

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 everyone, and welcome to episode 460 of the podcast. I hope our time together today helps you thrive in life and leadership. One of the things we called it on this podcast a year ago when I interviewed William Vanderbloemen was that 2021 was going to be the year of turnover. I know that episode got a lot of traction and turnover turned into The Great Resignation. And here we are. So we're going to explore that with Ken Coleman today, why employers have lost power and how to build a dream career. It's going to be a fascinating conversation. This episode is brought to you by Medi-Share. You know they have a 98% customer satisfaction rating and an average member savings of 50% or more? Find out how much you could save by going to medishare.com/carey. Today's episode is brought to you by Generis.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Learn how to increase giving and generosity in your church by scheduling your free 45-minute strategy session at generis.com/carey. Well, good to have Ken Coleman back. He is America's career coach, and the nationally syndicated radio host of the Ken Coleman Show, and also a number one best selling author. He's been featured in Forbes, appeared on Fox News, Fox Business, the Rachael Ray Show and since 2014, he has served at Ramsey Solutions where he offers expert advice to help thousands of people every day discover what they were meant to do and land their dream job. So yeah, this was a bit of a surprising year and you have probably felt like you've had the stuffing knocked out of you once again this year.

Carey Nieuwhof:

My team and I have been working really hard to get you some resources to start 2022 on a strong foot. If you've never checked out, I listen to a lot of podcasts, never go to the website. I want to encourage you to break that pattern. When it's safe, don't do this if you're driving. Obviously some of you are running or whatever you're doing, you're at the gym. But when you put down the weights or you slow down a little bit, or you get to your destination, head on over to careynieuwhof.com because not just on this podcast, but in everything we do, we are committed to helping you thrive in life and leadership. Would love to meet you over there. Join the millions of leaders year, who access our content, much of it free over at careynieuwhof.com. Then we also have some courses and other resources we share that really helps. We want to help you navigate things like what we are talking about with Ken and The Great Resignation. Well, it is that time of year again, it's open enrollment season.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It is the dreaded yearly task of diving into the mountain of paperwork and research, trying to find the best healthcare option you can for you and your family. What you probably want is trust and affordability. Well, with a 98% customer satisfaction rating and an average member savings of 50% or more, Medi-Share is two for two on those two key metrics. They're an affordable alternative to health insurance that allows members to share one another's medical bills. They offer access to almost a million healthcare providers and have a 27-year proven track record. They're the most trusted name when it comes to healthcare and having a quarter century expertise really helps. There's another thing

that's wonderful about Medi-Share, they offer free and unlimited professional virtual counseling to their members. So if you're like, "Yeah, I really need counseling. Can't afford it." With Medi-Share, you not only save money, you get that too.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So right now is the best time to make the shift, find out how much you could save by going to medishare.com/carey. Also excited to sit down on a regular basis and talk with Jim Sheppard. He is a sharp leader and the principal at Generis, and they want to help you increase your giving. In fact, one of my church trends for 2022 is I think, the sustained giving, a lot of churches have seen is probably going to drop and I would love to pick Jim's brain on like how to change that. So I sat down with him and I asked him this question. I said, "What is one strategy you've seen work to increase local giving?" I love his answer. Here it is.

Jim Sheppard:

Well, I think if I think one strategy, Carey, I'm just thinking for me, I'm thinking about what's the low hanging fruit that I've seen in a lot of churches? And a low hanging fruit that does have an impact in a lot of churches is the failure to take the offering or giving moment on Sunday morning seriously. Pastors will say to me, "Well, Jim, you don't want me to preach about giving all the time. Do you?" And I was like, "Well, no, a sermon series every now. That'd be great, but you've got 52 opportunities a year to talk about it and just be intentional. Stop using these rote things that you were using 20 and 30 years ago, and start coming up with some fresh ideas to illustrate two things. What does the Bible have to say about your giving? And number two, what are the great things that our church is doing with your money? That's low hanging fruit and every church can do that and be better and probably see some results pretty quickly.

Carey Nieuwhof:

We got about one month left in 2021. As we enter the year end giving season, there are so many opportunities ahead to engage with your givers and to rethink 2022. That is why the team at Generis is offering you a free 45-minute strategy session to help you maximize those opportunities. They have helped leaders normalize the giving conversation and move the needle on generosity for three decades now. Learn how you can increase giving in generosity at your church. Schedule your free 45-minute strategy session at generis.com/carey. Well, let's jump into my conversation with Ken Coleman. Ken, welcome back.

Ken Coleman:

Great to be with you, Carey. Always have fun with you, man.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, it's a great time. I'll tell you, a fun time to have this conversation too. We are in the middle of The Great Resignation, a subject I'm sure you've been tracking for a little while. I'd love to get your take. What is happening?

Ken Coleman:

Yeah, well, I think it's way deeper than The Great Resignation. Of course, that's a wonderful title and it's become a headline and economists weighing out on it all the time. But I think it's the great declaration. I

could call it a million things. I think it is the great migration. I could just break it down so many ways. What's happening is when you have a global pandemic that forces change to levels that we have never been forced, not in our modern experience, those of us that are alive today, maybe we have a few of the greatest generation left when, when you had Great Depression.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right.

Ken Coleman:

Outside of those very few older folks, even 9/11 didn't... 9/11 shocked us, but the pandemic in COVID-19 forced us into change in many areas of our lives. From a work standpoint, we were laid off, we were furloughed, we were sent home. It forced us in massive change as parents. Our kids were home from school. They were around all the time. It was really great for two months. Then it was like, "Aah, you know what?"

Carey Nieuwhof:

"Please get me out of here." Yeah.

Ken Coleman:

Yeah, right. Then we saw loved ones and friends die. We, on whatever level, whatever ilk you come from, there was were still uncertainty and fear for some more than others. All of that together was a cocktail of change that we've never experienced before. And when we, as human beings who naturally we're not okay with change. Because, it brings a lot of the fear of the unknown, which I think is the greatest fear we experience. I think we were forced to confront it. There was no choice. So in that we were able to then see our life in a little bit different rhythm and begin to count the cost and go, "What do I want to do? Who do I want to be?" Much like a birth or a death makes us confront our mortality and makes us confront our contribution. So I believe all of those factors together just made us start to get a little bit more comfortable with asking the tough questions about work and purpose. Because I know, you know this, most people would rather be miserable than uncomfortable and that's the truth.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's a good insight.

Ken Coleman:

The devil we know.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Most people would rather miserable than uncomfortable. What is underneath that? Can you explain that?

Ken Coleman:

Change. The unknown. "I'm miserable in my job, but I've made it through this far. If I can make it to happy hour on Friday night and drink my face off and distract myself on Saturday and Sunday. Then I got a gear back up on Sunday, but at least I know my boss is a jerk. I know my coworkers are toxic, but at least I know how to get through it." Versus, "Change requires me to be uncomfortable because now I

got to do something new, learn something new, go somewhere new." That's what I mean, the idea of being miserable, at least I know what to expect and I can gut it out. If I make a change and I get uncomfortable, ooh, gosh, there's so much there that I don't know. So we'd rather hang with the devil we know, and that's what's behind that statement.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, you also said, I want to rewind the tape a little bit. You said, great migration, great declaration. That really resonated. What are people declaring when they're quitting their jobs and just saying, "I'm not going to do this anymore." What are they declaring?

Ken Coleman:

That, "I was doing something because that's what everybody else does." I shared an article today on the Ken Coleman Show from CBS News about a young man. They highlighted three young people all in their 20s that left corporate America and went to the farm. This one 24-year-old said, "I was in a corporate job and I was in a cog. I was a cog in a wheel that I didn't even care about. I just... That's what everybody told me I should do and I should go to college and get a safe degree and get a safe corporate job." He goes, "I'm not just moving to the farm to work on a farm because I'm just looking for an exploration or something fun to do." He goes, "This is what I want with my life." So, that's the awakening, right? So the great declaration is, "I'm going to go do what I want to do." It's a, "I want to," not have to.

Ken Coleman:

A lot of these young people are going, "Wait a second. I'm young enough to be able to make this pivot." I think that's the declaration is they're going, "You know what? Life is too short to work in a job that has no meaning."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, and that, I write on this a little bit. You specialize it and do it for hours a day. But I've been really interested to see, I think there's been a shift didn't power. It used to be employers had all the power. "Ken, you're lucky to have a job. Sit there, do what I'm telling you. I'm going to chain you to your desk or to a machine or to an assembly line and you should be grateful and at the end of your 40 years, here's a little pension plan and a retirement gift." Obviously that died with my grandparents.

Ken Coleman:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

But it was still like companies had the power. Do you think there has been a power shift from employers to employees? If so, I'd love you to unpack that a little bit, Ken.

Ken Coleman:

Yeah. Well, you actually addressed it. There was a shift from the greatest generation, our grandparents, to my parents, the Boomers, and I'm a Gen X. The greatest generation, the Boomers, they looked at work as, "This is a privilege to get a check." And so they would stand on the assembly line for 40 years and not even conceive of another possibility. That was passed down to my parents, the Boomers and they largely did the same thing. They didn't do too much-

Carey Nieuwhof:

I mean, they were developed in the '60s for about 20 minutes and then they're like, "Oh, let's go get jobs." Right?

Ken Coleman:

Yeah. Now I got to go get... That's right. It's 100% right. You're right, the power has shifted and I love that you've set it up this way. In fact, I've never been asked this question. So I'm realtime in this, but when you said it, I think you really nailed it. See, employers think they have power.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right.

Ken Coleman:

Because of the paycheck, but what employers and leaders are coming to grips with right now, 10.9 million jobs in the US, 8.3 million unemployed still can't fill jobs. Unemployment benefits are now gone. Federal unemployment benefits are now gone since Labor Day in the United States. People still aren't coming back to work.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Ken Coleman:

What leaders and bosses and corporations are realizing is that the paycheck no longer holds the power it used to hold. Because now people are going, "Wait a second. I'm not going to come for just a paycheck. I'm going to go for a bigger paycheck." Let's just be very clear. That's always going to... Money's always going to be a big motivator.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. You got to eat, right? Yeah.

Ken Coleman:

Yeah. But a lot of people are saying, "It's about meaning, and I'm not just going to work anymore just for a paycheck. I want to go do something that I really enjoy. Life is really short." I think that therein lies the power because the workers are going, "I have lots of options." This new economy that we've been in, just for simplicity sake, let's say the last 10 years, 15 years, this new economy, the digital economy where, I mean, kids are coming out of high school right now in America. This is American data, but they're coming out, half of Gen Z, graduating high school wants to own their own business one day, and they're hoping to go into it right out of college or even some out of high school. So I just think with the spawn of the digital age and social media, and you can start a blog or a website or a business in about seven minutes, I think it's just flattened everything.

Ken Coleman:

It's like, "Okay, if you treat me like a worker, you treat me like an asset, I'm out." By the way, you're a leadership student, you're a leader. You and I both have a deep passion for this. Hey leaders. This is the

best thing that's ever going to happen to leadership. Because those that survive and thrive this shift are going to be servant leaders. They're going to be leaders who figure out that people no longer want just a paycheck. They want a path forward in their lives. You better show them a plan for development. You better show them a desired future that's attached to this job or they're going to leave you.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. I want to talk about that more from an employer standpoint, but, this conversation in the back of my mind, I had a conversation recently with Scott O'Neil, who's the former CEO of the Philadelphia 76ers and New Jersey Devils. I forget whether this was on mic or off mic, but I think it's fair game to share. He said, the thing about his kids and their generation, and he's got teenagers to early twenties is, he says, "The next generation, they don't necessarily own a house, they don't necessarily own a car. They're mobile." They're like, "I don't have to live in the city. I can move." They're rootless. The old route was, "I'm going to get a degree, going to get a car." It's all debt. Welcome to Ramsey world. Right? That's why you guys all have jobs. That's welcome to the American culture. I'm going to buy a house, have a huge mortgage and then I'm basically chained to this.

Carey Nieuwhof:

They've actually issued, they've actually rejected a lot of that career path that are now like, "No, I'm mobile. I'm agile. I can work independently. I have skills. If you don't value me, someone else will." Is that an exaggerate? I'm not asking you to critique Scott. I'm just saying, culturally, do you see that? Or would you nuance that in any way? Or what would you... What are you seeing when you look at the next generation of leaders?

Ken Coleman:

I think he's absolutely right. Millennials were the first generation that we saw were values-based in their decisions of where they were going to work.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Ethical clothing, ethical food, all that.

Ken Coleman:

Everything, it's about values, values, values. It's gone a step further now with the youngest of Millennials and the oldest of Gen Z to where politics was taboo. Now it's-

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. You never talked about that at the law firm, ever.

Ken Coleman:

My generation, my parents' is like, "Oh, you don't talk about politics at work. If you do, you're skulking over here on the side." Now, young people are going, "What's this CEO's political position on this. What's our public stance on a social issue." So we're seeing a huge shift here. Again, whether you like it or not, that's still values-based to those young people. It's like, "What's your position on this social issue? If you don't come out on this issue, I don't want to work for you. I don't want to buy your products." They're very values-driven. The Gen Z and younger Millennials, and this is significant. By the way Scott's right, because Millennials are now the largest demographic in the American workforce. So

they now have surpassed Boomers and Xers. Millennials are there and they're the leader. They're the young leaders. They're the up and coming leaders.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, they are. That's what it's so easy to forget. Because we've been talking about Millennials for years. It's like, no, they're 40. And they have kids now. The oldest Millennials are now moving into their 40s, which is fascinating. Okay. Let's go back to the power shift, Ken. I'm really intrigued by that. Because I think you're right. There's probably a lot of leaders and we have a lot of CEOs, senior leaders like board members listening to this podcast. If you're stuck in the old mindset where, "Listen, I write your paycheck, you're lucky to have a job." What does that do to your competitive advantage and what needs to shift as a boss for you to begin to understand how the world has changed and why you can't get or keep great people?

Ken Coleman:

Yeah. It's really good. Several things. We're going to run through these very quick, because you got to understand the whole picture. Number one, you have got to have the right narrative to attract the right people.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay.

Ken Coleman:

So it starts with how do I attract? Here's the game, all right? Acquiring, retaining. Those are your three, as a leader, as great leaders. So I'm going, I'm answering your question, but I'm going to come back a bit, so you'd see.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. Let's do it.

Ken Coleman:

In fact, I'm going to just lay this out there. You cannot and will not be a great leader until you learn how to assemble great talent. Now I'm just going to tell you, you can go... Listen, I worked for John Maxwell for years. I worked for Dave Ramsey, two of the best leaders on the planet. I've been to every Catalyst conference you could possibly imagine. I love leadership, blah, blah, blah. Love leadership books. Throw it all in a pile and burn it, if you don't learn how to assemble great talent. So that's what I mean by attract, that's the narrative, "Hey, this is who we are as a company. On this position, here's the kind of person that's going to crush this job." You got to learn how to attract the right people for the position.

Ken Coleman:

This is organization-wide. Then we've got to make sure that when we're attracting that we acquire the right people, that we don't... We have a serious process by which we match somebody to the positions that we're filling. Then third, we got to retain them. Okay? So I'm just giving you those first two pieces, but I'm going to answer your question because it was a retention question.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Ken Coleman:

So retention comes to this. You better show them a ladder. That's as simple as I could say it. When you hire somebody, you're not hiring them for a paycheck and to fill this position. You are also going, "Here's your ladder." Now let me break the ladder down. Great leaders figure out that this is not a one-sided ladder. Yes. You must show them professional opportunity in advance, but you must also show them personal advancement. You better develop them personally and professionally. So give you an example, and I'm not just saying this because I'm with Ramsey Solutions. But if you're leading a team and if it's not Ramsey Solutions, go get them some great financial content and teach them how to manage their money so that they win, personally.

Ken Coleman:

If they're married, develop them in their marriages and their relationships, give them some resources. Offer that as a company benefit, this is not a super expensive thing. Help them with their parenting because you aren't just hiring professionals. You're hiring people who are married, who are parenting, who've got financial challenges or dreams. When you can, as a leader, realize that you're hiring the whole person, which you know, inherently, but we don't act that way and when we can develop people, personally and professionally, and that's the ladder. Show them how they're going to grow personally on one side of the ladder and how they're going to grow professionally on the ladder as a result of being on your team.

Ken Coleman:

Now that, and by the way, you don't just show them you do it. You develop them. If you do that, you have a great chance of retaining people. Because everybody wants to feel valued and leaders make the biggest mistake in the world when they just drive performance, performance, performance and they don't think about purpose, purpose, purpose. That's the person.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That is so good. What about culture? I mean, I think a lot of what we've been talking about, so far seems to touch on culture. Is that a factor that young leaders think about when they think about moving from paycheck to purpose?

Ken Coleman:

Yeah, they should be. Because I get calls all the time on the Ken Coleman Show where it sounds like this, "Hey Ken, I took my dream job recently. I got it. And it's been three, four, five, six months and I'm absolutely miserable and I'm confused." I'll say, "Why are you miserable?" Every time it's the culture, it's the leader above them. It's the culture that's being allowed or openly promoted and it's making them miserable. So you can be doing the absolute right thing, but be in the wrong place and same thing with church leaders. I mean, I'ma tell you something right now. You could go, "Hey, I was created to be a youth pastor." And you go get that job. Or an administrative pastor or you fill in the blank, whatever the role is, corporations. Hey, this is the dream job and you'll go do the job, but you're in the wrong place.

Ken Coleman:

So I call it doing the right thing in the wrong place. Let me tell you something, if you're doing the right thing in the wrong place, it will confuse you. It'll make you think that you're not doing the right thing. I would say let's step back for a moment and do what I do for callers and go, let's dig in here. What is actually causing me to be unhappy and miserable? If we realize it's all environmental, then we're not changing the profession, we're just going to change the location. That is important because it can steal your joy if you're in the wrong situation.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay. So you got a brand new book called From Paycheck to Purpose.

Ken Coleman:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It's a pretty timely release. I'm sure you didn't plan The Great Resignation or all the things that were happening as you put the book together. But I do want to know, and I know this is not my favorite question to ask, but I am curious, why did you write it? Why did you write this book in this time?

Ken Coleman:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

There has to be a reason.

Ken Coleman:

Yeah, because basically been on the air for three and a half years when I started to write it. At that point, probably 4,000 phone calls and realizing that there needs to be a clear path for people. Whether it's finances, fitness, relationships, professional journey, purpose, you got to have a clear path. So I set out before this was a book, just to figure out the clear path. What's the clear, very simple to understand path for people to actually live and work on purpose? It's a big giant question. I was at the beach, Carey and I'd been struggling with it. I'd played with some acronyms. Trying all these. You're a content guy. Trying to figure out this sticky way to say it. Right?

Ken Coleman:

I was at the beach with my family and I get up early than everybody else anyway. So they're all sleeping in and so I'll never forget. I was in a place of frustration, restless, trying to get it. I went down to the beach before everybody else that morning, I had a cup of coffee sat under the umbrella. Thankfully we were on the front row, so it's just me and the waves and the breeze and a Moleskine and a pencil.

Ken Coleman:

I was sitting there and I spoke out loud to myself because no one was around me and they wouldn't have heard me anyway. I just said, "Coleman, how would you explain the journey to being who you were born to be, to a 17-year-old?" It freed me up and I started writing and I wrote, "Get clear, get qualified, get connected. Ooh, get started, get promoted, get the dream job." It was about six weeks later that I added the seventh item, which is now the seventh stage. And it was give yourself away.

Ken Coleman:

When I began to play with that and think through what is the journey like for somebody, no matter where they are, they could be in stage four, just in the starting stage and they're going, "How do I move up?" What do they need to do? They got to get promoted. What happened was over time, you begin to take that construct and I began to test it on the air. Then I went, interestingly enough, this was the path that I took switching gears from politics to broadcasting at 33. I didn't know it. I didn't say it this way. I had to stumble through it and believe me, I stumbled through it. You hear that throughout the book and every successful man or woman that I've ever read about or had the privilege to interview, I could plant this. I could take it like an outline and go, "Boom. This is how you climb the mountain. By the way, this is how you figure out the mountain, get clear, right? And this is how we begin to move. Get qualified, get connected, get started, get promoted, get the dream job."

Ken Coleman:

What's next? When I get the dream job, the view changes. Now, instead of looking up, I'm looking out. So anyway, it had to be a book, but only after I realized that I've wanted to simplify what I think for too many people is a mystical journey that only a few fortunate souls luck into. You know better. I know better, but I've wanted to demystify the climb.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, what almost every 20 something I know is struggling with right now is, "What do I do with my life?" It's gotten to the point where, when I got younger leaders in my life, I'm almost afraid to ask the question. Because, you can almost see them. It's a paralysis of choice. They've been told they can be anything they want from the time they were little kids.

Ken Coleman:

Right.

Carey Nieuwhof:

They half-believe it and they got a million options out there and a lot of them are like, "I don't even know." Whereas, I had a pretty good idea. I thought it was going to be in radio. Then it was law. Then it was a bunch of different things. So I had a pretty narrow view when I was younger. It seems to have shifted. What are you finding among most 20 somethings and what advice do you give to someone who's like, "I got no idea what to do with my life." And they're 25. What would you say to them?

Ken Coleman:

Yeah. First thing is yes, you do. Yeah. You do.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You do, you have an idea.

Ken Coleman:

You totally. In fact you probably have multiple ideas. Let me help you rephrase what you're trying to say. What you're really saying is, "I'm not 100% sure which way I'm supposed to go." There's a big difference.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, there is. Right.

Ken Coleman:

That's what I would say. Now again, I don't want anybody to think that's being glib. It's just, I'm sitting on the other side of 5,000 phone calls where I've heard that. The reality is, everybody has an idea or two. So first thing I would say to them is, "Okay, what are the ideas? Where do they come from?" And I want to dig. It always comes down to this. Who are the people you most want to help? What's the problem or desire that they have, you want to help them with? What's the solution to that problem or desire that you get the juice when you think about it? I mean, at the end of the day... I mean, every person on the planet, if I just stayed with them and I just kept pounding away with questions, driving towards those answers, everybody's got some kind of an answer to that. So then we start dealing with the doubt and the fear.

Ken Coleman:

What do we do when we have fear and doubt? We retreat to clarity. When I was a kid, when you were a kid, you probably played the silly little game freeze tag, right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Ken Coleman:

So we'd run around, tagging each other and if the person that was hit tags you, you were frozen until a buddy rescued you. But all of us have been in that situation where the person who is hit is on our heels and we're running with everything we got just to get the home base. We get the home base, it's like, "Whew. Okay, I'm good." And we catch our breath. This is the metaphor for getting clear. Because life is coming at you fast. You got pressure from parents and guidance counselors and friends and society that says, "You got to get a great degree and then get a great job." Then what? Yeah. Nobody ever tells you right past that.

Ken Coleman:

All right. So all that's coming at you. So retreating to clarity. Stage one of my seven stages get clear. So you take these ideas and you run them through the filter that the God of the universe gave you. It's already inside of you. Every person on the planet was born with talent, things you do really well. Every person on the planet was born with passion, a love of doing a task or filling a role. Then every person on the planet was born with a desire to contribute. That's mission. Talent, what I do best. Passion, the work I love to do. Mission, the results that I want to contribute. When those come in alignment, it's like a blinking arrow neon pointing to the world at work, which here's the fun part about this, Carey, there are multiple jobs, multiple career paths, even multiple dream jobs within that contribution zone that I like to call the sweet spot.

Ken Coleman:

So what we must do is with these ideas, we got to go run them through there. Does this idea allow me to use what I do best? Check. Does this path allow me to do work that I have high emotion and devotion for? Check. Does this job, does this path allow me to create results that I personally deeply connect to? I'm driving home at the end of the day and I go, "Oh, I made this contribution and that matters to me."

When we do that retreat to clarity, guess what happens? Clarity gives us confidence, clarity breeds confidence. And this is the best part. Watch this. Confidence breeds courage. So when we strike out on the path and we face unknowns, detours, potholes, all the things, and we begin to doubt and we begin to fear and our eyes divert from that mountaintop that we're after, we always have to retreat back to clarity and clarity reminds us of our why, reminds us of our where, and all of a sudden that confidence surges and in the moment, a person who does a courageous act has already gone to clarity and confidence. That's when courage arrives.

Ken Coleman:

You don't just sum encourage like, "I need to be courageous." I don't know if you've ever seen or heard, of course you have a story where a man or a woman has risked their life to save the life of another.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh yeah.

Ken Coleman:

In the moment we read the interview, it all goes the same, "Why'd you do what you did? And you just went..." They simply said, "I saw that they were in need and I felt like I could do something about it. So I didn't think. I just did it." Clarity, "This person, their life is in danger." Confidence, "I can help them." Courage, "I acted."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Did it.

Ken Coleman:

Instantaneously. That's what I want people to get. That 25-year-old's like, "Hey, it's okay to be uncertain. But the answers to certainty, the very thing that you're grasping for, lie within you. Do you have the talent for it? Do you love the work? Does it produce a result that matters to you? Here's the great news. If it's yes on all three, for multiple options, then just pick one, just go."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. Which leads me to this idea, this question, and you've hinted at it, circled around it. I know you address it in your book. But the whole idea of a dream job, right?

Ken Coleman:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Is there a dream job for everyone? Someone's got to sling macchiatos at a coffee shop.

Ken Coleman:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That may be their dream job, but I think there's a lot of people who are just, "I got to pay the rent." Or someone's got to assemble vehicles at an auto plant factory, or someone's got to sit three tiers down the leadership hierarchy in accounting and crunch those numbers. Is there a dream job for everybody or for some people? Or is it just a myth?

Ken Coleman:

No, there's a dream job for everybody, but sadly many and the majority probably won't attain it. Same thing like saying, it's like asking a marriage expert... "Is a healthy marriage... Is that really possible for everybody?" What are they going to say? "Of course, it is." But, what's involved in that? What must be done to attain a healthy marriage?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah. I would say just as a footnote, my grandfather was a janitor and he drove a truck, cleaned toilets and he was such a happy man. So I'm not trying to efface any particular kind of work or elevate one over the other.

Ken Coleman:

No, not at all.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I think you can find fulfillment in every work. That has really animated my attitude toward work, just watching my grandfather work as a young child.

Ken Coleman:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So I think there's dignity everywhere, but-

Ken Coleman:

Well, there is but let's go back-

Carey Nieuwhof:

I'm just curious about dream job, right?

Ken Coleman:

Well, but here, so I define the dream job as what I just laid out and get clear.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Ken Coleman:

The dream job is where I'm using my talents to do work that I love and it produces results that matter.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Had an impact. Yeah.

Ken Coleman:

Your grandfather did that. I shared a story on my show recently about a female janitor in Philadelphia. I believe it was. She's been a janitor for a long time and she's had opportunities to move up. She won't take them. She loves order, she loves cleanliness. It's her thing. She gets joy out of things being clean. For her, it's a labor of love. But more importantly, she's in a position at this public high school where for years now she has a little... She took over a closet, one of her janitor closets and she takes donations. She uses her own money and she stocks that thing into a mini store, food, clothing, toiletries. Because one early morning in one winter in Philadelphia, she was beginning to clean the cafeteria, there before anybody else, and she heard a pounding on the door.

Ken Coleman:

She went and opened the door and it was two kids. Their mom had dropped them off very early, because she had to go to work and there was no place for the kids to stay. They're living in the car with mom, they're homeless. She drops them off, she takes them in of course and realizes their story. Then she goes and buys basic needs for them. So it became a thing and everybody got behind it. So any kid in need just shows up at that janitor closet and whatever they need that she's got, they get it, free of charge. Now that's mission. All right?

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's incredible.

Ken Coleman:

What I would tell you is the dream job is defined by, are you using what you do best, your talent, to do work you love, passion, to produce results that matter to you, mission? It is a dream job because it feels like I'm in a state of flow, which is what Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, did a TED Talk on this. He compares what I'm describing to ecstasy, which by the way has been turned into a sexual thing or a drug by the same name. But it is actually not sexual in nature. It is a mental and emotional state by which you are... Experience a state of flow.

Ken Coleman:

So yes, the dream job is there for everybody, but your dream is different than my dream. And by the way, it has nothing to do with status. It has nothing to do with how big your paycheck is. You won't hear any of that coming out of my book or out of my mouth, because that's a bunch of garbage.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Which is often how it's characterized in the popular culture, right?

Ken Coleman:

Unfortunately in the space that you or I are in, I'm seeing pictures on Instagram of people standing in front of their jets and they're like putting it out there as though this is success. Well, sure it is. But I could tell you this, it's not. It's not significance. Getting a private jet doesn't give you significance. Producing results that matter deeply to you, that's what significance is. Where you go, "I created this result,"

whether it's a clean hallway or it is being a NICU nurse and caring for babies that are fighting for their life and caring for the parents that are praying beyond their ability to actually pray and they are just scared out of their mind.

Ken Coleman:

I don't care what the job is. I'm reminded of the greatest speaker. The world has ever known, Martin Luther King Jr. He did an unscheduled stop at a school, I believe in Philadelphia as well, a middle school, and of his great speeches, this one gets the least amount of attention. But I think we've all heard bits and pieces of it before, but he's looking at these young people and he is just encouraging them about their life. I'm paraphrasing. I write about this in the book, but he says, "Don't let anybody ever take away your somebody-ness."

Ken Coleman:

Then he goes on to say what we all know we've all heard or read, "If it falls your lot to be a sweet," excuse me, "A street sweeper, sweep streets like Michelangelo." And he goes on and on. "Sweep streets so that all the hosts of heaven look down and say, 'There lived the greatest street sweeper.'" That's what I'm getting at at that. There is purpose your purpose. So when you experience purpose, the dream job is just to... Popular vernacular, to describe, you're doing what you were created to do.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I know the Ramsey Group has talked a lot about education, but you talk about getting a job about what you know and who you know. I want to break that down. So what you know, what's your take on education? Because there is still this idea. There's two schools. One is, look at Mark Zuckerberg. He dropped out of Harvard and Steve Jobs famously dropped out and these guys became two of the most influential people. And there's the other path, which is you better get good at STEM and get your education and a way you go. What's your take on that? Particularly for young leaders who are in that stage right now, who are listening, going, "Do I spend another 50 grand on a college education?" What do you say?

Ken Coleman:

Full disclosure, I'm a college dropout as well. I think it's a two-part question and you've got to answer this. Nobody else needs to answer it. You got to answer it. Is college education or a higher ed degree, is it the only way to get where you want to go? Second question, is it the best way to get where you want to go? If the answer the-

Carey Nieuwhof:

Only way, best way. So if you want to be a lawyer, not a lot of other options.

Ken Coleman:

That's a great example. If you want to be a lawyer, it is the only way, and of course, because of that, it is the best way. But those are the two classifications. If you get a yes for both of those, then yes. But if you get a no on either one of those, the world has changed. I mean, Google is offering six month courses where they're training future talent and they're going to hire them right out of this stuff to do technology jobs. I've got a sponsor on my show called Bethel Tech. They got a nine month program and

it's less than 15 grand and they have a 78 to 80% placement rate. And people are starting making 65 to 75, 65 to \$70,000 a year. This is only going to keep happening. Okay. Everybody's doing it.

Ken Coleman:

Big companies are starting to say, "Hey, you don't need a college degree. Ernst & Young accounting firm. We're talking the gold standard. They're dropping the college degree requirement for several jobs. Because they're going, "You don't need it, number one. And number two, we're going to train you to do it the way we do it anyway." Yeah.

Ken Coleman:

I think that you're going to see continuing education and customized training by companies as we move forward in the future anyway. But, I'm all for education if it is the only way to punch the ticket and if it's the best way to punch the ticket. If it's not, great news for you, there's a cheaper and less time consuming way.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What about who you know? How does that work? Because, you have a position on networking and how do you do that? I mean, we talked about this a little bit last time you were on the show.

Ken Coleman:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

But, that whole concept makes people feel gross, "I got the job because my dad knows this guy." Or, "I got the job because I schmoozed somebody at a party."

Ken Coleman:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

What do you think about the who you know part of employment?

Ken Coleman:

Yeah. This is stage three. The seven stages get connected. Obviously I did a deep dive on the art of connecting in my previous book, The Proximity Principle. But in short I'm an extreme extrovert. Okay. So going into a room and bouncing around and just connecting with people, that's just something that I come by naturally.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Ken Coleman:

But I've got some introvert friends and I got an introvert kid. What I know is that introverts really understand the art of connecting way better than the extroverts. Okay. So I'm beating up on myself a

little bit, but, I'm praising my introvert friends. In that the introvert doesn't like the big crowd, doesn't like the speed dating kind of thing. The introvert is the one-on-one meaningful conversation. That would be the way to get forward, get moving forward. Because when you are surface, going around trying to meet everybody, it just smells. People smell you coming. They see you coming and you're going to get somewhere. You'll get some good connections doing that. But what I have found Carey, that the best opportunities that have come to me were not when I was trying to get an opportunity through a connection. It was when I was connecting to learn and I was connecting for specifically knowledge and wisdom.

Ken Coleman:

So if I'm sitting down with you, instead of asking Carey to connect me to somebody or do something for me, that really yields a lot. But if I say, "I'm not going to connect with Carey for something. I'm going to connect with Carey to learn something." Whole different ballgame. So then I'm spending time with you and I'm coming with a Moleskine and a pencil and I got some knowledge questions I want to ask you. Maybe I got some alternatives or some choices that I got to make and I want some wisdom for those.

Ken Coleman:

Knowledge, I want to get some facts, something Carey knows that I don't know and that's a whole lot. But then maybe I want to get Carey's wisdom. "Hey, got a 15-year-old. Your kids are older. Dealing with this right now. You got any thoughts about that?" Okay. My point is that when we are learners and students, two things happen, number one, the connection and the relationship is going to happen as a result of that. The humility, the hunger.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It's going to go deeper.

Ken Coleman:

It's going to go deeper. The humility in hunger, that's really attractive. But more importantly, when I leave that conversation, you will feel it's valuable, even though you probably spent most of the time pointing to me. But you feel like it was valuable because you were valued.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yes.

Ken Coleman:

You said, "Ken came to listen, not to talk. Ken came to learn, not to get." To me, and by the way, I did it the wrong way, a lot.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Sure.

Ken Coleman:

Because I'm a natural high energy, I have a little too much natural self-promotion. I'm just being really honest. It comes from enthusiasm, but it doesn't mean it comes across that way. So I learned how to do

it the wrong way. When I turned myself into a student, I saw things happen to me that I didn't ask for them to happen.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I appreciate that. You also outline some villains in terms of finding a better job.

Ken Coleman:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Do you want to share some of the ways not to do it?

Ken Coleman:

Yeah. These are the villains of progress. They're going to stop you in your tracks if you're trying to be on purpose and I know we got a lot of young people listening in, which I think is so fantastic. I want to share that fear, doubt, and pride. I'll break them down and what they look like and sound like. But I want to share first that they don't ever go away. If anybody, in some motivational gibberish tells you that you can destroy fear, doubt and pride, they're lying to you.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Ken Coleman:

Or they just have zero experience how to deal with it themselves. Fear, doubt and pride never go away, but we can overcome them. We can silence them long enough. Then the next time they come back, we can silence them and we can do that. I just want to paint that picture.

Ken Coleman:

So the biggest voices of fear that I've experienced personally, and I hear on the radio and on the podcast and on the YouTube show is, "I'm afraid I'm going to fail." "I'm afraid of rejection." And, "I'm afraid of what other people will think." Huge. I mean, think about it, right? Failure, everybody gets, "I don't want to fail." Rejection, what other people are going to think. Then fear of the unknown, I said earlier. "I don't know how it's going to play out, so I'm terrified."

Ken Coleman:

Here's what happens. I'm not going to unpack all those because I think everybody gets those. But when the voice of fear, if it's failure, rejection or the unknown or, "What's somebody going to say about me if I make this pivot?" When that voice of fear pokes up its head, you have to then say, "Is this telling me the truth and thus protecting me? Or is it lying to me and holding me back?" Because there are times where fear does protect us. Yeah.

Ken Coleman:

So we got to listen to that voice and we got to determine the voice. We go, "Is the voice telling us the truth." So if we say, "All right, I'm going to switch gears. I'm going to do a two-year program to get

qualified in something else and I'm going to make my connections and then I'm going to get started. I'm going to go." But if we go, "What if I fail? And I let down my family, my wife, we become homeless under a bridge." Okay, if that's what the voice of fear is telling us, then we go, "Okay, let's put that on the witness stand and go. What must be true for that voice to be true?" So then we look at that and we go, "Okay, this is holding me back. This is just straight up silliness. But if we're trying to start a business and the only way we can do it is in a partnership with somebody we don't know very well. And I got to come up with money I don't have.

Ken Coleman:

That means I go into debt and I only own 50%, which means if something goes squirly in this relationship two or three years down the road, and we have a nastiness, I only own 50%. This is going to be ugly." If I'm afraid of that, I go... "Now, there's several factors here by which I lose control and am totally playing the risk game way too high." That's what I mean.

Ken Coleman:

Doubt, very similar. The voices of doubt are, "I'm not good enough. Am I good enough? Do I have enough time?" Will anybody give me a shot? That kind of stuff. Then the voice of pride is, "No one wants to help you. Don't ask for help. You can do this saw on your own." That kind of garbage. That's a quick review of the voices, those enemies of progress and if you're not careful, they'll totally paralyze you. William James, known as the father of modern psychology once said, "No matter how absurd something is, if you repeat it often enough people will believe it." So those voices, if they're wrong, they become absurdities and they just stay skating around in their head, like a roller skating rink. They become realities.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay. Let's talk about promotion too, because we do have a lot of young listeners listening. Young leaders and they're like, "Yeah. I'm climbing somewhere. This isn't my destination." What are some keys to getting promoted at work?

Ken Coleman:

Yeah. So we unpack this in two different chapters in stage five of get promoted. There's three things that you need to be doing and there's five things you need to be becoming. I'm not going to unpack both of them.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Sure.

Ken Coleman:

But I would tell you that for young leaders I'll focus on the three things you need to be doing. Know your role, accept your role, maximize your role. When you're young and geez, I'm 47. I still think I'm young. I still feel young. My kids tell me every day, I'm not. There's always this [crosstalk 00:50:51].

Carey Nieuwhof:

I'll go for young. I'll just support you on that.

Ken Coleman:

Thank you very much.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay.

Ken Coleman:

Thank you very much, Carey. I appreciate that. But, it doesn't matter how old you are. We are humans. We humans rather are wired for progress. So we always want more, more, more. But it's really bad when you're young. If you know your role, that's clarity, you know exactly what's expected of you. What does a win look like? If you accept your role, you got an attitude to say, "I'm grateful for this opportunity. This is the rung of the ladder I'm on now. It's not where I'm going to stay, but it's where I am now. And if I'm honest with myself, I would've chewed my right leg off six months ago to get in and get on this ladder." Right?

Ken Coleman:

So we go, "I got an attitude of gratitude." Then finally, "I'm going to maximize my role. I'm going to go above and beyond to serve others." As John Maxwell wrote in his book, 360 Degree Leader, this idea of, as a leader, you're looking all the way around. You're leading up, you're leading sideways, you're leading down. Same thing in this role. I'm looking up, down, sideways, helping teammates when I can help them. I'm going to maximize my role. I'm going to go way above and beyond what's expected of me. If you do that, here's what'll happen. You'll maximize the now and you will ultimately get the next when you least expect it. But if I'm just here and I'm doing this, the next will take care of itself. Now, the converse of that is if I'm in the now with one foot, but I'm always over here talking about the next, trying to get to the next and I'm letting some stuff fall in the now, the very thing that I'm obsessed with, I'm going to sacrifice. I'm not going to get it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's so clarifying for a lot of leaders. Be ridiculously good at what you do and the promotion will take care of itself. That's fantastic. Because you have done 5,000 calls now, what I know your book is a response to the frequent flyer issues, the frequent caller issues. What are other struggles that maybe we haven't touched on so far, in this conversation, Ken, that you're just seeing popping up every day from the employee or employer viewpoint?

Ken Coleman:

Well, in the context of this conversation of purpose, it's being the best version of you. Because that's what I'm all about. I just want people to discover who they are and then be the best version of themselves.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Sure.

Ken Coleman:

Comparison. We haven't talked about comparison.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh yeah.

Ken Coleman:

Comparison is a real bugger on this journey because the very nature of being intentional and being on purpose, right? Means that I've got a very intentional pace, I've got a very intentional direction and I'm doing that. Well, the reality is, when you're doing that, there's other people out on this race too and they may be somewhat similar to you and I'm going to preach to myself for a second. I mean, I'm going to be vulnerable. Okay. I haven't done this ever on a podcast, but I'm going to own it for people.

Because I really want them to get this. I'm in a space where I'm on syndicated radio. I'm on Sirius XM. I'm on YouTube, all the social media things. And there are other people that are in the similar space as me. And there's a lot of them that have a whole lot more viewers, listeners, followers. I mean, it's just the reality. It doesn't matter that they've been at it longer or maybe they had to, if I'm not careful, I'll start looking at all that. And I start looking at all that

Carey Nieuwhof:

I hear you, Ken.

Ken Coleman:

Come on.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah.

Ken Coleman:

I'm just telling you, I'm not immune to comparison either. And so comparison the only person that we need to compare ourselves to, and I'm preaching to myself right now, is the you of yesterday. Am I learning something? Am I learning from yesterday? Am I getting better than yesterday? Am I growing? Am I serving better? Am I doing better in the business? Am I creating more value? I can't get in this comparison game. We live in the South here, Nashville, not too far from Kentucky where the greatest horse race of all time is run, the Kentucky Derby. When you watch to Kentucky Derby, you'll notice that they put blinders on those horses.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Good point.

Ken Coleman:

We need blinders, the blinders of focus and purpose. Get the blinders on, look at your mountain, what you're trying to get to, the finish line you're trying to get to, and just keep those blinders on. Just keep them on. Don't be paying attention to the horse next to you. The horse in front of you. Just run your race.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, that is a wonderful place to land the plane. Ken, so helpful. I think employers and employees realize we're going through a monumental shift. This really helps. The book is called From Paycheck to Purpose. It's a great title by the way.

Ken Coleman:

Thank you.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It's available everywhere books are sold. If people want to learn more, tell us where they can find you these days and where they can connect.

Ken Coleman:

Yeah. Well, thanks for having me, Carey. Kencoleman.com is the website. That's where you can connect on social, see where the show is, the different platforms that it's on. You can get the book there as well. We have a great tool that I didn't mention, that is a wonderful companion, called the Get Clear Career Assessment and if we got any StrengthsFinder's fans out there, this goes two more of the thirds. StrengthsFinders was about talent and talent only. What we've done is put an assessment together that looks at talent, of course, but also passion and mission. What I talked about. So we've put together 12 universal talents, 15 universal types of work, passion, and six missional drivers based on psychology research. Then we'll fill out a purpose statement for you. That's a wonderful tool that I do want to mention because-

Carey Nieuwhof:

Please do, yeah.

Ken Coleman:

Certainly for young leaders, this is a thing that it's a self-awareness tool and it's a conversation tool. It really can give you that clarity and confidence that we talked about. That's at kencoleman.com as well.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Okay.

Ken Coleman:

They can get it with the book. Anyway, I'd love for people to join me. I would also say this. I'm on air, every day. Monday through Friday. So check us out. If you want to call in, you can change your name, your location because of the sensitivity of some of these calls. But I want to help you and it's a free call. And it's free, so if the advice is terrible, it doesn't cost you that much.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's great. Ken, thank you so much, really appreciate you.

Ken Coleman:

Thanks Carey.

This transcript was exported on Nov 25, 2021 - view latest version [here](#).

Carey Nieuwhof:

Really enjoy that interview, so much to think about. If you want more, we got transcripts for you at careynieuwhof.com/episode460. Would love for you to head on over of the website. We got a lot of stuff coming up for you at the end of the year and January 2022 is going to be a powerhouse. Both here on the podcast, but also over on my blog, I've got numerous guest bloggers. I do a church trends post, and then we got a future series coming up in January with Mark Sayers, Nona Jones, D.J. Soto, Craig Groeschel, Bobby Gruenewald, Vance Roush. Want to dive into AI and some other things as well. Yeah, we're going to mix things up a little bit and hopefully it's all there to serve you.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I think what's coming ahead is going to be fascinating. And of course, if you subscribe, you're not going to miss a thing. So if you subscribe to this podcast, that's great. You can do that for free. You can also get my daily email that I send out to over 85,000 leaders over at careynieuwhof.com. We want to thank our partners for this episode. Do you know Medi-Share has a 98% customer satisfaction rating and an average member savings of 50% or more? If you want to start saving, go to medishare.com/carey. And Generis would love to help you see your generosity soar.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I think next year's going to be a really interesting year when it comes to money in not-for-profits. If you want a free 45-minute strategy session, go to generis.com/carey. And oh yeah, next episode, we've got Kadi Cole coming up. We are going to talk all about finding your leadership voice, have a listen in on that.

Kadi Cole:

I think longterm, this hybrid model is going to have a pretty significant impact that we're going to need to look at carefully. When it comes to pay and promotion, I think women need to be really highly aware of the choices they're making and the cost that it's going to be. Then those of us who are leading those kind of organizations, how can we do our best to make sure that isn't what's happening? As trainer, I do a lot of online training and I learned early on having some people live in a room with me and some people on Zoom was not the way to do it. So even if I'm in a company and I'm doing leadership training and there are 10 people in the building and 20 people internationally, we're all on Zoom in our office, we've leveled the playing field so that the interaction is equitable.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's next time on the podcast. Thank you so much for listening today. 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.