

Speaker 1:

Leadership is more important now than ever before. And entrepreneurs are the natural leaders. It's time to step up, take control of your business, and decide to be the very best as a leader right now.

Mike Paton:

Hello everybody. This is Mike Payton with the Lead Now podcast. And today I couldn't be more excited to introduce Dr. Dani McVety. Dr. Dani is a veterinarian and founder of Lap of Love, a national network of veterinarians providing hospice care for sick animals, the first organization of its kind in the United States. Dr. Dani is a speaker, consultant, entrepreneur, author, and host for PetCareTV. And she's passionate about making sure animals are given the best end of life care possible. Dr. Dani, thank you for being with us today.

Dr. Dani McVety:

Thank you Mike.

Mike Paton:

So let's start with your purpose and passion, if we can. What is it that motivated you to start this business and provide this valuable service in the world?

Dr. Dani McVety:

Yeah, I mean, I think that's where everything starts, right? I was doing emergency medicine when I first graduated, and when you're doing emergency veterinary medicine, there's a lot of conversations that kind of go with, we're either doing this or we're doing that. And the only wrong answer is doing nothing. We have to do something.

And a lot of times the that is euthanasia. So I kind of found that I just had this gift with people, and I love medicine. I'm a scientist, I'm a veterinarian. I went through a lot of school to learn medicine, but I found that I love the people even a little bit more than I love the medicine. So in emergency medicine, you have a lot of those conversations, and it turns into hospice and it turns into end of life. So I found myself just offering to go to somebody's home, and I did it once and then did it again and again, again, again, and at first it was just me and I just thought, okay, I love doing this. This is going to be a great part-time gig, and I'll pay back my student loans 10% faster.

And all of a sudden I was making more money and busier doing Lap of Love than I was doing emergency medicine. And I just kind of slowly shifted over to just end of life care. And then multiple things happen where somebody reaches out and says, "I want to do this too," or, "Can I help you?" And all of a sudden, I'm more busy than I can handle. And now I'm hiring somebody else. And so it's just this process of, there's another opportunity that presents itself. Are you going to say yes or no? And I just kind of felt like I kept saying yes, and now here we are 10, 11 years later and we have a little over 150 doctors in 34 different states with a team of almost 300 people.

Mike Paton:

That's amazing. And a very consistent story I hear when people are giving their stories is that you've got a passion, a skill, and work ethic, and you wake up one day and people are working for you. Our listener is going to feel like your story is quite familiar, if I'm not mistaken.

Dr. Dani McVety:

To me, that's what an entrepreneur is. A lot of people will say an entrepreneur is, "What do you do?" "I'm an entrepreneur." I'm like, an entrepreneur is not a job title. Okay. An entrepreneur is a set of personality traits, and it means just like you said, work ethic, a skill, and you just bust your butt doing it. And you're willing to do it.

Mike Paton:

Yeah. Exactly.

Dr. Dani McVety:

And I probably pulled one all nighter a week when I first started, because I loved it. But it was never work. Like I was constantly motivated and just driven to do it because I loved what I was doing.

Mike Paton:

Yeah. I can't tell you how many people I've interviewed or spoken with who say, the hard part of the job was remembering to bill people. You're running a business and you're working your tail off and you got to get paid. Right? So it's very few of my clients. Very few of the companies running on EOS were started by somebody who said, "Hmm, let me develop a well thought out business plan and a strategic action plan and blah, blah, blah." You start doing something and it turns into a business and here you are.

So describe the organization today. You said 150 doctors, 34 states. What else can you tell me about the way Lap of Love works with its clientele?

Dr. Dani McVety:

Yep. And then we have about 80 amazing team members that help answer phones. And we answer phones for 14 hours a day, which is really one of the things that is imperative in what we do. And then the rest of the team is made up of some amazing support leadership that help run the company and manage the doctors and manage the schedules and manage the team. And so what I can tell you is that we've been growing so fast, I don't even know those numbers anymore. I used to know them, but they could change from yesterday. So we've grown immensely. And particularly since post-COVID, in-home care has now become essential. Whereas in-home care was just something that was a bit of a...I don't want to say luxury because it's not luxury, but it was an afterthought. It was, "Oh, well, wouldn't this be great?" But now in-home care has become essential. So our calls, we have almost doubled since last year.

Mike Paton:

Right. I would imagine a lot of pet owners weren't even sure it was a thing, in-home care, pre-COVID, and now they're conditioned to ask the question.

Dr. Dani McVety:

Exactly.

Mike Paton:

Yeah. Very interesting. What role or roles do you play in the organization today?

Dr. Dani McVety:

So our implementer, who is a dear friend of you and me both, Chris White, when we first started talking with him, he was like, you're a visionary. And I fit the bill from A to Z of a visionary. So I'm definitely in that role. We have not had a particular person to fit in the integrator role. So I'm still in that seat.

Mike Paton:

Got it.

Dr. Dani McVety:

My now business partner is incredible, and her and I have shared that role for a long time. It wasn't all her and it wasn't all me, it was kind of like a shared thing. But now that we've grown, she's able to really take her department. And so I'm still in those two seats.

Mike Paton:

Got it.

Dr. Dani McVety:

I need to not be in those two seats.

Mike Paton:

Yes you do, and I'm sure Chris is in your ear about that regularly.

Dr. Dani McVety:

Yeah. And we have a path for that. Yeah.

Mike Paton:

So just to clarify for any listener who is not familiar with the term visionary integrator, the visionary is typically the founder of the business. Big idea person, big relationship person, loves to operate at 30,000 feet. Integrator is the person who runs the day-to-day, drives accountability, beats the drum, keeps the trains running on time. And Dr. Dani is a visionary stuck in the integrator seat, which is very common for an organization growing and scaling as fast as you are. And it's an issue that needs to be solved sometime soon. So what does your typical day or week look like in those two roles, if there is such a thing these days?

Dr. Dani McVety:

Yeah. It's different than it was pre-COVID, obviously, but it starts off with, and Chris helped out so much with this. I can't tell you what he did for us and our team. So what was happening before EOS? Is it, I was sitting with every department in every meeting and it was laborious, because I felt like I was in meetings all day long and I wasn't doing anything. And then I have to leave, because on a personal level, picking up my kids from school has always been very important to me. So I would leave to go get my kids. And then I literally, I sat in meetings all day and I wasn't doing anything. So once we had Chris's help, he helped me to step out of the department meetings and then just go to one-on-ones with the department heads.

And that helped just streamline my time so much. He taught me and the team, all of us, how to have data organized in a really efficient way. So now what I do is, all my one-on-ones are done on

Monday and Tuesday. And so again, that's with all the department heads. And so I get a quick rundown of what's going on, what's happening, any direction they need. And then Tuesday afternoon, we have our e-team meeting. So we have our level 10 meeting. And that's great, because now I've already had an update from everybody. Now we're really efficient on the L-10. And then the rest of the week, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, everybody's off doing the things that we're supposed to be doing. I get a lot of more efficiency. The departments still have their own meetings throughout the week, but then I get a report from every meeting. I read it just to see anything else, so it's so much more efficient than we used to be.

Mike Paton:

Awesome. Nice to hear that this has had a positive impact, and nobody hates meetings more than I do. And so being part of a meeting that doesn't feel like it's adding value, you couldn't pay me enough. So why do you think your organization is so successful?

Dr. Dani McVety:

This is going to sound humble. I don't really mean it to be that way at all. I think we're successful, 99% of the reason is just simply because we do something that is so meaningful. And so, I don't have to convince families of the value of what we do. I don't have to convince doctors of how wonderful it is to do what we do. I don't have to convince our support center team that answering the phone is a noble and valiant thing to do. It's an inherent thing in what we do.

So I think we have all the pieces that make this a very beautiful and simple and easily sellable. And I don't mean that in a sales way. I mean it in a personal way. I don't have to convince anybody of the good of what we do. All it takes now is a leadership team that reminds them of what they do. That's all it takes. You just have to remind them of amazing work that we do. And all of a sudden we have this awesome, easily communicating team that just continues to work harmoniously, and we fix the tweaks when we need to fix them. But I think that that's the main reason why in our company we've been successful.

Mike Paton:

Yeah, for the record, I am a pet owner and read your profile a couple weeks ago when we were first discussing you coming on the podcast. And I went, what a great idea. And it's surprising, it's a need that hasn't been filled before.

Dr. Dani McVety:

We hear that now, but just like any entrepreneur that's listening to this, at the time when I first started, I can't tell you how many people said, "you can't make a business out of that. No other doctor, that's not scalable. Nobody's going to want to do that. Clients aren't going to want to do that. People don't want to have that done in their home." But you do it and you do it. And you hone in your business model and you hone in the service of what you do. And all of a sudden everybody, it's like, obviously it makes sense.

Mike Paton:

Yeah. Well, I would add to your definition of entrepreneur, a person who doesn't listen to that kind of negative mindset. Sees opportunity where somebody else sees an obstacle.

Dr. Dani McVety:

My attorney told me that a lot. "You don't listen, Dani, do you?" I'm like, no. He's like some of my best clients don't listen to me. I'm like, okay, good.

Mike Paton:

Yeah. And at those rates, that's probably unusual. And then, what's the biggest challenge the organization is facing today?

Dr. Dani McVety:

At this moment, our challenge right now, just us in the veterinary field, is finding doctors. But that's a profession-wide problem. We just aren't graduating enough doctors to fill the need. You've got to kind of a two-prong thing happening where 85 to 90% of the graduates are female, graduating veterinary school. There's no problem with that, other than the fact that we love to have babies around our 26, 27, 35 year range. And that's right when you graduate vet school. And so if you just consider maybe 50% of them stop at some point to have kids, now you're talking about a certain percentage of the population that takes off anywhere from three to six months worth of work. So the amount of veterinary hours available goes down drastically. Again, this is just my opinion. And then also the fact that pets have become so important in everybody's lives that the demand for veterinary care has gone up. So you got these two things that are happening, and all of a sudden, there's just this lack of veterinary hours available. And it's something that everybody is going through.

Mike Paton:

Yeah. Very interesting. When we're talking about leadership, I want to talk about steps you're taking to address that challenge. But let me start with a historical question. And that is this. The question I like to start the leadership section of the interview with is, if you can go back to the first moment in your life where you saw someone lead in a way that resonated with you, either good or bad, what was the first time you recognized leadership? Who was the person, what were they doing? And what'd you learn from that experience?

Dr. Dani McVety:

You know, it has to be my dad. My mom and dad grew a business from nothing and made it one of the biggest wire manufacturers reps in the southeast United States. And my dad didn't go to college. He said he barely graduated high school. That doesn't make sense to me, but my dad's the type of guy that can talk to anybody, whether or not it's the President of the United States, or it's the homeless man on the side of the road, he could talk to anyone and just get on their level. And I grew up watching him do that. So I can't think of a specific example, but I do remember one night, one of my dad's warehouse men, and they had 20, 30 warehouse guys. And they're warehouse guys, right? They just load wire for a living. He was in jail, and my dad left at 11, 12PM, whatever, or AM, and went out and got the guy out of jail and brought him to his house.

And he did that a couple times. And I saw people follow my dad. And of course my mom also, she just did more of the accounting backend work. But I saw people follow my parents in a very selfless and unquestioning way. And even to this day, they have friends that are just... they would do anything for them, and my parents would do anything for them as well. And so I think that type of leadership, to me, it was gaining the respect of the people around you by your actions every single day.

Mike Paton:

Right. Taking action to demonstrate that you care, not saying that you care.

Dr. Dani McVety:

Yeah, exactly.

Mike Paton:

Right. Well said. Great story. Thank you. And certainly a common theme I hear from really, really good leaders is that you can't fake caring, for sure.

Dr. Dani McVety:

And caring about the person. You're not just caring about them to the extent that they're in the warehouse working, like you're caring about the person. You're caring about what they're doing. You're caring about their life. You actually genuinely want them to succeed and have a great life. And that's the whole point, because if you have a great life and if you're happy, you're going to stick with us and you're going to work well, and everyone's going to thrive. And hey, we might actually have a friendship, you know?

Mike Paton:

Right. Exactly. Yeah. So leading starts with serving, is what I hear you say.

Dr. Dani McVety:

Oh my God. Yeah.

Mike Paton:

Well said. As you watched that happen, did it create a desire in your own mind to become a leader, or do you feel more like you woke up one day and found yourself a leader, and was it intentional or accidental, I guess?

Dr. Dani McVety:

I would say both. mostly intentional though. My parents didn't go to college, so I'm of the generation, I'll be 39 this year. So I was of the generation of like, go to college, go to college, go to college. And my parents told me, they didn't have a degree to fall back on. So I was raised with, you need a degree to fall back on, and I always want to be a veterinarian and I never wanted to be anything else, so that my default.

So I think that being a veterinarian was number one. But then I always knew that I wanted to be in the leadership role. And so it was mostly intentional, but probably a bit of my personality also, just watching my parents, watching how they work, and I'm the oldest child. And I'm the oldest of all my cousins. So I think coming with an oldest child mentality, you're like, this is just my role in life. And it was always kind of expected. It was expected of me, meaning I expected it of myself. And it was probably somewhat expected of me on the outside.

Mike Paton:

When you think about yourself as a leader, what are the characteristics or attributes you try to display that makes you feel proud of yourself as the leader? What are you aspiring to be as a leader?

Dr. Dani McVety:

I want people to feel better. I want them to be a better person because of something that I did. And not necessarily about me, but even our support center team on the phone. When we first started our support center, I couldn't afford to pay them more than \$12 an hour. Like that's an entry-level job. And I knew these people didn't want to do that for the rest of their life. And I would tell them, I would say, look, I know you don't want to do this forever, but my goal is that whatever time you spend here makes you a better person for any other future job that you ever want. So there's communication tips, things that we'll talk about, how to say something, how to phrase something, that it will make you a better person no matter where you end up going.

And also letting them know that, I'm not going to be mad at you if you have to quit, if you have to get a different job, anything. And now we're able to pay our people a lot more than that, but it's still, even our doctors, I know that the tides of your life change, and sometimes you need to go here and sometimes you need to go here. And letting them know that I'm not being friendly to you just because you're working with us, I'm being friendly to you because that's who we are. And that's also what I expect of you. Meaning, we need to have good internal communication. And I have fired very, very productive people simply because they've been mean to other people.

And when we do that, everybody else in the company sees that, and now they understand a little bit more of like, wow, this really is about having good productivity, yes, we have high standards. But at the same time, we have a standard of communication. That means you have to, and that's one of our core values that Chris helped us get. You have to care about people. You have to like people. If you don't like people, you want to sit a room and talk by yourself, this is not the right job for you. No hard feelings. It's just not. You have to love people to work here. And that's what we want to exude back to our team too.

Mike Paton:

That's great. Great stuff. Are there any characteristics or attributes that you're leery of letting creep into your leadership style? In other words, describe the leadership disciplines that you don't have a taste for.

Dr. Dani McVety:

You know, I really don't like the heavy lingo, like the SOPs and buh buh buh, and even some of the EOS lingo, I've said, "Chris, I'm not going to use that word. I'm going to use this word instead." Because it just fits. It just fits better with what our organization is. So I really don't like that stuff. The question I thought you were going to ask is, what do you have to taper in yourself a little bit? And I have found that the older that I've gotten, the more introverted I've gotten. I can turn on the extroversion. I can turn it on, no problem. But I really have to sometimes remind myself, especially in the COVID situation, you have to keep that communication up. You have to keep it at a high level, and it has to be consistent.

And sometimes I get to this mind of, "but I already said that." And then I have to remind myself, "but that was last year and we have 50 new people, and I have to say it again," meaning good things like where we're going, our mission, vision, values, saying these things over and over and over again is not a bad thing. And it's not repetitious. But I think the corporate stuff, I really am a veterinarian first, and I've learned to be a leader. So that I think has gained me a lot of respect in the company, because we're a veterinary service, and people I think typically tend to respect a veterinarian. Whereas if I just came with

an MBA and a CEO title and all that stuff, that's a different respect that they're giving. And it's a little bit more of a hands-off approach. It's not as approachable, I guess, is the word.

Mike Paton:

I'm certain it's helpful that you're walking a mile in their shoes every day, and you're not asking them to do anything you're not in the trenches doing yourself. So the appearance of caring is less valuable than actual caring, in other words.

Dr. Dani McVety:

Yeah, yeah.

Mike Paton:

So we talked about your challenge of finding enough quality veterinarian students to fill the demand for your service. How are you dealing with that as a leader? How's your leadership team responding to that challenge?

Dr. Dani McVety:

To us, it's important to build the team and keep the team. Because even if we lose somebody, now all of a sudden we have to now invest again and recruiting and marketing and all that stuff. So we spend a lot of our time, A, recruiting, obviously, because that's important. But the recruiting also is a double benefit to us because we also generate a lot of our business through referral systems. So when I go and speak at a conference, now I'm not only speaking to people that are going to hear what I have to say and say, I want to do that too, but they also are going to hear what we're saying and then know that our company knows what we're doing and then wants to refer to us as well.

So it's this kind of two-pronged... so the speaking and writing is something that my business partner and I, honestly we just kind of fell into, and we, we liked it so we just kept doing it. We had no idea how important it was to our presence within the veterinary space, to continue to just put the message out of what we do. Conversations, a lot of what we do, nobody was doing before. So just the protocol of euthanasia that we have is very different than what we were taught to do in veterinary school. So we have a cocktail of medications and how we use them and how we deliver them, that is again, kind of very cutting edge. And it allows the process to be as beautiful as it can possibly be. And that sharing of that process and of giving that information to other people, at first people would tell me, they're like, "you're giving away your secret sauce. Why are you doing this?"

And I'm like, no, but we have to share this information. This is a benefit to everybody. And that attitude has brought a lot of people, A, referring to us, but then B, joining us. Now, once they join us, we got to keep them. So we have to be the employer of choice. We have to be the ones that care, that allow them to have the quality of life during the day that a lot of doctors don't have, we have to invest in them.

And one thing that we did this year, which sounded crazy, my board was like, "what do you want to do?" We hired a life coach. And I had a life coach that's working with 15 of our doctors right now. And it's a six month plan. And then after that, we're going to evaluate, and most likely, because everyone seems to love it, she'll take another 15. So this was, it's a strict and only an investment in them. And of course the outcome hopefully is that they're happy and that they feel in charge of their life. And all of a sudden they're not blaming something else for why they're unhappy and then maybe quitting. But

instead understanding that you have complete control over your life and your happiness and the decisions that you make.

Mike Paton:

That's great. A couple of notes for the listener, and just to kudos to you. So one of the bullets you find in a visionary's seat on the accountability chart is creative problem solving. 80% of the time, a visionary puts creative problem solving in their seat on the accountability chart. And that's the kind of thing, any idea that your board thinks you're crazy to consider is creative problem solving, and it's working. And it might not have worked, but you got to try when you're trying to solve a vexing problem that the whole industry is dealing with. That's a great story. Can you think of anything in your career you wish you had a do-over on from a leadership or management standpoint?

Dr. Dani McVety:

I think everybody that's in this type of position of entrepreneur and growing would look back and say, "well, there were a couple of hires that maybe weren't the best at the beginning," but, I was really blessed to have Chris White's help. We started traction at the same time that I thought I had a problem. And he was amazing at actually showing us what the problem was. And then now we've learned from it. So I don't know that I would take it back, because I learned so much from it. So there was a little bit of that. There's maybe a little bit of how I handled some situations where I'm like, "geez, I could have handled that a whole lot better. Or I could've just cut right to the chase instead of holding on for a long time," or little things like that. But I think all in all, everything that we've done has really been very much on purpose and we've been blessed that it's mostly turned out okay.

Mike Paton:

Yeah. Hindsight is definitely 20/20. What I hear a lot is, the things I regret are not the things I did. It's the things I took too long to do.

Dr. Dani McVety:

That's a good one. I like that.

Mike Paton:

Let's talk about leadership outside of business context. And I love it because you started by describing your parents as leaders. And so what have you learned in the business that's impacted your life outside the business from a leadership style?

Dr. Dani McVety:

You know, I have three and a half kids, so I'm pregnant with the fourth right now.

Mike Paton:

Well congratulations. That's great.

Dr. Dani McVety:

Yeah. And so I think from a female's perspective, it's sometimes different. Because we are in a leadership role in work, and then you have to come home and you have to turn on the wife role. And it's

very different, because I've got lots of books, as you can tell, I love reading the book. I don't actually read them. I listen to them and then I buy them because I think it's a trophy that I need to put on.

Mike Paton:

I see. I like it.

Dr. Dani McVety:

Yeah. So I've learned a lot about how you handle people, and I can handle it so well at work and be calm and compassionate and loving. And then when I get home, I have to handle it the same way. And sometimes I can get upset very easily at home sometimes, when I really shouldn't. Because I'm like, I wouldn't do that at work. Why would I take that personally? I take nothing personally at work, and then I get home and my husband says something, and I've taken it personally.

So I've had to really, really learn how to take the best of what I learned at work communication-wise, and try, I'm not saying I do this well by any means. My husband will tell you, if you want proof. But try and put that on at home. And it was actually really funny is that my kids, so we've started homeschooling this year because of the COVID thing. And not because we were scared of it, just because the school system had no idea what they were doing until two weeks before. I was like, nevermind, we'll take them home [crosstalk 00:25:18]

Mike Paton:

We'll take care of this.

Dr. Dani McVety:

We're going to do this for a year, at least and we'll see. And it's been going great. But I manage the kids' schedules like I manage the employees' schedules. Or at least like I used to. Like, here's what we're doing, and then this, and then this, and then remind them, and then text them, are you guys doing this? Come on, let's get on. And have to remember, they got to get them going and inspired too, like, don't you want to be smart? Don't you want to learn this? No, I don't want to learn this. Well you don't need to learn this, but you need to learn it for this. And so it's a lot of it. A lot of it spills over into the family life.

Mike Paton:

Yeah. An a-ha for me in my life was learning to treat my family like the most important business deliverable I had. And I'm a little embarrassed about that, and that you shouldn't have to work hard at that. But I think talking about the difference between genders and roles, I think for a lot of men, the identity comes from your profession more than your family. And I think the opposite pressure exists for women. And it's hard. We're all navigating through unprecedented change in the dynamic of what a family is, and to be a leader of a business and have a family that looks to you for advice, and if your household is anything like most households, your children refuse to acknowledge your husband exists when they need something. And so they're looking for you. It's got to be hard, got to be hard to balance even when they're not all at home.

Dr. Dani McVety:

It is, and I think from a female's perspective, you're supposed to do everything. And I'm supposed to be the perfect leader and the perfect mother and the perfect wife, and I actually did go through a divorce

after 10 years. So this is my second husband. He's amazing. And so I learned a lot through that process, and it was really tough because the business took a strain when the relationship took a strain, simply because of the nature of it. And when you're an entrepreneur, it's all wrapped up into one.

Mike Paton:

That's right.

Dr. Dani McVety:

And it's one identity and it's one everything. It was tough. I'm blessed to have gotten through it in a wonderful way, and we have a great relationship.

Mike Paton:

Well you've shown me already that your leadership style is infused with a tremendously positive mindset and attitude. And I think when you're going through something tough at home, the energy it takes to muster that positivity is just tenfold. And I've been there myself as well, and feeling the same overlap where you can't possibly be good at all of it at the same time. So kudos to you for trying.

Dr. Dani McVety:

Yeah. And everyone's telling you, you should be, and you need to be here and you need to be this. And, and it does. And then everything kind of takes a stress, but you have to align priorities and make sure that you're doing the best you can here and the best you can there, and then stop apologizing for it.

Mike Paton:

That's right. And demonstrate you care with your actions and listen. And all the things you've talked about in your business are equally as important, arguably more so at home. So great stuff.

Dr. Dani McVety:

Yeah I know, you're exactly right.

Mike Paton:

Sounds like your husband is smart enough to acknowledge that whenever something isn't working at home, it's definitely his fault. And if he isn't, I hope he listens to this podcast.

Dr. Dani McVety:

He's amazing. He is. So he knows what this business is to me. That's tough for an entrepreneur to work through.

Mike Paton:

Well I think in any partnership, if you don't want your partner to live her or his passion and dream and purpose, it's not a true partnership.

Dr. Dani McVety:

[inaudible 00:28:36], you just grow and you grow differently. And it's particularly when you build a business, never are things exactly the way you think they're going to be. Never. It always is different. And I think that's the way in life as well, obviously.

Mike Paton:

Well, and back to your original comments about the definition of entrepreneur. I couldn't live a life where my inbox looked the same every morning and my eight to five job. I mean, that would make me crazy. I want it to be different every day. And so complaining about it just doesn't seem like something I ought to be doing.

Dr. Dani McVety:

Exactly right.

Mike Paton:

If you could give a young leader who maybe is struggling right now, and one of the things that motivated us to start this podcast is, leadership is more valuable than it's ever been before. And appears to be more at a deficit than it's ever been before. But at the same time, it's fraught with more risk and uncertainty than ever before. So there's a lot of people out there who really feel like they need to get better at this stuff. What advice would you give a young leader growing into his or her shoes as a leader?

Dr. Dani McVety:

You know, I get questions like that all the time from groups that I talk to and that kind of thing. It's fascinating to me because, for us, I'll start. If you want some advice, read books, watch people that you look up to, leaders that you look up to or just watch them. And at the end of the day, you have to just do it. You can't just sit here and say, what book can I read to make me a good leader? What person can I talk to, to be my mentor, to make me a good leader? You have to just do it.

And whether or not you're going to lead a club that you're going to start, whatever, you have to start leading and building and doing something. And then that's how you're going to learn. You can't learn from a book and you can't learn. You can get tips and stuff from a podcast and you can get tips and things from a mentor and you can get tips and stuff from a YouTube video. But at the end of the day, unless you're doing it, you're not actually putting bricks on a foundation that you can stand on.

Mike Paton:

Awesome. Get in the arena, make it work, and learn from the things that work and the stuff that doesn't work.

Dr. Dani McVety:

Yeah. Well, and take the things that don't work and just say, great, awesome. You know, onto something else. There is not one person that is at a high level of leadership that is going to tell you that they would regret their mistakes. Nobody is going to regret their mistakes. They're going to say I learned from it. It was amazing. It was great. And I'm a better person because of it. And if I hadn't have learned from that, I wouldn't be where I was.

Mike Paton:

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Great. Couldn't agree more. Dr. Dani, this has been an absolutely fabulous conversation. It's been terrific getting to know you as a person, and my respect for you as a leader is super high. Thank you for giving us your time and your insights. You're doing noble work and building a great organization. And it's just a great gift to share with our listener. Where can we learn more about Lap of Love and about you?

Dr. Dani McVety:

So we have an awesome website. It's going to be even more awesome next year, but it's at LapOfLove.com, and you can Google my name and you'll find a Dr. Dani at LapOfLove.com.

Mike Paton:

Awesome. Thank you so much for your time. I look forward to sharing this episode with the listener.

Dr. Dani McVety:

Yeah. Thank you very much. Honored to be here.

Mike Paton:

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