

Announcer:

The Art of Leadership Network.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Welcome to the Carey Nieuwhof Leadership Podcast. It's Carey here and this is Episode 534. I am so glad to have a very different conversation with Patrick Lencioni today. Today's episode is brought to you by Pro MediaFire. You can get your communications and creative work done for less than a staff hire with Pro MediaFire. Book your free consultation today at promediafire.com/carey. And by Convoy of Hope. You and your church can help provide relief to victims of natural disasters and other crises by going to convoyofhope.org/donate. Well, every once in a while, our conversation goes in a very different direction than you think it will and this is one of those. Patrick Lencioni is one of my favorite leaders. I have followed him for decades as a lot of you have and I think this is around four or five for him on the podcast.

And I'll tell you, I just opened with a different kind of question, and 40 minutes later, we went to church on this one. Pat opens up about his faith. He talks about how he's grown spiritually. He talks about a pivotal moment in his life at church where, well, he really got down to his knees, totally changed his value system. And oh, we go places we just haven't gone before with Pat on this podcast and that he rarely or never talks about. We had a good discussion at the end when we stopped recording about, "Hey, do we share this or not?" and Pat's like, "Yeah, let's share it." So we're going to do that today and I hope it really touches you the way that it touched me.

And of course, we're going to get into some leadership stuff as well, but you know what Pat and I were talking after, and here's the reality, leaders have the same battles no matter who you are, no matter where you are, no matter what you're leading, right? I see my leadership journey from the inside. I see my insecurities, I see my challenges, I see my problems, but we see everybody else's journey from the outside. We see, "Oh, this guy's so smart, so brilliant. Pat sold 7 million books or whatever," and then what you realize is we're all the same, aren't we? And God uses us a different way. So I hope you really enjoy this conversation. I'm terribly excited to bring it to you.

Also, regular listeners who listen to the end note that sometimes I give away free stuff at the end of a podcast, I'm going to do that today, just a little freebie for those of you who listen to the end. And well, we want to thank our partners for this episode as well. I imagine that you've been hit by the challenge of inflation and maybe staff leaving for higher paying jobs. Well, staff turnover has been churning throughout the year and there is a way to get your communications and creative work done for less than the cost of a staff hire with Pro MediaFire. There's no healthcare benefits, payroll taxes, no risk of scrambling for help with a two-week notice.

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the islands and Central American countries allow Convoy to quickly respond as soon as a disaster happens. And when you donate to Convoy, here's what you and your organization do. You're providing food, hygiene supplies, feminine supplies, baby supplies, medical supplies, blankets, bedding, clothing and a whole lot more. So what are you waiting for? Visit convoyofhope.org/donate. That's true as individuals, true as an organization. Go to convoyofhope.org/donate.

Well now to our conversation with Patrick Lencioni. He's one of those guests that really doesn't need an introduction, but let me give you one anyway, he's one of the founders of The Table Group, is the pioneer of the organizational health movement. He's the author of 12 books and we talked about his next one on this episode. I'm so excited for it. His books have sold over 7 million copies, that's insane if you know anything about books, have been translated into more than 30 languages. As president of The Table Group, Pat spends his time speaking and writing about leadership, teamwork and organizational health and is one of the most sought after consultants in the world. So here is my very different, very inspiring, very encouraging conversation with Pat Lencioni.

Pat, it's so good to have you on the podcast. Again, welcome back.

Patrick Lencioni:

It's great to be here. It's always fun talking to you, whether we're doing it on a podcast or privately, but I love to talk to you, Carey.

Carey Nieuwhof:

OH, it's so great, Pat, and I think listeners know you've been such an influence on my life over 20 years and to be able to have these conversations now is just a joy. And I remember one of the times we were together in person with nothing recording, it really became evident to me how much of a passion the church is for you. And I remember being with you at your old office, you guys just moved a few years ago, I don't know that you remember this, but you diagrammed out this whole new model of ministry for the Roman Catholic Church and what it should look like. You're whiteboarding this for me and I thought it was amazing. Tell us why are you so passionate about the church and what would you like to see happen through it.

Patrick Lencioni:

Well, you can't be passionate about the church or I guess you could be, but you shouldn't be without being passionate about Jesus, right? Because the church is just the body of Christ. So I think that's important because I think some people are into the church like it's just an organization and all that and you can almost get caught up in the same kind of organizational politics and everything else, but it's Jesus and so we're the body of Christ. And years ago, after I got fairly successful in my work, I remember just thinking, "Wow, wait a second. Is this the most important thing? I think we all work and we're in business and I think that's great and I love that organizational health, but if the church is the body of Christ, then if there's dysfunction in that, man, I really like to do something about that."

And I felt myself being more fed when I worked with church organizations and so I started to do a lot more of that. And so I think really it's just as my faith became more important, Carey, my interest in helping the church did too. So that's probably-

Carey Nieuwhof:

How did your faith become more important to you? Was that childhood? Was that adulthood? When did that happen?

Patrick Lencioni:

Well, so I grew up with faith, but as they say, God has no grandchildren, so I wasn't simply just faithful because my parents were. And by the grace of God, I never let go of it completely, but I did not understand it or embrace it the way I should. Religious education in the world from the '60s, I was born in 65, through the '90s, it became watered down and very worldly. And so it's not very compelling, certainly not for a young man. Jesus wasn't presented as the lion that he is. It was always very soft. And so as I got older, I just was realizing like, man, I would meet good Christian people and think, "Wow, I want to be like them."

My wife converted, became a Christian and a Catholic because she met some wonderful women she met and then some guys. We met some young manly priests that were just so impressive and we thought, "Wow, what is going on here?" And so even though you wouldn't say that I converted officially, we're all reverts. And so my wife's conversion was a chance for me to really relearn the faith again. And it was crazy, it was just so amazing. And so since then, I guess it's the Holy Spirit, right? It's not easy to attribute to one thing or another, but maybe success also helped me because I realized there was nothing there for me.

Carey Nieuwhof:

How did you figure that out?

Patrick Lencioni:

I heard people talk about it and then I experienced it for myself. I remember Mike Singletary is a football player in the United States. He played for the Chicago Bears. Then he became the 49ers coach and he wear a cross and they asked him about that. They said, "Why do you wear that cross? Have you always done that?" He goes, "Oh no, no, I didn't start doing this until after we won the Super Bowl when I was with the Chicago Bears." And they said, "Why?" And he goes, "Because I realized there was nothing there. I climbed the ladder and got to the top and realized it was the wrong ladder up against the wrong building." And he goes, "And I think success makes people realize, 'Oh there's no there there.'"

So fame or achievement or whatever else, as you begin to experience the emptiness of that, you realize you have one of two decisions to make. You can either double down and take more hits and go for more of it or you can take your ladder, climb down the ladder and put it on the correct wall. So probably some of my success made me realize that, "This is not real. This is not satisfying." St. Augustine, I was just talking about St. Augustine. He said, "Our hearts will not rest until they rest in God," and I was like, "Oh thank you, God, for helping me realize that." And then I went through a dark night of the soul because of that, because I had to reconstruct my life or let God do it and it was painful and he was very gracious with me. But I suffered in having to unlearn all the things that I thought were important and change the way I lived.

And I still have that temptation. Every day I feel like, I think worldly achievement is no different than alcoholism or drug abuse or sex addiction or anything else and that it's you can get addicted to it. It doesn't provide much, but you keep thinking you want more. So when you go into withdrawals and realize, "Okay, I'm not going to pursue that as something that makes a difference," you go through withdrawals. And so for years I suffered like, "Oh, everything I've been doing is not really going to matter," and I feel like every year since then gets better.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I remember we talked about the breakdown or the tough season you had a few episodes ago when you were on and I'll link to it in the show notes. Was that the moment you're talking about or were there several moments where you hit bottom and had to reconstruct on the other side of success?

Patrick Lencioni:

I think the bottom ... It's so interesting, Carey, I do love to share this story, although it's very real and I can't talk about it lightly, is that I remember the day I went to church, I went to mass, I'm Catholic and I received communion and I went back to my seat and I remember generally in the church where I was and I kneeled down and I remember I was praying and I said, "God, I want to get all the way there with you." Because The Parable of the Sower was always what convicted me, the seeds on the path, the seeds off the path and the seeds and the thorns that got choked off by the world and then in good soil and I always was the thorns.

And I would go, "Hey," And I literally would go, "I made it to level three. That's better than level one and two." And one day I realized, "Oh no, the thorns will choke off the cares of the world." And so I kneeled down after communion, received the body of Christ and I was like, "God, please get me to the fourth. I don't want to live in the thorns." And I remember this really strong impression that he said back to me, "Are you sure? Do you know what this is going to require of you?"

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Patrick Lencioni:

And I remember that. And I remember, I don't know which movie about Jesus it was where Peter, they said, "Are you going to leave too Peter?" from the Gospel of John and he says, "Where else am I going to go, Lord? Where else can I go?" And that's where I was like, "Yes, God I have to. Am I ready for this? I know I'm not, but there's nowhere else for me to go, so please take me there." And I honestly feel, I honestly believe that he stripped me, beginning that day slowly stripped me of all my attachments to worldly things and it was horrific. And this was about 12 or 13 years ago. I was brought to my knees where he took away all the things I was living for and left me with nothing else.

And it was a great grace because he did not make me cheat on my wife or do drugs or alcohol or gamble away our money or anything like that, although it didn't matter because I had no judgment for people who went through those things anymore because I realized they were all doing the same thing I was and they were looking for something to fill in their heart what could only be filled in with God. And so as he stripped those things away from me, I had nothing, but I had to get to that place of nothing, so that he could build me up in him again. And it was terrifying. And I think about it when I think about St. Paul getting knocked off the horse, everybody that wants a conversion, "I wish I could get a St. Paul conversion, the one that happens right away," but of course, it wasn't like that.

It was painful and so was mine and I'm so glad that I got to go through it, albeit later in life, but I mean anytime is good. So that's what happened to me and that's when I think I realized that it's only him. It's only him. He's not part of my life. I still have other things in my life, but he is the center of it all and none of it makes sense without him. Everything I have to see through his lens and I still fail sometimes, but I slip and I go, "Oh yeah, gosh, that's what I used to do. I got to quit doing that." So anyway, that's what happened to me. I just remember saying to God one day, "Please get me there," and he did and he is, it's an ongoing process.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Mm-hmm. What was the stripping away? What had to die so that something else could live?

Patrick Lencioni:

All the joy I felt in life or for the joy of having wonderful children and a wonderful wife and having a good job and having a nice home and a comfortable, none of it seemed to matter which is frightening. I was like, "Oh, I don't get joy in any of this anymore." I literally got to the point where I was like, "I don't even know why I am living." And other people would go, "But look at you, you're a famous author and you have this and you have this and you have this and you don't feel good about any of that?" And I was at a point where I was like, "No. None."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Patrick Lencioni:

And that doesn't mean that when he built me back up again, he didn't give me the opportunity to love on my family, my children and my wife and I'm still learning to do that more and to receive love from them and from God. But I think he said, "I'm going to take you through the same thing." Carey, when I was going through that, I met this minister by happenstance, a miraculous almost thing. And he was a minister and he was a very well-known pastor. He was my age exactly and he was considered one of the most influential people in his urban area of metropolitan area, well known throughout the state that he lived in. And so he was a really success ... He had one of the fastest growing churches in America.

And he said he got caught, he had an affair with his assistant. His wife was pregnant with their second child. He was found out he had a latent addiction to pornography and he got called in front of his elders and they fired him. It was in the news. His wife kicked him out of the house, pregnant. He lost everything. And when he told me that story, I had what I can best describe as 100% empathy for him. I hadn't done any of those things, but I was like, I am no different than you are. And it was one of the most amazing things to go, "Oh, a drug addict, an alcoholic, a sex addict, a guy who cheats on his wife, a gambler, oh that's me." We are all so wounded and we do these things because we're essentially looking for what's going to fill us up.

I love that quote from G.K. Chesterton who said, "Every man that knocks on the door of a brothel is searching for God."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Patrick Lencioni:

And I was searching for God in achievement and fixing problems and satisfying everybody around me and making sure they made a living and making sure that my kids were successful and that my wife was happy, things that look like they're good, but I was doing it out of my woundedness and fear. And so God said, "Yeah, I'm going to take away all the goodness from those things, so you can realize none of those will last without me."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow. It is interesting, I've been thinking about this a lot lately because I think the trauma of life, the difficulties of life, the emptiness of success, it can make you implode or explode. And I think some people at a young age turn to drugs, alcohol, sex, overeating, whatever it is ...

Patrick Lencioni:

Right.

Carey Nieuwhof:

... and their life does an implosion, but then other people explode and become successful, right? Like, "I'm going to run a great company." And it's interesting because it lands you in the same place. Just for some stuff, you get a raise and a promotion, and for some stuff, you get fired and it's weird. I don't know whether you see that.

Patrick Lencioni:

Yeah, I think the explosion is more dangerous, Carey, because the world affirms it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Let's talk about that.

Patrick Lencioni:

Yeah, I feel so badly right now. I like football, I love going to the games with my kids and we talk about it. We have a football. We do fantasy football, but I feel so badly for Tom Brady and Aaron Rodgers right now, if you know who they are. So they're American football players who I know they're looking for something and their lives are not great right now and they're about to retire and they've even admitted they're afraid of it. And I know that their identity is tied up in their achievements. And I've met enough athletes and CEOs and famous people in every field to know that I look at them and I see an emptiness in most of them, unless they have faith.

And if they have faith, they take their fame or their success very lightly, they hold it lightly, and if it goes away tomorrow, that's okay. I have to tell you a story. I think one of the most ... I love learning things from young people. I love when I learn something from young people and I go, "Oh, I think you have more wisdom than I do." And it's a really wonderful thing to think that age and wisdom don't necessarily go together. And there was a football game recently, I love telling this story and there was this kicker. I hope people enjoy this. It's the truth. It happened just a few weeks ago and he's the field goal kicker for the San Diego, no, the Los Angeles Chargers now, right?

So the first, he can make four field goals in the game. At the first one, he hurt himself really badly like pulled a muscle or hurt his knee. And so he was pretty much done, but they don't have another kicker. So they wrapped up his leg and they had to bring him out three more times to kick. And every time he did, you could see he almost would fall down right after it. He was in terrible pain. And so the game goes into overtime, he makes a field goal on his busted knee and they win the game and he's the hero. They lift him up. And so they interview him after the game. His name, I think, is Dustin Hopkins, if I remember correctly.

And the announcer comes over to him and says, "How do you feel? How do feel?" And he said and he was very calm about it, he wasn't like showy and he goes, "Well, first, I just want to say, thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He's who I live," and very calmly. And he said, "I'm blessed in so many areas of my life. Football's just a small part of my life, so I'm so thankful really for all the other things that God

has given me." And he said, "But yeah, it's better to make it and to win the game, I suppose, it is good, so I'm happy for that, but really, it doesn't matter that much in life because I'm really thankful and I live for ..."

And I was just like, I want to be like him. And he didn't do it like you could tell he wasn't doing it showy and he wasn't trying to prove anything. He literally was just going, "Hey, so we won the game, but it's not that big a deal." And I was just like, "Oh, this young man has got it figured out." So I love to tell that story because it's not about me and it's about some young guy that's got it figured out. So man, if you're a young person and you go through some difficult thing in life, be grateful that you do it early and you figure out what's important. Because if you're a CEO and you're like, "Well, I'm being rewarded for being broken and wounded and that people just keep encouraging me to keep acting out of my wounds," it's going to be a hard fall and it's coming. Nobody escapes it. Nobody escapes it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

No.

Patrick Lencioni:

God was super gracious to me and let me experience that without hurting my wife or my children or doing something that had so much collateral damage that would've been even harder.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's how I feel about my burnout 16 years ago. It's like, "Oh man, the damage was so light compared to what it could have been, had some of those things kept going."

Patrick Lencioni:

And a pastor-

Carey Nieuwhof:

And I'm so grateful. Oh.

Patrick Lencioni:

And think about that, yeah, and because what you can just keep doing is pouring into other people and getting these little highs. You survive by ... Well, there was another person in desperation and I helped them and they thanked me and they said, "You changed my life, Pastor," and you're like, "Okay, that'll get me through for another day," but God needs to build us up and make us realize that we can do that and detach ourselves completely from it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So that Chesterton, "Every man who knocks on the door of a brothel is looking for God," you are one of the top leadership consultants in the world, period. And you end up in C-Suites most people never get to. When you get there, what do you see? What do you see spiritually?

Patrick Lencioni:

I see, it depends. This is so funny that we're talking about this because earlier today I had this experience.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Sure.

Patrick Lencioni:

And I saw a guy, a CEO, say that his goal was to build a hundred million company, no, a hundred billion company and to have people write books about the company he was building. And I shared with one of his colleagues because I didn't get a chance to talk to him, I said, "By the way, that's empty. I want him to realize that if he ever gets there, he's going to realize it's empty." And he talked about climbing Mount Everest and I said, "You can get to the top of Mount Everest to realize you're climbing the wrong mountain," and so I wanted to warn him from that. And I see a lot of that. I see a lot of it in the Silicon Valley. I see a lot of it in financial institutions, Hollywood, sports, organizations. It can happen anywhere, but in the startup world it's very big.

Young leaders are taught that they should be like Steve Jobs, Phil Knight, Mark Zuckerberg and these are people that are really broken. I feel bad for them and I don't judge them, except I want them to figure it out for themselves because too often they're doubling down on the wrong thing. And what really bothers me is that they're setting an example like, "This is the new way to be a leader," you know?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Patrick Lencioni:

I don't even want to mention the organization, but one of the best organizations in the world. They're fabulous. You don't know the name of their CEO. Nobody knows the name of their CEO because that's not why he's the CEO of that company. And he should be, if merit were the only reason why and he were interested in it, he would be a celebrity. And he's like, "Yeah, that's not worth anything." So-

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's a good thought. What about ... Because your faith has gotten stronger over the years, every time we talk and we've been talking for a few years, you're a little more vocal about it. And I can see that it's gaining momentum in you, your love for Jesus, your commitment to the church and to Christians. Sometimes, people think that that can create a conflict in the marketplace. I don't know, you've even in Working Genius, your new book, the parable is about a secular setting, but then it goes into a church setting. And you just seem to flip really easily and effortlessly between the two worlds. Can you talk about that a little bit? Because I think sometimes Christians are timid about that. I think sometimes we offend people unintentionally or sometimes intentionally. So how do you navigate that when you're dealing as a person of faith with lots of people who are not people of faith or your faith?

Patrick Lencioni:

Yeah, and it's a great question and it's changed over the years and the more I grow in my faith, the easier it gets. And I think it's because I will say this, Carey, I think that in many ways, I wrote this down on a piece of paper earlier today. I said, "What was it like for the Christians that lived in Rome that had a lot of respect?" Because people don't realize there were Christians in Rome that lived in society and then it turned, right? And then so Christians went from being respected people, part of commerce and all this other stuff to losing their money, their status, their respect of others in society, their lives in many cases.

And I thought, "What was that like? How did they deal with that?" And I realized that at some point they probably just gave it away. In other words, because you can go through life and lose it like death by paper cut or Band-Aid, pull it off, but at some point, you just got to go, "I'm going to set this aside and realize this has no meaning for me without my faith." And then as those things happen in society, we take it as less of a loss because it really isn't one. And so when it comes to witnessing to people, because I'm letting go of that a little bit more and I still struggle, you don't really fear the repercussions.

And as a result of not fearing the repercussions, you do it with more confidence and peace. And that's far easier for people to hear. And when they know that you're not afraid, they're less likely to take offense. And so I had this talk last night, this is so wonderful, thank you, God, for letting me have this conversation with you today, I needed to do this. Last night, I had a conversation with a bunch of consultants that said, "Pat, how do we witness to our clients in faith?" Because they work with their clients, they help them make their companies better, and then suddenly, they're like, "But this guy's still broken and I feel like I've helped him have a better company, but he's hurting. And I don't think he's of faith and am I allowed to share that and what should I do?"

And my advice to them was something I've recently discovered in my work with churches and that is the first step of evangelization. I think a great way to evangelize people, one that I do now and I've never had anybody take offense. And that's just to say to somebody, "Hey, tell me what's going on in your life because I'd like to pray for you and I'd love to know how I can pray for you." Now I've done that with people. I don't walk around the street just doing it to prove that I can do it, but I do it whenever I can. And even people that I know that have no faith will go, "Oh no, I'm fine, but thank you." That's the worst I've ever gotten. Most times people-

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, that's the worst case.

Patrick Lencioni:

Yeah, and people that hear this go, "I could do that," but they think being an evangelist is putting a soapbox on a corner and preaching. But if you could just say to somebody, "I'd like to pray for you. What could I pray for you?" And so many people probably of mild faith will say, "Wow, well, my brother-in-law's really sick. That would be great." I go, "Okay, what's his name?" And then occasionally, you can say to them, "Hey, would you like to pray right now? I'll pray with you." But you do that if you think they're inclined toward that. But just doing that says to people, "Oh, if you ask me that, that's important to you, and of course, then you do it."

So that's my thing now that's how I start. And I don't know a person in the world who is offended by that. And if they are, then that's just their wounds. So that's what I said to these guys and these were guys, some of them were former ministers and they were like, "Yeah, we can totally do that." And so simple, keeping it simple. So I don't know if I answered your question completely, but-

Carey Nieuwhof:

No, you did and I appreciate you sharing that. It's funny, I was talking to a friend who works in senior leadership at one of the big five tech firms near you, Silicon Valley. And she was just talking this morning, she just texted me about a couple issues she's working through, so we jumped on a quick call. And she was saying, "I've got people who have now come to faith at this big tech company." And she said, "I just go about it like I'm the person they go to with their problems. I become the trusted friend."

Patrick Lencioni:

Right.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And then it becomes a very natural sharing over time about, "Well, something that's important to me is my faith," and she's led people to Christ through that.

Patrick Lencioni:

Oh yeah. And by the way, there are so many Christians out there in the world, it is like Rome who they didn't want to be outward about it, but they write the fish on the ground or they give the sign of the cross, which is their way of showing people, "I'm a Christian." I can't tell you how many people like, "You're a person of faith too? Oh my gosh, I didn't even know that." So we are definitely underground and I will say this, it is very dangerous for followers of Jesus to think that they are not in hostile territory now. One of the things in the Catholic church, there's a great book written and this is true for everybody, but there was a great book written about we've gone from Christendom to Apostolic mission. And that's a good thing because we should have never lost Apostolic mission.

But I grew up in an era where everybody on your street was basically okay with what you believed, whether they believed it or not, that was part of the ocean you swam in. So where do you go to church was probably the answer. And somebody might say, "Nowhere," and that's okay, but generally, today, if you work in that tech company, you need to know that if they knew what you really believed, you would not be welcome there and then you can just hold that lightly and you need to be ... And I know even saying that sounds controversial, but it is a fact that if they knew what you really believed, they would want not want you to be there.

And we live in a world today where everybody's like, "No, I don't think that's true," but I can tell you with that is the new reality. Now it depends what kind of company it is and where you live, but in the Silicon Valley, that is not welcomed, it's not accepted, it's tolerated at best. And I think when you realize that, it's a lot easier to have peace and go, "Okay, that's what it is." So it's not so much the Band-Aid getting pulled off one hair at a time, but you can go, "Okay, I'm going to give that up. I'm not going to worry about that anymore."

Carey Nieuwhof:

One of the things then I so appreciate you sharing about that struggle and that stripping away and money not meaning what it used to and success not meaning what it used to, but one of the challenges is how do you keep drive and peace intention, if that makes sense, you know what I mean? Because then it can be easy, Pat, to say, "Well, I'm not going to write anymore books," or, "I'm not going to take on anymore clients," or, "We're going to fold The Table Group." What is the motivation that keeps you moving if the money, the success, the book sold is no longer the prize?

Patrick Lencioni:

Okay, gosh, this is so great having this and I'm going to answer this, but my kids tell me this, my wife too, that I skip over things that I don't always explain, I jump to the end. So it sounds like I'm not answering that, but so what I've found, what gives me-

Carey Nieuwhof:

We have time.

Patrick Lencioni:

Okay, good. What gives me energy and hope is something that I've really struggled with for years and that is I need to know the difference between when I'm in fellowship with people or when I'm with people that I'm actually trying to witness to or be a missionary for and not knowing which of those, because you can't do them both at the same time. This is what I mean by that is if I have people that I'm in fellowship with that were co-missionaries and I can be fed by them and built up with them. Then I can go out into the world and try to love people into goodness and truth and beauty.

But if I'm not clear about where I am and who I'm with, it is so paralyzing to me and people will think that sounds exclusive, but it's just logical. So the early Christians lived in community and then they'd go out into Rome and witness and serve and love, but they come back together and know when they were in a place where, "Oh these are my brothers and sisters, and then now, let's go out and love on people that are not currently our brothers and sisters, but to love them ... They're not in communion with us right now, but love them where they are and let God do the rest." But when we mix and when we're at some place and we don't know which of them it is, it is disconcerting and paralyzing to me because I'm like, "Oh, I don't know if this person is with me here or if I'm supposed to be ..."

And I think that's a big problem for people in the world today is that ... And this is what's dividing a lot of families and Jesus said that would happen. It's like, "Do who you're in communion with and do you know who you're meant to be reaching out to?" And for me, as long as I know I have brothers and sisters that are serving with me that can build me up and I can build up, then we can go out into the world and share goodness with them. Whether it's goodness about how to run a better meeting, but I hope that all of that points them ultimately to Jesus. So that's how I can continue to do it. I couldn't do it on my own.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. And then the motivation to continue to write books, to continue to consult with clients, that comes out of that like, "Okay, some of those will be fellow laborers and others will be people that maybe I have an opportunity to make an impact on," what's behind that?

Patrick Lencioni:

Well, I will tell you, I don't do work with just corporations anymore, personally. I'm working with organizations that are trying to serve the world in goodness.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Really? So you flipped your personal portfolio to good-minded companies that exist for good?

Patrick Lencioni:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's really cool.

Patrick Lencioni:

And there's plenty of other and all the other companies and the secular companies, the other ones in the world, they're using our stuff and that's great. We're building stuff that they can use, but I personally am spending my time helping organizations that I think are trying to make the world better, seeking

dignity, human dignity and truth and goodness. And so my books are reflecting that too. The 6 Types of Working Genius, I was very explicit, "These are God-given talents."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, you're very clear on that throughout.

Patrick Lencioni:

God wants us to ... Nobody gets everything because we need each other. He built us to need one another and we should love one another from a position of knowing what gifts we have and what we don't have and celebrating the gifts that others have that we don't have. And so I think that's truth, beauty and goodness, right? The next book I'm going to write is I think going to be about wounds and I'm not an expert on that, but I know a lot of experts, but I just see so many leaders, so many people in the workforce and in the world who are operating out of their woundedness. So it gets to what you were saying before, they're not a drug addict or an alcoholic or a sex addict or gambler, but they're still addicted and it works for them, but I can see that they're on a crash course.

And so I would like to introduce the language of woundedness. So just people can self-diagnose. It's an onramp and then go get the help they need, whether it's reading a book, maybe they have mild wounds or maybe they need therapy, or because ultimately, like somebody said to me yesterday, everybody just wants to be known and loved and that's by God ultimately. And so people understanding that they're wounded is a good way to know that they're going to stop running faster in the wrong direction just so they go further off a cliff. So that's what I'm going to write a book about, I think.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I can't wait to read that. Do you have an idea what wounds drove you ...

Patrick Lencioni:

Oh yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

... in your career? Yeah, do you mind sharing ...

Patrick Lencioni:

Oh yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

... what was driving you?

Patrick Lencioni:

Yeah, and this is not a pity thing at all, everybody's got them, but I grew up not knowing affection and attention. I was in an environment as a young child and my mom and dad are wonderful people, but they had their own stuff. But that's irrelevant in the sense that when I was a child I was like, "Oh, these people aren't paying attention to me and they're not delighting in me, so I know what I have to do. It must be that I'm not quite good enough, so I have to achieve." So from a very early age, I became performance-based in everything. I had to get perfect grades, be the best athlete, make everybody

happy in my family, please every coach, every teacher and I became ... So my addiction, that's what an addiction is, it's self-medication. My self-medication was achievement. And so that's how I got here.

And so my wound was, I felt shame, I wasn't good enough and rejection. So then you make vows like, "I will earn the right to be seen and I'm not a good enough person, that's why they don't love me. I've just got to be a better person." And so it looked like virtue and achievement and success, but it was really survival. And so ...

Carey Nieuwhof:

My goodness.

Patrick Lencioni:

... those were my wounds.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow. Very similar. We were born the same year, we talked about that in the past, and I, early on in my childhood, conflated performance with love, "Oh, the more I perform, the more I'm loved." And I don't know what happened exactly, but my goodness, that is a curse that you've got to break. You got to break the back of that or it's deadly.

Patrick Lencioni:

I was talking to a guy just yesterday. I was talking to a guy just yesterday.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Keep going.

Patrick Lencioni:

And he worked in ministry and he's a consultant now. And I said to him, and we were talking about all these people he knew and how he was ministering to them, but now he's doing consulting. And I said, "Are you capable of receiving love?" And he said, "No, no, that's always been a difficult thing for me." And I was like, "Okay." And we started talking about wounds and talking about going through ... So oftentimes, even in our woundedness, we help others, but we got to put the oxygen mask on ourself at some point, God's oxygen mask.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, for sure, for sure. I remember another conversation we had, I think it might have been for the ChurchPulse Weekly Podcast when we had you on that other podcast that I do, but I asked you about, because this is a passion point of mine and this is switching gears a little bit, but I think pastors often don't know how to approach business leaders. So you have Pat Lencioni coming to your parish, coming to your church, part of your congregation and I think often we ignore, and I say this as somebody who led a church for 20 years, we ignore the talent that we have in the pews, the talent that we have. And we say, "Here, Pat, park some cars or handout programs on Sunday," and then you go home and then you consult with companies around the world. How does that make you feel? What do you wish your pastor, your priest would do in terms of leveraging your unique gifts and talents?

Patrick Lencioni:

Oh man, this is a huge thing and this is why Working Genius can be so powerful too, but I remember going ... So I spoke at Willow Creek 20 years ago or something, more than that and that was my first me being in a church environment. They hired me because they didn't know I was a believer, but they hired me to just speak about teamwork because of my book and then I got part of that. And then other churches were hiring me to do stuff and it was really great and I was helping them. And then I'm Catholic and I'm like, "Gosh, what am I going to do for the Catholic church?" and I went to my pastor and I said and the first thing they do is, "Well, we need people to set up chairs or whatever else," and I was like, "Oh, I really want to use the talent God gave me."

And it wasn't like I'm proud and I want you to realize how talented, I actually want to do something I'm good at. And finally, I got to the place where I went to the diocese here, so the bishop and I said, "I want to do management training for the priests." And they were like, "Oh okay, that's great. Okay, well, you got to talk to this guy and it was going to be a 12-month process." And I said, "Screw it." And I said, "I'm going to get in the phone book. I'm going to look up every Catholic church in the diocese and I'm just going to invite them myself and I'm going to ask for forgiveness, not permission."

And so I called the guy at the diocese and I said, "I'm doing this. I just want you to know," and they go, "No, no, no, no, no, we'll do it. We'll help you." And so I found that I had to just go full in and then they would come alongside. And so what I want ministers to do, pastors to do is to recognize that they can't do everything and allowing people to serve the church in their passion is a ministry in itself. It brings them closer to ... People pray more and give money more if they volunteer more.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right.

Patrick Lencioni:

And so get them and turn them loose. I remember at Willow Creek years ago I heard a story about a guy who came and said, "I want to volunteer." They said, "What are you good at?" And he said, "Well, I'm a car mechanic. That's about all we can do." And so they said, "Okay, we now have a mechanics ministry to the poor." So they just said, "Who are you? What do you do? We are going to create that," rather than saying, "We have these 10 ministries and you better fit into one of them or we've got nothing for you to do." So the job of a pastor is actually to help the people in the pews make their work a ministry.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's so good.

Patrick Lencioni:

Everybody's job is a ministry. The parish or the congregations is just a place where they come together to have that co-organized. So that's what I think. I think it's becoming a connoisseur of everyone's genius and help them do ministry through that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, and this gets to what you write about in 6 Types of Working Genius where, and you and I had talked about this before, we have the identical profile. So we have invention and discernment and at the bottom are tenacity and enablement, but enablement, you think about that, right? If I'm the pastor, so think about having high-capacity leaders in your church. So enablement and you can clarify my definition, but the way I understand it is, "I'm happy to help, but I am much better if you just give me

something that I can do rather than have me be part of your thing." If it's like go set up chairs, you're like, "No, I'm more wired. If I thought setting chairs up was a good idea, then I would probably help but don't tell me what to do." And I think that shows up in churches. If you have a low enablement group, that's going to be difficult, right?

Patrick Lencioni:

Yeah, the thing about enablement and it's a gift and it's such a wonderful quality to have and these are the best team players in the sense of when you say to them, "I need your help," they're like, "Yes." Before you tell them what you need, they're like, "I will do whatever you ask because God has given me the passion for helping, but not on my own terms, on the terms that are needed." And honestly, nurses, nurses often have the genius of enablement because they come into that room and say, "What do you need? I want to get it for you." Whereas I would be more likely to ... So my wife says to me, "Pat, I need your help," and she'll tell you, I cringe because I'm like, "Oh, is it going to be something I like to do and I'm good at or something I don't." And she'll go, "I need you to help me clean the garage this weekend," and I'm withering. So what I do is I say, "Okay, tell me why you think we need to clean the garage."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right.

Patrick Lencioni:

I'm discerning like, "Is this really the right thing?" And she's like, "No, I don't want your discernment." "Okay, okay, so tell me the system you're going to ... I bet there's a good way that we could figure out to ..." and she goes, "Nope, I don't want your invention. I want you to stand there, and when I hand you something, I want you to put it where I tell you to." And because I don't have the genius of enablement, that kills me, which doesn't mean I get to say, "Sorry, honey," but it kills me. She has friends that will go, "I would love to come over and help you," but you don't even know what ... "It doesn't matter. I'll do whatever you need me to do."

So I used to feel really guilty that I didn't have enablement as a follower of Jesus because some people just really easily slide in and do whatever you need them to do and they're great on teams because they're like, "No, no, no, whatever you need me to do, I get joy and energy out of helping." I don't get joy and energy out of helping, I get energy and joy out of helping through invention and discernment. So they're just far more open handed and I admire them, I love them, I have a number of them on our team. And you know what's a beautiful thing to realize? There are times when even that genius is not the right thing to do.

Because sometimes people do enablement and this is when somebody asks you to do the wrong thing and your tendency is to go, "Sure, I'll do that for you." And it's like, "Ah," so two of my favorite people I've worked with for years, Tracy and Karen, in our office, they have discernment and enablement. And so I'll ask them something and I'll qualify it and I'll say, "I don't want your enablement," because that would mean they're going to do it, "I want your discernment. I want you to tell me if what I'm asking for you is the right thing," where there's other times, I'll probably go to them and just say, "I need this and I need somebody who's going to help me," and their enablement makes them go, "Sure."

So enabling is not always what's called for, just like invention is not always called for. Even discernment is not always called for. Sometimes we just need to get it done, but enablement is that one that people think is just being nice, but it's not. It's a gift. Some people are born to help and to serve and they get true joy and energy out of doing it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I want to come back to a couple of personal things a little bit later on, but let's dive into Working Genius for a few minutes and then we'll circle back on a couple of other things because we have covered this once or twice on the podcast already, so we'll link to those other episodes. But I want to ask you some questions that I haven't asked before about Working Genius. Maybe you can start with just a really quick inventory of the six geniuses, just so that people don't have to go back, they'll know what we're talking about, but just the thumbnail version.

Patrick Lencioni:

And I'm going to do it in order, not that things always happen, but this is the order of how work happens and it goes from 50,000 feet up in the air to 5,000 feet onto the ground.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Beautiful.

Patrick Lencioni:

So it starts up at 50,000 feet with the genius of wonder. Some people like to ponder. They look at things and they go, "Why are they like this?" They ask questions, "Could it be better? Is this really the right way to do things?" They ask questions about possibilities and they do that by looking around and it's very up in the clouds and it's often abstract and theoretical and it's critical because that's how every great thing starts. Somebody says, "Hey, maybe there's a better way to do this, right?" The next genius is invention. Somebody takes that question and says, "Ooh, let me figure it out. I'm going to come up with some ideas. I like to come up with ideas out of nothing. I want to come up with a brand new way to do that because you've asked the question, I'm going to invent something. I'm going to think originally."

Then we're getting closer to the ground, but still up there. And then somebody comes along and says, "Ooh, that idea of yours, I'm going to evaluate it. I have discernment. It's a great idea. We should do it." "It's not a great idea. Here's what we need to do differently." "Oh, that would be a disaster and here's why." They're great at evaluating things, using their gut instinct and their intuition and they're usually right and it's not linear. They just have great discernment. And then somebody else comes along and says, "If you've discerned that and you think it's a good idea, I'm going to galvanize it. I'm going to get people in a room. I'm going to get them excited. I'm going to get things moving. I'm going to provoke people to change," because they're people that wake up in the morning that love to galvanize others, inspire, sell, promote, and encourage.

Then comes our friends and enablement. They hear somebody galvanized and they go, "Yes, I will help. I'm in. Count me in. I'll be there. When do you want me there? What do you want me to do? I love to help get things going. I'm going to enable this to get off the ground." And then the last one is tenacity. People have the genius of tenacity, they're not jazzed about helping, they're jazzed about finishing. They like to cross things off a list, get it across the line, hit the target, hit the number and that's where they get joy and energy. I get no joy and energy from that. Finishing a book is painful for me. Starting a book, inventing and discernment is great. Finishing the book, I have to be forced to do that against my will.

So tenacity is what happens closest to the ground when stuff has to actually happen. So we go from wonder to invention, to discernment, to galvanizing, to enablement, to tenacity.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So this is what's so exciting about this, you've run a quarter million people through the assessment, so you've learned a lot about it over the last couple years, but you end up with frustration. In other words, mood has been a lot of issue, been a big challenge for a lot of leaders. So over the last couple years, especially with all the crisis we've been through, I think people are having a lot of difficulty motivating themselves, but some of that could be working genius. Like you would get frustrated and grumpy at work and I've definitely been there and I read the book and I work through your material and I'm like, "Oh, that makes a lot of sense." So how does that show up as frustration?

Patrick Lencioni:

Yeah, yeah. Yeah, and we feel guilty when we get grumpy and we don't know why and we think, "Something's wrong with me." And often because we're actually doing something that God didn't give us a genius in. And we're doing it every day and we're spending a lot of the day and it drains us. Because remember, it's about joy and energy. It's not just about talent. And if you are called to do something that drains you of joy and energy every day, you are going to be grumpy if unless you're using one of those self-medicating tools because you're not meant to do that. And I was doing that too much. I was constantly galvanizing and it was taking me away from doing the things I loved. I'm not naturally a genius galvanizer, but at least it's in my area of competence in the middle.

If somebody said to you, "Carey, your frustration," which I think knowing your frustrations is just as important as knowing your genius. If I said, "Carey, I have this great job for you. People are going to ask you for help and you're just going to have to help them and you're going to have to finish it on time and do it perfectly without asking any questions," that would be the worst job in the world for you. That's enablement and tenacity. My first job out of college was exactly that. I failed at it. I thought I was a failure. I thought I was a fraud. I thought all my success leading up to that point, I must have faked it. And it wasn't until 30 years later coming up with this tool that I realized, "Oh my gosh, I was destined for failure in that job," because it was all about doing what I do poorest and what doesn't feed me.

To watch people lose their guilt around themselves and to stop judging others by thinking, "Oh, they're lazy," or, "they're not smart." "No, they just don't have E&T or they don't have W&I." It's such a beautiful thing to watch people go from judgment and guilt to grace and self-understanding.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And like you, my gifts live out there at the invention and discernment level. So I love the brainstorm. I love the 30,000 feet, but we're in the middle of a reboot in our company right now and I was in meetings last Thursday and I'm like, "Now we got to actually implement this thing," and I can feel my enthusiasm waiting. And I revisited your material and I'm like, "But there are other people with galvanizing and other people with tendencies." And I said to one of the guys on my team who's like 25 years younger than me, I said, "Look, I'm your boss," but he is a gift of tenacity or the genius of tenacity, I should say, I said to him, "How about on this project I work for you and you just get this thing done, you tell me what to do and I will do it?" but I know he's going to ship it, whereas I can bring the visionary goals to it. Is that how this starts to play out in the workplace?

Patrick Lencioni:

Exactly like that. And we think that you should only do something because of your age or how you've paid your dues. And Cody in my office when I figured this out, I was like, "You love to galvanize. You should be the chief galvanizing officer." And it's like, "Well, but you're the CEO." And I'm like, "Oh, I'll do a little galvanizing, but you love it. I won't have to do it as much. I'll do these things over here." See, there is no such thing as a CEO in terms of what they do. You should be doing what you're best at. I was

with one of the best companies in America a couple weeks ago and they have a new CEO and he's an ET. He does the things and we put it up there and we said, and he goes, "Yes, I'm an implementer. That's what I like to do. I don't get that other stuff. Who around me is better at that other stuff? And when we're in that mode, they're going to be the star."

And that's the thing, everybody has the time to shine. That doesn't mean your authority is questioned. But we had a pastor, Carey, who wrote in and said, "I'm a fraud as a pastor. I shouldn't have been a pastor. I've been a pastor for 10 years and I probably picked the wrong thing." And we said, "Why?" And he said, "Because I can't write a homily, a sermon to save my life." And so that's what I should be able to do that. And he looked at his working genius and he was like a DE. He had no WI. And we said, "Well, of course, you can't, but that doesn't mean ... So you do like counseling people and helping people and when they need help?" "Yeah, that's the kind of pastor you are. Go find a friend in the church who's got WI and they can help you write your homilies. That doesn't mean you're a failure. Nobody's good at all of it. Hey, there's other ones that give great homilies and they're not very good counselors."

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, for sure.

Patrick Lencioni:

And it's like right. Now, the worst thing people do in these situations, CEOs, pastors, whatever, is they abdicate and devalue the things they're bad at. So they say, "Yeah, counseling is overrated. People that are good at counseling, that's easy and it's not that important. I'm good at coming up with a homily." You know what I mean? Because they do that out of like, "No, no, you should celebrate people that are good at it. You should honor that. You should thank them. You should just be so glad that they're like that and that doesn't take away anything from you." But without the language, it's hard to do that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

You also cover genius gaps. I think that's a really interesting conversation because sometimes, and I mean the vast majority of businesses are not multinational corporations, the vast majority of churches have a couple staff, and The Table Group is a small team, we have a small team. Yet every once in a while, you can have a genius gap. What does that mean?

Patrick Lencioni:

Well, on a team, what that means is, because we have a team map people take. Everybody on a team takes the thing and look at the map which basically just shows you where everybody's geniuses are and their frustrations. And you can have a team where there's nobody on the team that has tenacity.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right.

Patrick Lencioni:

And usually you can go, "Oh, that's why we never hit deadlines. We never finished. We never made our numbers or every time we rolled something out on the church, the last week of it is misery and we all hate it," or a team that's like, we had a team that had no wonder and no invention ...

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right.

Patrick Lencioni:

... and they were a technology company, a multi-billion ... And nobody on the leadership team had any sense of it. And they said, "This is why we're behind in technology. We're never in the magic quadrant for innovation because nobody here loves to sit around ponder, question things and reinvent. We just hit our numbers. We run a tight ship. And so when you have a gap, you have to fill it and you fill it by either forcing people who can do it pretty well to do it. That's not the best way because then you burn them out. You borrow people though. Sometimes you borrow a consultant or somebody from another department and you go, "Hey, why don't you come to some of our meetings when we're talking about this since you're good at this and that might be all you need."

Sometimes you hire for it. Sometimes you say, "The next person we hire, they really need to have a genius in this area." But what you can't do is leave that gap exposed and empty.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So the whole idea is there's two of the geniuses that you're naturally good at, they energize you. It's like, "How do I get paid for this?" And then two, that frustrate you to death. So in your team mapping, which you share at the end of your book, I smiled when I saw, because I know a lot of the people on your team, I'm like, "Oh, these are real names and real case studies." So if I got this right, according to the chart on your team mapping, you are the only person who has the gift of invention on your team, but it is the working frustration of a ton of people on your team. So I'm imagining Pat standing at the whiteboard, dreaming and scheming about the next book, the next project. What are those seven people for whom that's a working frustration? Are they rolling their eyes or what dynamic does that produce at The Table Group?

Patrick Lencioni:

Well, it's a great question. What you do notice though is there's a whole bunch of people on our team that have discernment as a genius.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yes, that's true.

Patrick Lencioni:

So they're glad to have me inventing and they're good at evaluating the things I come up with, but I was the one pushing the ball up the hill. Since then, we hired a guy, Beau, who has invention and I have a partner in crime ...

Carey Nieuwhof:

Fantastic.

Patrick Lencioni:

... that we go in and invent together. Until then though, I had to do it on my own, which was lonely, but at least I had people with really good intuition who would tell me, "That's a great idea," "That's a bad idea," "Oh, here's what we need on that." And then it would come back to me, but if I had not had people with discernment around me that were constantly saying, "Ah, where's your data? Prove it to

me. It's probably not right," I would have died. So although I was a lonely inventor, at least I had plenty of people willing to give feedback and they had really good judgment.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So what would be the recipe then if you have invention and everyone else has something else as their working frustration? Because I know visionaries who say, and this happens a lot at the board level, they come in with a really big vision and there's a bean counter on the board who's like, "We don't have the money for that," and somebody else shoots it down. What's the formulation for that to happen with the geniuses?

Patrick Lencioni:

So what they're doing, it's classic because we talked to a guy from Nike who worked in product development and this is what happens. People go from ideation, which is W&I stuff and they jump all the way to implementation, which is the E&T stuff. That's where you come up with this new idea and you show it to the bean counter and they go, "No, never, never, never," and it's like, "No, no, no, you're skipping the middle step which is activation." The activation is take it to a discerner, who's going to go, "Oh, that's good too, but I think we could tweak this. What about this? Okay, great," and then they discern. Then you get to the galvanizer who loves to lay it out for people and get people excited. And that process means that when it finally gets to the people who implement, it's been vetted and properly sold to them and the benefits and the costs are there. So you have to do those middle steps and so many teams go from ideation to implementation and they find that everybody's really frustrated.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, that's so good.

Patrick Lencioni:

So that's the key. The D and the G in the middle are critical.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So quarter million assessments, are there any surprises?

Patrick Lencioni:

I think we're up to 350,000 now. We'll be at a half a million by the end of the year.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Half a million by the end of the year. So as all this data pours in, any surprises, any new things you're learning on working genius? Because I think when you stumbled on this, it was at the beginning of the pandemic and you and your team reached out and said, "Hey, can we come on the podcast and talk about this?" And it was barely off the whiteboard. I think you had just built the website.

Patrick Lencioni:

Right.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So now you've got a lot more data. What are the surprises, if any, that you picked up?

Patrick Lencioni:

One of the surprises is this, all those people that have taken it, very few of them have questions. When they see the results, they're just like, "Oh my gosh, this explains everything." People don't call us and go, "I don't get it." We're like, "They're getting it." They're writing to us and going, "This changed my marriage. I finally understand her," or, "him," or, "Our team reorganized after five years of frustration because we finally figured this out." So the first thing we see from the data coming in is that it's fast and it works and people confirm it and so thank God for that. We're also finding that a few types are pretty rare, a few combinations.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Really? So you're getting your way team. Okay. Yeah. What's rare?

Patrick Lencioni:

The combination of wonder and galvanizing, which is the a really thoughtful, heady, "Oh, I'm wondering, I'm asking questions," and then galvanizing, "Come on, let's do it," that combo doesn't exist very much together. And then there's some combinations that do ... E&T go together a lot, but it's not near. None of that is near as common as we thought. It's still like, "Hey, it's 17% of people do that versus 2% of people do this." It's not like, "80% of people have the same combination." It's really distributed. But we are still cranking through that data. And probably in the New Year, we're going to sit down with it and come up with yet more ways to cut it.

But I will tell you something, Carey, we have a podcast called The Working Genius Podcast, and pretty much whenever we come up with a new insight, we share it on there.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Cool.

Patrick Lencioni:

So it's like real-time development with our tribe.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's awesome.

Patrick Lencioni:

And we put things out there and it's really fun to do. We did a podcast recently about what is uniquely annoying for each letter. What's the thing each letter hates to hear?

Carey Nieuwhof:

I'm going to listen to that.

Patrick Lencioni:

And the wonderer hates to hear, "Oh, who cares?" They're like, "I wonder, would this be ..." "Who cares?" That's like that would kill them.

Carey Nieuwhof:

All right, so selfishly, inventor, and I'd love to know what do the inventors hate to hear.

Patrick Lencioni:

Inventors hate to hear, "We don't need that. That's not practical. That's not practical," because it's like, "I didn't do it to you. I'm trying to do something big." And discerners hate when people say, "Prove it. Where's your data?"

Carey Nieuwhof:

I just know. I know, Pat. I know.

Patrick Lencioni:

Right? Because we're like, "I don't know. My gut is telling me this." And you know what's great when you learn this? People at the company now will say, "Pat, if you're saying that, there's probably truth to that. So we're going to look for that." Normally, they don't ask me for data. Tracy, who has great discernment, I don't care if Tracy tells me something that my book isn't good, I change it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Patrick Lencioni:

She has fantastic discernment. I don't go, "Convince me." I'm like, "If that character doesn't ring true to you, Tracy, you've been right so many times. I trust your gut." So-

Carey Nieuwhof:

So this is a business strategy question and if the answer is, "Oh, it's a revenue line," just say, "It's a revenue line," we'll move on. But Dave Ramsey said you could charge a lot more for the assessment. I heard you say that on an interview or two and it's true. I'm going over it with my team again right now. We ran everybody through it. We're team mapping, etcetera, etcetera. So it is highly valuable, but for the business leaders out there, like free assessment versus a nominal fee and I think it's what, \$25 or something? It's not terribly expensive.

Patrick Lencioni:

25 bucks.

Carey Nieuwhof:

25 bucks. Why did you make the nominal fee choice rather than take this assessment for free choice? I'm just curious as a business decision why you made that decision or your team did.

Patrick Lencioni:

Oh, why did we put a price on it at all?

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, yeah, yeah, why'd you put a price on it at all?

Patrick Lencioni:

Gosh, that's so great because 99% of people say, "Why'd you make it so cheap? So why did we"-

Carey Nieuwhof:

Why did you charge at all? Why was it a free assessment?"

Patrick Lencioni:

I think we needed to ... Yeah, I love that. I think it's because sometimes people value what ... If something costs something, they value it more. Because I know I've seen free assessments and free things like that. I'm like, "Gosh, do they think this would have any value?" And so that's one of the reasons why. And we did want to monetize it to a certain extent because we wanted to keep investing in it, but so much of the things we're doing around it, we just throw out there. Here's a very interesting thought, Carey. One of the reasons why we keep our company small is because strategically, it allows us to not have to monetize a lot.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Right.

Patrick Lencioni:

So when we just want to make a difference, we can actually put something out there and say, "That's all right. Let's just give this away." If we didn't think that people could afford \$25 for an assessment like this, we would have given it away. So I think we did value pricing like, "What would they think it was worth? And what would a college student go, 'Yeah, if that gives me that big of insights, this is worth it?'"

Carey Nieuwhof:

I'm so glad I asked the question.

Patrick Lencioni:

It's a great question.

Carey Nieuwhof:

No, that makes a lot of sense because I think you're right. I figured that there was some logic behind it, but I didn't know because there's a million free assessments online and I think you're right, "If I don't pay for it's like, yeah, what was that thing again? Am I a D, an F, a Q? I can't remember."

Patrick Lencioni:

Right.

Carey Nieuwhof:

But you're right, when you pay for it, you value it more, you're more likely to implement it and yet it's not like ... There are \$500 assessments out there if you want those too, right? So I think that makes a lot of sense.

Patrick Lencioni:

Right.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Thank you for answering that. Okay, couple of other things.

Patrick Lencioni:

Sure. It's good to have to think about those things again. Right.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So screenwriting, you actually wrote a couple of screenplays in the early days and your book is part fable and this one has a little more actual theory and strategy toward the end of it, but talk about your interest in screenwriting and how it makes you a better writer and a leader.

Patrick Lencioni:

So it's very interesting because the fact that an idea goes right back to this, it makes sense, right? You can imagine writing a screenplay, right? And so I was always an inventor and a discerner and that's what-

Carey Nieuwhof:

I wanted to be a comedian. That would have been funny, but I'm not actually funny, but that whole idea of being creative, totally, totally makes sense.

Patrick Lencioni:

Right. So I always had that in me since I was a child. And I went to college, I came from a poor family, my parents didn't go to college and they said, "You're going to study accounting and computers because you'll get a good job." And I didn't. I did economics and Spanish, but I took psychology classes and journalism and screenwriting just as electives because I really had a passion for that. So I get out of school and I decide while I'm working at Bain & Company, which was only 65 hours a week, but in my spare time, I would write screenplays because I really loved that. And I got some attention from a Hollywood screenwriting thing and an editor who was interested in my stuff and a director, but I didn't want to live that life, but I continued to have passionate.

And then I came up with my first leadership idea and somebody said, "You have to write a book about this." And I was like, "Oh." And I got depressed because I had a lot of business books that I never finished. I read the first two chapters and then skimmed through the back and I thought, "Hey, I wonder if people would like it if I wrote a story and I'm going to write it, so there's got really short chapters and characters and realistic dialogue, so that when they get done with it, they're like, 'Oh, I just finished this and I learned a bunch of stuff,' and then I'll outline what they learned." I didn't think it was going to get published. We were going to take it to Kinko's and just make copies and give it to our clients.

And then by accident, somebody's friend, sister's girlfriend's friend, Amy introduced us to somebody and it got made. They said they wanted to publish it. We're like, "That's great," but we didn't think it was going to lead to much. And then we realized there's a lot of people out there that don't want to be bored when they're reading something. And my books are really written more screenplays than novels. I

don't go lots of description around the smell in the air and the room and the table, which I love books like that. Mine is really about dialogue and moving the plot along.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It is. It's almost all dialogue. Right.

Patrick Lencioni:

Yeah. And so that was my favorite, and my screenplays, I really liked that. So that's what I decided to do and thankfully people like it. And I wrote a book that wasn't like that, *The Advantage*, which is fine. It's more of a textbook kind of thing, but we tried to make it fun. But people said, "We really, really like the fable," so I still do that.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I do love *The Advantage*. What was that first book? What was the first one you wrote that almost didn't get published?

Patrick Lencioni:

The Five Temptations of a CEO. It was *The Five Temptations of a CEO* and it's very allegorical. My other books are edgy fiction, but this guy is the CEO of a company and he gets on a BART train we call it here, which is a rapid transit at night and nobody else is on the train and then he meets these people. Are they real? Are they not? Was it a dream? So that one was much more allegorical, but now I try to write slightly edgy fiction.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And I take it your next one on wounds will be a similar thing, fable and then some principles?

Patrick Lencioni:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

That one will lend itself to a movie.

Patrick Lencioni:

Yeah, I'm sure it will be. Although I'm not thinking about that yet. I'm actually just thinking about the theory, but I'll probably get it into a story because again, I like when people go, "Oh, I could relate to that character." And sometimes they pick the character who's the most problematic and like, "That was me. I was the problem." So I love the fact that people are willing to see it that way.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Drunks & Monks, is that a book? Tell me about *Drunks & Monks*.

Patrick Lencioni:

Where do you think about that? Did I tell you about that?

Carey Nieuwhof:

I think that was a conversation you had with Jon Acuff. You were saying you were reading a book called Drunks & Monks or it was formative. Do you-

Patrick Lencioni:

Oh yeah. I have a stack of copies in my office. I give it to mostly guys. It was written by a guy who I discovered by accident. I was going on a radio show one day and I'd never listened to it, so the day before I listened and he was the guest. And so as he described it, I went online and I found it on Amazon. It was a self-published book and I read everything I could read on Amazon and I was desperate and I bought it. And it is a massively long book that is absolutely brilliant that would be the most amazing screenplay, but it's all true. And it's about a guy who's an entertainment lawyer who closes one of the most famous cases ever. He's practically a celebrity and he goes home that night and his wife kicks him out of the house and he's an achievement addict who never got loved by, I mean direct, and he goes on to a life of spiraling debauchery in search of meaning in his life and it's hilarious.

The man is brilliant. It should be one of those classic books, someday it will get discovered. Drunks & Monks, I don't know if I've ever read anything more poignant and more powerful and I don't even tell you where it goes, but Drunks & Monks is one of the most fascinating books I've ever read.

Carey Nieuwhof:

And it's just like so-

Patrick Lencioni:

And I give it to people.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It got picked up by a publisher at some point or is it still self-published?

Patrick Lencioni:

I don't think so.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Patrick Lencioni:

I think it's still self-published.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, I'm going to buy myself a copy.

Patrick Lencioni:

Oh, well, I'll send you one.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Well, that's really nice. Thank you.

Patrick Lencioni:

But the guy who wrote it, I met the guy who wrote it and he told me what he went through and it's about how he finds faith, but the darkness that he goes through. And it's not salacious, but it's just so real.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow.

Patrick Lencioni:

And the presence of evil and the presence of distraction in society and it's just crazy. It would need to be a miniseries, it's so powerful.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Yeah, yeah. Well, I think it was almost an aside in your conversation, you mentioned it. I'm like, "This is something I've never heard of and I wanted to pick it up with you." And it's a work of fiction, is it or is it autobiographical?

Patrick Lencioni:

Yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Or-

Patrick Lencioni:

No, no, it is absolutely all true. Yeah, the truth is stranger than fiction though. He could never write a book like this that people, "Oh, come on," it's that powerful. You're like, "This actually happened." And I met the guy and I got to know him and it's all real.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, that's great. Well, that's going to be on my reading list. Thanks so much, Pat, for that. And then the last thought, this goes back to where we started, you also mentioned in, usually sometimes we'll listen to other interviews that you've done recently just to pick up one or two things and you said again, it was a throwaway line, so to speak, but you're trying to deepen your prayer life. What does that look like for you these days?

Patrick Lencioni:

So there's this app called Amen, okay? It's a free app and it's got all kinds of prayers, but the beginning has the readings of the day. In the Catholic church, every day there's a reading if you go to daily mass and it's like Old Testament or New Testament and then a Psalm and then the Gospel. And it takes you through that and then you do what's called Lectio Divina where you contemplate like, "So what is God saying to you for that, you think?" My wife and I do it together usually and then we'll say, "What did it say to you? What did it say to you? Okay. And what do you want to say back to God now? And how's this

going to affect your life? And what's one thing you could do differently?" It's beautiful and I love it. I love it. I highly recommend. It's free. It's called Amen.

This thing that I do is at the top of it every time, but at the end of it, at the end of it, the guy who reads it quotes from St. Paul and he says, "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing and give thanks in all circumstances for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you," and it blows me away every time I hear that at the end of every day because the fact that God's will is for me to always rejoice and to always give thanks and to keep praying is the greatest relief I've ever heard. Because things happen that we don't want or like and the fact that God's will is for me to rejoice in the hard things and to thank him for the hard things and just to keep praying means that I don't have to be troubled.

So I want to pray without ceasing. I want to do formal prayer. I want go to mass whenever I can. I want to do the sacraments, but I also just want to be in constant communion with Jesus, so that when something happens before I act or react, I go, "Ooh, okay, so how do you see me right now and what do you want from me and what's this all about?" So I think that's what I'm trying to do.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Wow. Pat, this has been just as always the most riveting conversation. Thank you.

Patrick Lencioni:

It's a weird thing to share all these things. I love doing it, I love talking because I'm talking to you, but to think that I'm sharing all this with lots of other people that are listening, I praise God for that, but it's not my goal to bear my soul always, but I know that if it benefits somebody for doing that, I'm glad I can do it. But it's weird to take the most intimate things and put them out there for so many people to hear.

Carey Nieuwhof:

It's up to you what you want to have aired or not, but I'm always grateful-

Patrick Lencioni:

Oh, no, you can air it all. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

They're my favorite conversations, Pat, and I can't thank you enough. I do-

Patrick Lencioni:

Oh, I love talking to you, yeah.

Carey Nieuwhof:

I love talking to you too. So listeners, we've got The 6 Types of Working Genius available by Pat. It's out now. It's a great book. You've got like 28 podcasts. A sports podcast. You've got Table Group Podcast, You've got The Working Genius Podcast.

Patrick Lencioni:

No, they killed the sports podcast.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Oh, it's legacy now, is it?

Patrick Lencioni:

Yeah, they told us we couldn't do that anymore. Yes, it is. So I really have three, two of them that are ... I have The Working Genius Podcast and then our biggest one is called At The Table. It's just the weekly podcast we do, but I have a faith one called The Simple Reminder and it's just every week or so, a very short five-minute thought about something really simple about our faith. I'm not a theologian or a pastor. I'm just a guy trying and I'm applying the same kind of simple principles I see in other areas of life to like, "Hey, this is something I've been thinking about in my faith." So I have a small, loyal group of listeners who always surprise me. They're like, "Oh, I listened to last week," and I was like, I don't even know anybody listening to this."

Carey Nieuwhof:

That's great. And a website that you'd like to point people to, Pat?

Patrick Lencioni:

Well, workinggenius.com is where all this other stuff is, but The Table Group, thetablegroup.com is our company website.

Carey Nieuwhof:

Awesome. Pat, until next time, thank you so much. Well, I hope you found that as intriguing and encouraging as I did. Pat, thanks so much for being so transparent. I just so value his friendship. We have a growing friendship and really, really thankful for Pat. We are going to link to everything that we talked about in the show notes including Drunks & Monks and where you can get that, all right? So you can find that over at careynieuwhof.com/episode534. And I'm going to tell you, we have some very exciting guests showing up, but first, I want to thank our sponsors.

We want to thank Pro MediaFire. You can get your communications and creative work done for less than hiring your own team or person by going to promediafire.com/carey. They'll give you a free consultation today. Convoy of Hope is everywhere in the world when there's a natural disaster or some kind of crisis and you can support them by helping out at convoyofhope.org/donate. Well, coming up, who have we got? We got Tim Keller who just booked back on the podcast. Somebody I just met recently, Copyblogger, followed him for years, Brian Clark is on the show soon. We also have James Clear. We're going to talk about Atomic Habits to kick off the new year, get some new angles on that, Erwin McManus, Annie F. Downs and a whole lot more. Plus, we're working on some really big stuff for 2023.

Next episode, Kayla Stoecklein. Kayla comes back. And well, we talk about some of the unsustainable pressures of ministry on church leaders. I found that really helpful. In fact, I wrote a post on my blog that will compliment that. We'll talk about that next time, but here's an excerpt.

Kayla Stoecklein:

I really and that in those years of ministry just took my role as serving my husband and serving my kids in that season of life very seriously. And in that, I lost my sense of self and my whole world revolved around Andrew and his needs and the needs of my kids. And I often didn't ask myself, "What does Kayla need? What is Kayla's opinion on this? This is making me feel uncomfortable. Why don't I say something about it?" Yeah, so I just want to encourage anybody that's listening, that's a pastor's wife, you have a

voice and your thoughts matter and your opinion matters and your insight matters and don't be afraid to use it.

Carey Nieuwhof:

So that's next time on the podcast and thank you so much for listening. If this helped you, please leave a rating and review. Shout out The Table Group and Pat on social as well as myself. Maybe hit that little ellipsis, the three dots and share it with a friend, text this episode to a friend, share it with your team, whatever you need to do to help get the word out. This podcast continues to grow, you continue to share it, and as a result, we get to continue to do it. So if you like this episode, as I promised, something free, I want to give you something for free. If 2023 is the year that you're going to launch a podcast, maybe write a book, create a website or start building any time of online presence or maybe you want to boost your own online presence, My Art of Leadership Academy has got a free mastermind to help you with exactly that.

You can get the right people in front of, engaged with and transformed by your content by going to influencekickstarter.com. That's just influencekickstarter.com. I will give you a free mastermind on that, so check it out, influencekickstarter.com. Thank you so much for listening to the end. Thanks for listening. Thanks for doing what you do. We are in your corner and I hope our time together today has helped you thrive in life and leadership.