

The Better Show

I think you really start right at the beginning and say, “Well, does leadership matter?” I think you start with that. And I think, particularly right now in these challenging times, I think everyone would agree that I agree that leadership matters. And when you think about the COVID-19 challenge and you ask the question, “Well, who's going to have to lead on this challenge?” The answer is obvious, everybody. It's going to take everybody to lead. So I think leadership matters. And I have come to believe that the best way to lead is in a shared way where power is distributed and everyone is helping to lead.

(04:40-05:24)

The first reason shared leadership is a bit difficult is because humanity has gone through generations upon generations of a different type of leadership model that is built on collecting power to the center. Historically, the way you gained power and lead was by collecting it. And the more you collected, the more control and influence you had. But in the 21st century, that script is not working that well. *(06:41-07:24)*

I've come to believe, which is the fun part, that sharing leadership is much easier than not sharing it. Think about it that way. I've kind of flipped it inside out. And think about all the structure and control that has to be a place to not share leadership. That's actually hard to do. Sharing leadership really, when you contemplate it, is easier, it's intuitive, it benefits everybody, and it's not a complicated exercise. Collecting leadership is complicated, sharing it is not. *(21:32-22:24)*

[00:00:00] **Ian:** Hey everybody, Ian here. A quick note before we start this show. My guest today is Kevin Hancock, the CEO of Hancock Lumber, one of the oldest companies in America and the six-time recipient of the Best Places to Work in Maine award in 2010. However, at the peak of the national housing and mortgage market collapse, Kevin acquired a rare, neurological voice disorder called [spasmodic dysphonia](#), ‘SD’. And when his voice became weakened, he developed a new leadership style that was based on strengthening the voices of others.

And in his new book, [The Seventh Power, One CEO's Journey into the Business of Shared Leadership](#), Kevin shares his philosophy, his values, and the strategies that Hancock Lumber embraced on its journey toward becoming an employee centric company, where essentially leadership responsibilities are broadly shared rather than power coming from the top. I really enjoyed my interview with Kevin. He has a way of bringing warmth to business that you rarely hear from leaders, and many of his concepts can really benefit us all. I really hope you enjoy my interview with Kevin.

Welcome to episode 134 of The Better Show. Today I talk with CEO Kevin Hancock about his new book, *The Seventh Power*, and how we can all benefit from the concept of shared leadership. It is a show for people who want to get better, by people who love getting better. And that's us.

When we start thinking about all the different ways that we can improve, and we can get better, and we can help the people around us get better, it's such a wide world that covers

almost every aspect of human experience in daily life. I'm pretty excited about building a community of like-minded people.

Ian: Hello everybody. And welcome back to the better show. It's just me today, just Ian, but I'm here with a very special guest. His name is Kevin Hancock. And as you probably heard in my prerecorded biography intro of Kevin that you already have gone through, he's an impressive guy. He is a man of industry. He is the CEO of a longstanding family company up in Maine, my neck of the woods. I grew up in upstate New York. Kevin and I were just chatting before the show. And he's here today to talk about his new book, which is [The Seventh Power](#). So welcome to [The Better Show](#), Kevin.

Kevin: My pleasure, Ian, thank you for having me on your show.

Ian: Absolutely. Actually I heard that is actually your birthday. Is it true?

Kevin: Today is my birthday.

Ian: I was telling Kevin, this is the first time we've had a guest on The Better Show on his or her birthday. So thank you again. That's really generous of you to make time on your birthday.

Kevin: Well, one of my favorite things to share is an idea, so taking time today to be with you is truly a treat for me.

[03:07] **Ian:** I love that. And actually one of the quotes that I pulled from your book that you say right upfront in the beginning, I love this, you said your three favorite things to share are a smile, a hug, and an idea. And I was thinking, you know, it is getting a little crazy out there with the COVID pandemic. So maybe we can't share a hug at this moment, but we can certainly do two of the other ones, the smile and the idea.

Well, I came across Kevin's 2019 TEDx Talk called, [The Business of Shared Leadership - A CEO's Quest to Disperse Power](#). I was absolutely blown away by it, Kevin, and really inspired by it. And very happy that you're here to talk about your books. I think as we do every episode, I would like to start with, why does it matter? Why should we care about shared leadership?

Kevin: Right. I love that you start your shows that way. And I think that question really gets right to the heart of the very essence of The Better Show, which is an interest in awareness and interest in self-development and improvement and desire to make things better. Being conscious of change and improvement is such an essential ingredient in helping society evolve.

And so to this subject, I think you really start right at the beginning and say, "Well, does leadership matter?" I think you start with that. And I think, particularly right now in these challenging times, I think everyone would agree that I agree that leadership matters. And when you think about the COVID-19 challenge and you ask the question, "Well, who's going to have to lead on this challenge?" The answer is obvious, everybody. It's going to take

everybody to lead. So I think leadership matters. And I have come to believe that the best way to lead is in a shared way where power is distributed and everyone is helping to lead.

[05:35] **Ian:** I really love that. And it is very true. I think we're all starting to feel that right now. I mean, the COVID example is the topic du jour, it's the thing of today, but it will be something else in five years. But it is very tangible for us all right now to feel that we can't just rely on someone else to solve this for us. It is up to every one of us in a way. So that example really resonates with me.

One thing that I wanted to follow up with is, why is it so hard for us to disperse power in organizations? One thing that I love as a thing you say in the book and quoting you, is you say it's 'meant to be dispersed'. And so when I read that I think it should be natural for us, yet it feels like it's difficult for people. Why? Do you have any thoughts on that?

Kevin: I do. I think that's a great question. And I think the answer to it is in three parts: momentum, ego, and then thinking about followership.

So let's start with momentum. The first reason shared leadership is a bit difficult is because humanity has gone through generations upon generations of a different type of leadership model that is built on collecting power to the center. Historically, the way you gained power and lead was by collecting it. And the more you collected, the more control and influence you had. But in the 21st century, that script is not working that well. I think people can see, I believe, organizations globally are in a bit of a slump. When you look at their actual performance versus their peak potential performance. And I think this is the reason why.

The second part of it to me is ego. I know when I was a younger manager, I've been at this for a while, but a younger manager and leader, I really confused my own ego with my role. And I really often got caught up in thinking that my own self-worth or my own value was a function of my leadership role and my leadership power. And so I think it takes leaders letting go of ego and separating ego from role in order to disperse power.

But then finally, I would say the followership is a bit of a reason why shared leadership is a challenging subject. Humanity, I think, has been indoctrinated over hundreds and hundreds of years into the art of followership. Which is expecting not to lead, expecting someone else to have control. And for leadership to change and for power to be dispersed not collected, followership has also got to change.

[08:56] **Ian:** Interesting. Okay. So there's really kind of three components to that. It's a complex thing. Interesting. You know, one thing I was curious on is what role do you think that trust plays in making the transition to shared leadership? Bosses have to trust their employees, but don't employees have to have a leap of faith to make here as well?

Kevin: Yeah, I think trust plays a big role. So again, to me, the fundamental concept behind shared leadership is that power is meant to be dispersed. And that organizations and society as a whole can function more optimally and effectively if everybody shares that responsibility. But it really takes a bit of awareness to even start thinking about that, you know, which goes right back to the fundamental idea of your show. You've really got to be willing to stop and think about leadership and how it's traditionally functioned, and how it's

fitting today in the 21st century, and as humanity evolves, it would really be silly to say that leadership doesn't need to change. Of course it does. You know, everything's changing, and leadership has to change as well. But I think in general, it's a subject that hasn't gotten enough thought from enough people.

Ian: Yeah. I think that's what struck me when I heard your TEDx talk was, you know, this is a topic that more people need to be talking about. And so I'm glad that we can play a little bit of a role in that and get more people to start having a conversation about it. And I think your book does a great job at this. So my takeaway is, it matters. Shared leadership matters because literally society would all function a bit better if we took this approach. That's my key takeaway, and who wouldn't want that. Right?

So I'm kind of curious if we move into personal experience, when did you become aware of the importance of shared leadership? And was there some kind of memorable moment that inspired you to take this cause up? Because you were leading a busy life, you had a lot on your plate, why would you go do this?

[11:28] **Kevin:** Yes, there really are four dates that created big change in my life, and they are 1848, 2008, 2010 and 2012.

So 1848 is the year our company began doing business. I'm part of the sixth generation of my family to work for our company. We're a forest products company, and in 2008 the housing and mortgage markets collapsed. And I remember, in our market, housing stock shrunk by 66% in 36 months, and our sales fell by 50% at 36 months. It was an economic tsunami.

In 2010, at the peak of that collapse, I began to have trouble speaking. I hadn't connected that problem at the time with the economic challenge. But in hindsight, it's totally connected to me in terms of the pressure I felt during that period. But anyway, it turns out I had acquired a rare, neurological voice disorder called [spasmodic dysphonia](#) that made speaking at times extremely difficult. So there I was as CEO trying to help a lumber company through the collapse of the housing market without the consistent use of my voice.

And I laugh about this now, but at the time I said, well, what possible good could a CEO be who can't talk all the time? Because really, in some ways as a CEO, my voice had been my primary tool. But it was really interesting, Ian, when it suddenly difficult talk, you developed strategies for doing less of it. And my primary strategy was to answer a question with a question, thereby putting the conversation right back on the other person. So someone would come up to me at work with a question or a problem, because I was the CEO or the boss, and previously I would have provided an answer and a direction. But now because of my voice, I started saying, "Wow, that is a good question. What do you think we should do about it?"

[14:16] **Ian:** I loved this part of the book. I thought it was so smart of you. And it both helps you personally in that moment with your speaking struggles, but it also helps you start to disperse power, right? Like, isn't that the side effect?

Kevin: That is exactly what happened. So initially this was just a voice protection exercise for me. But after months of doing this, what struck me was so intriguing, not surprising but intriguing, was that people already knew what to do. They didn't actually need, it turned out,

a CEO or management top-down solution to the vast majority of the challenges they faced. They actually already knew what to do. All they needed was encouragement and safe work culture to trust their own voice and do it.

Now to really build on this, in 2012 I began traveling somewhat serendipitously from Maine where I live to the [Pine Ridge Indian Reservation](#) in the Southwest corner of South Dakota, which is the largest, poorest, most historic, most remote of all the Sioux reservations on the Northern Plains. It's a place I've now been over 20 times and have lots of friends there. But therein what struck me is I countered an entire community that did not feel fully heard. In part because of how they had been treated, and how those leaders who have the most power, which was non reservation at the time, white America during Western expansion had overrun them, that they felt like a piece of their voice was missing. And putting the two together, I had five personal learnings.

First from my own voice disorder, I understood what it was like to not feel heard. I actually knew what that felt like. Second, at Pine Ridge I really realized what may seem obvious, but there are lots of ways for humans to lose a piece of their voice in this world. And the third perhaps, I started thinking about that an answerable question, the very meaning or purpose of a life on earth. And concluded from that paradigm that perhaps it was to self-actualize. Perhaps what every human had in common is we were all here just trying to find our own true voice, to know it, to live it, to love it, and to gift it with confidence to the collective consciousness of humanity.

But point number four, across time when I got thinking about leadership I concluded, unfortunately that on average or in total across human history leaders have probably done a lot more to restrict or limit or intimidate or direct the voices of others than to free them. Which is then finally when it hit me that perhaps the partial limitations of my own voice, which I'd only previously thought of as a hindrance or a liability, or quite literally a pain in the neck. Perhaps a blessing or an invitation to lead differently because I was in a position of leadership and perhaps the limits on my own boys could be leveraged to strengthen the voices of others. And that's what I got really excited about this idea of, well, what if everybody led? What if everybody's shared the responsibility of leadership? And what if central leadership's role was to give others a voice? What might that look and feel like?

[00:18:26] **Ian:** Yeah. When you listen to Kevin's story or you read the book, one of the things I think that is so striking, and I'm sure you must feel this having lived it, is it feels like such opposing opposites. When you talk about where you are in Maine, running a lumber company as a CEO of a family company for a hundred plus years. And then you're talking about going across the country to an Indian reservation right after you have this crazy thing happen to you where you lose your voice. Like, all of these things seem to indicate that there has to be some reason this is all coming together, right? Like you must have a lot of stuff going through your head, and really inspiring to me that someone that... So just to make it very personal as well. For me, I'm 32, we talk about in our show where we're at in our lives all the time, and I'm building a career and I got married a year ago, and the listeners know this kind of stuff in anecdotes that I've talked about. But you know, you do always have, and I think everybody can relate to this, you always have that in the back of your head as you go through life that opportunities are closing. Or maybe you're just getting more and more defined into what you maybe were trying to aspire to or what life has thrown at you.

And I think what's inspiring about your story is you were very far down that road, right? Like you had a family comp, a company that you were destined to run. I mean, you mentioned in the book that you took that over I think literally the age I am now, 32, when your father passed. And then to be in the midst of that, to go through the financial struggles in the markets and all that stress, to have a personal medical issue. But then to go from that and say, I'm going to change the way I do things. I'm going to introspect. I'm going to write up. I just want to say, it's very inspiring that when you are that far down the path in life, and I don't mean that in a 'you're old way', I mean in the like your destiny was well on its way. It's just inspiring that you took the time to do this. So I just wanted to say, thank you, first off and for sharing your story.

I would love to move into what we always call the meat of the show, which is our tips and tricks. And really start to help listeners understand in their own lives how can we start to implement some of what you're talking about? So I will start with a really simple one. How can we get better at shared leadership?

[21:15] **Kevin:** Yeah. That's an important question. And I think the good news is all that we have to do is contemplate the possibility of it and make it a priority. I've come to believe, which is the fun part, that sharing leadership is much easier than not sharing it. Think about it that way. I've kind of flipped it inside out. And think about all the structure and control that has to be a place to not share leadership. That's actually hard to do. Sharing leadership really, when you contemplate it, is easier, it's intuitive, it benefits everybody, and it's not a complicated exercise. Collecting leadership is complicated, sharing it is not.

And I do talk of that in the book. I referenced this about the epiphany moment for me on this subject. I was thinking about these ideas now for a few years, and I was walking one night in the Arizona desert, north of Phoenix at sunset, when the kind of the epiphany I'd been searching for came to me in the form of five simple words and stopped me in my tracks.

Those words were, "In nature power is dispersed". And I stopped and I surveyed that desert scene, and then began posing out loud - this would have made you smile Ian - I began posing out loud, a series of leadership questions to the desert itself. I said, "Where's the capital of this desert?" "Where's its headquarters?" "Where's its corporate governing center?" "Where's the CEO?" "Where are the managers and the supervisors?" "Which one of these cactus is in charge of all the others?" And the answer to every question was crystal clear. In nature, leadership and the responsibility for the flow of nature is scattered and diffused. It lives in every part of nature, big and small. The minute we contemplate that, we know that to be true.

Then the second key awareness is to remind ourselves that humans are a part of nature, not separate from it or above it. We are a part of it, and humans ultimately aspire to organize in this same way. So sharing leadership, to me, is the organizational equivalent of synchronizing how we organize and lead in the pattern that nature naturally flows in.

Ian: Wow. That is, yeah. I remember hearing that the story in Arizona, and I did my honeymoon there, and I was thinking about that. The cactuses and seeing the nature out there and how it all runs. It's another way I would say it, right. It runs itself. There's no board of directors out there making the calls. So I'm curious, is this something that you think we can

only do in business? Or could this be applied in personal life, or government, or communities, or even family?

[25:34] **Kevin:** Right. That's a great set of questions, too. And I think the answers here are self-evident. I ended up writing about this in a business book context, partly because the publishing world wants everything in a box, and partly because that was my real-life example. You know, we went to work implementing this approach at our company at 550 people. But it is self-evident to me that same approach would be optimal in all aspects of personal life and collective life, whether it is government, community, family.

We have two young adult daughters in their twenties. And for parents, just think about the power of shared leadership in terms of parenting and imparting individual responsibility onto your children, versus the consequences of not doing that. And what I really think is happening here in the 21st century, which is super exciting that we're all alive here now with opportunity, is I think there is a planetary human awakening unfolding.

I believe that humanity, for centuries, has been organizationally centric. Meaning the individual was indoctrinated into the art of serving the empire, whether it be the country, the nation state, the religion, the corporation, or the school. But in the 21st century, I believe more and more individuals are awakening to their own sacred power that lives within us all. And that institutions have become slow to respond to this and adjust. It's a simple but massive shift. The old model, the individual was small before the institution. In the new model, the institution ideally is made small before the individual. The institution serves the individual, and then that in turn engenders loyalty and commitment from the individual back on the institution. But you do it by giving away power, not collecting it.

Ian: Yeah. I actually wanted to quote you from the book. This is for listeners; this is from the chapter entitled *Evan's Notebook*. And you say, quote, "The idea is to turn the corporation inside out. In the old model, employees were commodities that sacrificed and served the organization. In the new model, the organization becomes a conduit for serving individuals." Is there anything you want to speak to with that part? I thought that really resonated with me. It just made it so crystal clear in terms of you're flipping the model.

Kevin: Correct. In a way that actually will improve the performance of the business, but as the outcome of a higher calling. Now look today at engagement at work and you can see why this is so important. So across America, 180 million people work, but less than a third of them will describe that experience as personally meaningful or engaging beyond just an economic exercise. So engagement levels are super low, and globally the data gets even worse. Globally, a billion people work and less than 2 in 10 consider it engaging. And so you've got this overwhelming evidence that people who work are looking for something more meaningful, something that's going to serve them on a spiritual, personal growth level. And that requires organizations making the individual employee experience a top priority.

And what we essentially decided to do at our company is flip that script. Then we ended up actually changing the very mission of the company. So our mission now at Hancock Lumber is first to be meaningful to the people who work here, meaningful and valuable to the people who work here. So if you picture a flywheel, a business flywheel with all the constituents, employees, customers, suppliers, community, and the company itself, our focus has been to

put that flywheel in motion at the point of the employee experience. Not so that the business will do better, but because these are human beings investing a massive part of their life at work, and you want that experience to be meaningful. This will increase profit and corporate performance. But in its place as the outcome of a higher calling. So I'm really calling on business to take a step back and revisit its very mission and purpose.

[31:54] **Ian:** Yeah, that's powerful. One of the things in the book that Kevin has as you read through it, is every chapter ends with a lesson of seven that he has throughout the book in *The Age of Shared Leadership*. I don't want to give it all away, Kevin, I want to make sure people go read the book. But I'm kind of curious, out of the seven, is there one that really kind of struck you the most or surprised you? I'm just kind of curious if one of the lessons really stands out to you that you would want to share with the listeners?

Kevin: Well one that came to mind as I was listening to you is simply this, and the lesson is listening is for understanding, not judgment. So we're talking about creating a culture where everyone feels heard, trusted, respected, valued, and heard. When I was younger, as this zealous, hardworking manager, I think in hindsight I often listened so as to evaluate whether or not I personally approved of that other person's perspective. And if I didn't, to prepare to correct them, if you will. And I think that's such a not cool approach in the 21st century, counterproductive approach.

And so what we've really tried to do at Hancock Lumber is encourage our managers and leaders to listen for understanding, that there are no wrong answers. When someone says something, they're simply saying what they honestly feel or think at that moment in time. And the truth of the company is the collective set of all voices. And think about the power, the potential power of making it safe in a family, a school, a society, or a company, making it safe for people to actually say what they really think.

Ian: Yeah. You know what's funny, I just flipped to that part of the book, the listening part. And there was a thing I highlighted in bright, bold highlighter. You say this quote, "It's restraint that deepens engagement." And that one hit me. I was like, wow. So saying less can deepen my engagement sometimes. That one was fascinating, and it ties into the listening more than talking sometimes.

[34:40] **Kevin:** Yeah, I love that you pulled that out. Exactly. So what we try to do now when someone says something is to simply say, "Thank you for sharing that." Or, if it wasn't clear to say, "Thank you for sharing that. Could you tell us more about that?"

You know, I don't want to pick on a culture, but if you picture, let's just take an example. If you picture North Korea and an entire military parade where everyone is reciting the same words and making the same salute, that's not alignment. In an extreme example, that's coercion. In an extreme example, everybody understands that.

Well, pull that back to business. I think that old model was we all think the same way, we say the same thing, and we'd go at it the same way. And again, that wasn't alignment either. That was coerced. That's what that was. And what companies really need is for everybody to talk about the company as they are experiencing it. And that's actually to bring it to the bigger purpose, I think what the planet needs.

There's a question on the back cover of my book that's really become the motivated question for me and my pursuit to improve and grow. And that question is this, "What if everybody on earth felt trusted, respected, valued, and heard? What might change?" So everyone who contemplates that question says what you just said. Everything would change. Everything would change. And all it takes to facilitate that or move down that path is leadership restraint, which is respect for all voices.

We have millions of trees in the forest that we manage, and there never will be two of them that are identical. Same is true with humans. Even identical twins do not have identical voices. Humans are not meant to have identical voices. It's been a primitive approach to leadership that has pursued that objective, which in the 21st century we've outgrown that. Humans know it, and organizations are starting.

Ian: They're a little slow. Yeah. Yeah. Okay. Well, as we wrap up, I had a couple of questions I wanted to end with. One is, on our show we always kind of try to end with one thing that everyone listening can do today to enable the cause or to get better at the thing. In this instance I'm kind of curious, is there one thing that you would recommend when somebody hits stop on this little podcast and they take off their headphones, what's that thing that they should go do to help enable shared leadership in their organization, in their life?

[38:18] **Kevin:** There is one thing, and it might surprise you where I'm going to go with this. Where I'm going to go with this is that one thing is for each of us to make more time and focus, to turn inward and listen to our own true voice. This is where it starts to really start to break some of our own patterns and look within ourselves and seek and embrace and air to release our own true voice. That change starts from within. Once you move down that path, I believe our collective willingness to support others along that same path, will flow from that. The first obligation we have is to seek no love and release our own true voices.

Ian: And that sounds like it mimics your own story a little bit. I think that's maybe how you started when you started to listen to your own voice a little more. I'm very curious when you went through the process of writing this book, and it wasn't Kevin's first, he had another great book before this one. Anything really surprise you in the process of either researching or writing this book?

Kevin: Well, two things. The first was to me, the beauty of writing or the beauty of going on an adventure of learning is the biggest beneficiary is the person who does it. If when I wrote the book, the only thing I did was took the manuscript in my basement and put it on the shelf. It would have been so worth it because I learned, and I grew, and I changed. And that's what I really wrote about and then just decided to share it.

So first was the personal learning. But second, and I suspect, honestly, this is a big part of what struck you and inspired you to track me down, is these messages are actually super timely right now. And they're universal. And the only reason I feel comfortable saying that is I really feel like it was the gift of a higher energy or my own soul or my spirit guides that gave me my voice disorder, which I've come to see as a blessing. Which kicked me off center, forced me to look inward and change, and set me down a path that was a gift to me. But what really has motivated me now having been given that gift, is I think it's super timely

and its messages are universal, and there's critical mass of people on this planet that these messages resonate with right now.

[41:36] **Ian:** Yes. A hundred percent. Yes. I have nothing to add there. One last quick thing, I'm always curious, was there anything you weren't able to include in the book for whatever reason that you found interesting that you might want to share?

Kevin: Yeah, I touched on it in the book, but not often. And I'm actually contemplating whether or not it is the next book. And the concept is this, the Sioux tribes, the Lakota tribe at Pine Ridge on the reservation have a philosophy of connectivity that they describe as *Mitákuye Oyás'íŋ*, which translated means, “we're all brothers” or “all things are one thing” or “everything is related”. The big idea there is that everything that exists, whether it's a tree or a buffalo or a human, is made up of the same sacred star dust, and it's all related and connected.

But if you look at the way humanity has evolved to date, it's been very tribal. And the reason we're hitting kind of a big struggle or pivot point in human history in the 21st century, is that Sioux wisdom or prophecy is coming back to surface. Today, tribalism does not work, isolation does not work, because there's no ability to isolate. Today our biggest challenges and opportunities are global, but all of our governing systems are tribal and local.

When I leave the Pine Ridge reservation heading west, as I usually do, I hit a line in the middle of the sea of grass where I'm being told I'm leaving South Dakota and I'm entering Wyoming. And I stop every time, there's not another car person in in sight, and I picture a Sioux tribe moving across the Plains with the seasons and the buffalo say in the 1860s, coming to the ‘Welcome to Wyoming’ sign, and pausing to contemplate the potential of a line there that line, like almost every other, is a human construct. It's not real. But we've built our cards on these lines and it's a problem. It's a problem today.

And the other way I'm thinking about that, Ian, is that humans were very good at constructing empires. But what we've now got to do thoughtfully is deconstruct them. So the word “deconstruction is very much on my mind. And what's striking me first about that is that's not going to be uneasy exercise. So that's kind of where my head and heart are going next when I think about humanity.

Ian: That sounds exciting. I would read that in an instant. Please, please write that book. You know, it actually, it reminded me and I'm going to close with this. It reminded me in the introduction of the book, you talk about this story where you were at a gala for the internationally renowned Seeds of Peace Camp in New York City. And you talk about how former vice-President, now candidate, Joe Biden takes the stage, and he has this quote that you put in the book. He says, “Any conflict is nothing more than a loss of personal relationship. And then you go in and follow it.” And you say it reminded you of the words of a Navajo peacemaker. And the quote from that was, “We must understand that we are related to every person and every creature we see. But then we must honor our responsibilities to those relationships.” And I loved that part. That's another one that I bolded and highlighted, and it just spoke to me. But it seems kind of related to what you were just talking about.

[46:16] **Kevin:** Totally. So glad you referenced that. It reminds me of one of my favorite quotes, I forget who said it, but the quote is that “When you change the way you look at

things, the things you look at change.” And that's where maybe it leads this back with you. I think your show is so important. The very title to me is just compelling and perfect. Better Show starts with an awareness of we can do better, and that doesn't have to be an indictment on the past. The past was the best we could do at that moment in time. But what's critical is that we all recognize we can do better. And we all go to work on how we personally can lead that transformation in a way that's true to our individually unique and beautiful voices. So your show, I love being on the show and I love the mission of your show, and I'm really glad we're connected.

Ian: Well, as we sat at the top of the show, Kevin's favorite three things are a smile, a hug, and an idea. And if you could see my face right now, there's a giant smile all over it. And you have given me plenty of ideas, and I think our listeners, plenty of ideas to think about. The book is *The Seventh Power: One CEO's Journey Into the Business of Shared Leadership*. Our guest was Kevin Hancock. Kevin, thank you so much for your time. And I always tell this to guests, especially if you've just went through the process of writing a book, thank you for taking the time to get your thoughts on the page to organize and to share them with the world. Because it also is a mountain of work to write a book.

Kevin: My pleasure. Thank you so much.