just some thoughts along the way, I hope that really helps you and you know what really helps me? Free Starbucks. That's what really helps me.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So we've got some free Starbucks for you. I would love for you to get your hands on it. The way to do it is follow me on the socials. We're going to be sharing some barcodes that you can just use if you happen to be online or you can get to a store quick when they go live, they tend to sell out quickly, but we stack these up with a lot of cash this time around just to say thank you to you. So go to Carey Nieuwhof on Instagram, we'll link to this in the show notes as well, Cniewwhof on Facebook and Twitter.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Randomly they will show up, we are respecters of time zones, and you'll find them there. And thank you so much for listening. Thanks for an incredible year. See you in '21 with Andy Stanley 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.

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