



Coach Approach Ministries Podcast

Episode 139: Coaching Adaptive Change

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Brian Miller: I'm Brian Miller, Executive Director for Coach Approach Ministries, CAM for short. And I'm joined here today by Tod Bolsinger. Tod is the Vice President and Chief of Leadership Formation at Fuller Seminary. He is an ordained pastor and consults and coaches with churches and nonprofits. He's the author of three books, the latest which is creating quite a buzz in my circles, called Canoeing the Mountains: Christian Leadership in Uncharted Territory. Which I think anyone involved in church work today should absolutely read it. It's a must read.

Brian Miller: Tod Bolsinger, welcome to the podcast.

Tod Bolsinger: It's my pleasure to be with you, Brian. Thank you for having me.

Brian Miller: Glad to. You play a lot of roles, and I'm most curious about your role as an executive coach. And if I understand right, your wife is also an executive coach.

Tod Bolsinger: Yeah, yeah. Indeed. Yeah, I stumbled into it. But I ended up doing a lot of coaching when I finished up my pastorate, the last about five years or so with a lot of pastors going through transition. And that really actually led me into a process of discernment that changed the direction of my ministry. So yeah.

Brian Miller: So and you probably used it in your leadership, as well as you did some coaching of others.

Tod Bolsinger: Indeed, indeed. Yeah.

Brian Miller: Yeah. Me too. That's our heart. I think coaching is ... we're going to get into this, but I think coaching in the 21st century is going to be a key to leadership and navigating the future.

Tod Bolsinger: Yeah. Yeah, indeed. It was when I brought in a consulting group to work with me and I ended up finding myself using for three years an executive coach, who was really ... I really found I didn't need him so much to give me advice as I needed him to be able to help me navigate and figure out the process of going through hard changes. I needed his courage, I needed his encouragement, I needed his correction. He was a really important gift in my own life, and so it's led me to be able to do the same thing with others.

Brian Miller: I love that you said that. In fact, when I'm talking to people of that sort, as soon as they go in to start to tell me their solutions is when I start to find myself getting frustrated and shutting down. I'm sure that was a good idea in some context. But not in mine.

Brian Miller: Yeah, no, I love it. I love it.

Brian Miller: So Canoeing the Mountains. Obviously there's a disconnect there. And that's the title of your new book. Give us the context for Canoeing the Mountains.

Tod Bolsinger: Yeah. So it's two contexts. One was my own ministry context and then the other one was kind of like the context the book comes out of.

Tod Bolsinger: I had finished a Ph.D. at Fuller in spiritual formation and my life was really going to be built as a pastor whose whole hope was to take churches deeper. It was all about how do I develop the kind of communal spiritual practices that will really lead to the transformation of people in a deeper way. That's what my heartbeat was.

Tod Bolsinger: And I got asked by a group of Methodists in Portland, Maine if I'd come and speak on that subject. And they were all Christian educators. And I spent the entire morning being the keynote, three different presentations. They asked me to do a Q&A time, and during the Q&A time I asked what questions they had.

Tod Bolsinger: And about ... there were 60 people in the room and 59 of them all asked the exact same question. It was how do we keep our church from dying. So here I was in this interesting moment when I realized the organizers read my book and they wanted to talk about churches thriving and growing deeper.

Tod Bolsinger: I came as the guy who was all about spiritual formation and about how the church should go deeper. A bunch of people showed up to a conference where that was clearly communicated. But the unspoken thing, I said the thing that was keeping them up at night, was that they felt like their churches were dying and they didn't know what to do. And they were asking for my advice.

Tod Bolsinger: And what I realized at that moment is that there's always an underlying issue. And usually it's unspoken and very often it's beyond our expertise. And so I say it was that moment that led me into a journey, as a person who had a Ph.D. and was an expert, so-called, in spiritual formation and transformation, that I

actually needed to rethink my entire approach. And I needed to learn to lead all over again.

Tod Bolsinger: And then in my own ministry at the church, I found myself in a similar moment. Everything was going as well as I could possibly think it should go. And yet at the exact same time, my church leadership, who were in the middle of a church that was doing well by every marker, were getting burned out and were falling away from ministry and felt actually demoralized. It was kind of a malaise.

Tod Bolsinger: And I was stuck. I didn't know what to do with it. And so it led me into this coaching relationship and then a consulting relationship that let me rethink. And I realized there's a different reality. The environment has changed and is changing so rapidly that you can be really successful at one moment and then your entire movement can be falling apart the next.

Tod Bolsinger: You know, I was talking to somebody yesterday where I said, you know, don't ever forget Sears just went bankrupt. Sears was the Amazon of the 20th century. Just went bankrupt. That's how rapidly things are changing.

Tod Bolsinger: And because of that, we need to rethink our entire leadership model. And then I stumbled onto this story about Lewis and Clark.

Brian Miller: The whole culture's changing. And so those churches that are out there growing, that think maybe they're missing this, they're just probably on the end, the tail of this thing. The change, the cultural changes, are going to hit and we're going to have to rethink how we are approaching ministry, evangelism, I think the whole deal's kind of up for grabs.

Tod Bolsinger: Yeah.

Brian Miller: And it's a scary moment. A really scary moment.

Tod Bolsinger: Yeah, it is. Yeah. A huge part of it is that one of the kind of rules of thumb of what's sometimes called organizational systems thinking is that today's problems are built on yesterday's solution. And so one of the hardest things to help coach people through is if they've been successful, they have a very hard time knowing that their success is part of their problem.

Brian Miller: Right, right.

Tod Bolsinger: And so they keep defaulting back to what used to work. And if they think they try hard enough, they're going to be able to just succeed. Because it worked before.

Tod Bolsinger: And what's really dramatic is this notion that the environment around us is changing so dramatically that the very things you're doing are going to keep you from actually succeeding. And that requires a different kind of leadership, yeah.

- Brian Miller: Absolutely. So how did you get on this idea of the Northwest Passage? Of the search for the Northwest Passage, Lewis and Clark.
- Tod Bolsinger: Yeah. So the quick story for those of us who don't remember eleventh grade history is that-
- Brian Miller: Which is most people.
- Tod Bolsinger: Yeah, exactly. It's that Lewis and Clark were sent by Thomas Jefferson to find a water route that would connect the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean. That water route, everybody had been looking for.
- Tod Bolsinger: And to be honest, everybody assumed was there. As a matter of fact, they would say they knew it was there. And for the better part of 300 years, everybody of European descent had been trying to find a water route from Europe to Asia, because economics were built on that. Like it's easier to take raw material over water than over land.
- Tod Bolsinger: So you know, when Columbus, from a European perspective, discovers America, and of course there's whole civilizations there and whole people there. Their mental model is so just blocked that they assumed this is nothing but a giant obstacle, filled with things in their way.
- Tod Bolsinger: Because all they really want is a water route from Europe to Asia. [inaudible 00:07:49] says it took them a hundred years to figure out that what they found was more important than what they were looking for.
- Tod Bolsinger: And some of us would say it's taken us 400 years to figure out that there were people already here. That there was a ... So what we find ourselves in is Lewis and Clark take off with the Corps of Discovery's job was to discover this water route.
- Tod Bolsinger: Ships had gone up the Columbia River, up enough, far enough, that they knew there was a water route on the west. There had been those who had taken the Missouri River far enough west from the east that they knew there was the possibility. But nobody had found the connection. That's what they were there to find.
- Tod Bolsinger: 18 months after going upstream, from St. Charles, Missouri, they finally found themselves, after spending a winter with the Mandan tribe in North Dakota, they found themselves at the tiny little spring that starts the Missouri River. 18 months of navigating upstream, Merriwether Lewis and one of the guys that's with them literally put their feet on each side of the spring, they drink some water.
- Tod Bolsinger: They walk up the side of this mountain with every expectation that they are going to be able to take their canoes out of that stream, they're going to put

them in a stream on the other side, and they're going to get to go downstream. They're going to get to now coast all the way to the Pacific Ocean.

Tod Bolsinger: They believe they might have a half a day of carrying their canoes, portage, but they'll just keep going. Because they're water guys and they're used to rivers and they know what they're doing. And they can't wait to start going downstream.

Brian Miller: They had put up a banner that said mission accomplished.

Tod Bolsinger: Yeah, we are on our way. And we know that when they stepped over the Lemhi Pass from Montana into Idaho, they got their first real look at the Rocky Mountains. 300 miles of mountain.

Tod Bolsinger: Now, two really interesting parts for me that I think tie in here. One is that the Mandan had told them there are mountains. Yeah, there's a river on the other side, we've seen it. But there are mountains.

Tod Bolsinger: In their head, they thought oh, we're good at mountains. We're from Virginia. We understand what mountains are all about. And what they meant was like the Shenandoah Mountains, rounded hills that you could imagine dragging a canoe over.

Tod Bolsinger: They didn't have any mental model for the Rocky Mountains. 14,000 foot peaks, subalpine terrain, snow that would be hip deep, 60 miles of snow. They were planning to be water guides, they were canoers. They thought the future ... they thought everything of the geography in front of them was exactly like the past and that they would canoe their way into the future.

Tod Bolsinger: And what they found, of course, is that if they wanted to keep moving forward, they would literally have to drop their canoes and decide whether they're going to keep going. And what you realize is this is the place that the church is in today.

Tod Bolsinger: We're in this place where we have been, for the better part of 500 years, we have been in the Protestant Reformation. That if you want to, you can track all the way back to 300 years, to the 300s, to Christendom where the worldview was one where Christianity is supported by culture.

Brian Miller: Yeah.

Tod Bolsinger: So Christendom doesn't mean everybody's a Christian. It just means that Christianity, the culture supports Christianity. And when culture supports Christianity, there's a different way of being. Like it's hard work, like paddling upstream. It takes energy, it takes skill.

Tod Bolsinger: But as soon as you step into a whole new day, when you discover that the world in front of you is nothing like the world behind you, that it's mountains and not rivers, you start realizing that you can't just try harder. Like paddling harder in the canoe when there's no water is not only a waste of energy, it's a waste of time.

Tod Bolsinger: And so what it requires is where most of those folks in Portland, Maine were, where I was, where a lot of people are today. Where it requires you to learn to lead all over again. You gotta learn a different way of leading. And that's what the book's really about. It's a different way of leading.

Brian Miller: But we've canoed for our whole lives. We were taught to canoe. And as I preach through, I've been preaching through Matthew just so people can see Jesus, and I talk about how Jesus interacted. Obviously in the first century, which I think you're getting at too, that we need to go back to some of those. We have some indication that there's ways there.

Brian Miller: As I talk about how Jesus did it, the people just look at me. They've been in church their whole lives. They look at me like, what are you talking about?

Tod Bolsinger: Yeah, yeah. Yeah. Very often these types of folks-

Brian Miller: There's no canoe.

Tod Bolsinger: Yeah. When you talk to people who are in the church, and you share Jesus's story, what they think is well yeah, of course Jesus had to function that way because that was before we had buildings and we had tax deductions and we had Sundays and we had and nobody had choirs and we have program staff and we had ... Well, we think that's normal right?

Tod Bolsinger: So if your world is, it's all about water and canoeing, then that expertise matters.

Tod Bolsinger: And so one of the examples I use, just here in my office I have a copy of the Los Angeles Times from December, 1963. Someone kept it because it talks about the Kennedy assassination. And they gave it to me because there's an article in the Los Angeles Times from about the then 8000 member Hollywood Presbyterian Church. It's a church I served as a young associate for 10 years.

Tod Bolsinger: And so it's interesting to me to see my ... the church that I served featured in the LA Times. But the reason why I kept it is because in that copy of the LA Times, from 1963, there's a box that has a week's worth of daily Bible reading. And I would say if you can remember when LA Times helped you with your morning quiet time, then you [inaudible 00:13:31].

Tod Bolsinger: And if you can remember ... if you go into almost any town in America, and you realize they all look like they're the same small town, like the town square,

statue of the most famous dead guy, a library, a courthouse, and first church of whoever got there first. Right? First Methodist, First Lutheran. All the other first churches are all on Second Street because everybody knew that the center of society was law, education, and religion. And that religion was Christian religion. Even if you weren't Christian. In December 1963, Billy Graham was leading a lot of people to Jesus. They weren't all Christians, but Christianity had the home court advantage.

Tod Bolsinger: And so what's different today is it requires a leadership that doesn't assume that it's a changing environment. Which means that there's really no best practices and it really means that you have to learn to lead ... a different form of leadership that I talk about in the boo, which is called adaptive leadership.

Brian Miller: That thing you said earlier about Columbus, that it took them a hundred years to realize that the obstacle was actually ... had better stuff in it than if they wouldn't have had the obstacle. And I'm hopeful. I just believe that's absolutely going to be true. I hope it doesn't take us a hundred years to get there. So this idea of adaptive leadership, this is where I want to go next, adaptive capacity.

Brian Miller: Because this is where I think coaches can be a real benefit to the leaders of our time. I was just reading through one of the quotes in the book. "Adaptive challenges, by contrast, are those that cannot be solved by one's existing knowledge and skills requiring people to make, and this is where I think coaching comes in, requiring people to make a shift in their values, expectations, attitudes, or habits and behaviors."

Brian Miller: That requires many times somebody external to the leader to help them through that process.

Tod Bolsinger: Yeah. Yeah. And so just to think about that for a second, when you hear that list, and make a shift in values.

Brian Miller: Oh my.

Tod Bolsinger: Expectations. Right? Those are not things that easily shift.

Brian Miller: No.

Tod Bolsinger: As a matter of fact, there would be a whole bunch of us who would say wait a minute, that's the things that shouldn't shift. And what we're wrestling with is that the shifting is trying to pay attention to the discernment between what should never change, if we lose this we lose our core identity, we lose our reason for being. But at the same time, we've got to recognize that if we don't make that shift, we won't be able to keep moving forward.

Tod Bolsinger: So discerning what do you shift, what do you keep, and what do you change is an act of deep discernment. But it's also deep loss.

- Tod Bolsinger: So when you talk about adaptive leadership, what you're talking about is leadership that cannot be solved by an expert. That's called a technical solution. Not technology, though that's sometimes [crosstalk 00:16:26].
- Brian Miller: If it's an expert, it's a technical solution.
- Tod Bolsinger: Right, right. And technical doesn't mean trivial. Technical, like a heart bypass, that's technical. Flying a plane, technical. I would say preaching a good sermon, technical. Walking with people through death, is technical because you can train people to do it. There are experts who can do it, right?
- Tod Bolsinger: What an adaptive experience is, is when there isn't a capacity. So when you actually don't know what to do. And when all of a sudden you look around and realize what we usually do is we go copy somebody else's solution. But the copying of somebody else's solution never works in an organism that is built on a group of people being transformed.
- Tod Bolsinger: So an adaptive challenge is one that requires learning and it results in loss. And that's probably the most painful part of the whole thing.
- Tod Bolsinger: Whenever I speak, I start with a quote from Ronald Heifetz, who wrote .. he and Marty Linksy wrote this work on adaptive change. And he says, "Leadership is disappointing your own people at a rate they can absorb."
- Brian Miller: I think you're right. I mean one, there's got to be learning. There has to. And a coach's help bring the awareness so you can see what's all out there and it can definitely increase the learning. But you've really hit on it that there will be loss.
- Brian Miller: And that you have to be ready to help your people walk through the loss. There's no way of not losing something.
- Tod Bolsinger: Yeah. So imagine if you're the guy who's job was to build the canoes. Or you're the guy whose job was to navigate the canoes. You're with us because you're the best canoer we have. We're about to get to the rapids and we need you. Your whole identity is built on that.
- Tod Bolsinger: And then all of a sudden, the boss says hey, by the way, there's no water, we're dropping the canoes. And what we need to actually do is all of us who are experts need to start listening now to this Native American pregnant teenage woman who is nursing a baby and she's with us and she's now the expert and we need to follow Sacajawea to go find where we can find the people who will help us.
- Tod Bolsinger: Not only are we not the experts, but we're going to lose our expertise. We're going to lose our sense of security. We've got to become learners, we've got to be humble. It's going to be really hard. It's really hard.



- Brian Miller: So Sacajawea is not seminary trained.
- Tod Bolsinger: Yeah, yeah, yeah. It was an interesting thing. So like she's called Sacajawea, but I have this little thing. I saw some of the journals, and in the journals they pronounce her name Sa-ca'-ga-wee-a. And it's an interesting thing.
- Tod Bolsinger: I feel like one of my jobs is to try to give her back her name. Because what you realize is these two men of the enlightened, especially Merriwether Lewis, he was tutored by Thomas Jefferson. This man of the Enlightenment, who was probably as privileged as anybody, he is dependent on this young Native American woman who's nursing a baby. It's just a totally different mindset.
- Tod Bolsinger: And for me in the church, that is a reminder that God's grace is going before us. That there are churches that were not formed by Christendom, there are leaders who were not formed by Christendom, who are in our midst. And that there is the possibility for the church to thrive. But what it's often going to take is the leader who is probably going to need to be coached on how to bring voices to the table and other people's expertise that you've otherwise overlooked up until now.
- Brian Miller: Oh my. That's a task. And we've trained thousands of coaches who I think this is their heart. They want to help Christian transformation. Just as you went into spiritual formation.
- Brian Miller: That idea, it's transformation. That's what we all want. What are some suggestions you'd make to coaches out there who are trying to help church leaders, I would say Christian leaders, nonprofits. What were some suggestion you would give to coaches?
- Tod Bolsinger: Well, I think the first one is if you want to help people develop as adaptive leaders, you have to be an adaptive person. So one of the principles in the book is in uncharted territory, uncharted territory requires adaptive leadership.
- Tod Bolsinger: In uncharted territory, everybody will be changed, starting with the leader. So the coach has to be someone. So if you're like a lot of us who get into coaching because we're pretty competent and all we want to do is help other people, we got to get rid of the idea that the best thing I can bring is my advice.
- Brian Miller: Right.
- Tod Bolsinger: So learning to be a really good question asker, which I know your work does. I've actually seen the book and stuff. Learning how to lead through asking questions, how to listen deeply, to be curious, to be vulnerable yourself.
- Tod Bolsinger: You know, when your coachee is looking at you saying I'm dying, give me the answer, and you instead come back with a question where you tell them you don't know, that's a vulnerable moment.

- Brian Miller: Absolutely.
- Tod Bolsinger: And so for a lot of us as coaches, we have to work on our own adaptive capacity. And we have to really hold back our great temptation to want to solve somebody else's problem with our past experience.
- Tod Bolsinger: That's a major shift. And I know some of the coaching work, but to realize it's even more important now in adaptive territory.
- Brian Miller: Well, that's good to hear from you. Because our students are constantly saying how do I stop being the expert.
- Tod Bolsinger: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Brian Miller: Because it's so hard. It's so hard. You hear a problem and you instantly think oh, and your brilliant question becomes have you ever thought about trying this.
- Tod Bolsinger: Yeah.
- Brian Miller: Terrible question, terrible coaching question. But you're saying that for sure you've went out there ahead and looked and seen where this thing's going. And our expertise, no matter how good, will not help. It'll actually get in the way.
- Tod Bolsinger: Yeah. Well, think of it this way also. Even if your expertise could help, it doesn't build capacity.
- Brian Miller: Right.
- Tod Bolsinger: So part of what you have to recognize is when you're in an uncharted territory, it's not that the next five feet or five miles are uncharted. It's that the rest of it's uncharted.
- Tod Bolsinger: So what you're trying to grapple with is, yeah, sure, Lewis and Clark got into their ... they eventually found the river and they got in the canoes and they went forward. But they hadn't carried the canoes. What they figured out how to do was how to build new canoes.
- Tod Bolsinger: So the capacity to build canoes. And it also reminds us that we take our technical expertise with us. So what we need is every time we get into a new environment, a new area, a new arena, what we need is not only our technical competence, which we never lose, but increased adaptive capacity. Which is the ability to learn in that moment and the ability to go through loss in that moment.
- Tod Bolsinger: And that's what transforms us. And so coaching as "passing on expertise" is going to help you maybe get you through the next five miles. But it isn't going to get you through the rest of your life.

Brian Miller: Got it, got it. So one thing we need to do as coaches is really lock ourselves in as not being the expert. And that this adaptive process, that needs to be our expertise, is the adaptive process.

Brian Miller: What's something else you would tell coaches that would be really helpful to them?

Tod Bolsinger: The other thing I would tell coaches is don't underestimate how powerful and painful loss is. Which means you're going to have to deal with your own loss, right?

Tod Bolsinger: So when people are going through loss, one of the premises or the principles is people don't resist change, they resist loss. And people resist loss so deeply that they will even sabotage you to keep from going through loss.

Tod Bolsinger: So what's incredible is how an entire system ... like I actually know entire churches who have been given all the data that their church is going to die, you're going to run out of money in four years, you have an average age in your congregation in the 70s now, you only have ... you are not going to survive.

Tod Bolsinger: And they will listen to those facts and then they will say yeah, but we can't change. We will fill-in-the-blank. We'll lose whatever.

Tod Bolsinger: So that, you can't underestimate how painful loss is, and how much you have to help people go through loss. And that that actually is good news, because most of us in ministry have at least been trained on how to help people deal with personal loss.

Tod Bolsinger: We may not be good at organizational loss, but we do know how to use the hope of the resurrection to help people grieve. We grieve but not as those who have no hope, right? And it allows us then to think about the way in which we are able to really help an organization go through the same thing, a church go through the same thing.

Tod Bolsinger: So it really is if you can help people be learners and you can help them navigate loss, you can actually help them develop the capacity to keep going.

Brian Miller: That's fantastic. And I think we know how to help people through loss. It's through conversation, it's through telling the story. It's not, you know ... we as leaders often, too often, look to the future and get excited about the future. And won't it be great because we won't have to deal with all these problems, you know.

Brian Miller: But the folks are just ... they're just hurting and they can't let it go. And I've been in a situation you're in, to say here's the facts, we've got to make changes. And the response is, "Boy, I guess we'll just have to keep the doors open."

- Brian Miller: And I'm thinking did we just see the same data? And I never ... it never occurred to me, maybe even until now, the thought of that that's ... they couldn't grieve the loss. I thought they were just being stubborn.
- Tod Bolsinger: Right, right. So it's an interesting piece. Because almost every one of us who's in some leadership is wired to enjoy the adventure of the future. So our way of getting people to move is usually through going, "Charge, it'll be great, let's go." Right?
- Tod Bolsinger: In the book I tell the story of running into one of my old classmates when I was back here at Fuller, because I came back on the faculty and staff. I was just back here to teach and I ran into one of my classmates. And I couldn't wait to see him because he was a guy who'd been in the business world.
- Tod Bolsinger: And I was thrilled about the stuff I was learning. I kind of ... I think I wanted to show off a little bit, like hey, I know you were a successful business guy and now I'm doing this leadership stuff that many business people use. And I asked him, so I said well tell me what you're doing.
- Tod Bolsinger: And he said, "Well, I left behind the whole business thing. I got my degree. I'm now pastoring a little congregation in a church that's really in a ... it's an old folks home, it's in a nursing home. It's really what I do, my job is to take care of Grandma. And I sing and I pray for them and I hold their hands until I put them in the hands of Jesus. Tod, what do you do?"
- Tod Bolsinger: And I realized we had this moment where I realized I'm kind of a take the hill guy, and he's a take care of Grandma guy. And that all of us grapple with which guy are we supposed to be, which leader are we supposed to be, which. You know?
- Tod Bolsinger: I've sat down, I talked to a pastor the other day, and she said to me, "I struggle all the time. I am a take the hill person, and people assume because I'm a woman that I'm a take care of Grandma person. But I'm a leader. Which one do I be?"
- Tod Bolsinger: And I said, "You know, what you have to recognize is like adaptive leadership is always about negotiating competing values. It's about learning and it's about loss and it's about competing values. So the competing value of taking care of Grandma and taking the hill are in competition. What makes this so profoundly difficult is that we absolutely have to take the hill. We have to just take Grandma with us."
- Tod Bolsinger: And that's why it's complicated. Like we've got to empathize with Grandma, we've got to empathize with the people who are losing, are feeling loss, we've got to care for them. We cannot leave them behind. But the church has to move forward.

Tod Bolsinger: And so you don't move forward by scolding. You move forward by empathizing, caring for them, and also inviting them into transformation. And that's just hard, hard work.

Brian Miller: Well, let me get your take on one more thing here before we end. It's that what I find with leaders a lot of time is they think they've got to figure it out before they go to their membership, their congregation, and even their board.

Brian Miller: And my advice is always no you don't. You need to go to them and say I don't know, let's work through this together. Which makes me even think more about team coaching, not just leadership coaching, but team coaching, to help. Because nobody knows which direction this goes. And you're talking about those competing values. And if we do it together, we have a lot better chance of getting past the competition, it seems to me like. What are your thoughts on that?

Tod Bolsinger: Yeah. So I often say that adaptive leadership begins with those three words, I don't know. It begins with a leader who has technical ... so here's the thing to remember. It begins with a leader who has demonstrated technical competence. So they know you're credible, who has been caring, been what I call relationally congruent. So they know you're actually a person they can trust.

Tod Bolsinger: So when a trustworthy, credible, competent leader looks them in the eye and says folks, I don't know what's next, and is vulnerable, the adaptive process can start.

Tod Bolsinger: Now, in the book I say if no one will follow you off the map if they don't trust you on the map.

Brian Miller: Right.

Tod Bolsinger: So you have to be competent and you've got to be caring and you got to be congruent. But then you've got to be humble enough to say I don't know and invite a dialogue. Right? And invite a ... create a learning community, a corps of discovery. We are going to discover every step of the way what it's like.

Tod Bolsinger: And so for Merriwether Lewis and William Clark that started off as a strict military unit with strict military discipline, by the time they got to Oregon, when they established the United States of America in Oregon, they did it with a vote and they gave everybody in the party a vote. Including Sacajawea. And including the African American slave, York.

Tod Bolsinger: Because they were part of the Corps of Discovery and they deserved a vote. And that's a total shift of values, habits, behaviors, and beliefs. But that only happened because they walked through that process together.

Brian Miller: Yeah. I think there's a good framework in the book that talks about what you just said. The technical side, the adaptive side, and the relational side. And the mix of that Venn diagram, right there in the center. So I think that's a good framework for coaching as well.

Brian Miller: Tod, thanks for this work. This is so important. This is leading Christianity into the next millennia, and we need your work on this. It's going to be so helpful. I so appreciate it.

Tod Bolsinger: Yeah. It's great. And you know, this is the kind of work we're doing at Fuller. So if anybody wants more resources from us, I mean actually we got a bunch of resources ready to go. They made my resources available. It's pretty easy to do so.

Tod Bolsinger: You can just send a text to me and we can get resources right back out to you. It's just a ... send the word "canoeing," to 66866. A bunch of resources come right back.

Tod Bolsinger: Anybody who uses that text. The word "canoeing," 66866, and we'll send a bunch of resources back to you because we want to help leaders all the way.

Brian Miller: I'm going to do that immediately and I'm just going to encourage everyone listening too. Don't buy ... this may make you mad, Tod. Don't buy Tod's book. Buy a crate of Tod's books.

Tod Bolsinger: Thank you, thank you.

Brian Miller: And give them to everybody you know. Because it's going to be helpful to you as a leader to have other people reading this too. Because when you go and say I don't know and nobody else knows, then what do we do?

Brian Miller: Well, this book is a guide to where to start. And so we really appreciate that.

Brian Miller: Thanks for everybody else for listening to this podcast. Coach Approach Ministries is a nonprofit coach training school with over 15 years of experience, training more than 2000 coaches. Let us know how we can help you start or further your coaching career by visiting us at [www.coachapproachministries.org](http://www.coachapproachministries.org), or email me at [BMiller@ca-ministries.com](mailto:BMiller@ca-ministries.com).

Brian Miller: We'll see you next week.