

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 457 of the podcast. It's Carey here. I hope our time together today helps you thrive in life and leadership. Well, we're going to be talking about all things Enneagram with Beth and Jeff McCord. Also, I've got a What I'm Thinking About segment because I got something on my heart at the end.

Carey Nieuwhof:

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Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, it's good to have Beth and Jeff McCord. I know a number of you listen to their podcast, have read their books. We're going to talk about how to handle the tricky side, that is the people side of team leadership, using the Enneagram to diffuse tension and how to get the best from your leaders.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Beth and Jeff McCord are the founders of Your Enneagram Coach. Beth is a bestselling author, speaker, and coach. She's passionate about coming alongside individuals and helping them understand and interpret their story. Her and her husband created Your Enneagram Coach, and they have spent years training under top Enneagram experts. Beth is now leading the way in simplifying the deeper truths of the Enneagram from a biblical perspective. So you can learn more about them at [yourenneagramcoach.com](https://yourenneagramcoach.com).

Carey Nieuwhof:

Hey, leaders, I just hope you guys are doing okay. It is a tough go out there right now. I know we're well into the fall. That's why at the end of today's episode, I want to talk to you about your pace and some things I've been thinking about leading when you're chronically exhausted, et cetera. So make sure you stay tuned for that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

In the meantime, you're probably looking ahead to 2022, and that means it's once again that time of year, open enrollment season. It's a dreaded yearly task of diving into a mountain of paperwork and research trying to find the best healthcare option for you and your family. We want two things when it comes to our healthcare, trust and affordability.

Carey Nieuwhof:

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Carey Nieuwhof:

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Carey Nieuwhof:

Hey, pastors, I also want to tell you about my friends at Red Letter Challenge and how they can help you with their done-for-you resources. Leadership is complicated enough. Have you ever done a done-for-you campaign? If you haven't, I'll tell you, it's fantastic. Red Letter Challenge will help you see 40% growth in small groups in just 40 days or what about this? One leader who ran Red Letter Challenge said, "All of my key leaders are stretched thin, wearing multiple hats, and we just don't have the time to create a churchwide series with all the bells and whistles."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Another leader said, "I really want to bring momentum and energy to our church, especially back into our small groups." Okay. One last one, "Our church just feels so divided right now. It's so hard to get everyone attending in-person and online, and feel connected."

Carey Nieuwhof:

So you might be saying, "Yeah, I recognized that." Well, that's what Red Letter Challenge can help with. It brings unity. Everybody from kids to adults can dive in to the word of Christ for 40 days and get invited into something that is bigger than themselves and it's done-for-you.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So there really is no better time to launch a 40-day churchwide series in the New Year. No matter the size of your congregation, let the Red Letter team help you see huge wins as your people become greater followers of Jesus. So to get the 2022 40-day challenge, go to [redletterchallenge.com/carey](https://redletterchallenge.com/carey). Pastors, when you're there, you'll get a free book, no strings attached.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So with all that said, let's dive in to my conversation with Beth and Jeff McCord.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, Jeff and Beth, welcome to the podcast. It's good to have you here.

Beth McCord:

Yay! Thanks for having us. We're so excited.

Jeff McCord:

Yeah. Thanks for having us, Carey.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, yeah. So you guys have been digging into the Enneagram for a while. For those of you who are new, leaders who are new to the whole idea of Enneagram, we've had Ian Cron on a few times before, but can you give us an idea of why anybody in leadership should even care about the Enneagram? True confession, you know this. I thought it was a fad before I really became a conjuror.

Jeff McCord:

No. Yeah. We wondered that as well.

Beth McCord:

Yeah, it comes across especially nowadays as a fad, right? People are using it in all sorts of ways, a lot of ways that I don't think are always helpful, but if you're a leader and you find that your coworkers aren't getting along, they don't understand each other, they keep getting stuck, you as a leader, you can't seem to figure out how to talk with your team in a way that encourages them or spurs them on, you keep finding yourself stuck and you don't understand how to get out of it, the Enneagram is going to be a super helpful tool because it gives you astonishing clarity into why people think, feel, and behave in particular ways.

Beth McCord:

So the Enneagram is just a nine-pointed geometric figure. It looks like a nine-pointed star, and it's showing that there are nine valid perspectives of seeing, interpreting, and reacting to the world. So if you think of those nine points on a star, each of them is one of the main persona types. Think of them as all at different colors. Let's take those colors and put them as glasses.

Beth McCord:

So all three of us, Carey, you, Jeff and I all have glasses on right now, and it seems like we're all seeing in the same way, right? They're just clear glasses, but in actuality, all three of us are different Enneagram types. So it's like I'm wearing purple, you're wearing a deep red, and Jeff is wearing an orange color.

Beth McCord:

Now, in the Enneagram, those are just the colors our logo has. So it's not that each color has specific meaning, but what that means is that we are seeing, interpreting, and reacting to the world differently. Yet, we walk around this earth and in our businesses as if everyone should be seeing and doing and thinking the same way that we do. So we get agitated, and frustrated, and discouraged, irritable when people don't think and do what we think they should do, which is our way, the right way.

Beth McCord:

So the Enneagram is going to bring that astonishing clarity, but where it's really powerful is if you think of it like an internal GPS. So Carey, for you, you're a type eight, I'm a nine, Jeff's a six.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I am.

Beth McCord:

Now, for each of us, when we each get into a car, our navigation system automatically knows where we're starting from. Well, to use the Enneagram, you need to know your main Enneagram type. We'll get into that probably a little bit later, but you want to find the type that has your core motivations, your core fear, your core desire, core weakness, and core longing.

Beth McCord:

Once you find that main type, that's your current location, but each of us have a place where we're trying to get at, which is the healthiest version of ourselves, which really is how God created us to be. So in the garden when God created us, we would reflect him perfectly, but we're on the side of a fall. So we sin. We fall short. So that's why let's say for me, let's say my perfect destination is going from where we live now in Nashville to Kansas City, where my parents are. We're just going to pretend.

Beth McCord:

If I start from Nashville, but I start heading off to Chicago, that's not going to be helpful. I need to know where my current location is and where my healthiest destination. So for me as a nine, it's not about becoming an eight, a healthy eight. It's not by becoming a healthy one or all these other numbers. How has God called me to reflect him because we're the body of Christ? There is great diversity in all the nine numbers, and that's a beautiful thing.

Beth McCord:

So how has God called us to be unique? Then we veer off course, we want to have that rumble strip on the side of the road. That's part of the Enneagram where it alerts us now, "Oh, if I keep doing this, I'm going to fall into the same pitfall that I've always fallen into. How about I come back to the Holy Spirit, ask him for help, and have him work in and through me into that healthier direction?"

Beth McCord:

So it's really what we're talking about with the Enneagram. So if you can realize as a leader, "Wow! There are times in my leadership that I have veered off course time and time again. I kept falling into that same pitfall. I didn't understand why, but the Enneagram is showing me exactly what's going on and why it's happening, but not only that, it's giving me a trajectory of a healthier destination for me to go, and then I can bless my team by living out that healthiest part of myself." That's really what we're trying to help leaders understand is it's not just about what you do, it's all about why you think, feel, and behave.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. So for me, it's been a huge help in terms of self-awareness, understanding how I'm wired, what motivates me, and eights, we're, I don't know what you call it, a challenger. We're the people who don't like anyone to have power over us. We're afraid of vulnerability. We don't want to be controlled.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Jeff, how do you think for leaders listening, and we have a lot of leaders in the business sphere as well as the church sphere, but knowing your team's Enneagram type, can that make you a better manager? How does that help, Jeff, in just leading teams?

Jeff McCord:

Yeah, absolutely. Beth and I found out about the Enneagram when I was in seminary in 2001. So it's been a part of our pastoral career together for over two decades. What I found, and then in that time, I was also a mediator with Peacemaker Ministries when it was around. One, it helps to get a way upstream from conflict. So there's much greater understanding of not only what's happening inside of them, but also what is happening inside of me.

Jeff McCord:

So in Jesus' words in Luke 6, "Out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks," James 4, "What causes fights and quarrels among you, don't they wage war internally?" So by understanding what's happening inside of me, I'm able to extend the same kind of compassion and patience to those around me so that we're not just living reactively, but we can actually respond to one another in ways that are much more organized internally and much more compassionate for one another.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's great. What would you say to people who think the Enneagram is overblown or just not helpful?

Beth McCord:

Well, then they haven't dug in. I mean, if they had seen a lot of memes out there, unhelpful posts, and especially if they have experienced how people can weaponize it, oh, well, of course, they're not going to think it's very helpful. We're very adamant that people not use the Enneagram as a sword or a shield. We don't want to hurt, belittle, tease, mob, bully anyone for how they've been created, and their relational style, but we also don't want use it as a shield, especially as a leader, as a type nine. Here, I started Your Enneagram Coach, I could easily say, "Hey, guys. Sometimes nines procrastinate. You're just going to have to deal with it," right?

Beth McCord:

No. That does not bring about growth. It doesn't bring about anything good in our company. No. I can own it. I can say, "Guys, yes, sometimes I can procrastinate because I get anxious, don't really know what I'm going to do. I don't know what I want. Could you help me? That's a weak spot for me."

Beth McCord:

So we really want to make sure that we're just using the Enneagram correctly, but, yeah, if someone hasn't dug it or people call it drink the Kool-Aid, it's really because they haven't experienced that astonishing clarity that the Enneagram can bring and accelerated growth that everyone experiences when they take it seriously.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Jeff McCord:

Well, and I think, too, one of the things is that-

Carey Nieuwhof:

Go ahead, Jeff.

Jeff McCord:

.... the Enneagram came out of more of a spiritual tradition versus a Western, more well-studied and researched. So what you're finding right now, particularly for us at Your Enneagram Coach, I mean, we reached millions of people globally. So we're now having universities contacting us for a research that not only has started, but research that's going to continue to come out here in the future that's going to put it right at the level of all the other great tools that are out there.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. That's incredible. It's really enjoyed a renaissance. It's been around for centuries. We've had Ian Cron do this. So I know there are some people who listen every single episode, but I would love your really quick 10-second, 30-second take on each Enneagram type just for people who are new or who can't remember. I could do it, but you'll do a way better job. So let's start. There's nine numbers. I'm an eight. We've already got a six and a nine. So Jeff, you're a six, I heard and, Beth, you're a nine. Just start at one and maybe walk us through just the really hyper short elevator pitch for what each type is so that every listener can find themselves a little bit in the story.

Beth McCord:

Yeah. So the type ones are the principled reformers. They fear being inaccurate, wrong, bad, evil, corruptible. They're desiring to be good, virtuous, and right. The type twos are the nurturing advisers. They fear being unwanted, unloved, and unneeded. They're just wanting to be loved, accepted, and appreciated. The type threes are the admirable achiever, and they fear being a failure, incompetent, worthless. What they desire is to have great worth, value, and be admired, and to have high status and high image.

Beth McCord:

Now, the type fours are the introspective individualists, and they fear being emotionally cutoff, mundane, original, plain. For them, they desire to be their most authentic self, to be special, to be unique. Now, type fives are the individualist investigators. For them, they fear being obligated to be incompetent and incapable, to not have knowledge, to be ignorant. For them, they desire to have all of the knowledge they need to press forward and to be able to dive deep into any given subject, but also to have enough internal resources to get that done.

Beth McCord:

Now, the type six is the faithful guardian. They fear being without support, guidance, and security, to be blamed, targeted, and definitely abandoned. What they desire is that security, guidance, and support. Now, the sevens are the enthusiastic optimists. For them, they fear being emotionally or, I'm sorry, they fear being trapped in emotional pain, limited, deprived, and definitely missing out on something fun. For them, they're looking to be happy, fully satisfied, and content.

Beth McCord:

The type eights, which is you, the passionate protectors, they fear being harmed, controlled, challenged, and definitely left at the mercy of injustice. For them, they're looking to be the protector of themselves and those in their tight inner circle. The last but not least is my type, the peaceful accommodators. We

fear any kind of conflict or tension. We fear being overlooked and unimportant, and we definitely are wanting inner stability and peace of mind. So that in a nutshell is all the nine types with their core fears and their core desires.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Everyone has a strength and weakness, right?

Beth McCord:

Yes.

Carey Nieuwhof:

There are some good parts of every type. Do you agree that there are healthy and unhealthy expressions of each type?

Beth McCord:

Oh, if anything about the Enneagram, I think that's one of the most important aspects of the Enneagram. We call it being aligned, misaligned, and out of alignment of truth. When you're aligned with what is true, you're going to live that out. The overflow of your heart comes there. Then when we're starting to get misaligned, it's autopilot. We're starting to react to life instead of being proactive and very aware. We're just reacting. Then being unhealthy or out of alignment, man, could be absolutely destructive for yourself and all your relationships. So we really want people to understand that no matter what type you are, there's no best type. All types at their healthiest are amazing. All types at their worst are literally the worst. So no one can take the prize and no one gets the worst. So we just want people to recognize that's why the Enneagram is so helpful because it really shows who you can become.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So we don't have to go through every type, but you can if you want, but I'd love you to random, again, people love to, again, this is free consulting, right? So people want to know, "When am I unhealthy? When am I not unhealthy?" What would be an example of an unhealthy one, the person who has to make everything right, perfectionist tendencies? Then pick a few other types. You can pick on me, and maybe what an unhealthy five or six would be like. [crosstalk 00:18:38] You can pick on what you want.

Beth McCord:

No. Yeah. So the type ones, for them when they're struggling, they're definitely going to be hypercritical. They're going to see all the flaws, and it's because they have an inner critic that sees all the imperfections of life and in people and in themselves. It's like a megaphone at the type one's ear. That inner critic is constantly berating them and getting them to either fix it themselves or get someone else to fix it. It's relentless.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So is this the dilemma? You go to the desk at work of a type one. Everything's perfectly organized. You open up their stationery drawer. The pencils are sharpened. They're all lined up, and you think, "This person has it all together. They should come to my house and organize everything," but inside there's this super harsh critic.

Beth McCord:

Oh, it's relentless. I think that's why the Enneagram can be so powerful because when you can see past any façade because we can all put a façade on, if you look past that, you're going to see brokenness and you're going to see why they do what they do. So for the type ones, that critic, that inner critic is relentless. I constantly say it's berating them. It is trying to make them perfect and others perfect and the world perfect. As we all know, we're on this side of the fall, and that's just not going to happen. So it's exhausting.

Beth McCord:

So when anyone brings criticism to the type one, what they have to realize is they already a hundred or a thousandfold of criticisms aimed at them from their inner critic already. So if you feel that they're too sensitive or prickly or bite back, it's because they've already dealt with all of that.

Beth McCord:

Usually, it's like a coffee cup when you pour coffee in it and it starts to spill over. Well, that's what's happening with a type one. When you start to feel criticism coming outside of the type one, it's because they've already dealt so much with criticism aimed at them from the inner critic that it's overflowing into how they're reacting to those around them. So to understand that, it can give you empathy.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What does an unhealthy or misaligned one do? How do they act out at work? How would you feel the impact of a misaligned, unhealthy one?

Beth McCord:

Yeah. Well, what's interesting is that though they're going to feel great resentment inside and the resentment comes where they feel they're the only adult in the room like, "Doesn't everyone else see these imperfections?" Because we all think we see the world the same way. So ones think everyone else sees these imperfections and they're choosing not to take care of it.

Beth McCord:

So it brings up resentment, but to be resentful or angry in the mind of a one means that's being bad and wrong, which is one of their core fears. So they come at it from a different place than just being angry like a type eight might just say it like it is like, "Hey, let's get at this." Whereas a type one is going to bring it with more logic and a reason and not so much of a bite, except you're going to feel it come out sideways. You're going to feel a little bit of prickliness. You're going to feel the-

Carey Nieuwhof:

Passive-aggressive a bit?

Beth McCord:

It's a little bit of passive-aggressive, but it's a slight coldness but they're trying to be warm. You can feel the criticism underneath or they will say what needs to be done or tell you where things are wrong, but they're going to try to do it in a warm way, but you can just feel that bite under the surface. That's usually when they're struggling, when it's really built up inside them.

Beth McCord:

That's where we can come alongside our type ones and help to advocate for them by letting them know, "You've done a great job seeing what needs to be perfected, and I really appreciate your detailed eye on things. It seems like right now you might be really under the gun or feeling the pressure to get things right or to make things perfect. Is that true?" So by coming alongside them can really mean the world to them.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's super helpful. So let's dive in, Jeff or Beth, on another type and pick it apart that way because now I think it's coming into for leaders.

Beth McCord:

Do you want to do six?

Jeff McCord:

Sure. You can come in on the Enneagram stuff and I'll elaborate.

Beth McCord:

Well, tell everyone the sixes.

Jeff McCord:

Well, at our best, we're loyal, and our loyal trumps everything else. As a matter fact, how we use all of our gifts, all of our knowledge, it's all in trying to find security in relationship with someone else or even a system of belief. So it's very selfish in the sense that I want security, but it's also about other people. So it can look at times very accommodating to other people. It can look very people-pleasing.

Jeff McCord:

Now, sixes are a little more dynamic than some other types because there's two types of sixes, and there's one six that's very phobic, fearful, and there's another six that's more reactive and they called it counterphobic. They actually look like eights at times.

Beth McCord:

Well, they all have fear.

Jeff McCord:

They all have fear and everything is negotiating around that fear. So when it comes to organizations and contributions to the team, sixes oftentimes will overperform trying to find security. Will you prove your loyalty to me as much as I'm proving to you?

Jeff McCord:

The biggest message that you can give to sixes whenever you start to see anxious behaviors, passive-aggressiveness, it's almost at times they can be very enmeshed, and then we can also be very distant and independent. You never quite know where a type six can be, and it can feel a little chaotic, but the

biggest thing that you can give to a six as a leader is engagement and to stand with them in the midst of their storm and saying, "Hey, I'm here. We're good. You're good. You're doing a great job."

Jeff McCord:

What you'll find is that the more that you're able to what we call a non-anxious presence, to offer a non-anxious presence to a type six, the more their interior ... So if a one has a critic, a six has an inner committee. They've got a ton of voices that includes a critic that they're trying to answer to to make sure that they're the best that they can be for their leaders and their teams.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So I don't know that I have this right, and a little knowledge is dangerous, and that's what I have about Enneagram, although I have done some research. Is it true that the Enneagram six, because I'm convinced from what I know that everyone who answers to a board, which is most church leaders and a lot of business leaders, they have a six on the board. As I learned about the Enneagram, I thought, "I think I have mistaken what the sixes bring," because are they the people, and I could be wrong here, who will often raise questions about the 15% budget hike because, "Boy, that's ambitious. How do you know we're going to make it?" They will have a lot of questions upfront, but be deeply loyal on the backend. Is that typical behavior for a six?

Beth McCord:

Yeah. Absolutely. It really comes from that heart of protecting, so the loyal guardian protecting their team. That could be their church, their family, school, whatever team that is. They're able to think through all the possibilities. That's the thing. That's where the inner committee comes in. The inner committee, Jeff had said, it's like being in parliament in England where you got the main speaker who's speaking, then all of a sudden like, "Hey, we're going to be doing this, folks," and then all of a sudden everyone else is booing or hissing or cheering or giving all their viewpoints all at the same time. That's what it feels like inside a six. So a six in a meeting like that can think through all of the possibilities.

Beth McCord:

Now, for those that have already made the decisions, "We're going to have a budget. We're going to move forward in this area," and all of a sudden here comes someone and they're asking all these questions. It can feel like they're not for the group or they're for the board when in actuality, they're trying to prevent anything negative from happening.

Beth McCord:

So to come alongside them and say, "Wow! I can really see that you're being loyal and faithful and thinking through all the things. We really appreciate that. Do you think maybe next time we could set up a time where we could write up all those questions and answer them ahead of time?"

Beth McCord:

Now, they'll still have questions when they get there. They'll leave them even more questions, but to help bring a sense of, "Hey, we're for you, too, and we want to help you to navigate all of the questions that you have that they're good and helpful, but maybe 30 questions in one board meeting won't be as helpful."

Jeff McCord:

Well, and there's a few people experience what our coaching director calls my sixiness. So when people are experiencing my sixiness, and they can experience it in two ways. One, it can't come across as suspiciousness of a leader that, "I don't think you're taking good care of the team or the organization," or number two, "It's because I'm fiercely loyal and I don't want there to be a mistake that's going to harm the team or the organization." So my engagement sometimes can bring an energy of suspiciousness or it can bring an energy of loyalty.

Carey Nieuwhof:

See, I am convinced. You confirmed something. When I look back on my first decade in leadership, I think I had some sixes on the board who are actually very deeply loyal, which makes sense because when I inherited the churches I was leading at the time, it's often the most loyal people who are the last people left. It's like, "It's not going down on my watch," right? I would interpret their questions as disloyalty, and I wish I could go back and see that because eventually, I wean people like that off the board, not in a bad way, but as an eight, I saw that as a challenge. Really, what they were trying to do-

Jeff McCord:

Well, and that's one of the fears of an eight is betrayal. So if a six is seeing that maybe as an eight leader you're not fully recognizing all the consequences of your decisions, then there's going to be a fight. That's one of the things that earlier on that you mentioned about why the Enneagram is important because it gives a language to understanding that dynamic and to be able to have a vocabulary to name it in the moment.

Beth McCord:

What's interesting is that eights definitely work off of a kind of a hierarchy, "I am the leader. I'm the boss," and it's not because, I mean, obviously, if an eight is unhealthy, it's different. It's not because, "Oh, I have to be seen as the leader," it's, "I've got your back." I talked about this when you did our podcast. Eights, I call them diesel snowplows, the big snowplows that you experience up in Toronto because at their very best, they're making sure everyone is behind them and they're plowing a path so that everyone can get on that highway and get where they need to go. They're the ones to take on the opposition and the hits and the strain that it takes to get the snow off the road or obstacles, but for an eight, they can feel like, "Hey, everyone get behind me." Whereas a six, what's interesting is they don't like hierarchy. They want everyone to be seen as on the same playing field.

Beth McCord:

So when someone comes in with too much leadership and telling people what to do, the six seeing it very provocative and start pushing and prodding to see, "Okay. Well, that's okay, but are you for us or are you just trying to tell us what to do?" So it can get very provocative and testing loyalties and seeing where everything is going to land.

Beth McCord:

So then that can really upset the eight because it's like, "Why are you challenging me?" That's why this is so powerful, like you said, Jeff, is if we understand what's going on under the hood, we can actually have real conversations about what's going on versus assuming, and we call it assumicide, assuming incorrectly other people's thoughts, feeling, and motives, which gets us in a whole heap of trouble.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay. Well, this is really good stuff because I need the first five years of my leadership back with a couple of key relationships based on this. I just didn't know and they didn't know, and when you're not aware of that, you end up in a really, and it wasn't terrible, it wasn't headline stuff, it's just you end up hurting each other when you don't mean to, which is so good.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I can think of some sixes in my life and every time it's like, "Well, this could go wrong, and that could go wrong, and this could go wrong, and that could go wrong," and I'm like, "Ah! Just do it," but when you realize that that's different wiring, it's super helpful. Okay.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Let's pick on another type. Let's do threes and sevens because my theory and, again, correct me if I'm wrong is many leaders, not all, but a lot of leaders I work with are threes, sevens, eights, twos, and ones. Those are the most dominant types that show up in my field, not that there aren't nines, sixes, and fives, and fours, but they tend to show up. So let's pick on threes. What do you call them again? I think of them as performers. These are the-

Beth McCord:

Yeah, the admirable achievers.

Carey Nieuwhof:

They're achievers, yup. They're achievers.

Beth McCord:

They are achievers, and they can be optimistic, hardworking. They can champion people. They're the types of people that have lists and goals and they're going to get those things done, but they can get really frustrated if others aren't as efficient as they are and if others' work puts them in a bad light. So if they aren't as successful or it reflects poorly on them, that can get threes really frustrated and upset.

Carey Nieuwhof:

A lot of it is image-related, right? A little bit image-related?

Beth McCord:

Very much, yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

"I need to be seen as successful."

Beth McCord:

Exactly. So we talk about Jeff was a place kicker in college and the same, you're as good as your last kick. Well, for a three, you're as good as your last success. So they're always striving for this next success, this next achievement, but once they check it off, they're like, "Yes, I did it," gold star, trophy, whatever you want to call it. For them, it's like five seconds of glory and then it's like, "Oh, but wait. What's the next

thing?" and they have to go on to that next thing and the next thing, and it's exhausting to always hold up a very specific image that they want to show others that are around them. So for them, they're constantly not realizing how exhausted they are because they're always running to the next thing.

Jeff McCord:

The goodness about threes, because at times it's almost as if they don't see you, because they're so focused on the goal and getting to the goal that people become instruments to get them to where they want to be, but when a three moves to health and starts to understand their own interior world and that they're the false self that they're portraying to everybody else as the achiever that everybody should admire, when they start to identify who they really are as people, then they start to see people on their teams and in their organizations to move towards them so that it's not just them at their best at the expense of others, but they're at their best as they're bringing everybody else along with them.

Beth McCord:

Exactly.

Carey Nieuwhof:

If you're leading a three, what are some keys to leading a three well?

Beth McCord:

Well, you had actually said it in our last podcast and I was like, "Yes. That's absolutely correct." You definitely want to cheer them on. They really thrive well on affirmation and recognition, but really what they're hoping for is to be cared for, to be delighted in for who they really are. Now, they're constantly putting on these achieving masks and personas, but if you can just get between all of that and say, "Hey, I see. I really admire you and I like you," it's really going to blow them away, and that can really help them to feel like, "Oh, you mean I don't have to achieve all the time? Like you like me for me?" That is gold right there.

Beth McCord:

What you're going to see is they're going to start to realize that they can start come alongside everyone else and to be a champion on there on everyone's behalf versus just their own image, and that could be really dynamic.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Super helpful. Can we talk about sevens?

Beth McCord:

Yes, sevens.

Carey Nieuwhof:

They're enthusiastic, fun-loving, masters of pain.

Beth McCord:

Yes. We call them the enthusiastic optimists. Man, they are just excitable. They love great challenges in their careers. They're innovative. They're some of the most creative on the Enneagram. There's no failure. Whereas for threes, it's all of the fear of failure. For sevens, it's like, "Failure? What are you talking about? This is a new opportunity."

Carey Nieuwhof:

"I fell out of the airplane with no parachute, but I walked away. So it's fine, right? It was fun."

Beth McCord:

"It's all good, right?" For them, where they can slip into trouble, especially being a leader, is that they could lose focus. They can get really excited about a project or a new shiny thing, but then they can lose focus because then they're off to the next shiny, and then the next shiny thing. So and they can really procrastinate with mundane tasks, which can be a real hardship for a leader, right? Because we all have things that we have to get done. Even if we have assistants that help us along the way, there are still things that we have to do. If they procrastinate or actually avoid them all together, that can basically be a snowball effect, where it just keeps going down the hill, and eventually, it can wipe out the whole team if it's not taken care of.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So you could almost be the leader because you hear about this all the time who read a new book, went to a new conference and all of a sudden the whole company is going to pivot, and we're doing this, and the whole team knows for 30 days until you read the next book or listen to the next podcast or go to the next event or have a new friend, who told you this is the way. Is it that kind of personality that can show up at work as well?

Jeff McCord:

My initial thought is yes, and each Enneagram type would have their what reasons for doing that. So a six might adhere to the book because they believe it to be true and it's going to answer all their worst case scenarios. The fives may be like, "Oh, this is well-reasoned, and based upon all of my research, this is the best of the many voices on this particular subject." But it is true, yes, sevens will do it because they may jump in immediately to the excitement of a new idea and a new way whether to expand the business, scale the business, reach more people, impact more people's lives, but then once they see the next one or if they see the limitations in this one idea that they're looking for the next one to solve it because they don't want to be constrained by just one idea.

Beth McCord:

Yeah, or limited or deprived of fun. Yeah. For them, it's like Christmas day for kids. We love the anticipation of Christmas Day, but then we get to Christmas Day and we open the presents in five seconds and then it's like, "Really? That's it?" We're letdown because we built this huge thing in our mind. That's really what it's like for sevens on a daily basis. They're constantly thinking of the next fun thing. It could be the next thing they eat, the next conversation they have, but for a leader, if it's that next book they read, and the next project, well, once they get closer to the project and they start to see all the details that have to be done, the mundane tasks, the things that aren't fun, that's when they start to feel a little antsy and they want to leap off into the next thing.

Beth McCord:

So they just have to recognize that this is something that they have to recognize and deal with, and how they can grow. They can totally grow and be present in the moment, seeing all the possibilities around them, and navigating some of those weaknesses so that they can continue on the path of that goal or that project and to get it actually done.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So you're giving them some guidelines to stay focused, to stay on mission, to stay on strategy, to say, "Let's not pivot every 20 minutes here." It's true or is it true that sevens struggle with pain? In other words, "I keep going from adrenaline hit to adrenaline hit to avoid looking at the really big issues in life." How do you counsel that when you're leading a seven or do you just avoid it? When you deal with a four, it's like, "Oh, they're leading with their art," but a seven, can you ... What's that?

Beth McCord:

Well, if you're a type nine, you'll avoid it. If you're a type nine, you might avoid it.

Jeff McCord:

Yeah. There's a great line. The author Dan Allender once said that, "If you can't get out of it, get into it." The idea with the seven, I'm mindful, one of the type sevens that comes to mind is from the movie Patch Adams. It was when he was a doctor. He would go into the children's floor to bring joy to some of the kids that were suffering the most.

Jeff McCord:

The key here is that for a seven, when they hear no, they're thinking of that childlike part of their heart that's telling they can't do something versus drawing something out of there that is very noble and half noble because sevens can bring joy in life to even some of the most sorrowful situations. So it's appealing to their giftedness to bring life and ideas, but to use it as a superpower versus using it frenetically and without control or without restraint.

Beth McCord:

Yes. So if sevens are able to sit in the mundane all the way to pain, so there's a lot of in between there, they are remarkable at bringing life and abundance and joy to some of those dark recesses. Another great movie is Inside Out. Joy on Inside Out, she's trying so hard to get rid of Sadness, basically, just to shove her out somehow. "Here, you're seeing this circle. Don't move," but at the end, what she recognized is it is the embrace of the joy all the way to the sorrow of life that makes it so rich and beautiful. So that's when she realized, "Okay. We can have both and it actually would be meaningful instead of trying to get rid of Sadness." So that's why what we see when we see sevens embrace the fullness of life, that's where they really excel.

Carey Nieuwhof:

This is so helpful because when you start out in leadership or at least my journey, it's like you don't think any of these factors are in play, and then the longer you're at it, you're like, "No, we're leading humans," and this is all in play at work.

Beth McCord:

Yeah.

Jeff McCord:

We all have responses to each of these types. I mean, my response to a seven or to a type one is very different than my wife's response to those. So even for you as a leader, it helps to give vocabulary and compassion to yourself and understanding all these dynamics that are happening around you that maybe you weren't able to access before.

Beth McCord:

Yeah. I mean, just the knowledge of the Enneagram has really helped us lead our company and for me as a nine, I'm a peaceful accommodator, and if I were to just live in that position of just accommodation, that is not a good leader, right? There are things that have to get done. The nines, what we struggle with the most is what's called sloth, and it's not a physical laziness. In fact, nines can actually be the busiest on the Enneagram and a lot of it is to avoid all the other things, but we're busy on the behalf of others, but we forget about ourselves. There's this internal fog.

Beth McCord:

I can't lead well unless I know myself and I lead from that interior part of the core of who I am and what I want. Really, what I want as a leader, I want my team to feel cared for, like almost like Camelot where there's a round table. Everyone has a place at the table. I want your voice to matter. I want my voice to matter. I want your voice to matter. I want you to be seen and heard. I want you to excel what God has created you. That is a really beautiful thing, but if I don't adhere to it and stay strong in that and I just start to accommodate with people who are let's say upset or they want this or they want that, it could really topple the whole system, but to know what I need and to go after it is so important.

Beth McCord:

So using the Enneagram has been so helpful for me to be able to speak specifically and with directness to any of the personality types the way they need to be talked to, not the way I want for people to talk to me.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Apparently, nines make great presidents as well. I wonder if Lincoln was a nine.

Beth McCord:

Yup. We think Lincoln, Reagan, Obama, probably Clinton, at least those and maybe Carter. There's several presidents that were nines like President Reagan, I would definitely believe he was a nine with eight wing, which is actually me, but we use both our wings. I definitely lean more into that eight space, which is great because it helps me to get going, to advocate, and to have passion, where my nine wants to chill out, but you can see that passion in Reagan.

Carey Nieuwhof:

No. That's good because it's both sides of the aisle, and that's what they have to do. The best presidents are bringing people together with wildly different opinions if you watch the movie Team of Rivals or read Doris Kearns Goodwin's book on Lincoln. He has that uncanny ability to reach into all kinds of factions, people who would never be in the same room, who come in the same room and achieve something nobody thought was possible. Okay.

Carey Nieuwhof:

We're coming up on time, but let's talk about eights, my poison. This is my unique form of thing. So what are the problems in working with eights. Andy Stanley and I had this conversation in a previous episode. We'll link to it in the show notes, but he has a number of eights on his team, and he's not. He's a one. So he tends to be worked too hard on stuff and be a perfectionist, want to get it just right. He said, "The eights are really weird because it takes them a while to figure out what he thinks, and the eights have an instant opinion. They can charge hard. They can be loud. They can be dominating and intimidating." How do you lead eights?

Jeff McCord:

One of the interesting things about the Enneagram Beth and I noticed that so when we started Your Enneagram Coach, the people who we hired first were typically eights because as first time entrepreneurs and Beth being a nine, me being a six, well, we're not leading with a very bold vision and we needed people to help us make decisions, which is interesting because we were actually addressing a blind spot and it took us about a year like, "Wow! We've hired a team of eights."

Beth McCord:

They were great.

Carey Nieuwhof:

How did you not let that intimidate you or have them take over to the point where you're both on the unemployment line?

Beth McCord:

We know their heart. That's why the Enneagram is so beautiful.

Jeff McCord:

That's right. So we were hiring eights whose hearts were in the right place. So they weren't coming in and saying, "We're going to take over your business and make you a seven-figure business." They were saying, "Beth," at the time, "we're going to help you to amplify your voice."

Beth McCord:

Yeah, "Your vision."

Jeff McCord:

They were using their eightness on behalf of other not for themselves.

Beth McCord:

So when I understood, so with eights, where they can get stuck is by being too direct, too direct want, "my way or the highway," "I'm going to challenge you before you can challenge me," just real intense and have a sense of intimidation even though they don't realize it.

Jeff McCord:

Beth, I remember you calling it confrontational intimacy.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, it's true. If you're not fighting with me, you don't love me. I'm not a fighter. I'm not that guy online, but if you're going to back off, it's a dislike. What's the word I'm looking for? Indifference drives me crazy or people holding things back.

Jeff McCord:

There's a movie in the Matrix movies that one guy was fighting Neo and at the end he said, "You never know a man until you fought him." There's a sense to where that's what it was like for eights like, "Show me that you're going to match my energy, and that I can trust you, and that you're going to engage in this mission to the same degree that I am."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yes. My wife finds that exhausting.

Beth McCord:

Yes, I was just going to say as a nine it goes against my entire core of my being, but here's what's amazing is with the team that we brought on and to see behind, so the eights have the strong exterior, but in fact, they are some of the most tender on the Enneagram. I've had several eights in my life that showed vulnerability of that side of them, which is very rare, but when you see it, you're amazed at the depth of tenderness and what they will do to protect those that they love.

Beth McCord:

Once I got to see that and I knew eights at the core, I was able to bring these people on the team because what they were saying is, "Beth, we believe in your vision and what God is doing in and through you, and we're going to make sure that you don't slip into sloth again. We're going to make sure that we champion you and what God is doing in and through you."

Beth McCord:

I knew that their heart was always going to be for me and protect me, not to blindside me because that's their greatest fear, and that's something that they're not going to do.

Jeff McCord:

They still get out ahead of us at times.

Beth McCord:

Well, sure, they're eights.

Jeff McCord:

I know that they're attuned to me as a leader. They're not just out there on their own.

Beth McCord:

Yeah. So sometimes they'll, I think maybe you even said it earlier that eights, they think that they can get so much done quickly and in actuality, they can't hold that much. I was like, "Oh, my gosh! That's exactly-"

Carey Nieuwhof:

I think I said that on your podcast, and thank you for having me, by the way.

Beth McCord:

Yeah. That's what we're experiencing right now. We have these big projects coming up in our COO who's an eight. She's like, "Yeah. We can totally get this done," and Jeff and I are looking at each other going, "We know we've done this before, and this is going to take a lot more time than this short amount of time." She's totally willing to listen and to pivot, but in her mind, she can definitely make it seem like, "Oh, it's totally doable," because it's an eight. It is. It's confidence and assertiveness, but the coolest thing is when eight knows that you have their back and that you support them and that you're going to protect them just as much. They'll listen to your leadership and they'll follow suit. So it's just been great having them on our team because I know their loyalty is just, I mean, it's out of the park, right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right. Okay. Well, I got to ask and thank you so much for coming on the podcast. It's been a fascinating conversation that I think has helped a lot of leaders, but you have some great resources. You have a book, *Becoming Us*, that you co-wrote together. You've also got, what? 45 courses on all the different types, combinations of Enneagram, and you got a podcast. Tell us where they can find all things that you do, the McCords.

Jeff McCord:

Yeah. If you go to [yourenneagramcoach.com](http://yourenneagramcoach.com), that's the main page where all the resources are listed, but if you're new to the Enneagram, we just launched this year a great free introductory video series that you help you to find your type and understand all the nine types. It's called [enneawhat.com](http://enneawhat.com).

Beth McCord:

Because everyone says, everyone goes, "Ennea what? What is this?"

Carey Nieuwhof:

Brilliant.

Beth McCord:

So [enneawhat.com](http://enneawhat.com).

Carey Nieuwhof:

We will link to that in the show notes. I really appreciate you both. Thank you so much for being on the podcast, and really, really helpful on even leading my own team.

Beth McCord:

Thanks, Carey.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Thanks, Jeff. Thanks, Beth.

This transcript was exported on Nov 10, 2021 - view latest version [here](#).

Jeff McCord:

Thanks, Carey.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, I hope that conversation helped you figure out how to better lead a team, and some the nuances of the people that you are leading. I mean, we are in the midst of The Great Resignation right now. So I look for every edge that I can possibly get in leading people. You can find transcripts for this episode at [careynieuwhof.com/episode457](http://careynieuwhof.com/episode457).

Carey Nieuwhof:

Want to thank you to our partners for this episode. Thanks to Medi-Share. They have a 98% customer satisfaction rating, and you can save up to 50% or more. Find out how you can save by going to [medishare.com/carey](http://medishare.com/carey).

Carey Nieuwhof:

Red Letter Challenge, if you're looking for unity done-for-you solutions and so much more, go to [redletterchallenge.com/carey](http://redletterchallenge.com/carey) and while you're there, pastors, you get a free book, no strings attached. So that's for 2022 for you, 40-day challenge.

Carey Nieuwhof:

We got a What I'm Thinking About segment. I want to think about the gateway drug to moral failure. It's actually exhaustion and it's the gateway drug to a lot of things. I know a lot of leaders as we close these final weeks of 2021 are tired and I just want to talk about that. I've been there as a leader. I have been tired in the past. It's just something from my heart to yours.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Coming up, we got Kara Powell, and I'm excited for you to hear that conversation. Here's an excerpt.

Kara Powell:

This generation of young people, they are an anxious generation. We know that even before the pandemic they had quite high rates of mental health challenges, anxiety, depression, suicide even, and according to CDC data, during the pandemic for young people, anxiety has tripled and depression has quadrupled.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Also coming up, Ken Coleman, Ian Cron, Nicky Gumbel, Don Miller, Dave Hollis, Mark Sayers, and so many more. If you subscribe, you get that all for free. Thank you so much for leaving ratings and reviews, sharing this on social media. I really appreciate it. If you like this episode, I would love to have you check out some of the other stuff we do.

Carey Nieuwhof:

If you head over to [careynieuwhof.com](http://careynieuwhof.com), that website where I write gets accessed about seven million times a year and I send out an email on a daily basis, almost daily basis, to over 85,000 leaders. Well,

there's a lot of resources over at careynieuwhof.com. If you haven't checked it out, I would encourage you to do it. Even if you misspell my name, you're probably going to find it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

In this What I'm Thinking About segment, I want to talk to you about exhaustion because a lot of you are leading tired right now. I think what makes the last couple of years more frustrating than ever is usually hard work brings reward, right? You've worked really hard, so many leaders have told me, "I've never worked harder in my life," but for the last two years, hard work hasn't brought reward, it's brought stagnation or decline, and now you're looking at 2022 going, "How do I handle this?"

Carey Nieuwhof:

Exhaustion functions like a gateway drug to a whole host of unintended consequences in your life, including but not limited to moral failure. So I want to give you a quick lesson from Elite Athletes. One of my sons forwarded me a TED Talk and in it, Dr. Stephen Seiler shares a discovery that contrary to popular opinion, a lot of elite athletes like global elite athletes, we're talking top professional sports figures, we're talking about Olympic athletes like people who win gold medals, how do they do their training?

Carey Nieuwhof:

You would think that a lot of them do high intensity training, and what he discovered to his surprise is that most of the world's best athletes actually train at the low intensity level for 80% of their training. He actually divided training into three zones, green, yellow, and red. If that sounds familiar, yeah, yeah, I did that in my book, too, by the way, At Your Best. Green zone being low intensity, red zone being you can hardly breathe, you're just exhausted, and then yellow zone being in between.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What shocked him is world champion athletes do 80% of their training in the low intensity zone. What that does is that allows them to train long and hard and then when they need that burst that's going to put them on the podium, then they can move into the red zone, but they've got a lot of strength developed.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I think leadership is the same way. A lot of you have been living in the red zone. You're just exhausted all the time, you're tired, you're burned out, and exhaustion is a gateway drug. Now, if you've done for two years, okay, you made it through. Good for you, but I think year three is going to be a tipping point for a lot of leaders. If you didn't hit it this year, you're going to hit it next year.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Here's what's at stake. Here are seven things that you're sacrificing or risking if you continue to lead at an unsustainable pace. Number one, your family. I mean, you got nothing left and you know what happens is you go home and what have you got left to give your wife, your husband, your kids? Nothing, right? Zilch, nada. You got nothing left on the tank. Sacrificing your family on the altar of leadership in my view isn't leadership. I did that for a few years. I would not recommend it. I was able to save my family and keep everybody together, but it's a terrible way to live. Even if you're working exhausting

hours and you're moving the needle at work, if you're winning at work and losing at home, you're losing, period.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Second thing that exhaustion can lead you to, obviously, is burnout. By the way, if you're wondering whether you're burning out, I have a quiz that you can take. If you just go to [burnoutindicator.com](http://burnoutindicator.com), that will give you an idea whether you are in burnout, whether you're going to burnout, what your risk level is, but, yeah, you can burn out. Once you fall off the cliff of burnout, you lose control, which is not good.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Third thing is actually moral failure. Moral failure is I believe an unintended consequence of living in a state of perpetual exhaustion. It's not inevitable, but it is increasingly likely the longer you lead on empty. Exhaustion really is the gateway drug to moral failure. There's an author a few years ago, Stephen Mansfield, who wrote a great book on how leaders end up in the ditch. He said when leaders get exhausted, when they're isolated, if they stayed too long, moral failure often follows. So this is why.

Carey Nieuwhof:

When you're exhausted, bad things seem good and good things seem bad, and that's a perfect setup for moral failure. So I think that's at stake if you keep leading. I'm not saying you will, I'm just saying the odds go up the more tired you are.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay. Couple more things that really are at stake if you're leading exhausted all the time. Terrible decision making. An exhausted decision maker is a terrible decision maker. It's exceedingly difficult to make good decisions when you're tired. That's true personally. I mean, that's why at night, right? What happens in the morning? You're drinking your smoothie and you're eating spinach, and then at night, you got the bag of Doritos over in the couch. Why? You're tired. That's what happens. That happens when you're leading as well. If you're just tired all the time, you can't make great decisions.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Fifth consequence, a defeated team. A defeated leader will eventually create a defeated team. Your team's passion level will rarely exceed yours as a leader. Sixth thing that's at stake is you're going to produce more of the same. If you're in a malaise right now as an organization, you will continue to be at a malaise if you are exhausted because you can't think straight and you can't be more creative. Brain research is increasingly showing that when you're rested, you're actually more creative. So when you're exhausted, you're less likely to get the breakthrough.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Then finally, and this is a corollary to that, ineffectiveness. As more than one leader had said, "The best thing you can bring to your job as a leader is your energy." You can sprint for a month, you can sprint for a season, but you cannot sprint for years. Ironically, in your desire to do more, if you really don't check your energy level, you'll end up accomplishing less and you'll end up being ineffective.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I've called this out before, but I think a lot of leaders have lived over the last few years going, "Well, just get me to a holiday. Just let me, travel's back. So maybe I'll just take a vacation or go to the beach or the mountains or somewhere tropical and sit in a hammock for a while and I'll be fine." The fallacy in that is that time off can't heal you if the problem is how you spend time on, right? If you're spending your time on exhausted, you can take a month off and feel great, but the first Monday back at 11:00 AM, you feel like you got run over by a truck.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's why if you want a solution to this, a great way to end 2021 and start 2022 is to check out my new book, *At Your Best*. I am somebody who burned out over 15 years ago and I've got a book out now. You can get that for a very low cost on Amazon or anywhere you like to get your books. It's called *At Your Best*. It's about getting time, energy, and priorities working in your favor.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It's been a joy to help over 15,000 leaders jump in to that messaging with the release of the book a couple of months ago. We're getting notes every day from leaders who are saying, "I can't believe the difference that the strategies in *At Your Best* are making." It's designed to help you get back your margin so you can live on mission, so that you can actually be more effective at work, more present at home.

Carey Nieuwhof:

These are the strategies I've used for over 15 years now and I can tell you they've been field tested, proven, and I would love to help you with that. I've also got a companion video masterclass that you can check out. Everything is available at [atyourbesttoday.com](http://atyourbesttoday.com). So if you go to [atyourbesttoday.com](http://atyourbesttoday.com), you can get the book. If you're interested, there's a companion video masterclass and that also has some study questions for you and, hey, we're just here in your corner and I want to see 2022 and even the end of 2021, don't write the year off yet, see you live at a sustainable pace.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Thanks so much for listening, leaders. I'm so grateful for you. Back next time with a fresh episode, and I hope our time together today 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.