

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. Welcome to episode 438 of the podcast. It's Carey, here. I hope our time together today helps you thrive in life and leadership. Got Pete Scazzero back on the podcast today. My goodness, I don't know what world we're in right now; whether we're in the post-pandemic world, the mid-pandemic, the Delta variant world, I don't know.

Carey Nieuwhof:

But what I thought was, we would all be getting healthier. I've been digging into some research lately. That's not the case. So leaders are stressed. 30% of CEOs have thought about quitting. 40% of people are changing jobs. 50% of people, leaders, can't sleep at night. It's challenging.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So I'm so glad to have Pete Scazzero back. We're going to talk about getting you healthy. This is a theme we come back to increasingly on the podcast. But to me, it's like a diamond. You just keep turning it in different angles, and you see it differently in different light. Pete wants to help you get emotionally and spiritually healthy. So we're going to talk about that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Today's episode is brought to you by Remodel Health. Please, we are so thankful for our partners. If you haven't checked them out, do that. Head on over to remodelhealth.com/analysis today to get your health benefits analysis, and use the code CAREY50 for 50% off.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And by Ministry Grid. Podcast listeners get \$200 off the regular Ministry Grid price by going to ministrygrid.com/carey.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So Pete is going to talk about the reasons so many pastors fail. If you are under chronic stress, that is actually an indicator that you could end up doing something with your life, and with your responsibility, that you don't want to do. We're going to talk about how your platform can easily outgrow your character, and how to develop an interior life that will help you lead a healthy organization and life.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Pete, after leading the New Life Fellowship for 26 years, co-founded Emotionally Healthy Discipleship, a groundbreaking ministry that moves the church forward by slowing the church down in order to multiply deeply changed leaders and disciples. He hosts the top ranked Emotionally Healthy Leader podcast, is the author of a number of best selling books, included, the Emotionally Healthy Leader and Emotionally Healthy Spirituality.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Hey, if you are not part of the church world, welcome. We're really glad you're here. We're trying to bring the best of the church world to business, and the best of the business world to church leaders. You can apply these in whatever context you're at. Those are the kinds of conversations we're committed to having.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I've also got an episode today of Ask Me Anything About Productivity. We're going to talk about Gina's question. She asks, "How do you respond in crisis? Do you need a different rhythm in crisis?" I'm going to answer that and honestly, life is crisis. So how do you deal with it when stuff is always popping up?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, blind decisions, as you know, lose you money. Sadly, as organizational leaders, we often fail into making blind decisions all the time, especially when it comes to employee health benefits. New research shows that more often, employers over spend on health benefits and under provide for employees, and that bothers me. They don't even realize it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That is why exactly our partner, Remodel Health, designed their exclusive health benefits analysis tool. It gives you total visibility on what matters most to employees, then compares what they want against newer, better, and cheaper plans. So you're actually giving your team what they want and need. Plus, using these analyses have literally saved customers millions of dollars.

Carey Nieuwhof:

To date, Remodel Health has helped our podcast listeners, just from this show alone, save over 2.1 million dollars. So head on over to remodelhealth.com/analysis today to get your health benefits analysis, and use the code CAREY50 for 50% off.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Pastors and church leaders, while we've got you, do you wish you could streamline and standardize your volunteer training? Lots and lots of organizations are struggling with volunteer training right now. Sometimes it's hard to get them all in the room, particularly when you've got people who are anxious to be back, people who don't want to be back, people who are volunteering online.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You've got to check out Ministry Grid. They have everything you need to streamline volunteer training, all in one place. It's an online tool to build, customize, and curate your volunteer training in your church. You can use their 700 plus training courses and upload your own videos. Over the past year, they have seen churches adding their own content.

Carey Nieuwhof:

My church, Connexus Church, uses Ministry Grid, has found it so beneficial for our own training. I'm being trained as a volunteer this fall at my church, too, now that I'm no longer a lead pastor.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Here's the best news of all. They're offering our podcast listeners \$200 off the regular Ministry Grid price. For just \$399 a year, you get unlimited access for your church. So head on over to ministrygrid.com/carey to get this special offer.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So leaders, I'm in your corner, and very grateful to bring you another conversation with Pete Scazzero. I don't think you're going to be disappointed. Here we go.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, Pete, we've already started into our conversation and I figured I had to hit record. Welcome back.

Pete Scazzero:

Thank you, Carey. I'm welcome. I'm happy to be welcomed back.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You're always welcome.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. We had a great conversation over at ChurchPulse Weekly, the podcast I do with the Barna Group. Man, it was so good. I thought, "Well, let's pick it up where we left off there and where we left off here, last time you were on the podcast."

Carey Nieuwhof:

But you were saying you're learning some really interesting things. As somebody's who's written numerous books, lived in content for a long time, tell us a little bit about your Masterclass and what you're learning from that. Because I was really interested. This is for all content creators and there's a lot who listen to this podcast, which is a really interesting way to figure out how your message lands, what your audience is really thinking, the people that you're talking to. Can you tell us a bit about that?

Pete Scazzero:

Yeah. Carey, I fell into it. It wasn't something that I thought about. I know, my daughter, for example, went to an MBA program in Spain, second best in Europe, and it was based on most of the case study method. I know Harvard's MBA program. I have a friend who taught there and it's case study method.

Pete Scazzero:

So I knew about it. I'd played with it years ago. But when I wrote Emotionally Healthy Discipleship, I decided to do a Masterclass with just 40 people. What I did do was, I invited people, I didn't want to just be lecturing. So I did a 30 minutes, what's underneath what I wrote on different chapters, but then I asked them to send in case studies.

Pete Scazzero:

I gave them a basic format to follow, with some simple questions like, "Tell me your context, leadership context. What problem are you facing," and they'd define it. "What have they tried so far?" I want to

know what they tried that didn't work. They listed that. Then, "What questions are they holding?" That was very important.

Pete Scazzero:

It drew out so much of, for me, it was so specific, and stuff came out of me that I hadn't thought about. I'll give you one little example. One was an Anglican rector, priest. Works for one of the dioceses there in the UK. He'd been doing our material with his dioceses for the last, say five, eight years. He's frustrated because they were so slow to respond, and change, and all that.

Pete Scazzero:

I would get these case studies. I would pray over them. I'd say, "Lord, how would you have me respond?" So in his case I just said, "Let me just look for a second." I know a little bit about how Church of England was founded. So I said, "When did they start?" Oh, 1529.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. That was a while ago.

Pete Scazzero:

I talked to this guy. We'll call him Joe. I said, "Joe, you're part of the Church of England. You have been around almost, 1529, it started. That's a long genogram history." I said, "So you expect that you've been teaching some stuff for the last seven, eight years, and you're upset because they have not changed their 500 year history in five to eight years?" I said, "You don't understand, first of all, what it means to understand a genogram, legacies, positive and negative legacies, and how history impacts our present." I said, "What you're doing is magnificent, but it's a mustard seed."

Pete Scazzero:

So, I got into the whole issue of, the kingdom's a mustard seed. We got into not just the genogram of your family of origin, but genograms of a church denomination like that. Then of course, I followed that with a guy who was from Bulgaria, a couple pastors there in Sofia, Bulgaria. Again, their attempt to bring Emotionally Healthy Discipleship into their context and leadership development.

Pete Scazzero:

So, we got into everything from their history to being under Communism for decades, then the Nazis. Now all the corruption post '91, and you're battling so much stuff. I said, "Yeah. That's why you're there."

Pete Scazzero:

But this thing of speed and frustration was such a great moment, and just getting perspective of genograms. It's not just genograms of churches and denominations, but also of countries that have to be taken into account.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Just a quick clarification. What's a genogram? How's that different?

Pete Scazzero:

A genogram is a way to map out your family of origin, or church, or movement, over generations. It comes out of family systems theory, that, it's interesting how I fell into this. I spent a couple decades working on it. Anyway, it's a tool used primarily by high level therapists. If you're getting a Masters in Marriage and Family Therapy, or PhD in Systems Theory, you'll learn about genograms.

Pete Scazzero:

But I got exposed to it when I actually began this journey of E.H. Discipleship in 1996 when Geri and I, my wife and I, were in a therapist's office and our marriage was doing badly. In 10 minutes, he put a couple charts and go, "Your grandparents. Geri, your grandparents, what was their marriage like? How would you describe them, couple adjectives? What was your mother and father's marriage like? A couple adjectives."

Pete Scazzero:

Then he did mine, "Pete, describe your grandparents marriages, a couple adjectives. What were they like? How did they resolve conflict, et cetera?" Then, "What was your parents' marriage like?" Then he said, "Now let's look at your marriage." He did it in about 10, 15 minutes.

Pete Scazzero:

What was so striking for us was, we'd been Christians, and very arrogant, proud Christians, that we were the first Christian generation in our families, "We're so different." Then we looked at it and said, "Huh. Our marriage really isn't any different than our parents' marriage in terms of unresolved conflicts, et cetera."

Pete Scazzero:

I said, "That was powerful." So I went and started doing research on this thing called, what was that? It's called genograms. Then I went and got my doctorate in Marriage and Family. So I spent years working on this thing. I said, "This is a powerful tool to bring into the church in the area of leadership development and discipleship."

Pete Scazzero:

So it became a very core piece of everything we developed. We all come from families of origin that go way back in histories. When you come to Jesus, you're birthed into a new family, the family of Jesus, where life is different. So, discipleship is leaving your family of origin, and leaving your culture, and learning to do life in the new family of Jesus.

Pete Scazzero:

That's discipleship. We developed this tool of the genogram, basically for church that you don't have to be a professional to use. Honestly, it took us 17 years to actually figure out, how do you do this through a video? How do you do this in a church context without professionals there? People thought I was crazy. They said, "You're going to get in legal trouble." I said, "No, I'm not a professional, either. I'm a pastor." I said, "But this can be done."

Pete Scazzero:

It was a lot of trial and error. It's extremely powerful with many, many, many applications. But it's a paradigm of understanding discipleship. For example, as you all know, I turn 65 in 10 days.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Happy birthday.

Pete Scazzero:

Thank you.

Pete Scazzero:

So how do you grow older in the new family of Jesus? What does that look like? You see, I have a script of how to grow older from my Italian American family, from my family of origin, then from Western culture and how they view aging.

Pete Scazzero:

So as I relate to my adult children, I have four adult children who have had their own families. Two of them have their own families and grandkids. How we relate as peers, I'm not their father telling them what to do anymore. That's a big developmental task. How do I not over function, but yet, be a peer with them, respectful and a grandfather without meddling?

Pete Scazzero:

That's a whole, I never saw that modeled well. It's all about power and identity. How do I want to live into my, serving Jesus, into my 60s, 70s, 80s, and hopefully, 80s? I'm in the best years of my life.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. So we live in an age, Pete, where people feel self-determined, you can be anything. You can rewrite the script. You can decide what you would become. I can imagine there are a couple of leaders, maybe particularly younger leaders listening who are like, "Oh. How would what King Henry VIII did in the 16th century impact me today?"

Carey Nieuwhof:

What would you say? Or even my grandparents. I don't even know the names of my great grandparents. How do they impact me today? Because the older I've gotten, the more what you're saying resonates with me.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I'll give you a very practical example. I have a coach right now, a counselor/performance coach. He profiled me against high performing leaders. Apparently my activity level, even compared to other high performing leaders if you want to put it in a category, is off the charts, almost pathological. I am not good at sitting still.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Now, I come from entrepreneurs. My parents ran a business. I also pointed out to Greg McKeown recently, I was on his podcast because he was asking about my activity level. I'm like, "My parents are both from Holland. I was born in Canada, but the Netherlands did actually reclaim a third of their land from the sea over the last few centuries." There's a sense in which the Dutch are never idle. They're always moving. They're always improving. They're always fixing.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I've been to Holland five times in my life, but would that show up in my personality? What are we talking about here?

Pete Scazzero:

Absolutely. It's in your bones.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay.

Pete Scazzero:

We like to say, "Jesus may be in your heart, Carey, but grandpa's in your bones." That's kind of our mantra.

Pete Scazzero:

So, oh, absolutely it's in you. Just like you look at Canadian history. Why do Canadians tend to be more peace loving, peace makers internationally? The United States, we have a war history, fierce independence. If you look at our history, polarization's not a new thing.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I read 1776 last summer, the David McCullough book, I think.

Pete Scazzero:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It is. I felt like I was reading 2016.

Pete Scazzero:

Exactly.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Everything's changed and nothing's changed. There was polarization, racial tension, tension between men and women, between regions north and south, the whole deal. That was all there and the right to bear arms, which explains America's attitude toward guns.

Pete Scazzero:

I'm reading a book on Teddy Roosevelt by Doris Kearns, the historian. It's the early 1900s. It sounds like you're reading today. It's the same issues. It's amazing, the similarities. It's our own bones as a country, so it's nothing surprising.

Pete Scazzero:

But I've been called a racehorse on steroids by one, he's a business guy, does a lot of consulting with a friend of mine, with large CEOs of businesses. He goes, "Pete, no wonder you're an urban monk, and I deal with CEOs." He goes, "They're racehorses." He goes, "You're a racehorse on steroids."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Pete Scazzero:

It's creativity. It just comes out of me.

Pete Scazzero:

So I have had, and my journey ended up moving into monastic rhythms. Because I needed to balance and center so that I had a sense of proper channeling. I'm still highly innovative. I will, I'm sure, on my deathbed have a bucket list like Disney had of, what do you call it, kind of the wishlist of dreams. I'll have things which could be over here, a bucket.

Pete Scazzero:

I love that. However, there's limits. As a big part of theology was part of my rediscovering is a gift of limits. Biblically and personally so important. So I think theologically, as a leader who's entrepreneurial as well, it's been such a gift to get anchored into some of this, what I call emotional health, and a slowed down, monastic spirituality in the midst of activity. Which has saved my life, first of all, but been so rich, and wonderful, and necessary. I think partly because of my family of origin, my history, and culture where I live. I'm in New York.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Where did your racehorse come from? Some of that's God given DNA, but when you look back at your genogram, if I'm pronouncing that right.

Pete Scazzero:

I don't fully know. We had a family business, too. My father had, he definitely had some in him. But he was a Depression baby. His father had died. He ended up having to leave high school, support the family. So, he was always struggling his whole life to support everybody, even our family. He was immigrant. He was Italian immigrant, so you had that whole immigrant thing, so your kids would get ahead. But he had a lot of ideas and dreams. My mom had mental illness, so he was never able to do much because of her illness. He was a workaholic, as well.

Pete Scazzero:

I look back at that. My siblings don't have it. He has it. He had it, but it never quite got expressed. I think for me, I don't know, it just, I don't know. I look back at him, for sure, and my mother's side grandparents who had some entrepreneurial stuff, I had some bad family members, too, on the Mafia side, as well. But I don't know what they were all about.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right.

Pete Scazzero:

But I think some of it's Holy Spirit, gift-wise, dreams, and visions. I love dreaming. They get me in trouble sometimes, but now, getting older, it's been so good because I've got enough other balance theologically and experientially that I don't get in trouble as much, starting projects I'm not going to finish. More thoughtful, had a lot of failures under my belt.

Pete Scazzero:

Getting older is, I was told many years ago that your 60s and 70s will be your best decades if you're faithful in your 30s, 40s, 50s. I think that ended up being true. My 60s are turning out to be my most fruitful decade and most wonderful decade of life.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So encouraging to hear. So much of your work has been formative in my life, as you know. Part of it for leaders, because I think you're right. We come out of the gate. People who listen to this kind of podcast, there's a bit of stallion in everybody. You're like, "I want to make a difference, want to make a dent in the universe. I want to work my way up," or, "I want to start something or found something."

Carey Nieuwhof:

What I've discovered is, it's a question of maybe redeeming the gift. In other words, my gift was there, but it had a good side. It also had a shadow side, and it hurt people along the way, as you discovered in your marriage, as you discovered in your leadership. What would you say to the leader, because you and I have had the benefit, maybe a decade apart or so. But we've had the benefit of years that a lot of listeners haven't had.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What would you say to the young leader who is trying to say, "Pete, can I get there faster? Is there any way that I can get rid of the shadow side of my gift that's annoying everybody around me, or causing other problems in my life?"

Pete Scazzero:

I think for me, my encouragement to young leaders in their 30s, for example is tending to your inner life is a matter of life and death. You've got some issues here about culture, questions that you were going to ask. You want to develop healthy cultures. I don't care if it's a business, a ministry, a church. Healthy culture is the only way it's going to be sustaining long-term. I don't care what you're building.

Pete Scazzero:

As leaders, it's going to flow out of, we are the culture. Your inner life is the culture. It doesn't matter what you speak, what books you recommend they read. It's what you're living is what's going to become the culture of those around you. So that means spending time managing external things like institutions, and plans, and strategies. That's easy.

Pete Scazzero:

But leading, letting yourself be leading your inner life, that's dealing with monsters. That's difficult. But that is your real work. My encouragement, I didn't get started until my late 30s is, you want to dedicate

serious time of investment into your being. Early, because that is the most important gift you can give to your business, your church, your employees, everyone who's looking to you for leadership.

Pete Scazzero:

It's your being. Your gifts may go beyond your being. You may have a platform because of your charisma, way beyond your inner life's capacity to sustain it, but it will catch up with you. It will.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, I know this is your life's work and we explore it every time we get together. But just for those who are like, "Okay, I've got to pay attention to my inner life." Can you give us a couple of building blocks for that, Pete? I've had to figure it out the hard way like you do. I had to work on that day after day, year after year.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What are some rhythms that if someone's like, "I've never paid attention to the inside." Where do they start?

Pete Scazzero:

Wow. Well, we're talking to a Christian audience here?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Largely, yeah.

Pete Scazzero:

Largely. But even if you weren't a Christian, I would say to you, "You need first silence and stillness in your life." That's frightening before the Lord. To be able to pay attention to your feelings, what's going on inside; your motives, "Why am I anxious? Why am I impatient? Why am I so angry at that person at the meeting who ignored what I said, or disagreed with me?" To have space to be reflective so God can come to you. Doing things like looking at your family of origin and how it's impacted who you are today.

Pete Scazzero:

Listen, we have many folks with PhDs who think they're stupid. They get another PhD. They still feel like they're stupid. Why? Because they were told they were stupid when they were six years old, and never did the inner work to differentiate. They're still living their family of origin story. They've got two PhDs now, but they still feel like losers, or stupid. Or folks who are highly accomplished, multimillionaires, who feel like losers. They live like they're poor, but they're actually worth hundreds of millions of dollars because it's inside. The money's not solving the inside problem.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right.

Pete Scazzero:

So you know, everyone's coming into your team, for example, of how they do conflict, how they do feelings, how they do empathy. You name it, how they do success. All that's coming from a family of origin. You can't help manage and lead that team if you're unaware of your own self.

Pete Scazzero:

So it starts with you slowing down to pay attention. You probably need to find some kind of guides, mentors, coaches. I'm not talking about just coaches who are going to help you manage moving faster and smarter. There are coaches that will help you do that. I'm talking about coaches, mentors, spiritual director, therapist that are going to help you get at the inner life out of what you lead in the outer life.

Pete Scazzero:

We're leading externally from the inside. That's the difference versus, "I'm just leading things on the outside here. If there's problems, I'll pay attention to my inside because I have to, but I don't have time really for that because I'm moving so fast."

Pete Scazzero:

That's American leadership. Sadly, we've brought that into the church. We pray before the meeting starts, and then we plan, "We got to reach the world for Christ." Well, I'm glad that the early church didn't do that. We wouldn't be here today.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Let's pick apart the collapse of leaders. It's a good interview. I haven't touched a single question I sent you, so this is good, Pete. This is good.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Let's talk about the moral collapse of leaders and let's not pick on anyone in particular. No names. Unfortunately, there's enough examples now that we probably all have someone else in mind. But men and women, mostly men in business, men in ministry, mess things up. They end up taking money, making stupid decisions, sleeping with people they're not married to, betraying the trust of people and abusing people.

Carey Nieuwhof:

The collapse of leadership happens so often. Do you want to talk about what you see in that? What are some of the driving factors that cause leaders to fail?

Pete Scazzero:

There's many complex reasons. Many folks go, like you say, why would they do such a stupid thing? They even actually have a pretty good marriage and they go have an affair. Or they embezzle money, but they don't even really need it that badly. You say, "Why would they do that?"

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's a great question.

Pete Scazzero:

Yeah. Part of it is, they're looking to get out. The pace of their lives is unsustainable. They're angry at something, maybe at themselves, the situation. They don't have any idea how to redo their lives, so they do something stupid so they'll get kicked out. "You'll kick me out. That'll get me out."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Now, is that intentional? Are they like, "I'm going to get fired."

Pete Scazzero:

No, it's totally [crosstalk 00:27:45]

Carey Nieuwhof:

No, it's all subconscious, right?

Pete Scazzero:

Yeah. Yeah. They have no idea why. They're running on such fumes. They're so exhausted. It's like because they don't know how to self-soothe, again, low differentiation is a word we often use.

Pete Scazzero:

So I come home. I'm exhausted and what do I do? I go watch porn to medicate and feel better about myself. Versus letting yourself feel the feelings, "I'm exhausted," pivot. I need to make some shifts here. You talked about you're making some shifts in 2022 about how you're structuring your schedule, which I'm sure you'll talk about in the podcast.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Pete Scazzero:

Which I feel is fascinating, but you're pivoting knowing that, "This is probably not the pace I want to go for 2022."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right.

Pete Scazzero:

We're going to shift. It's hard, because no one's telling you to shift. The momentum is, keep going.

Carey Nieuwhof:

No, everyone's telling me to do the opposite. Everyone's saying, "We want you. We need you." I'm like, "No. I'm not making any decisions on 2022 until Q3 2021. My calendar's blank."

Pete Scazzero:

That's amazing. I'm in the same situation. I've got the momentum pushing me forward, from publishers, to people who work for me or around me. People's livelihoods are wrapped up in this thing. It's exciting and there's adrenaline on it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, yeah. Yeah. Look, somebody wants me! Wow, this is big!

Pete Scazzero:

It's like that poster, Uncle Sam, I've got to post this on social media. You know the poster, Uncle Sam Wants You!, the old Army poster? How many young kids, because you want to be wanted so bad. So you say, "I'll sign up. I want to be wanted."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, what brilliant psychology. I never thought about that.

Pete Scazzero:

So they sign up and they're in boot camp, or they're in the middle of a firefight and they, "Why did I ever say yes?" Because no one ever wanted me and the Army said, "We want you." I realize it's the same-

Carey Nieuwhof:

It's a whole new spin.

Pete Scazzero:

It's the same with pastors and leaders. "Why did I say yes to this speaking engagement? I don't even want to go, but they want me. Well, I'll get on the plane. I'll fly four hours, but they wanted me. At least I'm wanted, but I don't want to be on this plane. I want to be home, but I got seduced by, 'We want you.'"

Pete Scazzero:

Again, it's work to have the self-discipline to be able to know what to say no to. You ever heard the expression, since the Middle Ages, one of the seven deadly sins was sloth. The sloth was the lack of discipline to set priorities. Lack of discipline to have a life of recollection, they used to call it, a life of silence and solitude, to be centered.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's a very different understanding than we think of as sloth.

Pete Scazzero:

Yes. So the only slothful people are busy.

Pete Scazzero:

So I have my things I watch in myself, especially in my body, when I am out of whack, when I'm doing far more than my inner life can sustain, when I've been seduced by that, "Uncle Sam wants you, Pete," and I've said yes, I was, "I don't want to do this." So I pay very close attention to my body because the body knows before, often, my mind and our minds.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So you're thinking, if I'm tying this in right, is it possible that these leaders who end up in the headlines have had all the symptoms that you would feel, they just didn't realize it was going on? You said they wanted out, that kind of thing.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Can you talk about some of the symptoms that you look for, to see if you're getting out of sorts? I realize when I burned out, I never understood affairs, never understood that. That's nothing that's been part of my story, by the grace of God. But when I was really burned out, I'm like, "Oh, this is how it happens." I had one guy tell me once, "All I wanted to do was feel something because I couldn't feel anything anymore."

Pete Scazzero:

Exactly.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So let's keep talking about that. What are the signs that you might be heading for a fall? Or getting out of whack?

Pete Scazzero:

It's not even, again, what's a fall? There's the big falls, where I blow up my life, or my marriage and my kids by doing something really stupid. Again, not understanding even the power. I get afraid, I get a healthy fear of sadness when I see young, gifted people wielding power, whether it's in a church context, a large church. They're building their platforms on social media really big, or traveling. I'm like, "Oh, Lord." Because I know in certain cases, they do not have the inner life to sustain this, and this is not good. This is not good.

Pete Scazzero:

But they don't realize it's not good. They actually are saying all the right things. They're actually preaching the right things and they don't even get it that they're not living it. It's so seductive. You can even write about it and not actually live it, and it's not going to come out for five, 10, 15, 20 years.

Pete Scazzero:

What they don't understand is, the platform is a smoke. It's a cloud. It's going to come and go. We're here, Carey, and we're gone. Pete who? Carey who?

Carey Nieuwhof:

You're right.

Pete Scazzero:

So I look for, on the small things, for myself because I could fall like anybody, tomorrow. If anyone thinks he stands, let him take heed lest he fall, 1 Corinthians 13. I'm sorry, verse, no. It's chapter 10, verse 13, 11, 12, 13 about, if you think you're standing, you're in big trouble. We're all dependent.

Pete Scazzero:

So I watch myself on a daily basis. One, is there anxiety in my body? Is there tenseness, my stomach? I had a very difficult conversation yesterday, and had to, they made this long story during COVID, a DVD video of me for one of our curriculums, a redoing of the curriculum. They did it during COVID, so they did some things on, not the cheap, but had to compromise some things.

Pete Scazzero:

Anyway, I got the final cuts. I was supposed to approve it, and then we're good to go. I thought it was terrible. They probably put 20, 30 plus thousand dollars into it, a bunch of people's couple, few days work. I put a couple days work in. I said, "I'm not going to, you can't release this. This is poor. This quality is not reflective of the kind of quality we want at Emotionally Healthy Discipleship. What makes us who we are is the quality of what we produce." I said, "This is a backwards step." I said, "This has to be redone."

Pete Scazzero:

But I was up half the night and the anxiety of, "This is going to be a battle with a major publisher. There's tens of thousands of dollars involved. There's a lot of peoples' lives. Someone could lose their job." I'm thinking of all them. I'm thinking of my own integrity.

Pete Scazzero:

It makes a long story short, but that was a lot in my body. When I had that conversation, and I was able to be calm in it, and it went really well, and they agreed to do it, which was wonderful. But I had to compensate for that. My body yesterday, it was a 10:30 meeting. I just had to slow the rest of the day.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You kind of planned for it? You're like, "I need to decelerate out of this lane after?" Or what?

Pete Scazzero:

Oh, I knew. I knew. I have to feel it in my body. Throughout the day, I took some time off. I took some this morning off, just to, I feel great now, but it took a lot out of me. I was aware of what that one half hour meeting, there's energy that goes out. Even Carey, everything we do, energy's going out of us. It's monitoring, is enough coming into me?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay.

Pete Scazzero:

So I've got to be receiving in on a daily basis to correspond to what's going out.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So you're tapping into something I haven't written about. It's been in my brain. It's like mutual brain waves. For about the last two months, there's that one verse in the gospels when the woman comes up, touches the hem of Jesus' garment, and there's the idea that the power goes out of him.

Pete Scazzero:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Of course I've read that my whole life as, "Okay, so there's some kind of holy power, miraculous power or whatever." I've been thinking about that as a filter for my life. Everything I decide to do, from answering an e-mail to solving a WiFi problem, there is power that goes out of me. Not in the same way that heals a woman who's been sick.

Carey Nieuwhof:

But you have diminishing reserves over the course of a day. Would you agree, disagree? Any thoughts on that?

Pete Scazzero:

Again, we're back to, we're humans, beings with limits. So every interaction, everything we do, power or life is going out from us. If we're speaking to a crowd of 10, 20, 50, 1,000 life is going out of us. So therefore, there has to be a replenishment this direction.

Pete Scazzero:

That's why, for me, setting rhythms. What are the rhythms like in your days and your weeks, your months, your years? How do you structure that? I think sabbaticals are very important. I know business people that take sabbatical. Sabbaths are important.

Pete Scazzero:

For me, my morning, I had a mid-day, I call it office earlier. It was so good for me. For 15, 20 minutes I just was, pretty much was silent most of the time, and just still, and just being. Resting in God, or resting in myself, being present in His reality, actually, I read a story with Desert Father, the Desert Father book there. Arsenius, flee, pray always and you'll be safe. "You'll flee from men," is what the text actually says.

Pete Scazzero:

He was a Senator during Emperor's time. He was tutor to the Emperor's sons. He fled into the desert to get to God. It was a tremendous text, I thought. He would refuse to let himself be famous. He just stayed in the desert, so his will would be one will with God's will. Obviously, I'm not living in the desert. I'm living in New York.

Pete Scazzero:

But it was just such a, "Yeah, Lord." To me it was just, hidden-ness is a good place. Not being busy is a really good place. Being prayerful and present to God is a good place. It's a whole different reality than I'm surrounded by as I open the newspaper and read about my own, and around other leadership adrenaline junkies, trying to monitor that and not get caught up in what I like to call Americanized Christianity. I'll say, "No, I'm not doing that."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Before we move on, what are some other signs? You look for anxiety. What else do you look for?

Pete Scazzero:

If you're married, another thing is, all you've got to do is ask your spouse, how are you? That's a good sign. That tells you a lot. Because you're one flesh with this person if you're married. Even though you may be in different professions and all that, you have different interests and all that, but you're one flesh, and therefore the nurturing and overflow of that relationship is very key.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So you're asking your spouse, "How do you think I am?"

Pete Scazzero:

No. No, no, no. I just ask, "How are you?"

Carey Nieuwhof:

So really genuine interest in her.

Pete Scazzero:

If they're lousy, that says something about you.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Ah!

Pete Scazzero:

That says something about you, that you're just going on, and your spouse is not well or whatever. You're out there doing your, you're building something, all right. I'm over here doing my thing, but we're really not connecting.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Got it.

Pete Scazzero:

My wife's big thing about the church, she can analyze the church pretty quickly. She'll ask the pastor's spouse, "How are you?" That says a lot about the whole condition of the church for her because if that spouse isn't flourishing, the church is probably not flourishing, either. Not really, underneath. Because that's your first neighbor.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So you check anxiety, check your spouse. What else do you pay attention to?

Pete Scazzero:

You're very aware of your body, very, very aware of what's going on inside your body. Again, tenseness, when you're rushing, very big signpost that you're bypassing something. Rushing is, to me, a big yellow light going off in the car that something is wrong. When you're making decisions quickly, when you're not listening. You're talking more than you're listening, another big, big signpost.

Pete Scazzero:

When you've got this feeling of, "I need time alone. I need to [inaudible 00:41:05]" yeah. I don't get the time, "I've got so much to do." Boom. That's a gigantic, but that's God. "I'm not living the life I really want to live," that's the Holy Spirit speaking to you. I see all these things on a Holy Spirit coming to us.

Pete Scazzero:

So you're paying attention to where God is giving you, where there's life. You have time to actually savor it. I mentioned to you about this case study thing. I just know God was, I fell into something by responding to all these case studies. Stuff was coming out of me. Stuff was coming out of people. I said, "I don't know what this is, but I know God's in this somewhere," if that makes any sense.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. I'm glad you looped back to the Masterclass. We got off on some other subjects. That was one of the points I wanted you to bring across to leaders. You learned something, because we have a lot of content creators here.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So, shifting gears. We have a lot of content creators. Often we're broadcasting, "I posted a video to YouTube, I preached a sermon, I shot a vision message," or whatever you're doing in the moment. But you're not really testing that material live, in a case format, with feedback, and you loved it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It made me think. I've done a lot of Q&As over the last year, year and a half, since I haven't been traveling. A lot of interaction with podcast listeners, and with leaders in my courses in the Leader's Circle, and really in the position of student, listening to people's cases. What was the benefit of that for you?

Pete Scazzero:

When you write a book, or give a sermon or teaching, it's general. It has to be, by the very nature of content. But discipleship, or leadership development is specific. It has to be. Again, if you're Jesus and the 12, it's along the way in context. That's where the power is.

Pete Scazzero:

So, a case study enables you to get into that person's particular context in a way that you could never in a chapter of a book. I wrote this book, it's for leaders. I got some whole philosophy about creating content, too, which we should touch on at some point later.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay.

Pete Scazzero:

Because people write books, and they release content, but it's not been gestated properly. It just becomes ... anyway, it's not been birthed. It's a premature birth. I read so many premature birthed

books, and I feel like, "Why'd you have to rush it? Why'd you listen to the publisher? Why'd you let that deadline get to you? This wasn't ready."

Pete Scazzero:

It's a bummer to me, because now the message became lost.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You can tell when it comes from a deep place.

Pete Scazzero:

You can tell, yes.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You can tell.

Pete Scazzero:

When the last page is as good as the first page, when it's not like, you have two great chapters and the rest of it is, there really wasn't that kind of thought.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Here's my word count. Yeah.

Pete Scazzero:

Yeah. Yeah. So I'm sorry. I got sidetracked.

Carey Nieuwhof:

No, the Masterclass, and then I do want to get into content creation. When case study, you actually encourage people to write down the exact situation they were facing.

Pete Scazzero:

Yeah, and be specific. What's the problem? What have you done to solve the problem? Then what questions you're holding. Force them to do work, so you don't do all the work for them. I'm in a place now, I want people to read some content and then you do a case study and tell me everything you've done.

Pete Scazzero:

Now actually, you know where I got the idea was, I think it was originally from Peter Drucker.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, okay.

Pete Scazzero:

Peter Drucker would not meet with anybody who didn't first send them a sheet about, what challenges are you facing?

Pete Scazzero:

That's where I got the original idea from. I get asked all the time, people want to meet with me. I'm like, "Put it in writing. What it is you're wrestling with? What is it you've done so far to resolve it? What questions are you holding?" In other words, you do some work to really define, "Why do you want to talk to me? What's really the question you're holding?"

Pete Scazzero:

Now sometimes the question they're holding isn't even the right question, but at least they've done work to go as far as they can.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Pete Scazzero:

I appreciate that versus, I'm doing all the work, trying to pull out of them. I'm spending an hour pulling out, "What's going on here? What's your context," and all that. I can get it in five, 10 minutes, just reading a one or two page, thoughtful case study.

Carey Nieuwhof:

But you found yourself responding to these case studies, and teaching extemporaneously, discovering all these thoughts that were new to you, right?

Pete Scazzero:

Well, to be honest, I wasn't extemporaneous. What I would do is, I liked having them. They grouped in different groupings. One was global. One was people leading high powered movements. Others were young leaders struggling with a lot of young issues, in your 30s kind of issues, 20s and 30s, with dark nights, and frustrations of speed.

Pete Scazzero:

Speed is a big issues. People's frustration with speed, it takes so long, team building. They want to build culture like, "What's the program that builds culture? Give me that?" So, it's really helpful it's really, really helpful.

Pete Scazzero:

I'm going to try to do a monthly, each month, do case studies with a theme and see if it works. There's something about the case study. I'm going to experiment that, even in a podcast format, and see if it works. I just love it. I just loved it.

Pete Scazzero:

So for example, a number of folks leading large movements were concerned about building culture. They want to make disciples. We have a course that we do. A lot of churches do the course, which is

important as one building block to change a culture. It's called the Emotionally Healthy Discipleship Course.

Pete Scazzero:

But it's not about having this course, kind of like an Alpha, in your church every year. That's not the issue. The issue is the leadership being the culture, where the material is in your bones, and you're actually living it and reinforcing it with your leadership and your teams. If you're not living it, and your teams aren't living it, it doesn't matter what courses you run. It doesn't matter what you preach. It doesn't matter how big your church is. It's shallow.

Pete Scazzero:

You're just doing world culture with a Christian veneer in it. But if you're going to be serious about discipleship, you're going to go the same way as Jesus. It's going to be sloppy, difficult, messy, small, and slow. That's it. You're going to have to figure out, "How am I going to disciple a few?"

Pete Scazzero:

Geri and I used to choose 15, 17 people and we would do a year in our basement. Every year. Even now, we're doing it for leaders in a cohort, picking some people that we're working with, and investing ourselves in a few.

Pete Scazzero:

Now, it doesn't seem to produce much initially. This is like, "What am I doing here?" I used to have friends who were in these big churches and doing strategic planning all the time. I was like, "I'm in my basement. I'm with these 15 people and half aren't even going to work out. Half don't even want to hear what I'm saying."

Pete Scazzero:

That was really about our average. About half would be like, "Whatever." They didn't really respond that well, even after carefully choosing them. I relate to Jesus and Judas, imagine. Goodness.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. It's like, "Well, didn't get them all right."

Pete Scazzero:

Discipleship is just, you build a culture. It takes years. It's really slow and thoughtful. But every time something comes up with a team member or a person in your church. Say someone, I was telling this pastor. Someone says, "You should be meeting with everybody in our church every month. One on one you should be calling them, as a church plan, or every two weeks," they told him.

Pete Scazzero:

I said, "That's a discipleship moment." I said, "Do you understand? It's a culture moment." How you respond, how you meet with that person and say, "Let's talk about, how do we clarify? What's a valid expectation?" We have a certain skill on that. It's got to be conscious, spoken, realistic, and agreed upon. I said, "Did you ever agree that you'd meet with these people?" He goes, "No, I'd never agree to that. It's ridiculous. I would never be home."

Pete Scazzero:

I said, "But you understand? To just let that slide is a culture moment. You've got to meet with that person one on one. But you've got to have it in your own, how do you deal with people when they do that? What's it triggering in you?" So it's a lot of work to be done in you, to go talk to that person. That means you've mastered this skill of stop mind reading, clarifying expectations, so that you can walk in there, train them differently, because that's how their family of origin did. Probably their grandparents, their great grandparents. It's in their bones to make those kinds of ridiculous statements.

Pete Scazzero:

Now they're bringing that all into your culture that you're building, and you're just going to let it slide because you don't know what to do except be upset at night that they're probably going to leave the church.

Pete Scazzero:

So again, what's building culture? It's hard work. But if you'll do that hard work over and over again, like Jesus with the 12. Who's the greatest? They kept going, "Who's the greatest? Can I sit at your right and left?" Same kind of issues coming up at different angles, but they finally got it.

Pete Scazzero:

But you've got to be willing to do those little conversations. It just takes time. There's no pill. You want a pill. There's no pill here. It's just Jesus with the three, and the 12, and the 70. It's a mustard seed. It doesn't look like it's working, but it is. It really is, long term.

Carey Nieuwhof:

The Masterclass you were telling the story. If I'm telling tales out of school, we can cut this out.

Carey Nieuwhof:

But you were telling the story of one leader, not a unique story, who was really struggling. Things weren't growing, not feeling good about, I think it was a he, himself. Can you flesh out that story and tell us your advice?

Pete Scazzero:

This fellow was very gifted, young leader in his early 30s. Church plant, growing and blossoming, but then COVID hits. All of a sudden, New York is not the place to be. People were leaving New York. Half the church left, and he's working with lots of folks in their 20s and early 30s. He was frustrated because they were consumers. They weren't people willing to take leadership, and get equipped, and help build the church. He was frustrated with their slowness and their indecisiveness, all their problems. Then you've got the COVID thing, and basically how hard it was, and how slow, and discouraged.

Pete Scazzero:

Now, I knew a little bit about him and his history. He's always the golden boy. Everything he touched turned to gold, super gifted young man. I know if they haven't come to him yet, they're going to come to him with invitations from other churches because he's a really good communicator publicly.

Pete Scazzero:

The temptation for him to leave this difficult environment in the next couple of years is going to be very, very high, very strong. More money, more people, more platform. I said to him, "Hey, I just want to give you something to think about. I'm not the Holy Spirit, but I want to give you something to think about, that this might be God's gift to you. That this dark night that you're in, of difficulty, that rather than kick against the goads, as Paul did, rather than strike your staff against a rock because you're so angry at God moving so slowly, that maybe God's breaking you, that everything you touch doesn't turn to gold, that sometimes everything you touch turns to dust, and it's God who turns things to gold. But maybe it's God's will that you actually persevere joyfully in this difficult place, and that you stay, and you look like you're failing, but you're actually succeeding by failing."

Pete Scazzero:

Because you can be "succeeding" and failing, but you can be failing and succeeding. I said, "The question." He said, "What's God's invitation to you right now? I would just suggest to you that you're 31 years old, 32 years old. You've got 40 to 50 years ahead of you, of really active service for Jesus. This is a blip in the screen, these next three, five years, 10 years. I just would encourage you to relax, and love your people, and be patient, and invest in them, invest in yourself. Let God change you. But that idea of being the golden, gifted, anointed young man who the Evangelical empire will make you a super star, is the worst thing that could ever happen to you. So this is God's protection and love for you."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Do you know how that advice was received?

Pete Scazzero:

Good. I actually called him to follow up because I was concerned I wrecked him. I was concerned. No, I recommended a book to him as well, *The Making of a Leader* by Robert Clinton. He used to teach at Fuller. Clinton's work at Fuller was to trace how God makes leaders. His basic point was that all great leaders who make it long term, they didn't really start bearing fruit until they were 15 and 20 years into their ministries. It was mostly God [inaudible 00:54:31] the first 15, 20 years, and that the real fruit came later.

Pete Scazzero:

I said to this guy, "You think you're bearing fruit. It's really nothing to what it's going to be later, if you're faithful to Jesus in these years." I said, I recommended the book to him. So actually, he had picked it up. He had read it. He just said it's really hard to bear. "What you're saying is very hard to bear." He goes, "Intellectually, I know it's true. But I don't want it. I don't like it. It's hard." I said, "Okay, that's good. That's good."

Pete Scazzero:

So he let himself be angry, which is good, and be sad, which for him was gigantic. He didn't do anger or sadness. So he's on a really good journey, a really good journey. I hope he stays on making some good decisions. It sounds like he's going to, which was great. But I did follow him up because I was a bit concerned.

Pete Scazzero:

There's 40 people listening in, so there wasn't a lot of time for him to talk. He talked for an hour straight with me when I asked him how he was. He had a lot to share.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I'll bet he did.

Pete Scazzero:

It was good.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, I'm putting myself back in 31, 32. That would be a really tough message to hear.

Pete Scazzero:

It is.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I'm not sure I would have listened. In my case, my body stopped just like, "All right, we're on strike. You're burning out." So that happened in my early 40s, around 41. It's a tough message.

Pete Scazzero:

It is.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So, Pete. Man, time's flying. We have thousands of young leaders listening right now, tens of thousands of leaders listening. Everyone's been under pressure cooker stress, historic levels of stress for a couple of years now.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Speak to leaders. How do you care for your soul when none of this shows any sign of predictability, normalcy, or easiness in the future?

Pete Scazzero:

Yeah. I would see the unprecedented crises that we're experiencing as invitations from God to pivot. Now, not simply pivot strategically, which is where we first go in our thinking. There's no doubt, we are all pivoting externally in our ministries, and business or leadership responsibilities.

Pete Scazzero:

I'm talking about pivoting in the way that you're leading. That, to me, is the invitation. It's an invitation to pivot, lead from the inside out. So that regardless of what's happening externally, you're okay.

Pete Scazzero:

So if a war breaks out, a civil war breaks out in the country. I often think of the Syrian Christians who were caught when Isis was marching down from the north, towards Damascus. I had a friend who had

done a lot of PhD work with the Syrian monasteries there in northern and central Syria, that as Isis was approaching. A lot of them got killed and the monasteries got razed to the ground.

Pete Scazzero:

I thought ... The point is, you can be in a place that, regardless of what's happening historically, externally around you, you're okay. You're going to be faithful to Jesus because you're not getting your validation from outside any longer. You've actually got it from the inside.

Pete Scazzero:

So you say, "How do you get there?"

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. Yeah, that was my next question.

Pete Scazzero:

That's the journey. That's the journey and I would invite you to get on the journey. I think the journey is, this is a God moment for you. You're feeling that, and God's in that feeling of, I'm overwhelmed. This is crushing. Yes.

Pete Scazzero:

So, that means the resources are not there internally for you right now. All right. Now, what might it look like to bring a greater balance into my leadership now? It's been so externally focused by external metrics up to this point. What might make [inaudible 00:58:41] to pivot so I've got some internal ones as well? What might they be? How do I learn about this?

Pete Scazzero:

So I think that's where Emotionally Healthy Discipleship will help you. That's [inaudible 00:58:52] say they help you get started. There's so many resources out there, but it's not what we're used to in the leadership space, to be talking about.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. Now, I know in your story and my story, Pete, pain was a motivator. Things were not going well with you and Geri. Things were not going well with my wife, Toni, and I. Things were going great at the church, but then I burned out, everything like that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What about somebody who would say, "I'm not really at that point. Things are okay at home. Things are okay. I'm stressed but I'm not burning out." Does pain have to be the teacher? How would you begin to shape it, even if you're not hitting a wall right now?

Pete Scazzero:

By no means do you have to be in pain to get this. Because you will be in pain. Everybody will be in pain. Everyone's going to hit walls. That's just part of living life.

Pete Scazzero:

I can think of one friend of mine who, he learned all about grief and loss. He's been someone that was in our church, eventually was on our staff and did well. Anyway, he had a son killed in a car accident.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Pete Scazzero:

He wrote me and said, I mean, he was crushed, of course. We met a couple of times after that. He said, "I just can't even imagine being in this place and not having been equipped to understand walls, understand God's pathway for dealing with grief and loss, God's pathway of dealing with walls, learning to feel." He had not done feelings before, "how to integrate my feelings into my spirituality and my leadership." Because at that point, he was a pastor as well, in another church. He goes, "I just can't imagine not having had all that equipping before this event happened in my life."

Pete Scazzero:

Now, of course, he could have learned it afterwards. But oh, my gosh. How many people say, "Cancer was the best thing that ever happened to me," because they finally had to deal with some stuff. That is not the way it has to happened. It happened my way with me because I wasn't listening. There weren't folks around.

Pete Scazzero:

I wasn't listening and there weren't people actually talking about it very much. I had a publisher tell me recently, most of the book submissions he's getting are about emotional health. The culture came around. The young leaders are emotionally fragmented and they're much less reluctant to talk about these issues. They're actually very open, super open to things that my generation was like, "What's wrong with you? Pray it through, buddy. Pray it through."

Pete Scazzero:

So I think the culture's changed.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, for the better.

Pete Scazzero:

Absolutely. I think the church, the Western church is at a real key place. If the church doesn't pivot, in my opinion, from, I'll call it more of a Western cultural Christianity, to one that is more anchored Biblically into the radical demands of Jesus to come follow him, I do think that we will just become kind of like the European church has become, just kind of weak.

Pete Scazzero:

The leadership God, the leadership's coming from Africa, Latin America, Asia. The church is booming in these places. The Western church is in big trouble. I think the political polarization has been another symptom of our weakness, to be that politically polarized in the church is an embarrassment.

Pete Scazzero:

Every time that's happened in history, it has always led to catastrophe. I have a friend who's a missiologist, PhD, 40 years. We went through all the historical moments where the church has gotten politically aligned with one political party or another. It's always led to a disaster, every single time. It's always been a sign of weakness of our discipleship and formation in the church, that we can be seduced that easily.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I know we're pushing an hour in this conversation, but do you want to talk a little bit about the Americanized Jesus? That is such a helpful thing to see, because I think historians will see it clearly. We look at it and go, "No, that's just the way it is for a lot of people."

Pete Scazzero:

You know what's interesting? One of the chapters is called Follow the Crucified, Not the Americanized Jesus.

Pete Scazzero:

It's interesting because it's come out of years of thought. But in particular, I spent a few years on the gospel of Matthew. Think about it, a few years, verse by verse, meditating, studying, and then I went to John. I was studying how Jesus disciplined the 12. I was like, "How did he do it? How did he mold these people? What were the issues he was getting at?"

Pete Scazzero:

So what I call the Americanized Jesus is actually, it's the same issues that Jesus was trying to drive out of the disciples are actually the same issues in every culture in the world. They just look different. But the American culture, in particular, personifies them today. At least today in the 21st century, it's like Hollywood.

Pete Scazzero:

So the Americanized Jesus is like, "Be popular." Jesus was like, "Reject popularity. Reject it categorically. Live for me alone." The world's discipleship is, "Be great." Disciples wanted to be great. They wanted to be popular and they wanted to be great. Jesus says, "Just reject greatness-ism. Just forget it. Be with the little. Be with the small. Be with the mustard seed."

Pete Scazzero:

Then be successful, again by the world's standards, up and to the right, numbers and all. Peter was like, "Never, Lord, are we going to be crucified and be rejected." Jesus was like, "No, reject success-ism. This whole worldly definition of success, drive it out of you. Then embrace," avoid suffering and pain is the world's discipleship, "Don't suffer. Don't have pain and failure." Jesus says, "No, embrace failure and suffering as the way to glory."

Pete Scazzero:

But it's so deep in the gospels. If you look at the Pharisees and religious leaders of Jesus' day, they were about the worldly discipleship model. So were the 12 disciples. They'd been shaped in it. So we've all

been formed in this worldly discipleship model that really comes from the culture and it's in the church. It's so deep in the church.

Pete Scazzero:

So my invitation, my call to every young leader, and old leader as well, our age, us as well is, "You've got to reject popularity. You care about one thing. Jesus, he's the one." I want a, "Well done, Pete." That's what I'm looking for. Reject being great.

Pete Scazzero:

You want to be great, Carey? I want you to be great. This whole idea of being great is our status. There was nothing about Jesus that was great by the world's standards. In fact, he purposely kept telling people, "Don't say anything about me. Don't tell anyone." He'd heal you outside the village because he knew they were going to make him great for all the wrong reasons.

Pete Scazzero:

Then, be successful. He let thousands walk away from him. He was crucified alone. He looked like a failure his whole life. God does that to us, but he did the Father's will. He didn't exercise his power in a way that the Father didn't want. When you have power, you can exercise it real easy for yourself. That's the great test, isn't it?

Pete Scazzero:

When you have platform, you have money, you have things grow, that's when things get dangerous. Because the more power you have to make these things happen, if you don't have the character to go with it, you're going to start wielding it in ways that are worldly and it just leads to disaster.

Pete Scazzero:

So yeah, I think rejecting the Americanized Jesus is actually rejecting worldly discipleship that's been here since the beginning. It's really all there in the gospel. I didn't do a sociological study. I didn't do any of that stuff. I just took it right from Matthew and John's gospel. It's all here. I relate to it all. I've lived it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Pete, it's so rich. Thanks for making us better. Tell us about what you're doing right now. You have a podcast, your latest book, where people can find you online. Give us the summary.

Pete Scazzero:

Emotionallyhealthy.org is our tag. I've got a podcast, The Emotionally Healthy Leader, much like yours. I love yours and I love your blog, Carey. I read it. I learn a lot from you. I think I'm coming from a specific angle of leadership.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, yeah. Totally.

Pete Scazzero:

Definitely not the whole, integration of that inner life out of which we lead. I want people with vision, but I think my contribution is getting at what we call emotionally healthy discipleship or leadership.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Been so formative for me, Pete. It really has been.

Pete Scazzero:

So I wrote Emotionally Healthy Discipleship to actually to leaders. It was my attempt to take the core theology of building a healthy culture, specifically in a church, or Christian led para-church, or ministry, organization with these seven marks that are, "These are cultural markers; limits, grief, loss, make love the measure of loving well, brokenness and vulnerability. Break the power of the past. Follow the crucified Jesus." These kind that you can build a healthy culture with.

Pete Scazzero:

So I'd recommend that. It's meant to be a primer and get you like, "I want this thing." Then it's going to launch you, hopefully, on a journey. It's got to be lived. No book's going to help you. Books are books. They're just ideas.

Pete Scazzero:

To me, my passion is a generation of leaders that, we actually respond to these difficult times differently. We can lead the generation behind us. You ever heard that ancient Indian, Native American proverbs. Everything we do is for the seventh generation.

Carey Nieuwhof:

No, I haven't heard that.

Pete Scazzero:

The generation behind us, these generations. I want us to be mentoring the next generations of pastors and leaders, non-profits, and people with vision. I meet so many wonderful young leaders. I'm like, "Okay, let's help them get early on what we didn't get." Which was some attention to their inner life.

Pete Scazzero:

I think if I can help on some of that piece, that'd be wonderful. They can then branch off and do great things for God. Hopefully, set our shoulders, Carey. But that they can say no to opportunities. Just because a door opens doesn't mean they walk through it, and they have the wisdom, and the courage, and the grace to say, "Not now for me. I'm not going to write that book. I'm not going to add that service. I'm not going to franchise our business right now. I'm just going to stay right where we are, and do a high quality job, and trust God with when it's time to expand."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Such sage advice. We'll link to everything in the show notes. Pete, thank you so much for being with us again. It won't be the last time.

Pete Scazzero:

Carey, thank you.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, you know we're committed to you over the long haul, and to finishing well, something I'm thinking about a lot lately. If you haven't checked out an episode, just scroll back with Steve Carter. We talked a lot about that, what crisis does to people, to victims, but also to the entire organization. How do you finish well?

Carey Nieuwhof:

So if you want more of what Pete had to say, we've got all the links for you in the show notes. You can go to careynieuwhof.com/episode438. I would love to hear your questions about productivity. I'm going to answer Gina's question. If you haven't checked it out yet, head on over. I know it's a lot of work because you're listening and you're driving in the car. Just freeze this for a moment. Send yourself a text, if you can safely. Just say, "Ask Carey about productivity."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Head on over to careynieuwhof.com/podcast. Scroll down a little bit. You'll see a microphone. Just follow the instructions and maybe I will coach you on your productivity question. I'm doing this because I've got a brand new book coming out, called *At Your Best*. I would love for you to check out more about that in a moment.

Carey Nieuwhof:

But first I'm going to tell you what is up next. We've got Kendra Adachi. Maybe you're like, "Carey, all this productivity stuff makes me feel overwhelmed." She wrote a book called *The Lazy Genius*. She's an Enneagram 1 and a former perfectionist who eventually had to give up on the notion that she had to be a genius about everything.

Carey Nieuwhof:

We go all kinds of places on productivity. Actually, that's going to be a big theme over the next month. Here's an excerpt from the next episode.

Kendra Adachi:

A lazy genius is someone who is a genius about the things that matter and lazy about the things that don't, but to them, to the individual person. Like I said, not everything can matter. I think we know that, intuitively, or maybe intellectually, we know that, that not everything can matter to everyone. But we sure try really hard to make everything matter.

Kendra Adachi:

I think, too, this is a leadership podcast. I think that people who are leaders, who are in ministry, who are running companies, you feel like you have to be really great at a lot of things, that a lot of things matter. I know that I would often feel like, "I'm not doing a good job if I'm letting things go. Aren't good leaders supposed to be extra capable, and hold all of these things?" I would say no because that's why people burn out, because they're trying to do too much.

Carey Nieuwhof:

This transcript was exported on Aug 20, 2021 - view latest version [here](#).

That's next time on the podcast. If you subscribe, you'll get it automatically. If you're new to the podcast, welcome, and please subscribe.

Carey Nieuwhof:

We also have John Mark Comer, David Allen, Erin Meyer, who wrote a book on Netflix. Chris McChesney for those of you who know the 40X framework, Four Disciplines of Execution, so good. Just did my interview with Amy Porterfield. If you want to get a leg up in online marketing, that's coming your way. Mike Todd is coming back. We've also got Dave Hollis, and we've also got the guys from The Art of Charm Podcast coming on this show. Very excited for all that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

If you subscribe, of course, you're not going to miss an episode. I only listen to the podcasts I subscribe to.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, now it's time for Ask Me Anything About Productivity. Thanks again to our partners, who we carefully select. If you haven't yet rethought your employee health benefits, go to remodelhealth.com/analysis today. Save money, get more. Use the code CAREY50 for 50% off. Right now, you can get \$200 off the regular Ministry Grid price by going to ministrygrid.com/carey.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, with my book release of At Your Best, we got a promotion on right now that is going to give you access to a number of bonuses that will go away when the book launches. So you've got a couple weeks to take care of it, but why not do it right now. Head on over to atyourbesttoday.com. When you pre-order the book, audio, Kindle. I just read the audio book. That was a lot of fun and a lot of work. Or the hardcover, of course. You will get access to a Masterclass. We sunk so much into this Masterclass. Don't think, "Oh, I shot it on my iPhone." No, no, no. We rented this amazing studio, poured it in. It's yours for free if you pre-order the book.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So head on over to atyourbesttoday.com. You've got to have the today in there because if you go to atyourbest.com, you'll learn how to DIY a bunch of stuff. Which is awesome. We love those guys, but that's not us. It's atyourbesttoday.com. Go there before you go to Amazon, or Barnes and Noble, or your indie book seller because that is where you'll be able to see all the bonuses and you will be able to get the bonuses. If you just buy the book and forget about it, you don't get the bonuses. We'd love for you to get the book.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What is At Your Best about? It's about getting time, energy, and priorities working in your favor. I'm coaching people around that right now, for a season. So again, if you haven't yet given me your question, go to careynieuwhof.com/podcast. Click on the button, start recording. Leave me a voicemail. That's what Gina did, and here is her question.

Gina:

Thank you for taking my question. My question is, does crisis, or something like the pandemic, change our ability to be productive? Are there practices we have to maintain in times of crisis versus times of more normal workflow?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Thank you so much for your question, Gina. It is a good one.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So yes, we have all been through an unprecedented 18 months. It's like, "What? Are you kidding me? Nobody could have predicted this." But I want to spin the question a little bit for you, Gina. Doesn't it feel sometimes like life is crisis? Long before the pandemic, long before the global turbulence, we were all, little crises that happen. Sometimes they're personal. Sometimes they're beyond your control. It could be a health crisis. It could be emergencies in your company or in your church. It could be a staff member that's gone rogue or going through a real crisis. It could be your health, or the health of a loved one, a child, a parent, a sibling, a spouse.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Life is a series of emergencies. That's what it feels like. So I want you to expand the question because what I'm going to share with you, I think could be a strategy to deal with the crises that inevitably come up. Sure, we're going to get out of coronavirus. That is just going to become a subdued part of life, and life will go on.

Carey Nieuwhof:

But people have been sent from their home because of fires. People have been struggling with extreme heat. You look at the world, it is not getting any simpler. Your world is probably not very simple, either. So what do you do?

Carey Nieuwhof:

First thing I would say is, as a rule, and I learned this the hard way, all of my lessons in *At Your Best*, I learned the hard way. Most people are over scheduled. You look at your week, and this is what I encourage you to do, Gina. Open up your calendar. Look at the week ahead. You go, "Hmm. It's not too bad." Right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

But the way I used to schedule my meetings, I would often say, "Well, let's just schedule a whole day of meetings Thursday, and a whole day of meetings on Tuesday," and then I would get into it. What I did was, I didn't leave room for anything urgent that would come up. Every day, something comes up.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You think about your life, and in *At Your Best*, a third of the book is devoted to priorities. It's about how to get time, energy, and priorities working in your favor. I thought that would be like, "Oh, by the way, here's a few priorities tips." No. That ended up being the biggest section of the book because I realized that's how everybody gets on track.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So I'm going to give you a hack. Don't over schedule your week. What I've done, and I talk about this in At Your Best is, I set a meeting cap and recommend you do the same thing. I'm going to tell you what I do. Don't do what I do. Figure out your number. But I think you have a maximum number of meetings or obligations you can do a week. Beyond that, you start to flounder. You start to get overwhelmed, overworked, over committed.

Carey Nieuwhof:

My number, and again, this is not so that you just write down this number and live that way, but you need to experiment with your own. My number is 15. If I have more than 15 meetings a week, I start to get stressed. That doesn't sound like a lot because you look at a calendar in my life, with 15 meetings in the week it's like, you've got all Monday morning open, all Tuesday with nothing on. You've got Wednesday's kind of busy, and Thursday's full, and Friday's got a couple of commitments in it. You're like, "Wow, you've got all this time, Carey."

Carey Nieuwhof:

But stuff comes up every week, global pandemics notwithstanding. If I have 15, I know I'll be able to catch a lot of those curve balls when they get thrown at me. If I go lower than 12, I start to get bored. Now, in coronavirus, that's a different thing, when you're in a crisis.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So I would look at the number of meetings you have and try to figure out what's your ideal number. Now, if you're, I'm a little bit introverted these days. If you're a real extrovert, you may want 20 meetings a week to really help you thrive. If you're super introverted, maybe more than seven, a meeting a day on average. That would be more than a meeting a day on a five day workweek, but more than seven really drains your battery.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You've got to figure out what your number is. An easy way to do that, you can monitor it going forward. But I want you to look back over the last month or two and try to remember, what was a really good week? Then ask yourself, "What was true during that week?" When you look back at it, Gina, you'll go, "Oh, the third week of July was fantastic. I had seven meetings. I did this. I did that."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Then look for the patterns because you're going to hit a number, and mine is 15, where if I go beyond it, and I do that some weeks. Some weeks are just busy. But listen, it is a busy season, but seasons have beginnings and they have ends. If your busy season doesn't have an ending, it's not a season. It's your life. So yeah, you can be in a busy season and jack that number to 17 or 18. I think if I have 20, I melt down at that point. My team knows that, so we schedule to 15 a week.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So look at your meeting cap, that's one thing. Second thing I would say, when you're truly in a crisis, and that could be a global crisis like we've been in. It could be an organizational crisis where sales are falling, or you're really in this downward spiral. It could be a staff member leaving, or it could be a health consideration. Then you're really dealing with something a little more temporary, like when coronavirus hit. Obviously, we're 18 months into it now.

Carey Nieuwhof:

But for about a month, month and a half, it was siege mode. What you have to think is, what is essential and what is not? Those are anomalies. Those are things that you should not be managing by crisis all the time. When something big and global, and it could be in your case, a health scare, or a diagnosis your spouse gets, or something.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What I would do is think, "What do I need to be true to lead through this season well?" One of the things that happened to me was, I lost all my speaking. Now, a couple of things happened with that, and that was a source of income for the company, for me, for my family, and I had all these people I'd promised to serve.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So I needed extra time in that season to renegotiate through my speaker's agency, with a lot of those people, and try to figure out what was going to be canceled and what was going to be flipped to digital. Almost everything flipped to digital. Once we got that solved, that was fine.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I also realized, "Okay, now I have this time on my hands because I'm not on airplanes, and in airports in different cities and time zones." That gave me the opportunity to start something new. So we forged a partnership with Gloop and with Barna, and started the ChurchPulse Weekly Podcast. That was a lot of meetings. Barna's West Coast, so I was up sometimes until 10:00 at night talking to David Kinnaman, hammering that out with our friends, Scott Beck over at Gloop.

Carey Nieuwhof:

When we got that all figured out, we launched a podcast. Then it was record, record, record. But that was for a season. Within a couple of months, we had a real rhythm that worked between the Barna team and my team to produce the podcast. Then that became manageable.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So what's the principle there? Crises should be short lived. Even though we are in a global meltdown pandemic, that was two months of intense activity. Because if it had been six months of intense activity, I could have been a bug on a windshield. I could have been done. So it was, you try to put a date on it. Now, if you're with chronic health concerns and they go beyond that two month window, then you have to think, "How am I going to recalibrate my life completely?"

Carey Nieuwhof:

So this, I hope, has given you some insight into that. The At Your Best book will give you a framework, and it's a lot longer than I can do in a 10 minute answer, to completely recalibrate your life regardless of the circumstance you're in. So if you end up with a chronic health crisis near your, or perhaps it's yours, you can use the principles to radically recalibrate your life. If it's a season, you know how to adjust.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Then of course, if you're in more normal conditions, which I personally am right now, book launch notwithstanding, I know that my meeting cap's about 15 meetings a week for this season. If I keep there,

and I keep my green zone, which we talk about in At Your Best, and I'm doing what I'm best at when I'm at my best, then I'm probably going to be okay most days.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So Gina, I hope that helps. It's a great question. We're all there. We've all been there. Unfortunately, we will be there again. That is life. I hope this helps. I'd love to coach you, so leave your question at careynieuwhof.com/podcast. Click on the little button that says, "Start recording," and leave me a voice message. I would love to coach you.

Carey Nieuwhof:

My newest book, At Your Best, gives you the strategies you need to win at work and win at home by living in a way today that will help you thrive tomorrow. The release is September 14. There are special bonuses if you pre-order right now. You'll get free access to the At Your Best Masterclass. This thing, I can just say, is sizzling. This is not an afterthought. We poured a lot of time and energy into this Masterclass. It will be available for purchase after, but right now, it's free if you pre-order the book. You also get early access to a burnout assessment, and the Thrive Calendar that is the heart of the book.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So you can pre-order At Your Best, and claim your copy, and then you get the Masterclass instantly. So you can go to atyourbesttoday.com. Don't forget the today. atyourbesttoday.com, and you can get all that right now.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I'll catch you next time on the podcast. Thank you so much for listening. I hope this has helped you thrive in life and leadership.

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.