

035 Go Deeper Reflection Guide

GO DEEPER: LEADING WITH LOVE AND BUILDING LEGACY

A Reflection Guide for "Why Everyone Wants to Be Loved: Lessons from a Business Icon"

INTRODUCTION

In this powerful episode of Making Sense of Faith, Adam Hamilton introduces us to Barnett Helzberg Jr., whose revolutionary approach to leadership and business challenges our understanding of what it means to truly put people first. As you reflect on this conversation, use this guide to explore your own leadership style, consider how love can transform your relationships, and think about the legacy you want to leave behind.

3 REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Take a moment to consider what stood out to you most from Barnett's story:

1. Barnett built his business on the principle that employees come first, not customers. How does this challenge your assumptions about leadership in your own workplace, family, or community roles?
2. The "I Am Loved" buttons became a global phenomenon because they met a universal human need. Think about someone in your life who might need to know they're loved—what's preventing you from expressing that to them?
3. Barnett talked about the Jewish concept of "tikkun olam" (repairing the world) as a driving force in his philanthropy. How are you currently contributing to "repairing" or healing the world around you, whether in small or large ways?

2 KEY INSIGHTS

1. True Leadership Starts with Loving Your People

"I would say, love your people and just treat them as you would your family or anybody else. You're number one. Everything comes from you. It's not the customer, it's the people serving the customer."

Question: What would change in your leadership style if you truly believed the people you serve or work with are "number one"?

Reflection: Consider a time when someone treated you with genuine care and respect. How did that affect your performance, attitude, and willingness to serve others? Now think about how you can model that same approach with the people in your sphere of influence.

2. Legacy is Built Through Daily Acts of Love

"It really all comes down to loving other people and appreciating them and listening to them and not trying to be the expert or more knowledgeable than anybody else."

Question: When you think about how you want to be remembered, does your daily behavior align with that vision?

Reflection: Barnett hopes to be remembered for "warmth" and "friendship." What simple, everyday actions could you take to ensure your legacy reflects the values you claim to hold most dear?

1 PRACTICE EXERCISE

The Daily Love Check-In

Take 5 minutes each evening this week for this exercise:

1. **Reflect on the day:** Identify one person you interacted with who you could have shown more love, appreciation, or genuine interest.
2. **Ask yourself:** Did I treat the people in my life as "number one" today? Where did I fall short?
3. **Plan tomorrow:** Choose one specific person you'll intentionally show love or appreciation to tomorrow. This could be:
 - A genuine compliment to a coworker
 - Really listening to a family member without distractions
 - A handwritten note of thanks
 - Simply asking "How are you really doing?" and waiting for an honest answer
4. **Remember Barnett's wisdom:** You don't have to be the expert or have all the answers. Sometimes the most loving thing you can do is simply show up and care.
5. **End with intention:** Before sleep, set an intention to approach tomorrow with the same warmth and genuine care that Barnett modeled throughout his 91 years.

QUOTES TO CONSIDER

"We never even thought of giving up. You know, there were people wanting to buy the company and this and that, but it just never occurred to me."

"Everybody wants to be loved."

"It gives me a lot of joy. You know, those things. They're not for the charity. They're for me. Yeah. The way I feel."

"If you're giving when you're living, you're knowing where it's going."

CLOSING REFLECTION

Leadership isn't about having the biggest title, the most knowledge, or even the best strategies. As Barnett's story reveals, the most transformative leadership flows from a simple but profound commitment: treating every person you encounter as if they matter deeply—because they do. Whether you're leading a team of hundreds or simply showing up for your family, the principle remains the same. When love becomes your operating system, extraordinary things become possible, and the legacy you leave behind becomes one of healing rather than harm.

This reflection guide was created to accompany the Making Sense of Faith podcast episode "Why Everyone Wants to Be Loved: Lessons from a Business Icon." For more resources like this, visit makingsenseoffaith.com.