

Keith Carlson Awarepreneurs interview

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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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SPEAKERS

Paul Zelizer, Keith Carlson

P Paul Zelizer 00:04

Hi, this is Paul Zelizer and welcome to another episode of The aware printers podcast. This podcast is all about the intersection of three things, conscious business, social impact, and awareness practices. Each episode I do a deep dive interview with a thought leader in this intersection. Someone who has market tested experience and is already transforming many lives. Before I introduce today's guest, in our topic, I have one request. If you could go over to iTunes or whatever app you're listening to the show on and hit the subscribe button and do a rating and do a review. It helps tremendously. Today I'm like really, really thrilled. really thrilled to introduce you to Keith Carlson, who is responsible in some ways or at least inspired me to start this podcast we literally would not be here, keep the night didn't have a conversation that we're going to talk about today. Our topic is holistic career coaching for nurses, in addition to being the primary Every person responsible for inspiring Paul Zelizer into podcasting, Keith Keith is a nurse who has been working in a variety of settings including home health, hospice, nursing education, and others since 1996. He's a board certified nurse coach, which is known as an NC dash BC. And he offers holistic career coaching for savvy nurse. He's also the host of the nurse Keith podcast. Keith, welcome to the show.

K Keith Carlson 01:29

Thanks, Paul. It's such an honor to be here and I'm here you you're just such a natural at podcasting. It's just a no brainer that you're on the mic. Well, we're gonna

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Paul Zelizer 01:37

talk about that conversation where you help me figure that out. I feel like I don't know it seems so technical, and I don't know which microphone to use all the things that people say when they're procrastinating about podcasting, you help me work through that. But before we even go to that key, talk to us, we're called to wear printers. And one of the ways we like to To get to know somebody is to ask you about a wellness or an awareness practice that you personally do to bring your resilient self to this work

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Keith Carlson 02:08

well, especially during these very difficult challenging chaotic times these days, the first thing I do in the morning is I hydrate to get my brain going. I always like to hydrate my brain with a couple big glasses of water and some vitamins. And then I exercise for a minimum of an hour first thing every morning. So that's one way I really like to start my day and if I don't do that, I definitely see the consequences. So I have learned by default, that that is really needs to be my my first actions of the day.

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Paul Zelizer 02:47

Nice started off right a friend of mine likes to say yeah, so nursing was that like, always reuse yourself, you know being of service in the world when you're

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Keith Carlson 03:00

boy did you say I want to be a nurse or like, how did that come onto your radar? Oh my gosh, no, no, I wanted to be an artist. I had several famous artists and musicians in my family. And I went to art school right out of high school, I went to the Philadelphia College of Art, and the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. And I always proudly say I dropped out of both. And it really took all my 20s till Gosh, I didn't graduate with my associate nursing to I was 32 years old. So there were three nurses on my dad's side of the family, his sisters, and that really impacted me when I was in my 20s studying holistic health, becoming a massage therapist, a yoga instructor getting into into holism in general. And when I realized, oh my gosh, I have a young teenage son, I need to set an example for him and I only have a high school diploma. I thought wow. I really need a career and nursing kind of hitting me over the head at that point. And I actually never looked back.

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Paul Zelizer 04:04

So you started in the holistic realm first, sometimes people go into medicine and being a

healthcare worker, and they say, oh, there's a wider picture, you started with the wider picture and said, nursing is a great place for me to bring these skill sets. I

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Keith Carlson 04:16

did. Yeah. And I talked to many nurses who find the holistic world, you're right after they've become nurses, which is also a great path. So I think either way you get there is awesome. And some of us just happen to go that route first. And I've always been somewhat of a rebel and just do things differently. And sometimes it's a little, you know, backwards, but I get there eventually.

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Paul Zelizer 04:40

One of the questions that just seems really obvious, we try to pay attention to social context. You're a man and nursing isn't always, you know, career path. And when I think of my mom, she said, You know, when she was growing up, you could as a woman in her age range, you could be a teacher, a nurse or a secretary. Right, there you go. She started as a teacher, right? The nurse nursing has historically been a career that more women than men go into. Talk to us a little bit about, like, what's it been like to be a man in this career path? And how has that influenced how you've, you know, made your choices in your professional career?

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Keith Carlson 05:19

Sure, well, contextually thousands of years ago, the first nurses were actually men. That was probably around I can't even remember what what century that was, but the very first nurses recorded were were male. And then we had lots of male nurses slash medics in the military back in World War One World War Two, but it really has been predominantly a female profession throughout the 20th century, and even into the 21st. We have three points, I don't know four or 5 million nurses in the United States, only 10% are men, or maybe nine and a half percent. So that number has only been budging very slightly when I entered my nursing education in the mid 90s. I think we are at 6.5%. So it's a very, very slow increase in terms of the percentage of men. And when I was a nursing student working in western Massachusetts, in doing my clinicals and small community hospitals, I would have these old like World War Two vets, you know, and they'd say, well, you weren't smart enough to be a doctor, you know, I get questions like that. Or they would say, I'm not gonna let a male nurse touch me, you know, so I had to face a lot of that. And the very, very common question for male nurses is, Oh, so you weren't smart enough to go to medical school. And even today, I hear men, even young men telling me they're hearing that. So we we as a profession as a subset of profession, we pushed back against those

stereotypes and we need to actually stake a claim for ourselves within the profession and The unfortunate thing is that it's true that men often earn higher salaries than women in nursing. And men often move into administration management and executive positions more quickly than female nurses. So even though we're only nine or 10% of the profession, there is some disparities there. And while some want to deny it, I it's extremely clear to me that that's the reality. So I'm very proud to be a man and to be a nurse. And I encourage other men to do so as well, especially men of color because they are vastly underrepresented. And I really appreciate your willingness to talk about disparities and inequalities you've written about this law. We're going to get into your content and how just prolific you are Keith Ahmad.

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Paul Zelizer 07:54

But it started with this like on the ground being a nurse trying to pay attention boasts a patient care and compassion are super compassionate guides. I should say this. I'm not interviewing a stranger here, Keith and I have been neighbors. He knows my daughter, my daughter used to walk his dog and take care of his dog. When they went on vacation, we've known each other a long time. So, like hearing me reference things. There's a history here. Yeah. So I can say with, you know, just embodied knowledge, you're a caring man who's bought a lot about just a one person at a time bring really quality care to each person while still paying attention to these larger inequalities and disparities in a way that I resonate with. Appreciate and celebrate.

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Keith Carlson 08:44

Thanks, Paul. Well, I guess since you believe all that my evil plan has worked.

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Paul Zelizer 08:49

Your evil plan to make you think you're a good guy. Yeah. So the years and years of frontline nursing and some of the context we talk about, you know, home health And hospitals and lots of lots of places and somewhere along the way, you start widening back and thinking about nurses and their careers, like when did that start to happen? And how did you get into that work?

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Keith Carlson 09:14

Well, again, I get into things sort of backwards. I was just January of 2005, I was sitting in front of the fire with my brother in Amherst, Massachusetts. And it was snowing. And my brother looked at me and I can still remember he said, Hey, Keith, are these new things

called blogs? You're a good writer, why don't you try one? And I was like, Okay, I'll take your challenge. So I launched a blog that night. And it's the same blog, I'm still writing digital doorway. It's been 15 years and I learned within six to eight months that when I wrote about healthcare, and nursing and the stuff I was doing in the world, that people really noticed and started paying attention. So I started focusing more and more More and more into nursing and healthcare. And the blog grew. And it turned out I was one of the very first nurse bloggers on the internet. And that led me to start fielding questions from people. And the questions often were about careers and self care and wellness and how to manage your life as a nurse. So that just started focusing more and more into it led me to think I could actually maybe figure out a way to create a business around this. So that was the gateway but again, I sort of back my way into things without even knowing what I'm doing. And that actually tends to work out pretty well. Blogging was your gateway drug to podcasting? Oh my gosh, yeah, it was. It was. Yeah, tree predated podcasting by seven years. Yeah.

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Paul Zelizer 10:48

Yeah. And so much of when I think of you, Keith, like you're prolific you write not only for your own blog, and not only have you done your own podcast, I just looked to Hundred 90 episodes, congratulations, as best I could see on your website getting ready for this and you've done other things. And now you're part of a podcast in our like, it would be impossible to understand how you got to this place where you're doing so many interesting things and we'll unpack them all but they key if I was gonna say one thing to understand as a listener how Keith got to where he is it would be content is that fair to say?

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Keith Carlson 11:26

content marketing all

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Paul Zelizer 11:27

the way to getting Yeah, so like, what what have you learned about that and how 15 plus years of doing it, like just so much care and so much steadiness and so much attention to quality that like, how can somebody who's listening, understand, like if I'm in their shoes, and I do my homework, and we'll put links to all the places that Keith is, and you can go see for yourself and I'm talking about how the hell do you do that key? That's if I'm listening. I got asked that question.

K Keith Carlson 11:56
Yeah, well, I have a little workshop of elves

P Paul Zelizer 11:58
nonpolar writings. Maybe you pay them in chocolate or

K Keith Carlson 12:02
like, how does that pretty much? Yeah, pretty much. Yeah. No, but really, when I started my business by hook or crook back in, I don't know 2009 or so 2010 I, you know, I worked and I have worked even up till recently with different marketing specialists and business coaches and you probably you know about this, like, people say, Oh, you need to have squeeze pages and all these landing pages and all this stuff and allow on all

P Paul Zelizer 12:32
you gotta sell funnel key. My I always

K Keith Carlson 12:35
said, you know, my sales funnel is my personality, and it's the stuff I put out in the world. And I can tell you, I haven't bought a Facebook ad in, I don't know, four years because three years because I realized No, it's it's this is such a waste of time. And I if you look at my social media feeds once in a blue moon, I'll put out some sort of promotion, maybe couple times a year. At best, and I just it just doesn't sit well with me. And I've never used a squeeze page. And what I've done is I've I write for other platforms for mostly as a paid writer. And I appear on podcasts and I on videos and Facebook Lives with other people. And I write my blog and I do my podcast. And I just, you know, my name is out there. And what I've done is I've created a brand, where I'm seen as what we have to call, I guess, a thought leader. And I've just created ubiquitousness of my presence in the space where I want to be and where the people I want to reach hang out. And I've learned how to do that. And mostly, honestly, Paul, it's just like, creating content that I think is valuable for people and is free. And if they want to check out what else I do, that's awesome. And of course, I mentioned my coaching pro grams on my podcast. Of course, it's my platform. But I just don't hit people over the head with it because I just don't believe in doing that. And if I'm leaving money on the table and have left money on the table, I honestly don't care. Because I feel good about the way I do things.

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Paul Zelizer 14:15

Right. Yeah. It and I'm thinking about what you said earlier, like you were just you started this blog. And you started just thinking about the questions. And again, I know Keith, so listeners, I know what he does. You just answer really important questions or questions that are at least on people's minds, and you bring a care and a willingness to unpack it. Whether it's, you know, a question on your podcast or one of the pieces of paid content that you've been, or roles is to create blog for African American health for instance, right. That's something at least in the past, you've done in the past Yes. Yeah. And and paying attention to health questions and understanding the disparity Is this something you've done? Right? You just answer questions basically, not by my thing. But here's something that a lot of people are trying to understand about health or more recently about being a healthcare worker, being a nurse or other health care worker and navigating these, you know, complicated systems that don't always think well about either personal or professional, self care, things that humans need as a nurse or as a health care worker. And let's talk about that. And you just go in there without a lot of drama. And then you do it the next week, and then you do it the next week, and then you do next week and you live pretty well. Yeah,

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Keith Carlson 15:42

yeah. I have my own struggles, of course, and like I said, maybe leaving some money on the table, but, but we all have to approach our business and the way we move in the world in a way that feels good to us. And we need to be able to sleep at night and go to sleep feeling like Yeah, I did good thing today or I've reached a lot of people this week or last this month or whatever and and if we if we have inklings that what we're doing doesn't sit well with our soul, then I think there's, there's, there's some there's a deep dive we have to do to make sure we can turn that ship around and approach our business and our work from that place that that speaks from, you know, our core. And I think if we're not doing that, that I can't stand that kind of cognitive dissonance, I just it doesn't it just, I can't tolerate it in myself. I just can't do that.

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Paul Zelizer 16:36

So somewhere along the way started thinking about things like holistic career decision making and coaching and also about that time I think he started to use the word nurse printer right? Yeah, interesting. Okay. That's Keith about nurse printer entrepreneurs, right? But like holistic career coaching, when when did that are like going from a Canada right about healthcare and nurse and I'm gonna get paid to make some content which you've done for many years. And starting to think about on a step into the conversation about help people help nurses specifically, think about their choices and their well being in their

career. Where are we talking, when that starts to show up for you, and I want to do this.

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Keith Carlson 17:24

Well, when I started writing professionally in 2009, actually getting paid to write I also started just watching what was happening out there in the Zeitgeist of nursing and healthcare. And I started hearing this word coaching, and not many nurses were into it. So I started looking into health coaching and life coaching and I took a couple little certification courses and stuff and just realized, okay, there's something to this. And as I listened to the marketplace, I wanted to offer something around self care and wellness but not many nurse on printers were doing that at the time, and I wasn't getting a lot of there just wasn't much traction for it back in 2010 or so. So I listened to the marketplace and that's just what I recommend your listeners do as well. And, and I kept getting questions about careers like Keith, I don't know what to do, I'm unhappy. I don't really want to talk about, you know, my self care routine, I want to talk about like how to have a better career. So I basically decided, Okay, the world is the markets talking to me, I'm getting my putting my finger on the pulse of what nurses are thinking and feeling. And I'm going to turn myself into a holistic career coach. So I basically just studied like crazy and just figured out what people wanted to know. And thought, Okay, I'm going to learn what they want to know. And then I'm going to teach them and that's how I started creating content along those lines. People liked the content. They contacted me, I created a web presence that showed them that I actually was someone they could trust and like and know. And one thing led to another as my practice grew. So it all came out of, I guess that notion that we have two ears in one mouth for reasons so that we listen twice as much as we talk. So I listen to the marketplace a lot before I realized what I had to say.

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Paul Zelizer 19:25

Love this, but people listen regularly. No, I like to joke about my spiritual highlighter. And I want to pull out my spiritual highlighter, Keith and circle what you were saying about listening to the marketplace. And I think Tell me if I'm understanding correctly, I think like, we have a lot of listeners and you know, you talked about starting your day with drinking water and exercise. Other practices might be yoga or meditation, like a lot of our listeners feel really passionate about those. I want to work with people. My sense is you still care about those things. You just hold us you started your day with that today and other days, but you pivoted so instead of saying, Let me teach you, perspective client about how to exercise and meditate you, you said, Oh, you're struggling with, you know, these systems that are aren't always very don't don't value nurses as much as we'd like them to. And you're trying to figure out how to have a career where you feel more appreciated and have more impact and feel like you're a human being who matters. That's awesome. Let's

come on down and along the way you started teaching them how to practice self care and exercise and drink water and maybe meditate and maybe do yoga. Is that fair to say?

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Keith Carlson 20:44

That's it. Yeah. So the reason I started calling it holistic career coaching a year or two in was like, I realized, oh my gosh, like, anybody can help a nurse pretty much write a resume and update their LinkedIn profile and get a cover letter. Go in. And you'll learn how to network. And I'm great at those things. I'm a LinkedIn expert, I can teach people, all that stuff. But my most successful clients and the clients I enjoy most, they're they want to accomplish those things. Those are great. You know, like, we want to get you out in the marketplace. And this is what we have to do. These are the tools in your toolbox to get you a job.



21:21

However,

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Keith Carlson 21:22

if you're having trouble visioning what your career needs to be or what you want it to be, I need to understand what kind of books you read what you do on vacation, what you do for fun, what kind of exercise you do the names your dogs and cats and birds or journals or I need to get the big, big background story of who you really are. And then I can truly help you create a career. Sure I can help you write a resume, but you know, a resume is great, but if you can't walk into an interview with your head held high, knowing who you are and what you really want in your life, that resume is not going to serve you that well. So I like to do the deepest dive I can possibly do with people. And I know where to draw the line between coaching and counseling or psychotherapy. And often I will say to clients, actually, more often than not, you know, I think this is we're getting a statutory I think counseling or psychotherapy really helpful for you right now. And we're going to draw the line right here. Because once people get to know me, and we're going into these deep conversations, they want to unburden themselves. And I started hearing about their disabled spouse and their child with epilepsy and, and their mom with dementia and their friend who committed suicide last year, you know, and we go deep, if they're willing, and that's what helps us create the vision of a career that's really going to move the needle for them.

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Paul Zelizer 22:49

For the listeners, I just so encourage you to stay true to what you're passionate about, but to listen deeply about where there's an opportunity. Since Keith appeared said, I'm going to teach wellness to nurses, you might have had a very different past 10 years, then I'm going to work with nurses and other health care providers in a very holistic way to help them optimize their career. It's been a good ride for you and it might not have been if you had an attachment to what it looked like. Good point.

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Keith Carlson 23:21

Yeah, very good point.

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Paul Zelizer 23:22

So start doing this and then along the way, you're cranking out blog posts and you're working with people and people are reaching out to you and somewhere I know you launched in 2015 you say I'm gonna do podcast and that is a game changer for both you and me because we literally wouldn't I'm not sure we'd be here maybe I would have found my way to it but I don't know that I would have that was a milestone in your journey said I want a podcast and it changed a lot of things for you. What? What was that? Why podcasting? What were you thinking when you nonce the nurse key podcast?

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Keith Carlson 23:59

Well, actually dates Paul, and you don't know this part, but it dates back to 2011, late 2011 when I was hanging out on Twitter, using, you know, hurting, nursing, not hurting, hashtags, hashtags, nursing hashtags, and just checking out like, what do people say? And you know, what do they? What are they talking about? And these two other nurses who were burgeoning entrepreneurs, we all noticed each other Kevin Ross and Anna Robinson. And we were like, well, what, what's going on here? So we all hopped on Skype and started talking. We lived in different parts of the country. And we realized, oh, man, you know, there's something to do here. We need to do something. And we all at the same time said podcast, we all want to podcast. So we launched one of the first nursing podcasts on the internet in January of 2012. And it was an RN No,

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Paul Zelizer 24:51

the

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Keith Carlson 24:52

Yeah, it was called Rn FM radio. And we were one of the first I think three nursing podcasts on the air. Internet and just like in 2005, I started one of the first nursing blogs on the internet just in a backwards way and I fell into podcasting the same way. I just happened to meet a couple cool people on Twitter and are an FM radio let went for four or five years about 260 episodes with various combinations of cat of hosts and co host I was the common denominator among all the different iterations of the show. And then the nurse Keith show spun off that show in 2015. So I'd already been involved in 200 episodes before I even launched the nurse keys show.

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Paul Zelizer 25:41

You're like 500 episodes in if you put them together,

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Keith Carlson 25:44

actually. Well, the nurse key shows actually over 300 now because I have a lot of bonus episodes that aren't numbered. So and then I hosted a podcast I was paid to do for a while called mastering nursing and it didn't last long enough. They ran out of money. So I'm I'm edging close to 600 episodes. Which is kind of crazy. It's insane. It's insane. Yeah, totally insane.

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Paul Zelizer 26:13

So let's do this being a podcast. Let's I want to take a break when we come back on here how you think about podcasting now and how that fits into your business. But before I do that, I do want to take a break and say thank you to our sponsor. And we're not like most podcasts that have like a meal delivery, you know, service or a website service. We don't have one or two sponsors, we have hundreds. It's called the aware of printers community. And what we do is if you've got a business that's about helping people in a significant way, and you want a positive impact and do it all in a really conscious aware, kind of a way we help each other grow those kind of businesses that can be as simple as who can build a website conversation I had this morning for this kind of Or who's somebody who can help me get started with podcasting, I'm community member asked us that or we're now to have a podcast success team or we help people look at both sides of the mic. And we have conversations about helping people get better as a host and their strategy there or they want to be a guest or they want to do both, right. So if you've got a business like this, then you could use a little more support from people who are in this space center generous and like to collaborate, go check out the aware printers community at aware

printers.com forward slash community. And thank you community for sponsoring this podcast. 600 episodes and that is I have not had that experience yet. Keith, congratulations and talk to us about somebody listening. They know they've heard me say my name is Paul and I'm podcast obsessed. And well, let's just tell the story. Do you remember that conversation we had? It's probably about three and a half baby four, four years ago. Do you remember telling me Do you remember what you told me? That changed about how people listen to podcasts? You told me something about this and a light bulb went off right? And now our listeners are tired of hearing me joke about my name is Paul and I'm podcast obsessed. Do you remember what he told me? Boy, people listen to podcasts.

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Keith Carlson 28:21

Oh, well, I probably said to you, well, you know, you can't watch a video while you're while you're buying groceries or, you know, out in the world driving but you can listen to a podcast on this, this little device in your pocket. And that mobile, that mobile aspect of podcasting, even though they say video is king, I don't know anymore. I still feel that audio. If it's not King, it's at least Duke or something because or URL maybe that we can listen to podcasts anywhere we are. And I think that That intimate connection with the audience being between somebody's ears. You told me that

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Paul Zelizer 29:06

more than the bag, a light bulb went off in my head that intimacy say more about intimacy. Yeah. Well,

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Keith Carlson 29:14

watching a video is great. And I also feel that there's something about audio, there's something just about this disembodied voice, that when someone takes you with them on your on their commute, or when they're at the store shopping, or when they're running or biking or exercising, and you're their companion, and you're actually in their head, you're literally like in their head, because they have these earbuds in and you're you're bouncing through their, you know, their auditory canal there and the hop in the nerves to the ear. That is a very intimate connection, and where videos awesome, but there's something about Audio that I think there's something so special about the human voice. And if you think back to Thomas Edison and the Edison phonograph company and his Master's Voice and, you know, this whole notion of, you know, people gathered around the radio or gathered around the record player, you know, there's this. There's this very old, atavistic feeling of, of the comfort of the voice. And I don't discount how important



Paul Zelizer 30:30

that is. There is that piece for us? You help me make that connection between intimacy and that sense of dialogue. And that's that tradition. In like early podcasting, people didn't back in the day people didn't get into podcasting to make a gazillion dollars. People got into podcasting to tell stories and have really honest conversations. Mm hmm. And this idea that your buds literally Go inside, you're literally inviting somebody between their ears. And if you do it well, they'll come back week after week after week after week and the intimacy there has like, intimacy. say more about that. And this light bulb started to go on, and you told me the story of the research of how people listen. And I was like, oh, dialogue, intimacy, assign me up. Right. Before that I had been like, but but but you have to, like, you know, figure out like how to get an iTunes and what microphone to you is all the tech objections? How am I gonna like afford to pay somebody or learn how to do myself to do the editing and, you know, it takes all this time and then you are like, intimacy, storytelling dialogue and all that went out the window and I became podcast obsessed. So listen, I probably wouldn't be here without Keith. Thank you, Keith, for the show. Or it's all your fault that our printers exists, it's up to the listeners like a citizen They can choose



32:01

they can



Keith Carlson 32:03

choose your own adventure.



Paul Zelizer 32:04

So you got pretty obsessed 600 episodes in what is podcasting meant for your business as an entrepreneur?



Keith Carlson 32:12

Oh, well, really, in terms of content marketing, again, it's that intimate connection people. People often will remark to me. And this at first, it was very hard for me to hear. They would say you have the most wonderful voice You're so common



Paul Zelizer 32:28

you are.

K

Keith Carlson 32:31

Yeah, that first year. So with our an FM radio, I could barely listen back to episodes because I couldn't stand the sound of my own voice, which is common for most people, because we don't really know what our voice sounds like, generally. So it took me a little time to get used to it and then to develop my voice, so to speak, and even work with a voice coach and I have a podcast coach and, you know, I've learned how to do these things. And I now speak on stage two. I've been speaking on stage for about eight years. Nine years now. So for for me in my business, podcasting is the way I connect with people. And it's one of the main ways people often find me. And that connection and people being able to tune in, you know, pretty much every Friday, they know they can find me there's a new episode in their feed. And then there's surprise episodes often earlier in the week, often these days, especially during COVID-19. So it is just the most direct connection with my listeners beyond, you know, Instagram stories and all that stuff. And I don't even do YouTube videos, I just can't stand it. So that is the way people really get into my head. And that's the way that I most readily Connect, and it's just worked. People have gotten on the podcast bandwagon within the nursing community, and now there's so many nursing podcasts. You can't even throw it stethoscope without hitting one. And it's just it's a great community and people know that it's a thing. And that thing is big and everybody recognizes its value. So I think I've done my job.

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Paul Zelizer 34:13

And you were an early adopter. And that's the Your name is in that space with a certain kind of awareness. This guy's been doing it for you said, one of the first three nursing podcasts on the web, right? Yeah, just in the US just like in the world, right? Pretty much. Yeah, that's awesome. Cool. Yeah. And being a podcast another success and an exciting thing is you've recently been invited into a nursing Podcast Network or a medical one. Talk to us about that.

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Keith Carlson 34:44

Yeah, well, well, I'm I joined I've joined two networks. The first one is Rs, longer media aprs ello. nga, and that's comes from Hippocrates, ARS, longa v2. brevis, which is art is long life is short and often Longer these very cool, very progressive, mostly doctors from the Bay Area who launched their own network. And this is that network is really about community connection, collaboration, collectivism and bringing humanities into medicine. So ours longer is eventually going to bring in artists and singers and musicians and all different

things beyond nursing and healthcare. So I was the first nurse podcaster to be brought into that network and it's small and mighty and growing. But just recently, I was invited to join the health Podcast Network, which is a burgeoning medical Podcast Network. And I, I'm the third nursing podcast to be brought into the network. Most of the others are doctors. And I'm humbled to say that it's the same network we'll find San Diego Gupta of CNN with his Coronavirus factor fiction podcast, the New England Journal of Medicine, the American Medical Association, the Mayo Clinic, you Penn nursing and some others stellar stellar figures in the medical and health podcast world. So I am so thrilled to be part of that network. And I'm just super excited. And if I can get Sanjay Gupta on my show, that would be just how cool

P Paul Zelizer 36:29
would that be? I'll

i 36:31
try. I'll

P Paul Zelizer 36:31
try. What if somebody the listener, and they know I think most people will know what a podcast is. But if they've never heard or they're not really sure what a podcast network is help our listeners understand that.

K Keith Carlson 36:44
There's different types of podcasts networks. So health Podcast Network is basically a platform where they feature certain types of podcasts and put them all in one place so you can go to the health podcast and Work website and see all the podcasts in one place. So it's sort of like a rising tide lifts all boats kind of thing. Where, okay, so if we have Sanjay Gupta and nurse Keith and New England Journal of Medicine and Penn nursing and Mayo Clinic, then that's pretty big market share, and that could attract sponsors. But even better, it just helps listeners to Sanjay Gupta find me or listeners have me find Sanjay Gupta. Right. So it's just this way of bringing people together and ARS longa media, which is our as long as dot media, that is another place where certain types of podcasts are gathering, that one has a particular social justice mission. Whereas health Podcast Network has a more medical nursing kind of mission. And then there is voice America blog talk radio. Those are the more I would say personally profit driven types of networks. And

that's a whole nother story but you network's are one way of just putting together groups of related podcasts so that fans of that particular genre can tune into many at the same time.

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Paul Zelizer 38:12

Listeners for those of you who have been around for a while, we have tried to get one going with the were printers, but honestly, we started too early and it didn't work, but it's not. I have, we haven't put that one to bed. So just that's all I'm gonna say about that right now, because we're not here to talk about that. But I love networks and when they're working well, they're incredible. We just went too early into those terrains and those waters to be transparent. It didn't work, but I think that's an option in the conscious business kind of social impact entrepreneur space, another day, another conversation. Talk to us now keep being I can only imagine being a holistic career coach for nurses in the error of COVID-19 is interesting task, shall we say? That

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Keith Carlson 38:59

that's an understatement. of the century. Yeah. Yeah, when COVID started emerging into the popular, were not popular. It's unpopular into the consciousness in early March 2020. I kind of jumped on it really fast. And I have to say I dived in, hadn't forgotten everything first and burned myself out because I was working 10 1214 hours a day, fielding calls from friends and family and colleagues and studying and writing and podcasting. I just went kind of crazy. And I had to slow down eventually, but I had it was pretty front loaded, and I realized that I had a platform that could really reach a lot of people. So I realized that okay, I am going to churi the data and the information out there and try to bring the most up to date information to people as I can. And also elucidate things that I feel like aren't being talked about as much as they should be. So I've been leaning heavily into COVID Through my paid writing, my own writing, and my podcast since March, and I'm publishing periodic COVID-19 updates on my podcast, which are separate types of bonus episodes, and just using my platform to educate people, and I feel like it's part of my mission. It's part of why I'm here. And I'm not going away because pandemics not going away.

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Paul Zelizer 40:28

So how is this impacted? Like, what is your work with the actual most of your revenue comes from being a holistic career coach for nurses, although you've got a lot of balls and multiple streams of revenue and Keith Carlson like that, that's the thing. You've done that really well. But but that's still your primary role and your primary way people support you

in this work like how, how does it look now and how has COVID-19 effect, the career coaching you're doing?

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Keith Carlson 41:03

Well, honestly, starting in late March, early April, my phone is ringing off the hook more or less. And my coaching practice really became incredibly active. April, May, June into early July 2020. It's now taken a little bit of a backseat or just slow down, which usually happens July and August anyway, so I'm not too worried. But people have been reaching out to me when they're burned out when they're worried. And one is that we have this existential crisis facing our entire planet, and humanity as a whole. And people, many people, Paul, I'm sure you know, many are looking at their lives saying, hmm, what's most important to me right now in the face of this existential threat? So, people are often coming to me saying, You know what, I am rethinking my entire life and I need your help. So, I think September, we'll all start seeing people circling back. Some people are still filtering through. And my coaching people often want to talk about the impact of the pandemic on them. And they also just want to hear what I have to say about where things are headed, because things are, things are still not pretty right now, they're actually less pretty every day. So, or not even pretty, they're just more grim every day. So, I, again, I'm just using my platforms to educate people, even if that's within coaching or not, I just, it's part of my mission right now.

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Paul Zelizer 42:33

And I'm seeing this as well, people reaching out and saying, you know, kind of, like, pre COVID-19 and, and, you know, post, like, here we are now, it sounds like people are saying, you know, maybe in the past, they would say, Well, you know, there's something just not a great fit or I have a supervisor that's, you know, kind of a jerk and it's not fun to work in this medical system. Maybe you got some of But I it sounds like and I would certainly agree in my coaching work, like, boy, this is just fundamentally like who I am and what I'm doing. And when I go to work, there's a big disconnect there. And can we talk about that disconnect, not just my supervisors a jerk, what do I do about it? Absolutely, yeah.

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Keith Carlson 43:20

Yeah, I do get some of that still, of course, because any of those things like my supervisors, a jerk or I have a negative workplace culture at work. That stuff's exacerbated by the stress of the pandemic. So a lot of stuff boils to the surface or becomes even more. It's even put into Starker relief for the person for the nurse. But also people are just looking at oh my gosh, what am I doing? You know, I have friends and colleagues who work in you

know, I have a friend who works in a covid ICU in Seattle, and I have another one who's in nurse practitioner school and I have another one who works in an ER and another one who works in a rural practice. So A lot of my friends and colleagues are on the front lines and you know, risking their lives and they they're all been looking in the mirror and doing some deep thinking. Right. And now's the time. Now's the time to do that deep thinking. And a lot of nurses I think are going to be leaving the profession. And that's tragic.

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Paul Zelizer 44:19

Yeah, well, it's hard. I mean, when I think of I've been in some conversation, we have an aware partners member, kay judge, who's a medical doctor, she's an MD, and but is a real activist talking about the same kind of disparities and talking about health care workers as a whole, not just doctors. And when I think of our health care workers and in our conversations with people like, okay, imagine being a nurse who's trying to care for people, you're risking your life. And at least in the US, we're like having politicized conversations about should we even wear masks? No. Which we know was one of the single biggest things we can do to like, if everybody wore masks, the research tells us the science right? We'd be like an infinitely better shape in the space of like six weeks, right? Just by if we got to a 93% or a 95% of people leave house wear mask and things get better and you're risking your life and it's getting worse because people won't wear masks and won't follow social distancing rules like Wait, what are we doing here? Right I yeah, my heart goes out to health care workers right now so so Thank you, Josh. And thank you and then also rates like what the hell are we doing? We want yes to be there for us. But we won't put on a map. We're fighting out masked What are we doing?

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Keith Carlson 45:42

Yeah. And I and I'd like to point out one thing, Paul, that I keep driving home everywhere I possibly can. May I?

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Paul Zelizer 45:48

Yeah, absolutely.

K

Keith Carlson 45:49

Yeah. Is that is that when people are applauding for the doctors and nurses on the front lines, that is awesome. Keep doing it. That is great. But I also want to point out that That there are environmental service workers in hospitals who clean the patient's rooms who are COVID-19 positive. They're suiting up and going in those rooms, right? And they're

risking their lives and making a lot less money than the nurses and doctors, and they don't get a whole lot of banks or recognition. And, you know, if they happen to be members of a community of color, for instance, which is highly possible, then they're not the kind of workers who are going to be able to stay home and work from home. That's not even a thing, right? They have to come to work. And we also have to look at the people checking us out at the grocery store and the pharmacy and the people who do all those other things work in the hardware store, you know, there's 30 hours right yeah, the person who just brought my mail a couple minutes ago I saw him out the window and and all those people out there who are working the people who work in meatpacking plants and and where houses, you know, shipping your thing that you wanted in two days, because you really needed that set of sheets by tomorrow, you know? So, yes, the doctors and nurses doing amazing work and that they're right there. But there's plenty of other people doing that amazing work to dentists, you know, mail carriers, everybody. So we're all in this together and it's kind of sink or swim as a as as a culture and as a society and as humanity as a whole. And that the political infighting and the politicizes politicize this, how do you see it? The politicization of this whole this whole situation is absolutely maddening. And I'm banging my head against the wall so much, you know, the Bloods running in my eyes and that's not a good thing. So there's something has to give here. And as the US is 4% of the world's population, but 25% of the infections, there's a problem.

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Paul Zelizer 47:58

So as your you in a blessed position, Keith to have a platform and people you know, you podcaster in these networks and people know who you are, and you've got great clients and you can work from home, right? You're in a really blessed position. As somebody who's kind of had a front row seat to where healthcare in the US has been and the people who are on you've been on the ground, doing, like working with humans, in a very intimate one to one kind of way. And now you coach people doing that, what's going through your head about where we are and your personal role as somebody who's thinking about holistic career for nurses and health care workers, and where we are in the US and how do you make sense of it. And what's Keith Carlson's response to this poignant moment that we're in?

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Keith Carlson 48:52

Yeah, good question, Paul. Well, I am trying to hold on to as much hope as I possibly can. One thing that gives me Hope I have to say is the millennial generation, that sure older generations generally disparage the younger generations, right? It's sort of like a rite of passage. But the millennial generation, the the level of social, racial, open mindedness, the the ways in which that generation and the younger generations than that look at trans

right transgender rights and GLBT q rights and, and the rights of the, you know, in terms of racial disparities, etc. I believe that these younger generations are the ones that give me hope, because they're the ones who actually, to me seem incredibly committed to bring me more humanity to healthcare, for instance, and I am encouraged by what I see in here by the number of women going into medicine right now. They're actually the majority of people in medical school right now as far as I know. And the number of women and people in the millennial generation rising to positions of power in positions of leadership and decision making. So I do hold out hope that even though we're leaving them, we've created for them this absolutely. This world that's completely upside down, and we've just torn to shreds. I believe that that generation has the wherewithal to bring about massive change. And us older folks are going to have to follow their lead at a certain point because they're the ones who are becoming the the dominant factor within the society. So my place is to encourage people, empower people, give people information, bring them some inspiration and self awareness, and then just allow that to propagate out there in the world. So I'm one lone voice, and I try to create as much content and consciousnesses I can and then that's where I have to let go of expectations. And just say, okay, I've done my part, what else can I do now? And so that's that's a lot where my head goes. And I'm aghast at what's happening in the world. And also hold on to as much hope as I possibly can manage,

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Paul Zelizer 51:15

through really honest answer. And thank you key. Sure, sure, Keith, I could hang out with you all day. But I don't want to do that to you. I don't want to do that to our listeners, if there was something you were hoping we might get to on this topic of holistic career coaching for nurses, or where we are in our health care wellness journey, and we haven't touched on it yet, or there's a thought you want to leave our listeners with, what would that be?

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Keith Carlson 51:42

Well, one, I want to go back to what I shared earlier, which is a kind of a cliché, but it's that we have two ears and one mouth for a reason. And I think that can teach us a lot anywhere we happen to be whether it's talking and listening about COVID or talking Talking to healthcare providers about their experiences. And I believe that, that if we can all move in the direction of collectivism, rather than individualism, I believe that's the direction that our society needs to head. And that's the message I keep putting out there. And if we do listen twice as much as we talk, that is what's going to keep us moving in that direction. And that is where I believe I'm going to hang my hat because that's, that's, I think, central to basically our survival at this point.

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Paul Zelizer 52:39

Keith, just a deep bounty for being on the show. Like I'm not sure we literally would be here without your inspiration. You've been a huge inspiration to me just not just the technical part of podcasting and the intimacy but how you show up and the way you're willing to have honest conversations, and the You're willing to talk about complicated things and include things like disparities and inequalities and do it all in a really humane caring way. Just like all those things. You're a big part of how I came to say I want to go right there this kind of podcast so just thank you for being on the show. But also way before this episode just thank you.

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Keith Carlson 53:25

Well, thanks pawn, I guess I've paid you really well to say all these things. I guess I'll keep Yeah, I'll make out one.

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Paul Zelizer 53:40

Thank you. So we'll put a link to Keith's website and all these various podcasts endeavors in the blog digital doorway. And if I wrote a bunch of notes, we'll try to find the links to all of them. If I miss one, please send an email through our contact page. Speaking of that, we're now Twice a week podcast. That's so exciting to me. There were so many stories we just couldn't not tell them. I had to say us. So if you have an idea, we'd love listener suggested topics and guests. So go to the aware printers website and go to the contact page and tell us what do you think we should be talking about? Or who do you think we should be interviewing Please love that. For now, I just want to say thank you so much for listening and telling your friends, please take really good care of these very pointed times and deep value for working towards the positive impact that you're having.