



EP268 _Julie Spencer Washington

[00:00:00] **Lisa Nichols:** Chromosomes. Little strands of nucleic acids and proteins are the fundamental genetic instructions that tell us who we are at birth. Most people are born with 46 chromosomes, but each year in the United States about 6,000 people are born with an extra chromosome, making them a person with Down syndrome.

If you've ever encountered someone with Down syndrome, you know that they are some of the kindest, most joyful people you will ever meet. They truly have something extra. My name is Lisa Nichols, and I have spent the last 24 years as both the CEO of Technology Partners and as the mother to Ally. Ally has something extra in every sense of the word.

I have been blessed to be by her side as she impacts everyone she meets. Through these two important roles as CEO and mother to Ally, I have witnessed countless life lessons that have fundamentally changed the way I look at the world. While you may not have an extra chromosome, every leader has something extra that defines who you are.

Join me as I explore the something extra in leaders from all walks of life and discover how that difference in each of them has made a difference in their companies, their families, their communities, and in themselves.

If you'd like this episode today, please go to Apple Podcasts or wherever you listen and leave us a five star rating. I'm delighted to have Julie Spencer Washington on the show today. Julie is the Chief Marketing and Communication Officer and Chief Customer Experience Officer at Trinity Health.

Well, Julie Spencer Washington, I am so delighted that you have made the time to join me on the Something Extra podcast today.

[00:01:56] **Julie Washington:** Thank you for the invitation. It's good to be with you.

[00:01:59] **Lisa Nichols:** It's good to be with you too. I always love to go back and tell our listeners how these connections happen, right? So you and I met

through CEO forum and we really got to spend a lot of time together at this last annual forum at the Broadmoor and you and I were talking and I, I think the thing that I walked away with from you, Julie is just the incredible love and the support that your family gives one another. I was just so blown away by this. And I think I'd even read this and I could be wrong, but I think you had a niece that graduated from law school and I don't know, about a hundred of you showed up for her graduation and I don't know if the hotel was, you know, able to, accommodate you guys or not. But I just think that's so incredible how your family shows up for one another.

[00:02:53] **Julie Washington:** Yeah, we're big on celebrating and doing life together. And so what makes the numbers so large is my mom's from a family of 15. So that means you have a lot of cousins. And so first, second, third, whatever number it is, there's a lot of kids and other playmates. And so, yes, it was actually my cousin. She was our first law school graduate. And so we couldn't miss that opportunity to celebrate. And yes, it was about a hundred of us trying to take a picture on a hill.

You know, there weren't enough tickets for graduation. So no, everybody didn't go in, but we did end up going into a restaurant. That was 1 of those cafeteria style. We can just go to an open table because you couldn't reserve a room 400 people. So we just grab this big area with tables to just salute her and celebrate her accomplishments. And so, no one should do life without a village. And so we're many villages to our own family members. And so I'm blessed to call each of them family.

[00:03:50] **Lisa Nichols:** It is a blessing because that does not happen all the time, right? So I just, I love it, but you have four children of your own, I know Julie, and you're a woman of deep faith and you and I obviously connect on that point and just passion and a lot, a lot of accomplishment in your life and I want to talk about that. There's a lot I want to talk about, but I know, let's talk about growing up and I know your mom and we'll get to her. Julie is Julie's mom and she is an incredible woman. I know that she was a great inspiration for you, Julie. And I want to talk a lot about her in, in just a little bit, but I know you have the older sister, Jennifer, and I know you lost your precious dad in 2015. I lost my dad last year and there's not a day that goes by that I don't think about him and miss him. And he was incredible. But where did you grow up? I'm not sure. I know.

[00:04:47] **Julie Washington:** Sure. I was born in Hollywood, Florida, but our home was in Dania, Florida. Actually, my mom is still there. And so it's right outside of Fort Lauderdale. And so South Florida is the, sort of the residence,

but my mom's from Mississippi and my dad's from Georgia. So we spent many of our summers in either of those two places or in New Orleans with my grandmother. So I'm a Southerner, with all kinds of pieces and parts added in that makes me who I am. So family and the extended family is actually a part of who I am and what shapes how I think about community and how I think about the diversity of our responsibility, just as people, as humans.

[00:05:36] **Lisa Nichols:** Yeah, I love that. The South is very family oriented and it usually always, many times revolves around food and we'll talk about that. Lots of family dinners and I love that. My, my mom and dad both came from fairly large families as well. So I had so many aunts and uncles and cousins and, you know, but everybody's kind of moved, you know, different places now, but it's always wonderful when you can get together with them.

But in your career, I mean, you, you're a very accomplished marketing executive. You are now the chief customer experience officer for an organization. We'll talk about that, but what did you love to do as a child? Did you ever think that you would be doing what you're doing today, Julie? What, what was the precipice for, for all of that?

[00:06:24] **Julie Washington:** Yeah. So I don't even think I knew what marketing was, so I'd be, totally denying the truth of my story, but it's not a straight line. So, my sister actually integrated our elementary school and it was across the street from where my mom worked, right? And so we had the opportunity to see things that maybe in our predominantly black neighborhood, you wouldn't see there was a young lady at the talent show in second grade. She did ballet as her talent. And I didn't know exactly what it was, but it was something I thought I would love to do.

So much of my younger years was around the stage. So I've danced with the ballet company until I was in high school. So I loved singing. So I've sang in I don't know how many different choirs. So I love performing and sharing different gifts and talents in a way that hopefully tells stories and allow you just that moment to forget your, your reality, but get captivated into the story of The Nutcracker, captivated into the song of hope. And so that's sort of the younger side of who I've always been. But coupled with that, I also loved Math and Science.

So I thought I'd be a pediatrician because that was the one doctor I knew. And so I worked for my, my pediatrician and back in the day, I'll date myself, I was a candy striper. So I worked at the hospital and you volunteered. And so I spend a lot of time in healthcare from that standpoint. So I just thought I'd be a

pediatrician. So Alvin Ailey wasn't going to pick me for the, for his company and we weren't moving to New York, then I guess I'll hang up my tutu and become a doctor.

And so that was, that was the original plan, but who knew that life would have me go full circle and not exactly knowing how medicine would show back up. But now that I'm serving in healthcare, but I'm doing it with marketing as a core and customer experience as the flanker, and I'll close with the thought of I used to do a lot of oratorical contest.

So speaking was my way to get scholarship money to go to college and so now telling stories, ties into health care and serving others toward a whole and healthy life. So it all doesn't fit neatly, but it's all around similar pieces and I do like being on the stage, whatever stage that is to tell the story of Trinity or tell the story of each of these patients that we have the privilege of serving in care.

[00:08:57] **Lisa Nichols:** That is always so incredible to me, Julie. How many times talking about what someone did as a child, and it may not look, it doesn't look exactly like you said, you didn't go on to be a prima ballerina, but, it's, it's that creativity, that, ability to tell the story through dance or through song. Now you're telling the story through words and marketing video and things like that. So I just, I absolutely love that. Well, you did go on to get a B. A. in both Chemistry and Psychology so here's where your science comes in from Emory. And I think Emory, if I'm not mistaken, I think Emory has been somewhat part of your family's legacy, too. I think there's been other family members to go to Emory. Isn't that correct?

[00:09:49] **Julie Washington:** It is. So back to the extended family. So my mom, it'll be almost 60 years that she's been working for the same Jewish family. So the story starts with the original employer. So call it the grandparents. The Beagleson's grandson, who my mom now works for, he was the first person to go to Emory.

So when I was looking at colleges, Ms. Beagleson said, I think she should look outside of Florida because I was only looking at state schools because that's the only thing that we could probably afford, right? So, but that was the only non Florida school that I applied to. And so when I got in, I was in the 2nd in the Beagleson-Spencer family to go to Emory.

And then 2 of the grandson's 3 daughters, they are graduates of Emory. And now my youngest son, he actually is a freshman at Emory. So that now makes five of this expanded, blended family that we love that are all Emory Eagles. So

great institution and truly change the trajectory of how I show up as Julie, but shaped who I am and how I lead each and every day. So I'm forever indebted to Emory for not just my experience, but now for my son's experience.

[00:11:08] **Lisa Nichols:** That is so neat. And I know that education for your mom, and we'll talk about some of the things that are important to your mom, like education and food and cooking and that sort of thing. But I know that was really important to her that you have a good education. Now, here's the thing that I found really interesting, Julie, you got your MBA from Wash U, in St. Louis.

[00:11:30] **Julie Washington:** I did. That's exactly right. So, all roads lead back to St. Louis one way or another. So, after I graduated from Emory, I worked for a company in Cincinnati in insurance, and I realized that Chemistry and Psychology would not teach me how to be well in business. So I applied and I was able to, get into Wash U and I spent my 2 years there and I end up staying in St. Louis a little longer. I met my husband there, and he's from St. Louis, so that kept me even longer than my original plan, because I worked for the, for, Ralston Perina, which is now Nestle Perina Pet Care, but I worked for them for 12 years. And so that kept me in St. Louis 14 years. That was much longer than a quote unquote, the Julie plan had me in St. Louis, but a beautiful city, beautiful people, and definitely a part of our family circle because all of my in laws are still in St. Louis, so..

[00:12:28] **Lisa Nichols:** I, I love that. I'm just so sad. I didn't know you when you were here, right? There's two and a half million people in the greater St. Louis area, I just wish that you and I had ran into one another, then, but I do, I do love that, that you've got St. Louis in your background. And it is a great city. Greg and I moved here, Julie, I don't know if I told you this, but we moved here almost 40 years ago and right out of college, we got recruited by McDonnell Douglas to work here in St. Louis, what moved us here. And when we got here, we said, Oh, we'll probably be here for two years, two or three years, maybe, and then move somewhere else. And that was 40 years ago. Cause it is a great place to, to raise a family. And there's just so much art and culture and sports teams and it's a great city. It really is.

So, but you did, you did go to Nestle and you worked in marketing, I believe at Nestle, and then you also were VP of marketing at P&G. Julie, I know so many amazing people, and I know you do too, obviously we're working there that came out of P&G. What an amazing company in Cincinnati, so many awesome people come out of P&G.

[00:13:42] **Julie Washington:** I, I think it's a great entry point for any discipline, it's not just for marketing, I think many times P&G, we talk about it from a branding standpoint, but if you want a supply chain side, the operation side, it's a great process and a great principled organization. And so when you can learn how business is done, how you make money, how do you partner, how do you deliver great products to the people you seek to serve. That's invaluable because you can take that anywhere.

And so I'm very grateful that, the stars aligned through acquisitions that although I was with the Gillette company in Boston, that the small company in Cincinnati bought them and moved me to Cincinnati and had the opportunity to get to meet many people that I'm privileged to still call friends now. But the learning continues because they have become consultants. Some of them have worked with me since Procter and Gamble. And so the learning and partnering journey continues. Just a marvelous organization that I am truly glad to say that it was a part of my story.

[00:14:52] **Lisa Nichols:** Absolutely. Absolutely. And I can't remember, I'm not going to remember the statistic now, but I know at one point I did a little study on Procter and Gamble and it was, incredible how many leaders they've grown, how many leaders they've grown.

[00:15:08] **Julie Washington:** And Lisa, that's intentional, right? Because when you have people to think a certain way, you become that which you already outline and can envision. A friend of mine says that you need to see it before you see it. So if I tell you this is the outline of leadership, you at least can recognize it. You know how to grow into it. My Children, we do vision boards. Right? It's not so much that they need to have a purpose statement, but you need to dream big dreams because I think we lose that as soon as we get to kindergarten somewhere. We forget to just be free and to allow oxygen in our lungs. Right? And so vision board, how do you dream those things and Procter was very intentional about saying each of us have leadership ability. I will show you and help you craft what that looks like for you and then allow you to ultimately just go do what you're gifted at. And so I'm grateful for that impartation, but then I can actually pay it forward in those that I have the chance to lead, but also to mentor and then those that I call my children, that I'm able to impart to them.

[00:16:18] **Lisa Nichols:** Yes. Well, I love that you do the vision boarding because I, I so agree with you. I do think Julie, there comes a point where people stop to stop dreaming. And you and I are both faith filled women and so I'm just going to quote a scripture from the Bible that says "Where there is a

lack of vision, the people will perish”. So we cannot ever stop that dreaming. And how do you know what you're aiming for if you don't dream those dreams? How do you even continue to go and to grow and to go forward if you don't have those goals in mind?

So I love that you do that with your kids, but you went on to be the CMO I think for Jamba Juice and now and we're going to talk about this you're the chief marketing communications and the chief customer experience officer big job at Trinity Health, tell us a little bit about Trinity Health and I know a little bit about it but you can tell it better than I do.

[00:17:16] **Julie Washington:** Yeah, so Trinity Health is a 21 billion health system, which means we have hospitals, we have urgent cares, we have medical groups, as well as we do the continuing care, which would be around hospice, nursing, homes, senior living communities. So think of it as truly end to end healthcare for those in our communities that we serve. And so we're in 27 states, and we have about 120,000 colleagues, what we call colleagues and employee. And so our colleagues are all front facing with the desire to serve in partnership with you in the mission of how does and would Jesus serve you.

And so, we are a Catholic based system, which means we have open hearts and open hands, and everyone here is not Catholic, but we have a receptivity to take you as you are to know that you need to be loved on and cared for. And so we try to do that for every, individual that comes in as a colleague of mine, but also as a patient or a resident in our facilities.

[00:18:29] **Lisa Nichols:** Yeah, much like our Mercy Healthcare System, right, Julie, in St. Louis, the same thing, it's there to serve and to love people and a higher purpose.

[00:18:39] **Julie Washington:** That's exactly right. So we should do it differently than just transactionally. So we try to be in relationship with you to lean into those social determinants of health that are impacting why your health is the way it is, right? So it's not just solving for what the problem is, but understanding all of the contextual things that might be impacting you. And then, of course, standing up and giving voice to the things that maybe some of our constituents in our communities cannot speak for. How do we ensure that we're doing our part and holding ourselves accountable on health equity?

And so everybody does not get the same care. And how do we ensure that in our places of care that we Trinity Health are caring for each soul with the same level of compassion and dignity and respect as any other. And so we all have

homework to do, so we don't have it perfect, but we are striving toward the thing that we believe is the ultimate goal and that we were called as a Catholic system to deliver.

[00:19:40] **Lisa Nichols:** Mm hmm. Well, tell me this. I mean, you're the, the chief marketing officer. How would you describe the role of marketing in healthcare? And there's various stakeholders obviously in the healthcare system, you have your patients and then you have your healthcare providers, but how does marketing play a role there, Julie?

[00:19:59] **Julie Washington:** Yeah, so the easiest way is to combine marketing and communications. And I say that because the core in health care probably started with communications and not with branding, right? So communications, think of it during COVID. Internally, everyone needed to know almost by the hour what was going on and what is this thing called COVID? What do I need? How do I protect myself? What do we need to say or do? And in a system this large, we need to do it consistently, right? So that's one part of communication. Externally, as stakeholders of meeting the people we serve, you too wanted to know what is this thing called COVID and what should I be doing at home? Or when can I come in? Or how do we care for you when you can't come into the building, right?

And so each of those were core parts of what we would say would be marketing and communication. But I'd say comms is sort of foundational, whether it's a crisis, if something's happened, there was a shooting, who's being triaged, all of that is communication. Full stop, new thought, in marketing, you start thinking about who is this brand? How is it different? And why would I want to come to Trinity Health? And so that's where marketing now says, how do I have educational classes for you? Inviting you to our house and maybe work on preventable components of it.

How does marketing intercept you online digitally to make sure you're aware of the screenings, whether it's mammogram or your colonoscopy that you need to have? But we need to show up in ways that allow you to be educated as well as to ensure that we remind you of the things that you need to do, because you are the true primary person responsible for your health, but we're here to partner with you in it and then marketing, of course, with the doctors, we want to ensure that, you know, that the best care is in the house of Trinity. So, whether that's the star ratings, how do we ensure that our providers are being seen and that, you know you would be in good hands if you come to Dr Washington's medical practice.

And so that's the core of marketing. But think of it from COVID, how do I amplify the message? But it's much different than I'll say my P&G days of how do I get you to buy Tide or wanting you to buy Gain. That kind of demand creation. We have demand, I just need you to be educated and informed and feel assured that when you're at your most vulnerable, this brand called Trinity would care for you in such a loving and compassionate way.

[00:22:29] **Lisa Nichols:** Yes, I love that. Well, you have something that you say, about the voice of Amelia, tell me that and saying that we need to bring the voice of Amelia into every meeting. Can you expound on that, Julie?

[00:22:44] **Julie Washington:** Yeah. So in, think of it in old marcom segmentation used to have six segments and usually you had a different persona for each one and we're too big of a system and I didn't want people to get lost in the jargon. So our member, and that's what we call them, is one name, and her name is Amelia. And the point is that in every conversation, Amelia should be included. And how do we make sure that what we thought was a good meeting, really was a good meeting, and the only way we would know is if we keep Amelia at the center of the conversation.

So we really are very patient or member centric around, are the things we're doing benefiting Amelia? In addition to what we believe will benefit the ministry. And so that changes when Amelia's at the table, you might ask different questions or she might say some things and my job in the customer experience standpoint is to say, things aren't as nice as you think they are.

What is it that you need to do more of, or invest in Trinity if you really want to meet my needs? You're not moving as fast as I need you to do. You're not being as responsive as I need you to be. Amelia is trying to tell us what she wants, the way she wants it. And the key point is, are we listening? And so we try to ensure that Amelia is in the conversation and that we have an open ear to hear what she has to say.

And that's on every colleague, 120,000, every huddle meeting, every anything. An EBS worker comes to clean your room, are you listening to the actual Amelia that's in room 502? He's trying to tell you something about the clean room, right? And so that's, that's Amelia and we try to ensure that she figuratively is in the meeting because she should be at the center of all of our decisions.

[00:24:39] **Lisa Nichols:** Yeah, it's just a great way to think about it. It's a great way to remember that. And, you know, bringing that, like you said, into every

meeting, into the cleaning of the room, whatever the case may be. I just, I love how you, how you've, incorporated that through the 120,000 colleagues that you have there at Trinity. But I've got to ask you this. So how, you know, can you tell me about data and technology and how you have used the data and technology to tailor your marketing efforts? Can you expand on that a little bit? Cause obviously Technology Partners, we're a technology company, Julie. So I have to ask you that question. How's technology and data impacted how you go about doing the marketing and delivering the right customer experience?

[00:25:29] **Julie Washington:** Yeah. If anything, think of the power of the technology is the power of the digital arena. So much is online. In many patients worlds you have the power to know what's happening even before the doctor receives the report. What I mean by that is we partner at Trinity with Epic and they are the portal and software that allows you to get your MyChart. So if you have blood work, you will be able to see the results of your blood work in addition to your physician.

Because after all, you are the keeper of your care as much as I'm partnering with you as the physician and so technology allows you to see things. It allows the doctor and the clinicians in total to actually use data to see if there's some trends. Are there certain hot spots? Are there things that are there that we need to understand, unpack and then address and technology from that part of data, allows me to group people, group regions, group service lines, group situations differently than just taking you one by one.

In a customized way, data allows me to, let's just use marketing, emailing. I need to just email you the mammogram email. Everybody doesn't need a mammogram. So how do I make sure I'm talking to you about the things that are most important to you at this stage in your life, or because I know you haven't had a mammogram in a couple of years. How do I now know you need to be reminded to put this back on your to do list. So we use data to help inform our actions, reminders for our patient. But then you use data at large. We know the type of patients that are in our system, meaning some people really look to their physician when the physician says it, they'll go do it.

So guess what? The marketing there, you're going to always see a physician in the picture. Because you need to know that assurance of the doctor isn't directly telling you to do it. Whereas someone else says, you know, I'm good. I know how to do things on my own. Well, they don't need a picture that shows the physician. They need the empowerment of information. So I now need to show you different images. And so we customize the messages based upon the segment we think you fall within based on attitudes and behavior.

So three different ways to think about data that gets to a personalization of what I say to you, personalization of how we can prevent or partner in your care. And then data around what do we address as a system? Those ills and issues that the community might want us to address as a health care system.

[00:28:16] **Lisa Nichols:** Very good. Very important. Well, Julie, I got a couple more questions I want to ask you and then we do need to take a quick break. But I love the first line of your LinkedIn profile. Here's what you said. You say a marketing and business executive who builds businesses, brands and people. So culture is so important. Fostering a positive culture is so important. I would love for you to tell me about the building people piece.

[00:28:45] **Julie Washington:** You know, I am blessed that so many people have poured into me, but back to the beginning, when we were talking about community, the whole essence of building people, is helping them see the gifts and the greatness that they have. And so Marianne Williamson has a quote that says “our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate, our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure”. And so I'm trying to unlock, all of those great things that are inside each of us that someone didn't take the time to tell you, to show you or remind you of.

And so I spend a lot of time mentoring and I am an executive coach. So I spent time, took me seven years, but I am a certified coach. Because I think it's important to know how to listen to what people are saying and not saying, and then to know how to show up in their lives. And so I do a lot in pouring into people based upon what they're saying, what they're showing and I believe also in the potential because I have one amazing mentor in particular, his name is James White. And I've worked for James, three different companies. And the point is, I believe he saw in me that which I didn't even know I had. And so how do I do the same and pay it forward such that there are others that just need the opportunity? Sometimes they just need the encouragement to say you can do it or give them the opportunity to show that they will do it. And that's what I try to do every day.

Of course, you can't get to every person one by one. But I believe just like in anything else, it can impart from the stage some positive ideas, some information, people can latch onto that. And then for those that you get to do one to one life giving conversations, I think that makes the difference. And so I'm blessed to have not just mentors, not just coaches, but I have sponsors and people who show up in my life to help me be better today than I was on yesterday and I just try to pay that forward with those that I have the pleasure of coming in contact with each day.

[00:30:52] **Lisa Nichols:** That is so awesome, Julie. Well, and I'm thinking as you're talking, it's kind of like training the trainer too, in that when you mentor those people, the hope, right, is that they're going to turn around. There is a multiplicity factor there because they're going to turn around and hopefully do the same thing for people behind them. And so I just think it's. It's just such a beautiful thing. And we could probably do a whole podcast just on this to tell you the truth because I'm very passionate about that as well.

One more question for you and then we're gonna take a quick break. I read an interview that you did and you said, somebody asked you what your superpower was. What did you say? Do you remember?

[00:31:33] **Julie Washington:** I have several different superpowers. So, so which, which audience was I talking to?

[00:31:40] **Lisa Nichols:** This was determination. You said that is one of your superpowers is determination. So what I would love for you to do, do you have any anecdotes, any stories where determination, on your part has been the thing that really got you through?

[00:31:59] **Julie Washington:** Yeah. So determined to determination probably looks a lot like perseverance, not giving up when you want to give up. Right. And so, so I'm very planful and when I say that, I mean, I really write it down and so I was young and so I didn't know that you probably shouldn't say this out loud to anyone other than your mom or dad, but I wrote down when I expected to get my promotion, at Ralston Perina and according to all the statistics and everything I read, it shouldn't take me more than three years, right? So tell me what I need to do. And so I told him on June 3rd, 1994, I'm expecting to get promoted.

Let's just say that did not happen, right? So, I did not get promoted on said date. So, there's that. So, how do you keep going when the plan falls apart? Cause it was a good plan. I had done all the things they said I needed to do. And I just assumed that the promotion had to be within reach and that did not happen. But with that said, you have to have a larger and, and broader view of what is it that I still haven't done. What else has changed and always being aware of what's around me. So I was heads down, focused, and if anything, I was checking boxes.

So that would be the insight of determination is sometimes you have to lift your head up, take a look to your left and right to make sure things haven't shifted on you to understand why you still should keep going. But in all things, you have

to know what your North Star is. So I still was going to get promoted. The North Star didn't change. What I had to do was adjust how I saw it and who I was working with to understand the promotion wasn't just about my ability, but it was about my connectivity to others. And I missed that part of the equation.

I just made an assumption that it's there. And so you have to be your best cheerleader. So when you don't win the game that you thought you should win at the time you thought you should win, it doesn't mean that you won't win, right? So that would be the first one. The second one that I give is being willing to not let titles get in the way of progress.

What I mean by that is, I was a vice president at Gillette, to move to Procter Gamble meant I would take a title that was called director. That might look bad for some people, and I decided that going to Procter as a director was more for me than trying to go to someone else's organization as a vice president. And then when I left Procter, I became a vice president at Luxottica Retail, but I went to Luxottica for less money than I was making at Procter and Gamble.

So talk about determination when things don't look like they're adding up the way they're supposed to, but yet you keep going. And that's been the story is you can't give up when you know what your purpose is and you actually know that people are depending on you to deliver your gifts in the way that only you can deliver it. So whether I made less money, whether I was called something else, I had to be willing to be open to those changes that might have implied something, or I could have allowed it to sort of weigh on me. But I was like, okay, I'm not what I'm called. I am who I am. And so that was probably the aspect of determination is not losing sight. Of my goal, even though there were some things that weren't going according to plan.

[00:35:29] **Lisa Nichols:** Sure, that is such great advice, Julie. Such great advice. I've got another friend, Bev Kaye, that says the only way up is not always up, you know, it could be lateral. Don't get hung up on the salary adjustment. Don't get hung up on the title. Look at the job for what it is. The other thing that really made me think about this, Kathy Mazzarella is a good friend and Kathy is a fortune 500 CEO of Graybar. And there's what, 50 of them now, I think. And she's, she's one of them, but I will never forget her talking about one time that she was up for a promotion and she thought she was getting this, this job.

Someone else in the organization got that position and she said at first, you know, it really angered her and you know, but she talked to her dad and her dad said, you be gracious and you be gracious, even when things don't go your way,

Julie. Do you know when that rolled around again for the CEO role, they remembered that in her and came back to her and now she is the CEO.

But just because it does not go your way, just make sure that you're gracious in that process. And you know, she said her dad said, you call, you call that person, you congratulate them and take the high road. And so that's, that just reminded me of that. Well, we've got some other things to talk about cause I've got to, we've got to talk about Sulie. We've got to talk about the book you've written, but we do need to take a quick break and we'll be right back with Julie Spencer Washington on this Something Extra Podcast.

[00:37:14] **AD:** In business, the tendency is to seek out partners who are bigger, faster, stronger. When it comes to IT, you should be looking for smarter, faster, better. That's just what you'll find with the talented technologists at Technology Partners. Our experts develop custom solutions to tackle your most complex challenges. All to simplify your processes in the smartest, fastest way. Most efficient way possible. The time to be swift and nimble starts now go to technologypartners.net/solutions and see what's possible.

[00:37:44] **Lisa Nichols:** Welcome back everyone to something extra podcast. Now, Julie, I want to move into something. I'm very excited to talk about, and that is your sweet mama, Sulie. And you already, you already talked a little bit about your mom. She was, I think number 11 of 15 kids grew up in Mississippi. Incredible. Here's so many amazing things about your mama though. She is a four time cancer survivor. I listened to a podcast that you did for Susan G Komen. I think it's the highest listened podcast in the history, I believe, of Susan G Komen. But you were 10 when she first got cancer. And I know she was only 38 at the time that she, she got cancer, but she's been through four, yeah she was very young. So in a, I knew we don't have a lot of time, but I want you to at least say, what did, what'd your mom learn? Through that process, what did you learn? And then I've got some other things to talk to you about.

[00:38:52] **Julie Washington:** Yeah. So in all four cancers, the importance was early detection. So that's been her main message to all of the family members, and to anyone that she has the opportunity to share with is the need for you to take action. If you feel something, it's almost, if you see something, say something. If you feel something. because at the end of the day, that was what was the difference maker. And she had great physicians. So you do need a great healthcare team. Two of the four cancers were found in surgeries for something else.

And so when a physician knows something isn't right and takes action and not just, you know, doing the thing that they went in there to do, those were the two that were discovered through surgery, whereas the two breast cancers were found, through her own self exams. So that's the, I'll call it the, the main message that we'd have from a healthcare standpoint, for anyone, not just women.

But each of us must be proactive and always astute and not walk in that fear of, Oh my gosh, I don't know what this is. Well, it's good to go ask someone who can help you identify what it is and come up with, at least a medical plan around how to address it.

[00:40:11] **Lisa Nichols:** Mm hmm. Now, great advice that early detection, getting a great doctor, knowing your family history. You talk a lot about that too, Julie, know your family history and, and be aware of those things that you need to watch out for because there are some things maybe that you can do differently, right? But the podcast host, when I listened to this, I love this. The podcast host said, how do you keep joy in your life, Sulie? And I love your mom's response. And I was a little bit surprised, but first of all, what was her first thing that she said?

[00:40:45] **Julie Washington:** She might've said sports. I mean, she loves the Lord as much, right? So, so God was, has always been centered. That's where her faith, when you can't see your way to something, she was anchored in knowing someone bigger than her had her in his hand, right? And so, knowing this is not a solo fight, was an important piece. And so you can have joy when you know that the outcome is in a victorious warriors kind of hand, right? So that was one piece.

But the second thing that brings her joy is that she just loves sports. I mean, my mom watches ESPN one ESPN two, the tennis channel. If there's a sports channel, she's usually up watching it, because she really does enjoy sports. And you should know before you go over who she's rooting for so that you're not rooting for the other team. Cause that usually doesn't go so well in the house. So, but those are her two passions.

[00:41:43] **Lisa Nichols:** She's so cute. Yeah. And cooking. She loves cooking. But I was just tickled because she's like, I even watch hockey. I watched tennis. It doesn't really matter what it is. She watches it. Right. And then I just got so tickled because she's like, I've coached more teams from my chair. She coaches, she champions. She's a cheerleader. Oh, she even got into NASCAR, Julie.

[00:42:07] **Julie Washington:** That's exactly right. So at the Gillette company, I had the opportunity of doing sports marketing. And one of the things that we introduced were The Gillette Young Guns. So there were six drivers. I had never watched NASCAR. I'm like, Oh my gosh, now I'm over something I know nothing about.

So I needed everyone in the family to pick a driver because you know, they're just making left hand turns and they're like 43 of them driving. So I'm like, okay, everybody pick a car and determine if your guy is driving and will he win. And that will know where my six guys were so needless to say, that's how my mom started in NASCAR, but I took her to a race.

And then I think until you've been, on the track and you see the giftedness of these drivers, they're not just making left hand turns. The speed and the agility that they have to make the moves, and to drive as close as they are, you have a new found respect. So then she fell in love with it. And then of course our favorite driver of The Gillette Young Guns became Jimmy Johnson. So we follow Jimmy even now. And so she's always watching to help Jimmy, of course, become a champion seven times over.

But then she, she is, she would rather go to, to watch TV. And watch you do your sport than to go in person because she can yell, she can get to see the replay because she is loud. And so, you know, she doesn't do well, if you want to quiet on the tennis court, she's usually yelling to help Venus in some capacity.

[00:43:30] **Lisa Nichols:** There is a movie, Julie, that our grandson wanted to go see. And I was like, eh, yeah, I'm not really sure about this genre, but he wants to see it. I would highly recommend it. So inspirational. Gran Turismo, Gran Turismo about this kid that was a gamer, racing and in gaming and then got chosen to actually race. It's a very inspirational movie. So your mom would probably really like that.

But I want to talk just a minute here before we go into something extra about your book. So you and your mom wrote a book called recipes for joyous living, a story of inspiration. And I absolutely love this book. I would highly, highly recommend our listeners to get the book. There's Sulie's recipes, Julie's favorite recipes sprinkled throughout the book. We've talked about this cornbread dressing. She's very well known for her pound cake. I mean, how many pound cakes, Julie, do you think your mama has given to people?

[00:44:34] **Julie Washington:** We might be into the thousands now. I mean, they've been coming for forever. And even in college, my mom would put the pound cake or what I call my chocolate cake in the mail for college. And so the people at the post office even know what the little box has in it. Well, you can probably smell the cake as well. But they haven't been intercepted, thank goodness. But they usually make it to their destination.

And then of course, it's her way of expressing love. So, in the time of loss or in the time of celebration, she's usually going to take over a cake, just to ensure that you had something sweet, to, to have as I'll call it a comfort, just in case all the other things didn't go well, using the pound cake is, right on time with a little glass of milk. It usually goes down quite well.

So, but she's, my mom is intentional about serving. She, at her, at our church, she was the clerk of the church, the secretary of the church for over 22 years. And whenever she would end the Sunday announcements, she would tell them that in essence it's from James, and her, her point was when we come to church, sometimes we come in a very receiving mode, but her point was, you have to also leave in a serving mode.

And so her point, in James 5:16, is that, “the effectual fervent prayers of the righteous avail much. So those of us who've entered God's house to worship. Let us depart to serve”. So every week I heard constantly the need, the call to serve. And so that's probably why I show up the way I do in many different ways, is because I'm always seeking to be the hands, the feet, the mouth, the minds, the eyes, the ears for all of those Amelia's that I don't know, but I have been chosen to be able to serve. And so that's just a gift from my mom that keeps on giving in a multitude of ways of how I show up in life.

[00:46:35] **Lisa Nichols:** It's so beautiful and a beautiful, beautiful model that you have. And I, I had the same thing with mine. I, I tell people if you stumped your toe, my mom was there with a meal and that's just the way she showed up. And I, I just love that. Well, I've got one more question for you. I've got, I probably have got five more pages of questions, Julie, but we're not going to do that to our listeners today. We may have to do a part two, but I wanted to talk to you about children, because you've got four children of your own and, you know, you said, speak up when your child does well and encourage them along the way. And you give a lesson from the Canadian geese that I think is really funny. Can you tell our listeners that lesson?

[00:47:23] **Julie Washington:** Sure. So, in St. Louis, in Cincinnati, and even here in Michigan, the Canadian geese are everywhere on pick a corner or pick a

parking lot. And what you will notice about them is they're usually in a group on the ground and it's no formation. But when they get in the air, they fly in a V formation and it's important for them to fly that way because it helps them get where they're trying to go. Part of it is physics and air. But also if you're listening, they're noisy group. They're honking all the time, and I call it cheering and words of encouragement to say you can do it.

But the point of the person or the geese that's right, you know, right at the point, that one is to lead them where they're going. And so I'm always trying to make sure my children understand our responsibility as the goose that's first. Sometimes it's the one when you're in formation that you're not always asked to lead. Sometimes you're asked to be a good follower. But in all things, we should do that together and that we're not successful unless we all get to the desired destination.

And so there's just a lot of imagery and a lot of strength and thinking about what these geese do, the way they do it and the formation that they do it in. And so I don't know what our V formation is as humans, but I do believe we should show up and lock arms in a way that says, I'm as strong as you are. And we do these things for the common good. And I do it for you as much as you do it for me. So that's sort of the, the geese of watching them over time as to how they strengthen us as leaders, but also just as individuals.

[00:49:06] **Lisa Nichols:** It's just such a beautiful metaphor, I think, Julie, and, and what I wrote down is we should all be honk, honk, honk. Honking so that we are encouraging one another. I mean, what would our workplaces look like, Julie? If we were honking and encouraging each other to go, go, you can do this. I know together we can do this. I think it would be really different. But let me ask you this. This is called something extra. What do you believe is the something extra that every leader needs?

[00:49:44] **Julie Washington:** I would hope that every leader has a willingness, to what I'm going to call blend with another. So I mean, unpack the childlike aspect of the statement. So I have three of my own children, and the fourth is my goddaughter. So she's a part of the circle, but in the four of them, I learned really quickly by looking at a box of Crayola, right?

So they start off with those big fat chunk of crayons, and those are your primary colors. There are eight in the box. But the important part is we learned later, I'll be excited about having 64 colors, but they only occur when we're willing to blend the primary colors together, whether it's red and yellow makes orange or red and blue makes purple or whichever way they blend, I've learned as a

leader, it's important for me as a team member to be willing to blend with my teammates. If I stand individually and I'm always just going to be just me, I miss the beauty of what we could color together. The color itself doesn't change who I am. But what happens is because of my willingness to blend with another color, something extraordinary is produced. And so I hope that the something extra that we have, is that we're willing to blend in because it doesn't matter whether you are a sharp crayon, a flat one, a broken one, a whole one, a tall one, a stub, doesn't matter the state that you find yourself in. If you're willing to actually blend in, there will be magic and beauty that will result for our teams and also for those that we serve, whether that's through a product or a service. So that's what I would hope for each leader in the something extra. Be willing to blend your color with another.

[00:51:40] **Lisa Nichols:** That is so beautiful, Julie. I hope I'm as old as your mama and still remember. The, the Crayola, seriously, because how boring would it be if we just had red, yellow and blue, it would be a boring picture, but the diversity of all of that and blending it together makes a beautiful, beautiful, masterpiece. So thank you so much, sweet sister for being on the podcast today. This has been so much fun for me.

[00:52:14] **Julie Washington:** Thank you.

[00:52:16] **Announcer:** Thank you for listening to today's show. Something extra with Lisa Nichols is a technology partners production copyright Technology Partners, Inc. 2019 for show notes or to reach Lisa, visit tpi.co/podcast. Don't forget to leave a review on Apple podcasts, Google play, or wherever you listen.

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