



EP273_Donnie Campbell

Lisa Nichols 00:03

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 6000 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 in 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 is 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 this 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 like this episode today, please go to Apple podcasts or wherever you listen and leave us a five star rating.

I am thrilled to have Donnie Campbell on the show today. Donnie is a keynote speaker, math teacher and basketball coach who inspired the character Ted Lasso. Well, Donnie Campbell, welcome to the Something Extra podcast I am so delighted that we could make this happen. I've been looking so forward to this time with you.

Donnie Campbell 01:58

Thanks for having me. I'm excited too. Excited to jump in and talk about whatever you want to talk about.

Lisa Nichols 02:05

Oh, well, that sounds good. Well, we're gonna talk about a lot so but you know, always like start, Donnie, just by giving shout outs to how you and I got connected. Our mutual friend Tim Sater, with AAIM, said, Lisa, you gotta have Donnie and of course, I you didn't know this, because I don't know there were 800 people there or something. But you were the keynote speaker for this year's AAIM.

Donnie Campbell 02:32

Right.

Lisa Nichols 02:33

In May. I did a breakout, but you were the big keynote speaker and I was in the audience. And I absolutely loved hearing from you. So I'm just delighted to have some time with you today.

Donnie Campbell 02:46

Oh, thanks for having me. I mean, Tim Sater is one of the all time great guys. They gave us a bag for speaking there. And it's got AAIM on it. And when I see the bag, because I use it everywhere in our care my computer when I travel. So when I see it, I think of him and I just puts a smile on my face. Because I really enjoyed my time speaking, and it was one of my second or third. You know, it was a little intimidating because I was out in front of about 800 people. And I was nervous and but once I get going and I get talking and I just I enjoy talking about leadership and stories with Jason and stories of my journey as coaching and teaching. You know, your mind, just you're a speaker, you understand. And then you just go you know, and Tim made it very, very comfortable for me, his whole staff there with AAIM is phenomenal.

Lisa Nichols 03:38

Fantastic. And so for anybody in St. Louis, it has not been to that AAIM conference. And I think I want to say it's about the same time frame every year about the May timeframe. If you've not been to that conference, it is definitely well worth it. And you can hear amazing speakers like Donnie. So for those of you who don't know, Donnie, and for those of you who are Ted Lasso, fans out there, Jenny and I happen to be two of the biggest fans. We love that show, Ted Lasso. Donnie is a big inspiration for the Ted Lasso character played by Jason Sudeikis. I think now Donnie, I want to

say the Ted Lasso has won five Emmy Awards. It is just an amazing show. So we'll talk about that. I want to get your predictions on if there's gonna be other seasons. I don't know.

Donnie Campbell 04:33

I'm hoping. You know, Jason, I'm sure you know, I think I'm not in his position. But I'm sure that when I was watching him just from my perspective, he looked tired. Even though it was great. I mean, the last season was phenomenal. But just for me outside looking in he looked like to me was a little tired. I think sometimes you know, I'm sure it's putting that show on takes a lot of time, a lot of energy. He probably they're taking a little break. But I and also I think sometimes you know, he probably knows when it's time to move on to you know, maybe there's not any anything that they could put out there that would make it any better but knowing him, you know, he's such so talented. If they're going to do something that it'll he won't do something unless it's really, really good.

Lisa Nichols 05:27

Well, I you know, yeah, to your point. I mean, maybe it's going to be something different, but I will talk more about the show. But before we get into all of that, Donnie, I want you to take me back to really the very beginning. No. Take me back to just growing up. I know that you grew up in a little town in Kansas, I think Lyons, Kansas, about 3300 people tell me about growing up.

Donnie Campbell 05:55

Well might my dad was a machinist, and worked 40 years as a machinist. And my mom worked for the government. She was a secretary. And I grew up in a very small humble beginnings and it was great. It was like my I had a Tom Sawyer your life. I mean, we, you know, you went outside in the summer and mom would say, hey, you know, don't be coming in, you're letting all the air out. You know, so if you need a drink, you got it off the faucet or the hose and, and we play football every day we play basketball. We went to the swimming pool and, you know, my parents were very, very, very spiritual people, very grounded people. They could give me a kick in the butt when I needed it. But they could also put their arm around me and tell me how much they love me. So I always knew I was loved. And it was it was you know, I was a I was an all-state quarterback. I was an all-state basketball player. I ran on two state championship track teams and went to Kansas State and played football and signed a short professional football. I played basketball at K State too. And but I did sign up as a free agent contract to play for the Houston Oilers. A lot of people don't know the Houston Oilers are. But I probably had the shortest pro career of anybody in the history of the NFL.

But I learned a ton I really did. I learned a ton and when I got out when I quit, I knew I was ready to start teaching and coaching because that was really my love. I'd said what I knew I wanted to do is teach and coach my parents did not want me to to teach and coach It wasn't that they didn't have tremendous respect for teachers. They just said you know, Donnie, you're always going to struggle you're always going to and I think I remember I said it in different terms, but I'll paraphrase this, you know, I'm not really about worried about the money I'm, I'm worried about making a difference with kids. Because I had so many people growing up including my parents, my teachers, my coaches, who made a huge, did so much for me and saw and spoke greatness into me and saw greatness in me that I didn't even believe you know, and I've just been very, very lucky with the people that I've had throughout my years of life that have motivated me have told me what I need to hear sometimes maybe not what I was want to hear. And I knew that they cared about me and they wanted what was best for me and that's where my parents were.

But I haven't been back to Lyons. Both my parents passed in 2014. My brother was a huge influence. He was 10 years old or may he played at the University of Arkansas. So when he would come he was quite a bit older me. Of course everybody called me Doug and so Donnie growing up because my brother was such a great athlete. And I wanted to be like Doug I wanted to be a basketball player. I want to play at Arkansas like him he held a rebounding record at one time and, but he was my hero growing up and I wanted to be like him and he ended up passing he died of cancer three or four years ago. So he was my really my inspiration at times and I miss him I think about him every day and my parents as well. And then but they get a smile on my face when I think about them.

And then I have an older sister lives in Reno, Nevada, and she spoiled me rotten. She's probably the, she's only about 5'4 5'5. But she could be my brother and I both up. And she's one of the kindest, She's one of the probably between all three of us. She's probably the most like my mom. My mom was never said a bad word. In her life. She never drank. She never smoked. She never and I have a rule in my classroom that I call Visory rule. My mom's name was Vi. The two rules I have is number one, you won't use profanity. And number two is if you don't have anything good to say you don't say it. What's kind of my upbringing and the values that I was taught growing up and I think it really starts coming, anybody that's coming from a small town though that the people there are hardworking, they're honest, their handshake, you can believe everything they say. And, and that's kind of where I was raised. And I always go back to those values and standards that I was taught at a very, very young age.

Lisa Nichols 10:15

Yeah. Well, I hadn't planned on talking about this, Donnie, but you cannot imagine, I mean, it's, I need to do a study on it. How many leaders I talked to amazing leaders that came from very small towns. You know, they, you know, it's kind of funny, they have a lot of aunts and uncles, that aren't really your aunt or your uncle. People watch out for each other in those small towns, don't they? And you can't get away, either. You know?

Donnie Campbell 10:48

I remember one time, of course, you didn't have cell phones back there. And we were playing baseball. And it was in a lot. And I threw a ball that broke a window. And I think we all ran, and I was young man, I must have been six or seven. Before I got home my dad already knew. And you know, I'm gonna pay for that, but you're gonna have to work to pay me back. So that was a lesson right there. You know, you know, you're gonna you make a mistake, you're gonna pay for it. And it's a great lesson for me and, and, you know, my dad going back to he had 13 Brothers and sisters. Set really no seven boys, seven girls, one was stillborn. My dad was the oldest. And one of their emphasis my both my parents, my mom, they both were raised on the farm. And we lived in a small town. I mean, I knew that I didn't want to be a farmer. It's too hard work and hard work. But they're the salt of the earth people and but my dad, and parents really emphasized in education, they wanted all three of us to go to college and to better they wanted as all parents do, you know, they want their children to be better than them. And but my dad, this isn't really I know, it's kind of off the wall. But my dad was in Hiroshima the day after his bombed. And so, you know, he was he was in the army. He fought in World War II, and he never really talked much about it. But he did do that. And he had some stories though, later in his life, and he would tell me and but, you know.

Lisa Nichols 12:35

I hope you were able to capture those somehow, Donnie.

Donnie Campbell 12:38

Well there was a gal that wanted to record him. I don't know if they I don't think they ever did. I don't think they ever did and but, you know, we have pictures and stuff that that my sister and I have from he took when he was there and things like that and but he really didn't talk much about it because he was one of the first ones in. And so he didn't he kept really to himself. And but my mom you know, she worked for the government and she very soft spoken. Didn't say a lot. But when she did say it, you knew she meant business. Remember, my brother and I got in kind of a wrestling match course he could whip me he's 10 years older than me. And we had broken a chair something wrestling around. And she chased us out of the house. You guys just need to leave. And of course, you know you if you've got boys, you know how boys are. We were probably throwing the football, yes, in the house. And but, you know, I miss my parents and the wisdom that they gave me. You know, if you think about it, you don't realize how smart your parents are until you get to be about 24, right?

Lisa Nichols 13:56

Isn't that the truth? Yeah. Isn't that the truth? Yeah. Donnie, I had I knew that about you that you lost several really close people in your brother and your parents all very close together. And you know, I wasn't really planning on talking about this necessarily. But yeah, I've lost both of my parents now. I lost my dad last year. You know, it's um, yeah, I mean, you've, you've, you've experienced a lot of highs in your life but you've that's adversity and hard times two. And I mean, we're like going back to the Oilers, the Houston Oilers when he got cut, you know from it. I mean, what what was the lesson? What were the key lessons? Do you feel like that you learned through that?

Donnie Campbell 14:42

Well, I've always believed that. At the time I'm sure I didn't see it as a lesson. But I'd done everything I could. I'd get myself in great shape. I've done a lot of throwing I was a quarterback and Warren Moon was there at that time who was they'd been in the Hall of Fame, and Oliver Luck who ended up playing for the for the Colts and, but I just realized it was time for me to move on. And I took those lessons. And I've used them in my coaching and my teaching, you know, you know, I didn't really fail. And I think you fail forward lessons and learn, you know how, you know, I think you learned a lot of times through your own frustrations. But I knew I was ready to start teaching and coaching. I don't look at it as a bad situation, I look at it as how many things I learned when I was there. And very few people get an opportunity to go to a pro football camp. And I did, and I watched, you know, and I think many of us, you know, we were given two ears and one mouth, I really use this a lot. And I really think if you really observe more, I was telling our kids at the camp, one of the best things you can do as a player, as a student, as anybody, just observe people observe. And I told them on the basketball floor, oh, you know, sometimes we see but very few people look. Very few people they hear but they really don't listen. And if you can learn to observe it already makes you a better student, a better basketball player better really leader. And I learned that very early in my life when I first started when I played for the Oilers. And when I played football at Kansas State, you know, I, I listened a lot more than I talked. Now it's a little bit overwhelming, because I'm talking more than I'm really listening.

Lisa Nichols 16:56

Right. But you still have that. I'm sure you do you still I mean, even when you're talking, you're listening to the audience, or you're reading the audience. Donnie, and you know, I I'm a firm believer too, I believe that everything and I don't like the word failure, because I don't think it's, I think it's only failure, if you don't try, you know, really, but when things don't go the way that you had hoped that they were. There are that's just part of your journey. And you just take those things, and you carry them forward with you to the next thing. So yeah, I'm a very, very big believer in that too. And we can learn, I think we learned so much more sometimes in the valley, of those. But you know, there's no mountains without valleys. There aren't you know, and so? Yeah.

Donnie Campbell 17:52

One of my favorite quotes I love is, you know, it's not what you achieve, it's what you overcome. And, and I've always, what we tried to do when I coached is I wanted practice harder than a game. So we put them in situations in practice, that they had to learn to talk and learn to communicate with each other. And one of the things we did, we always did a lot of disadvantaged drills, where we'd play five on for six on four, we'd have five offensive players against four defenders, which is harder than it's ever going to be in a game. And it taught our kids number one, it gave me great confidence that they knew that if four could guard five, five on five was going to be easy. And it also taught them to overcome adversity. To do love it to it's a challenge, right? But it's it's making you better it's bringing our team together and I and I really love that. Because also when you do that it creates communication, you know very we can we talk, we communicate now that we don't really talk, you know, in a basketball team, you have to talk. You know, I tell the kids all the time, you can't have your cell phone out there and texting each other on the basketball floor. And you know, if you're not talking, I always told my kids you're not playing defense.

And so I totally agree with what you're saying. I think that you learn so much more, I think the two hardest things to, and I've learned them both, the two hardest things as a human being to handle is failure and success. You know, success, always, success, you get a little cocky. You start thinking you're a little bit better than what you are you know who amazes me so much is Tom Brady. I mean here a guy that had it all, but he's constantly looking to get better when he played and to have that drive you know, win a win a Super Bowl, numerous Super Bowls, and each year come back to overcome that complacency to me is wow. I mean, that is hard to do. I can remember we won a state championship. And the next year we had a better team. And we made it to the state tournament. But I never felt like I reached those kids. I never felt like I kept the pedal to the metal. And it was a great lesson for me that I needed to work harder when you're having success.

I need to and but when I first started coaching, I had I took a job that was probably the worst job in Kansas. And when I took the job, I asked my head coach, I said, this is not a very good job. He said, Well, Donnie, you've never been a head coach, you're not going to get a good job. Which was humbling, right? He says you have to take this job and turn it into a good job. Every night, we'd get beat, and I had about a 30 minute drive home. And by the time you got home, you know, it wasn't much fun. But I was constantly talking to other coaches, I was getting resources, I was trying to find out different ways to get better. And I improved so much. So I think for me when things weren't going well, I think I'm better. Yes, you get when things go well, I'm not as good. Yes. So I think the biggest mistake young coaches make probably young leaders is having like success early. Because then they think they know it all. As I didn't get that opportunity. I, we were failing. And I had to constantly reach out find different resource, get better talk to people observe, and all those things. And that was just something I learned at a very young age, very young coaching.

Lisa Nichols 21:54

It's a great I love that. I love that story. Well, you know, and you've probably said three or four of these things since you and I've been talking, Donnie, but I know Jason always said that you were great. And you were well known for aphorisms and sayings. I mean, where do you believe those came from? Where do you believe those motivational quotes? I mean, have you been just a student of leadership and a student of that for as long as you can remember? Did it come from your mom, your dad, coaches that you had?

Donnie Campbell 22:26

A little bit of everything? You know, when we were not being successful? You know, you have a lot of questions. I started studying leadership. And one of the persons that I came across was John Wooden. And one of the greatest leaders, if you really want to get better as a leader, you need to study John Wooden. And I had a little blue book and think I think I have it here. Yeah, there it is. And, and what I would do is this little blue book, I would find little quotes and things in it that would be relevant for whatever our team was going through. And I would always mention that quote, you know, discipline yourself, so others don't have to, you know, what was it, success is peace of mind, which is direct result and self satisfaction, knowing you did your best to become the best of your company that really resonated with me when I read that. And so what I was doing early was just trying to develop basketball players,

instead of trying to develop my players to be better people to be leaders. And that's sustainable success. And I learned that from my own frustration starting out. My first head coaching job, we were three and 18. That's three wins, and,

Lisa Nichols 23:55

And 18 losses.

Donnie Campbell 23:57

And after that first season, I knew I had a lot of work to do. And I had a lot of questions. I started reaching out to find out to get answers for those questions. And since I got, since then, we've really tried to emphasize the developing our players to be better people first, better basketball, and I used to say this a lot. You know, playing basketball is what you do. It's not who you are.

Lisa Nichols 24:27

Yeah, so good. Yeah, you focused on more who they were and so did Wooden, you know, I mean, Coach Wooden, and I remember a long time ago, Donnie, reading his book, not the one the little blue book that you have, but the the black book, you know, just his autobiography or his biography. I can't remember which one it was and I was just so impressed by him. You know, and so I would love and I don't know if you remember this or not, but um, you know, I printed it off, he has got a pyramid of success. And maybe we can include this you have it, don't you?

Donnie Campbell 25:15

I have an autographed one.

Lisa Nichols 25:19

Jenny, you should take a picture of that. So we both have it. You know, but you know, I love the quote that you just said, because it's at the top of the pyramid of success, success is peace of mind, which is a direct result of self satisfaction in knowing that you did your best to become the best that you're capable of becoming. And that is really all that we could ask of anybody, right? Donnie is did you do your best? Did you do your best just try to be a better version of yourself. But if you have not, and we'll maybe put this in the show notes. That is so funny that we both held it up at the same time. But this pyramid of success, I think there's like at the top, it's competitive greatness, but there's about 14 different central elements of character development here. And then on the sides, there's these other words, like ambition and adaptability, and resourcefulness and fight and faith and patience. You know, and I think those really represent the values that support the central elements are the qualities and, and of course, prayer. I mean, you know, when you're talking prayer, I mean, in faith, you know, that's, that's an action, you know, that we're doing, but I, I absolutely love this. Did you like kind of go through each of these character elements and kind of focus on them as you were coaching, Donnie?

Donnie Campbell 26:44

I would use these relative to whatever we were going through at that time. You know, I think trust is huge. I think trust is huge. And I tell players, you know, you want me to trust you. And I, I want to trust you, but it's our habits every day, that develops that trust, you know, talk is cheap. You know, you want to be a leader, you want your people to follow you, if you will, then you have to set the right example.

Lisa Nichols 27:20

Right.

Donnie Campbell 27:21

You can't have trust without honesty. And I think that's so important. You know, every everywhere I go, now I speak, the main thing I hear is, hey, we're getting these people that are in leadership positions, and they don't know how to lead. Well, it's your job. It's not their job, it's your job to take them from point A to point B. It's all Jim Dandy to have these mission statements and all this stuff on the wall, that, as my dad used to say, that dog don't hunt, you have to sit down. You have to work with people, you and you have to be you have to set the right example, you know, your met your example, isn't the main thing in leadership is the only thing in leadership. That's from Morgan Wootten, the great coach at DeMatha High School, you know, he's gone, but he's passed. But and I think accountability is so important. You know, holding, if you want to be a leader, don't you have to be able to hold people accountable to your standards and to your values. And there's a way to do that, you know, in a in a kind and caring way. But, you know, sometimes you you've done this, this, this, this, you got to be honest with people, this, this behavior has to change. This is not how we do things here. And you work on your culture, I guess culture is the big buzzword. But it's not there. It has to be worked on every day. That, you know, with your team, you're working on that every day. And one of the things that I learned and it took a while is look for the positive, not the negative. When you see somebody that's doing the way

you want it done. You need to reaffirm that very quickly, that behavior, and the other ones see that as a golly coach, that maybe I need to step in line and do that, too.

Lisa Nichols 28:32

Yes.

Donnie Campbell 28:32

And I think another thing is commitment. I think, you know, your players have to be committed and committed is an action. You know, and it's hard for a coach to develop trust with you, if you're not coming in and putting in the extra time and being committed to the team first.

Lisa Nichols 29:54

Yes.

Donnie Campbell 29:55

And those are all things that I think are things that you know, in a nutshell that I would take from John Wooden and another person who's really influenced me to that's really a John Wooden disciple, if you will, was Don Meyer. Don Meyer's, the greatest coach and no one's heard of.

Lisa Nichols 30:16

I was gonna say, I don't know Don Meyer, tell us more.

Donnie Campbell 30:21

Well, when I was a young coach, somebody sent me information about Don Meyer. Don Meyer was a head coach at David Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tennessee. And he would have clinics and there would be 2000 or 3000 coaches there. He taught me how to teach the game. How to teach. And it was such a I mean, oh, he's gone now. And there's a there's an E:60 story about him. If you want to have a good feeling about Don Meyer, he still has a website as well, that you can go on there and get different leadership things. So yeah, he helped me tremendously. And he was huge on developing leaders as well. And then probably the third person who's helped me is Bob Knight. And when a lot of times when I say Bob Knight, people think of all the, you know, things that and I don't agree with everything that coach did. However, I went to his coaching Academy, which would be maybe 1000 or 2000 people there, he opened up his whole program at Indiana, to all these coaches, he showed everything they did. So when I was a young coach, went to that clinic. And I stayed there for three days, there was probably three practice to practice on Friday, three on Saturday and three on Sunday. So you're talking about eight practices, he opened up, he showed everything that they did. And I was watching, watching what they were doing. And bam, I said, this is how the game should be taught. Motion offense, teaching kids how to play, don't run plays, man to man defense. And that's it. So those are real.

And so he was another one that had a huge influence on my life. And the thing I loved about teaching motion teaching kids how to play was it. It was a greatest developer of teamwork of anything you could do. And then I had a player that ended up playing for him, and I develop a relationship with him and his assistants. And I was learning even more, and I was constantly asking questions. And you know, I've just been so blessed. And I had really good players too. I had a kid that ended up being SEC Player of the Year first round draft choice. So when I had these really good players, coaches would come in, and I would sit down with them and talk and ask them questions, and they would send me stuff, they would send me video, and I was constantly trying to get better. And one of my favorite times was when we didn't have cell phones and I'm sure everybody knows who Bill Self is. Well, Bill Self was at Tulsa when I was a young coach at Shawnee Mission West. He was recruiting this kid Matt Freese is his name. And he was up at my in my coaching office after like, I don't know, it was a Thursday night. No, it was a Friday night game. He came and watched and then he came in my office. We stayed up till two o'clock in the morning in my office talking basketball. Well, my wife calls my office. What are you doing? Are you watching film? No, I'm here with coach. She goes well, you probably ought to get home. And I said, Yeah, so I ended up and there's another guy who took his course I had a player he wanted right. But he still stood there. Stayed there and taught me and I just been Roy Williams.

Lisa Nichols 34:03

Yeah, I mean, like I said, I mean, you're a coach but you're a student, you know, Donnie, that's what I'm hearing. It's like you're still a student.

Donnie Campbell 34:12

Yes.

Lisa Nichols 34:13

And then relaying those things in whether it's, you know, from somebody that you've met or somebody that you've worked directly with? Well, you know what, I have got so many more questions. But we need to take a really quick break, and then we'll come right back with Donnie Campbell on this Something Extra Podcast.

AD 34:32

Hey they're, in a challenging business climate like this savvy leaders looking at technology to find an edge. This can mean the difference between staying ahead of the curve, or playing catch up. It's time to collaborate with the highly skilled experts at Technology Partners. Our team of technologists draws upon decades of experience for your project, with each bringing a passion for solving problems and a track record of success. How can we help you overcome your biggest technology challenges? Visit technologypartners.net to book a free call siltation with one of our leaders.

Lisa Nichols 35:03

So welcome back everyone to the Something Extra Podcast with Donnie Campbell. Donnie, it's been so much fun to spend time with you today. And I just, I can tell you and I could probably talk for 10 hours. And just keep going.

Donnie Campbell 35:18

Yeah, hopefully everybody out there has had a Happy New Year and enjoying this. And I just feel very blessed and humbled and privileged to be able to, to do this. So thank you for having me.

Lisa Nichols 35:30

Absolutely. Well, you know, we've already talked about this, but I know that you coach Jason, when he was at Shawnee Mission. Yeah, I have a couple of questions about that. You know, I mean, how, you know, how was he as a person? How was he as a person? How was he back then, as a basketball player?

Donnie Campbell 35:51

Well, number one, he was a good player. He didn't always like to play defense, like I wish he would. I think it was brought out on one of the shows, on the morning, TV morning shows, and I nicknamed Jason Sueikis. I took the D out of his name because he liked playing offense, he didn't like playing defense. However, he knew that if he didn't play defense, he didn't play. So he did play defense. He didn't like school. So we had an agreement that you need to be in school, you need to be doing your work and but he was a good teammate, that group of kids that he played with, that I coached, they're still friends to this day, and they would do anything for each other. That was a special group. And it was a special group for a young coach. I needed that group. You know, I wouldn't have known how to handle issues that go with teams, the different personalities, you know, and strengths. That group was easy to coach. They not They not only listened, but they heard what I was saying. And I always have a fond memories of that group. Jason, you could tell he was very witty, very witty, and I remember finding out that you know, his uncle. His mom's brother was on. Cheers.

Lisa Nichols 37:21

Oh, really?

Donnie Campbell 37:22

Well, people know that he was the guy that I think he was the he was the one that was always at the bar drinking. But that was his uncle. So and then I ended up that could be true, though. And so when I heard that I thought, you know, I've gear out, but I just thought in the back of my mind, his wittiness, that's where that's the avenue, you'll end up going to be a basketball player, you know, he went to a junior college and played and then end up going to KU and go into school. But that wasn't what he really wanted to do. You know, I know it takes all of us sometimes to figure out what we really want to do, you know, some people earlier than others. He knew that he wanted to be an actor. He wanted to be a comedian. And as we all well know, you know, look where he's at now. He's, you know, he's tremendously successful. And I need to think our love about Jason though, that I really love the most is he still gets back here in Kansas City. He hasn't forgot Kansas City, he comes back and does a couple charity events. One's for Children's Mercy Hospital here. And I think the other one is for wounded, wounded soldiers. But don't quote me on that. And, but that's what I'm most proud of him. I know. They're basically we should be proud of him. I'm proud of him that he hasn't forgot where he came from. And he's still giving back to the community. That's what means the most to me, and I'm really proud of him of that.

Lisa Nichols 38:53

Strong character, strong character. You know, he said that while you were there inspiration for Ted Lasso's coaching style, Donnie, his dad inspired his mustache

Donnie Campbell 39:10

I could see that. Yeah, putting a mustache on me is like putting a tie on a pig. It's still a pig right? I'm not gonna put a mustache on me.

Lisa Nichols 39:26

I thought that was funny. But you know what I think is really funny about this whole thing. Donnie, you never even seen the show. And then one day you're walking down the hall and one of the other teachers goes hey, there's that famous basketball coach that Jason Sudeikis' character is patterned after you and you're like what? I think you eventually watched it you and Janice I think binge watched it over a weekend or something.

Donnie Campbell 39:53

Fell in love with it. So endearing. And you know, I really didn't see myself in the in the show. You know, but my wife did. She's like yeah, my daughter saw it. And I saw many of the lessons that that I tried to teach my players and over the years and my students, you know, I always told my kids, I don't coach basketball, I teach attitude. And I said, there's a right way to do things and a wrong way to do things. And we're always going to do things the right way. And I said, you know, there's no, there's no short term to success. You know, I can think of things that I tried to do in the short term to try to win games, always came back to bite me in the seat.

Lisa Nichols 40:39

Always came back, I just had this conversation with someone this morning about, you know, it's never like taking shortcuts in business, you know, maybe taking a shortcut on a project or whatever to maximize profit, it will, it's not the right thing to do. You know, everything we do, there's no, there is nothing to be gained ever by taking a shortcut. And the other thing is, it will come back to bite you in the butt.

Donnie Campbell 41:07

Yep. It always does.

Lisa Nichols 41:09

It will, yes.

Donnie Campbell 41:11

And it comes back to that at the most, inconvenient time that you hope it doesn't come back, you know, and I just think that, you know, in the business world, too, is, sometimes things just don't go right. And you just got to come, hey, this, I tried my best that didn't work out. I'm gonna try to make this right. And, and people respect that. They might not like that. But they live respect that you're honest. You know, it's the same way. Like I think about going to get your car fixed. If I have somebody as a straight shooter, that's say, Hey, this is what needs to be done. And I can trust them. I mean, I had, like, I had a car that I went and took it somewhere and it was gonna be \$3,000 to fix it. I took it to another place and it cost me 75 bucks. And I'll never go back to that place. No, because I don't trust them.

Lisa Nichols 42:09

That's right. Yeah. You had said that earlier. That trust is so important when we were talking about Wooden and the pyramid of success, that trust in Covey has Stephen MR. Covey, not senior. But the son wrote a book several years ago called *The Speed of Trust*. You can only move as, as, as the trust factor goes up in it, you know, and me it's trusting the leader, right? But it's also trusting your team. If there's distrust among the team, you're not going to be unified. So I love that. You mentioned that. But yeah, Ted Lasso is such a feel good show. But I love what you said. You said after you watched it, Donnie, that you felt like you learned more from the show than probably Jason ever learned from you? And I that's a very humble thing to say. I would imagine he would not say the same thing. But, you know, I was just thinking about just the impact that you've made on him, Donnie, and I'm thinking about all the other, Jason's out there that you have made an impact on and I'm thinking that is to me, and I'm not putting words in your mouth. That's a definition of success.

Donnie Campbell 43:29

I agree. Thank you very much. It means a lot to me. It really does. I you know, it's, it's humbling. It's real surreal. I just, I've just been very blessed to have I miss the smell of a locker room.

Lisa Nichols 43:48

Really?

Donnie Campbell 43:49

Oh, I do I miss that impact. I know some people don't. I miss the impact that you make with your players. Just like, I got a text this morning from a player who thanked me. And I'll get I'll get players asked me or call me or come up to me and say what they all now they have kids and they asked me for advice. And I just say I said you know what the right thing to do is your gut tells you what the right thing to do just always do the right thing. And it's, it's really, all of us know what the right thing is to do. It just are you willing to do it? You know, and that's leadership right there. You know, I always say, you know, you want to be a leader they'll smell don't sell ice cream. Because at times you're gonna make some decisions that somebody's not gonna like, you know, I had to make cuts every year as a basketball coach. I hated it. I didn't sleep for two weeks. That's why are so many jerseys. And it's not picking the best team. It's picking the right team. And I've always, I've always believed this I interviewed for quite a few jobs. And I, I never felt like I was the best coach, I felt like I was the right coach. And I think for people interviewing for jobs, even though you want a job, I want this job, but does it fit you? Because if it doesn't, then you're going to have heart aches, and the person hiring you is also going to have heart aches, because, you know, you guys aren't on the same page about how will how you believe things should be done.

Lisa Nichols 45:23

Well, this is so funny that you're saying that, and not the best, but the right one. Because I'm thinking about Ted Lasso. And when he went to Richmond, you know, he knew nothing about soccer, right? He definitely was not the best coach, but he was the right one for the team, you know, at the time. So I love I love that, you know, one of the first episodes in Ted Lasso so and I don't know, I haven't talked to you about this, but they posted a sign up there that said, "Believe," you know, and, you know, what does that mean for you as it relates to coaching teaching? I mean, is that something that you really try to get this? Because that's believe in yourself, believe in your team. But you know, what does it mean, Donnie?

Donnie Campbell 46:17

It encompasses a lot. I just think sometimes kids need love the most when they deserve it the least. And I think sometimes, you know, I had a kid one time miss a shot that would have won the game. And I could tell this young man was a really good kid, really good player for us. And after the game, I put my arm around him. I said, you know, if we had to do it all over again, I'd still have you shoot the ball. And I said, it's gonna happen again and you're going to be the one that's going to take the shot. And I know you're gonna make it. So people need to be told you still believe them. And it's great to tell him that you believe in when things are going well. But I think as leaders we all need to and as coaches, you need to tell people that you believe that I'm probably the most one that things are going well.

Lisa Nichols 47:10

Yeah, that wow. What sage advice? What sage advice? Yeah. Tell it tell me this because you and I kind of talked in the sidebar conversation, I think it might be really helpful for our listeners, because sports is such, youth sports is such a big thing, isn't it, Donnie? I mean, you had three girls of your own. They all played sports. And you told me you said you really didn't get involved? If we've got listeners out there that are parents of athletes? What kind of advice would you give them? And I know kind of what you did for your girls, but what would you, what would you say to them?

Donnie Campbell 47:51

Number one, they better be having fun. If they're not enjoying it than they shouldn't be, don't force them to do it. I never force my kids to do anything. If they did do it, they were gonna finish it, whether they liked it or not, you know, talked about, you know, finish. But I think number one, they've got to love it. And the reason why kids are getting out of, you know, I think I like the percentage, there's like, it's in the 80% 87% Don't quote me on our getting out of activities, sports activities by the age of 13. So why are they getting out of it? They're getting it out of it for two reasons. Parents are trying to live their life, their sports career through their kids. And number two of coaches who really don't know how to teach, that really don't know the fundamentals. And what I'm seeing now from kids now, as a given example, basketball players, I watch a lot of games do I still go to high school games and watch and I watch college games and kids now are more athletic than they've ever been. But their basketball IQ is not very good. They really don't understand how to play. And, and so that that's totally different than what I believe in. I was one of my kids to be fundamentally sound and to play as a team and and if your kids are on a team, and they're there, and they're, they're enjoying what they're doing, and they're learning so many lessons, and are they always going to be happy with the coach? Of course not. But it's not your responsibility as a parent to jump in and try to get your kid whatever it may be. It's more playing time. You need to have your son or daughter go talk to the coach, because this is not about you. It's about the kids, kids. Parents have changed. And to me, I just want to stay out of it. I don't know what they're doing in practice. I don't want to know what they're doing in practice. I'm just gonna go to the game.

I remember my daughter, my youngest daughter played soccer. We were in a tournament in Iowa. And she was on a really good team. And she hardly I think they played three games that weekend. And it was a little expensive. We have to get a hotel, you know, and all this stuff that goes into it for people that are doing traveling teams and stuff like that. I don't think my daughter played four minutes. So as we're driving home, she says to me, she says, Dad, can I say talk to you? So you weren't sure what's going on? She goes, so what do you think about this week? I said, Sydney, it didn't matter if you played four minutes, 40 minutes or not playing, I still love you. I'm proud of you. And it's not it's so it was never about me about her success on the soccer field or basketball floor. It was about what kind of kids they are. Are they learning lessons from what they're doing?

Now everything's about Okay, can I get my daughter or son a college scholarship? And that's great. I don't think that's a great goal. But to me, it's are they having fun? Are they learning? Are they learning fundamentals? Are they learning the right way to how to work with other people. All those things that were way the the horses out of the barn now. There's too much money involved with it, youth sports. Look at the collegiate ranks in the money, there's so much money involved. People are transferring from team to team. Why? Because the almighty dollar. And that's what youth sports are. I mean, it's, it's money. And it's really not about developing these kids to be better people which is what I think youth sports are, you know, and so I'm sure there's some parents out there have their kids playing a lot of different clubs sports and think this guy's crazy. You know, I've done it long enough to know that your kids would rather have their grandparents at their game than the parent because all the grandparent says after the game is they love them. They don't want to be in their car, going home with your parents rehashing every play that you didn't make every play that you every free throw you missed or whatever, they will say that to the parents, because they don't they love their parents so much. And then the coach is telling them thanks. So that's where there's, you know, they want to try to please a coach, but then they want to try to please the parents. And that's where the there's the problem.

Lisa Nichols 52:28

Yeah. Such great advice, Donnie, and you're like, you know what, I just, you know, you said with my girls, I just wanted to be the parent. You know, I didn't try to coach them. I didn't try to do the play by play or the places that they could improve. And you said the thing that your girls remember, is going to have ice cream, or going to Applebee's getting half price appetizers or whatever. That's the thing they remember. Yeah.

Donnie Campbell 52:55

That's what they remember, yes. I miss that, too. I've got grandkids now. So I'm going to be able to go watch them and, and take him in the gym and say, Hey, Papa, will you take me to gym and teach me how to shoot and I would love to do it, you know, unless they facilitate that I'm not gonna, I'm just gonna go watch him and enjoy myself. That's what my wife always, we enjoy being around our family and our kids. That's our that's what's really all about us family isn't it, you know.

Lisa Nichols 53:25

it is it really, really is. Well, let me ask you this. I mean, what, you know, you I am thinking about how you just pour out because you're a math teacher now. So you teach math, you're around students, you're around kids all the time. You're constantly pouring out, pouring out, pouring out, pouring out. And Donnie, I know that you cannot constantly pour out without being poured into. So how do you do that? How do you self care? How do you keep energized so that you can go be the best version of you for those students?

Donnie Campbell 54:06

Well, the biggest thing in teaching is, there's always work to do. I mean, you're going to have papers to grade you're going to have emails to get ahold of. I just don't take it home. I mean, I work hard when I'm there. I guess I work smarter now. I just don't work harder. I don't take that stuff home because it's family time then. Also, I don't take myself too serious. You know, that's just me. I think that you've got to put yourself first and everything you do. Like today I worked out, you know, I think you need to work out I think you need to, to have somebody that you work with that you can confide in, that, you know, it's not going to go anywhere else where you can talk, you know, because there's challenges we all have them. You know, you know, everybody wants to say that Ted Lasso's feel good, but it's not always feel good, you know? There's things that go on the classroom, you know, and so I, I just always tried to not take myself too serious, I don't take the work home. And then I try to take, you got to take care of yourself. And when I wake up in the morning, I have certain things that I look at, that are positive. I do my devotions to do my spiritual stuff in the morning, I want to go to school in a good frame of mind. And that's just me. Everybody's different. I mean, I just think that you need to take care or you're going to burn out. I've been doing this 38 years. I see so many young teachers are getting out of teaching. We've got some really good young teachers. I mean, they and I told one of them one day, I said, you know, it's not a sprint, it's a marathon here. So you want to be your best and your best as needed. And you can't go 99 miles an hour and keep doing that for as long as I've been doing it.

Lisa Nichols 56:03

Without burning out, yeah.

Donnie Campbell 56:05

And that's what I see from teachers a lot. And of course, you know, they look at the money side of it. I understand that, you know, the money side of it, too. But I just think that it's burnout city. If her just don't take it home. It's gonna be there tomorrow anyway.

Lisa Nichols 56:19

Right.

Donnie Campbell 56:21

And then I think two is have a list of three things that you have to get done, get those three things done. If you have a list of 10 things, then you're only going to get probably one thing done if you're lucky or not get anything done.

Lisa Nichols 56:36

It's overwhelming, too overwhelming. Yeah.

Donnie Campbell 56:40

I do that too.

Lisa Nichols 56:41

Great advice. Great advice. Well, let me ask you this. This is called something extra. Uh, oh, What do you say is this something extra that every leader needs?

Donnie Campbell 56:57

Wow, what a great question. I think I think you need to come every day with juice. I think every day you need to come with that enthusiasm, that juice. I tell my students I said I can promise this much. I'll come every day with juice. They'll look at me like I'm crazy. They think I'm gonna bring an orange juice, energy with excitement. Nothing ever was ever achieved without enthusiasm. Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm. And I think if you're going to if you're not enthusiastic about what's going on, then everybody around you, you know, what's that? You know, you're either an energy giver or energy vampire. And I think that you need to come every day with enthusiasm. When I get to the point in teaching where I don't enjoy what I do, then that's time to do something else. But the speaking around the country now that's kind of invigorated kind of shortened my saw a little bit but number one, you need to bring juice every day. That's my opinion.

Lisa Nichols 58:03

I love it. I love it, Donnie will this has been so much fun. I so appreciate you making the time I cannot wait for our listeners to hear this episode. And I feel I feel like you brought the juice today. So thank you for that.

Donnie Campbell 58:21

Thank you. Thanks for having me.

Announcer 58:24

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