

- [Speaker] This is the Craig Groeschel Leadership Podcast.

- Hey, welcome to another episode of the Craig Groeschel Leadership Podcast. I'm super-excited and honored that you'd spend a little bit of time with us every month. We'll release a new episode the first Thursday of every month. I want to say a big thanks to those of you who are sharing this on social media. That means the world to me. I hope you'll go through this with team members. At the end of each session, I've actually got application questions for you to help you to drive these thoughts in with your team. If you're looking for a good leadership conference, I teach six or seven a year with Andy Stanley. And we'll actually be in Central Pennsylvania next month, November 9th. We're doing one conference that day and we're doing the same conference the next day on November 10th. So, November 9th and the 10th in Central Pennsylvania. It's called Catalyst One Day. You can actually just kind of Google that if you want to. Catalyst One Day. And we're teaching leadership all day long. Here's what we're going to do today. Today, I'm going to review last week's teaching and then we're going to dive into Part Two of the answer to the most commonly asked question. Most commonly asked question. That is how do we lead up? Each week, I love to try to answer a couple of questions as best I can. You can email me with questions, comments, idea, thoughts, anytime at LEADERSHIP@LIFE.CHURCH. You can also go to LIFE.CHURCH/LEADERSHIPPODCAST and you can sign up to receive the notes every single month. We'll send them to you the day before the podcast releases and then you'll have the notes in front of you. Let's dive into a couple of questions that came in and then we'll look at Part Two of how do we lead up. Sarah asked this question. She said, "As a woman in ministry, "a wife, a mother of two, a daughter, "a friend, and a runner, balancing it all "can be very challenging. "I want to pour my life into family and friends. "I want to read a million different books. "I want to be a better speaker, teacher, "leader, mother, wife. "But it can be all very overwhelming. "Do you have any words of wisdom?" Well, Sarah, you sound a lot like my wife, Amy. Honestly, you sound a lot like so many leaders that I know. So many responsibilities. So many opportunities. And so little time to do it all. I will do a whole podcast of two on this idea one day. We'll dive into it much more. But here's just some big picture thoughts. First of all, Sarah, we have to understand that balance is an illusion. I want to lived the balanced life. I'm going to tell you right now. That's an illusion. There is no such thing. We're always out of balance. In one season, you're traveling a lot. In another season, you're having a baby. Another season, you're writing a book or you're starting some kind of big project. Another season, you're home because you're not feeling well. Life's always out of balance. We need to understand that balance is not the goal. Balance is not the goal. Faithfulness is the goal. What we want to do is we want to be faithful to do the most important things in this season of life. So, Sarah, I want to encourage you to think seasons. Seasons. Respect the season that you are in. You said you have two toddlers. This probably is not the time to read every great book that you want to read. There's some things that we have to say no for in this season. But just because we say no in this season does not mean that we say no forever. The first 10 years of leading this church, I didn't write books. I didn't travel. I didn't do Leadership Podcasts. I had six kids under the age of 11 at home. And so, my focus was all church, all family. Now, my youngest of six kids is 12. There's a little more flexibility. I'm in a different season. I can do different things. So, give yourself permission to let your life be a little out of balance. Don't feel guilty when you're focused on doing what's appropriate. Don't beat yourself up when you can't do everything. You can say no for now but that doesn't mean no forever. Biggest thought is, wherever you are, be all there. Wherever you are, be all there. Dustin asks this: "How do you discipline those under your leadership "without breaking down their spirit? "I know it's different, handling different types of people. "But any advice is appreciated." How do you discipline people without breaking down their spirit? Dustin, I'm glad you asked this question. The reason is this shows that you want to help people get better. One of the most common problems in leadership is leaders who avoid confrontation. And, if you don't have

confrontation, you'll never develop people. So, this really indicates that you're a good leader. I'm glad you asked it. Now, Dustin, since I don't know the context of your question, I'm going to have to make some assumptions. And I'm assuming that you're talking about trying to help people get better. Maybe, you want to help them stop doing something ineffective, unproductive, counter-cultural, or you see an area where, if they improve, they could strengthen their overall contribution. So, if that's the case, I want to change one word in your question. You said, "How do I discipline?" Instead, what I want you to do is think, "How do I coach?" If you're trying to help them improve, don't think discipline. Think coaching. Because a coach may be stern, demanding, or have high standards, but a coach is always on the side of the player. A good book you might want to look at is *Crucial Conversations*. *Crucial Conversations*, the authors talk about, anytime you're having a developmental conversation, you want to create a climate of safety. Climate of safety. And, in order to do it, the authors talk about using what they call contrasting statements. In other words, if you're having a developmental conversation, the person on the receiving end is nervous, they're afraid, they might feel defensive. By offering contrasting statements, you're going to remove fear and anxiety. Here's a contrasting statement. "I'm not mad." "You're not in trouble." "You didn't disappoint me." "And so, you're not getting fired." You take their fears away at the very beginning to create safety. And then you explains, "We're having this meeting "because I believe in you, your potential. "I want to help you get better." And then what do you do? You coach them. You coach them, okay? If they know that you care about them, they'll be much more open to receive from you and they may even thank you. Now, if you are actually disciplining them, that's totally different. If someone didn't tell the truth, they missed a deadline, they're disruptive in meetings, they're counter-cultural in their attitude or whatever, then you're disciplining them. And, when you're disciplining, you've got three goals. Number One: You want them to understand what they did wrong. Number Two: You want them to understand what they must do next time. And Number Three: You want them to understand the consequences if they don't. Number One: What they did wrong. What they need to do better. And what happens if they don't. That's discipline. And, in this type of conversation, I'm not as worried about their feelings, okay? Because they need to feel the heat of it if we're disciplining. I'll tell them I believe in them but I want to be very, very clear, here's what needs to happen. And that's when you're disciplining. Think disciplining if there's something that's really, really wrong and out of culture. Think coaching if you're simply developing. Alright, let's dive into Part Two today of answering the most commonly asked question, and that is, "Hey, I'm an employee. "How can I help my boss see my idea is a good idea? "How can I influence my supervisor? "I've got all these ideas to make our organization better "and nobody will listen to me. "How do I lead up?" Let's review and then we'll dive into this. If you're the point leader and you say, "I really don't care what my employees think.", that is completely unacceptable. If you don't care what they think, you either have the wrong people or you are the wrong leader. What do you do? Change your mindset, or change the people around you. Those are your only options. If you do not value those people around you and empower them to use their gifts to give life to their ideas, they will not stay. If you don't listen to the people around you, eventually, you'll be surrounded by people who have nothing valuable to contribute. So, why is leading up important? We're reviewing. Number One: No organization will ever be what it could be without honest upward communication. You're on the front lines. You see solutions to problems others don't even know exist. Your insight is very valuable. If you asked me, "Why has, Craig, "your organization grown the way it has?" It's because I've got amazing people that I give opportunities to bring their insights to help make the organization better. No organization will ever be what it could be without honest upward communication. Number Two, your ability to lead up now will help determine your ability to move up later. If you bring your ideas, make a positive contribution now, it's going to open up doors for increased influence in your leadership later on. The biggest myth about leadership we talked about in the last episode is this: You have to be in charge in order to lead. You do not have to be in charge in

order to lead. Years and years ago, everybody was all about positional power. It's all about the title. Today, there's personal power. What is personal power? When you care about others. When you serve them, you have personal power. People would rather follow a leader with a heart than a leader with a title. You care about people. Five things that matter. We covered two last week, three new ones this week. Number One: honor matters. Honor matters. Honor publicly results in influence privately. If you want to be over others one day, learn to be under them with integrity today. You may say, "But my leader's not honorable." No, no, no. Respect is earned. Honor is given. Number Two: Timing matters. Look at the rhythm of your leaders, your bosses, whoever, your supervisor. Look at the rhythms of their week, their schedule, and approach them during appropriate times. New content, Number Three. This is new. Number Three: Motives matter. If you want to influence up, examine your motives first. Anytime you want to bring an idea, help change the organization, approach with an attitude to serve. Your only motivation has to be to push the mission forward. If you want to be noticed, you want to be seen, you want to be promoted; if you have any self-centered, selfish motivation, that's going to dilute the purity and the power of what you want to do. You come with a pure motive. You're never leading up to make yourself look better. You're never leading up to be a hero. You're never leading up to make someone else look stupid. You're leading up with pure motives. Now, when you're doing this with the right motives... This is really important. Don't just point out problems, but bring solutions. Don't just point out problems, but bring solutions. Let me tell you something about your supervisor and I promise you this is true. He or she prefers hearing from someone who has potential solutions to someone who just sees problems. Again, let me just say that. If you only come in, "This is wrong. "This is wrong. "What are we going to do about this?" If you're only pointing out problems without bringing solutions, you're going to be very, very annoying. Okay? When you come in and you say, "Well, I see a challenge and here's two ideas "that might address it." Suddenly, you might have the ear of the person who is over you. Even if your idea's not perfect; even if it's never implemented, it shows you're thinking. It shows you care. And a lot of times, a decent idea leads to a great idea. Don't just point out problems. Bring solutions. I remember years ago when we had a problem; we couldn't baptize all these people and it was a real problem. The service was rushed. And someone came in with an idea and they said, "What if we had a big pool and baptized multiple people?" Then someone else said, "Oh, yeah, and then what if we actually "did that during worship?" We worshiped as dozens of people are being baptized. And we put them being baptized up on the screen and we made it a big celebration. Well, this was a problem that someone saw. They brought a solution. It was a pretty good idea. Someone else added to it. And suddenly, what was a problem is now a great opportunity and we had a breakthrough idea and can baptize thousands of people and have an amazing experience. Why? Because someone saw a problem and brought a solution. What did they do? They led up and made the organization better. Remember, just because you have an idea, you don't want to come across with a critical heart. There's a massive difference between thinking critically and being critical. It doesn't mean you don't think critically. But you cannot have a critical attitude. Motive matters, motive matters, motive matters. What else matters? Number Four: Initiative matters. Okay? Initiative matters. If you want to gain trust and influence, what can you do? Lighten your leader's load. Lighten your leader's load. If you see something that needs to be done, ask your supervisor. "Hey, can I take that from you? "Can I help you with that? "Would you mind if I did something to help make "your world a little bit easier?" Now, here's what you don't want to do. Don't go up to your boss and say, "Boss, I don't have enough to do. "Can you think of something I can do to help you?" Okay? At that point right now, your boss is looking at you going, "You know what? "You have no idea? "You just gave me something else to do "by thinking of something for you to do "to help me." You may jot this down. The best team members don't need to be told what to do because they intuitively find important things to do. This is so big. The best team members don't need to be told what to do. They intuitively find important things to do. If you're always finding a way to lighten your leader's load, your leader is

going to be very grateful. You're going to have tremendous influence. You may jot this down. If you're willing to do what others won't do, you will earn influence others don't have. Let me say it again: If you're willing to do what others won't do, you will earn influence other don't have. I'll give an example: In our organization, there's a team member, her name is Kendra, and she's distant from me in the organization. I wouldn't normally interact with her a lot. And, a while back, she emailed my assistant and said, "Hey, I see that Craig's teaching on such and such." "If I put some ideas on paper just maybe to help out, "would that be okay?" And I said, you know, absolutely. So, she sent an email with ideas on the subject which I was teaching on and her thoughts were truly brilliant. Brilliant! I used a couple of them in the weekend message. And so, the next week, she said, "It was amazing he used them. "Do you mind if I do that again?" I'm like, "Do I mind? "Would you do that every single week?" Well, here's what happened. Now, whenever I get in a tough spot, I'll just email Kendra and say, "Hey, can you give me your thoughts on this?" I call it the Brain Dump. Her brain is so smart. "Would you just write the first things that come "to your mind on this subject, this idea, this scripture, "and then just send it to me." And by 8 AM the next day, she'll do that, and she's done it again and again. What happened? She saw something that she could do to lighten my load, to add value to the organization. She offered it. And now, we have a very close relationship. She has tremendous influence, not only in my life, but in our whole church. Why? Because she intuitively found something important to do and now it really makes a big, big difference in the organization. What does she have in my life as a leader? She has access. Access equals influence. Access equals influence. If you serve your leader, you'll have more access. If you have more access, you'll have more influence. What matters? Well, Number Three: Motives matter. Number Four: Initiative matters. Number Five: Truth matters. Truth matters. If you're always a yes-person, I promise you, you will lose credibility. Why? Because truth always trumps flattery. Truth always trumps flattery. As a leader, you need to understand that the more successful you become, the more difficult it will be to find people to tell you the truth. It sounds crazy but this is very, very true. Take it to the bank. The more successful you become, the bigger your organization gets, the more influence you have, the more difficult it will be to find people to tell you the truth. Why? Everyone starts to tell you what they think that you want to hear. The higher you rise, the more people are going to tell you exactly what you want to hear. That's why those who care enough to tell the truth are incredibly valuable. What happens when someone tells you the truth? Don't ever penalize them. Don't ever write them off. Don't say, "That was stupid." Don't distance yourself from them. If they tell you a hard truth about yourself to make you better and you're the point leader, say thank you. As difficult as it may be to hear the truth sometimes, it's the truth that changes us. It's the truth that sets us free. Then, give them public credit. Say, "Hey, so and so on the team told me this "about my leadership and it was hard to hear. "But, man, did it make a big difference." And what you're doing there is you're giving others permission to know it's actually safe to approach the leader and to tell them the truth. Give them public credit for what they've done. Now, someone asked me one time what was one of the most important moments in the history of my organization? I lead a church now in 25 locations, a lot of people and such. And we've been blessed to do some kind of creative things. What was the most important moment in your church? A lot of people would think whenever we gave away free resources. That was actually a big, big deal. Some would think it was when we went to video teaching. That was actually, it kind of helped be a groundbreaking season for churches around the world. Some people would say when you did multi-site. That was another groundbreaking time. Some might assume I'd say when we were able to create the YouVersion Bible App which has impacted hundreds of millions of people now. One of the most important moments in the church was years ago when a staff member named Jerry Hurley, back when we had probably five staff members or so, led up. One of the most important moments in the history of the church was when Jerry Hurley, who's still with me to this day, years and years and years ago, led up. Our church was probably two years old. We had probably five staff members

at the time. And what did Jerry do? He was five years older than me. He had been a district manager for Target stores. He had a lot more experience than I did. I was a little bit nervous and intimidated by him because he was such a great leader. It was amazing we had him on our team. He joined our team. On the very first day, I was doing a funeral, and he said, "Hey, can I carry your Bible "and can I carry your stand for you?" I was like, "Oh my gosh. "This guy I respect is serving me." What did he do? He always loved me. He always honored me. He always had my back. He had access. He had trust. And because of that, he had influence. One day, Jerry looked at me and he said... He built me up. He said, "Craig, you're a great leader. "You cast vision. "You inspire people." He said, "But you're so hands-on. "You're actually controlling so much "that we can't get anything done." And he was loving, but he told me a very harsh critique of my leadership. And he said something along the lines of, "You will become the ceiling of this organization. "But, if you'll trust me and trust others "to do what we can do, "I promise you, if you'll let go, "we can build an organization that can impact "tens of thousands of lives." Well, I heard it. I heard it. I was a control freak and I was not empowering the people around me. One of the most powerful moments in the history of the church was when someone who was under my leadership served me with integrity and told me the truth. My controlling nature was getting in the way of the growth. And if I would just let go and trust and empower some people around me, we could have an organization that would make a massive difference. To this day, I give Jerry honor for leading up. Because we would never be doing what we're doing today had someone not led up, okay? Wherever you are in your organization, you can make a difference. You don't need a title to make a difference. All you need is the right heart, the right insight, and you can make a difference. Let's review and then look at some application questions. Motives matter. Approach with an attitude to serve. Your only motivation is to lead up. Don't just point out problems. Bring solutions. Okay? Initiative matters. You want to gain influence, lighten your leader's load. The best team members don't need to be told what to do because they intuitively find important things to do. If you're willing to do what others won't do, you'll earn influence that others don't have. Access equals influence. What else matters? Truth matters. If you're a yes-person, you will never have influence. Truth always trumps flattery. Now, again, if you're the point leader, you need to do everything you can to give people in your organization the opportunity to lead up. And here's just, as I was processing this, think about this. I've been honored to teach leadership for a long time now. The number one most commonly asked question that I get everywhere above any other question is this: How do I lead up. I've got great ideas. So, what does that tell me as a point leader? What it tells me is I need to work exceptionally hard to give my team members access to set their ideas free. If you are the leader of any type of organization, you need to do everything you can to give the people around you the ability to lead up. If you think, "Well, I really don't care.", again, think about it. Either you have the wrong people or you're the wrong leader. What do you do? Either change your people or change your attitude. Why? Because no organization will ever be what it could be without honest upward communication. Three questions to reflect upon. Number One: What is the best idea you have for your organization to make it better? What is the best idea you have to make your organization better? What I'm going to encourage you to do is put it on paper. And then, I'm going to encourage you to work on focusing your idea into one sentence. Why? Because you may have a one-sentence moment where you can say, "Here's what I was thinking.", and that may open up the door to share your idea. What's the best idea you have for your organization to make it better. Put it down on paper. Number Two: How can you lighten your leader's load? Think about it. What is something you can do to take something off of your leader's load? Number Three: If you're the point leader, what can you do to give others significant and consistent opportunities to influence you? If you're the point leader, what can you do to give others significant and consistent opportunities to influence you? Just before doing this, I talked to my assistant. Said, "We need to do more meetings. "We need to bring staff members in that I don't even know "and hear from them." That's something specific I can

do. Every point leader needs to take this question to heart. Because you have amazing people around you. You do not know it all. The more you try to control, the smaller your organization will be. You can have growth or you can have control but you cannot have both. I look forward to seeing you guys again next month. Thank you, thank you, thank you for sharing on social media. Thank you for rating or reviewing this. Again, leaders, be yourself. God made you the way you're supposed to be. Be yourself. Why? Because people would rather follow a leader who's always real than one who's always right.

- Thanks for joining us here on the Craig Groeschel Leadership Podcast. I know many of you may be tuning in on YouTube or your favorite podcast app and you may want to access a past episode. Well, you can find all the episodes as well as show notes and additional resources simply by going to WWW.LIFE.CHURCH/LEADERSHIPPODCAST. As Craig mentioned earlier in this episode, there's a Catalyst One Day conference taking place in Central Pennsylvania on November 9th and 10th. Craig will be alongside his good friend, fellow pastor and leadership extraordinaire, Andy Stanley. To find out more or to register for the event, all you have to do is go to WWW.CATALYSTCONFERENCE.COM. And, as always, we would love it if you'd rate and review this podcast on iTunes. It's a great way for you to help us spread the word and help more people grow in their leadership. Again, thanks for joining us here on the Craig Groeschel Leadership Podcast. We'll see you next time.