Gerry ([00:11](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Welcome to the Seidman Mentorship Podcast. This is your captain speaking on this show, we navigate the voyage of life through the lens of Lakers, some who have just come aboard, and others who are well underway. We will speak with experts who will show us the ropes, help us plot a course, and recount exhilarating tales of uncharted territory, all while promoting lifelong learning agility and a culture of mentorship.

Gerry ([00:45](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Today on the show, I welcome Professor Kevin Lehnart. Professor Lehnert has a PhD in marketing international business from St. Louis University, a MBA in economics from Loyola, a MA in philosophy from Boston College, and two BAs in both philosophy and psychology from St. Louis University. Professor Lehnert and I talk about the walls and pathways that students encounter when they first come to Grand Valley, and the opening ways in which you can be a better mentor to each other. And throughout the entire university, we focus on vulnerability. A concept that seems simple at first, but really isn't and is at the key and the heart of mentorship. Professor Kevin Lehnert this is honor and a pleasure for me to have you and welcome Ahoy. Welcome to the show. As we say on the Seidman mentorship, we do all these nautical pun things. It's a lot of fun. I'm sure you'd appreciate that. But welcome.

Kevin ([01:42](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Thanks. And the honor's mine, I mean, it's not, it's not the- trust me, I am not one to be honored. It is, it is the other way around, for sure. Thanks.

Gerry ([01:52](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Well, it's a great opportunity for us to talk about mentorship. I shared as we were getting ready, I think you and I resonate on so many of the same things. The challenge today will, for us, to keep ourselves on task, on topic because we share so many interests including mentorship kindred spirit in you as you're an instructor but you're also really involved in the students. I wanna start by asking about your Laker journey thus far.

Kevin ([02:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I've been here 13 years now. And you know, I came, came out at 2010 market's. Not super great for any faculty, much less marketing faculty. Grand Valley saw something in me that I didn't see in Grand Valley, and this is the unique thing about Grand Valley, right? Grand Valley will see something in you that you may not see in yourself. I was throwing applications at the wall at Medicare. It was a position I had applied to it. And, and when Grand Valley interviewed me, they asked me, they said, Hey, you know, we know the interview looks for international marketing, looks for these things, but what about ethics? What, you know, because my background is in philosophy and it was only, you know, through, through poverty kind of, that I got into business and I said, holy Cats, ethics. I mean, yeah. Because I never thought I'd be doing ethics.

Kevin ([03:10](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I figured I'd be 20 years in the field before I got to do ethics. And so I've been doing ethics. The other thing about Grand Valley, right? My Laker journey is Grand Valley was hiring when, when I got hired. So I got hired with two other colleagues, one from my same doctorate program. And they hired two colleagues before me and colleagues after. And so we all came up at the same time, growing our families at the same time. And so when we talk about this Laker family, right? In the marketing department, when I got hired, it, it wasn't a, it wasn't a a metaphor. It was reality. And, and to this day Suzanne Bennett, who was the department chair at the time, is my emergency contact for my son <laugh>. And, you know, and, and I would call people from the department.

Kevin ([03:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

You know, when, when my son, who at the time was a month old when I got hired for, for questions about, he's got a fever, what do I do? Or, and asking for recommendations. And we grown up together and we talked about that Laker journey, that laker for a lifetime. I think we often forget that that's, that's, there's a truth to that. That's not just a marketing blip. That's not something that we use hand you a pen when you graduate. It's that connection for mentorship, right? That's part of that, that's part of that family. I tell my students, you know, when we talk about finding jobs and that, you know, it's not what you know, it's who you know, you know, you know Grand Valley people. What do you mean by that? We go to LinkedIn, pull up the Meijer job page, guys want to work at Meijer?

Kevin ([04:43](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Okay. Someone wants to work at Meijer. And I say, click this button and you click this button and it tells you all the people who are connected to Meijer, you know, the, the, the business who are also connected to Grand Valley and it's hundreds. And the way LinkedIn works, they're always probably the more recent connections, which means it's young people. And more often than not, someone's like, I know that guy. Right? Or I know that person. And, and that's it. Right? And, and that's been my Laker journey, right? The, I don't go anywhere without seeing someone who's like, Hey, professor Lehnert or whatever. And it's, it's wonderful. And it's magical because it's, it's done out of compassion, it's done out of, of love. It's done out of enjoyment. And, and that, that's something special about that, that I haven't seen anywhere else.

Gerry ([05:29](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I like how you describe, as we talked about this before, these walls and pathways to mentorship. And it sounds like what you were describing is kind of these pathways. There are ways that you got to where you wanted to go, but not just through the fact that you knew somebody. We had this in common, but I can tell you actually care. I can hear the inflection in your voice that you feel like you're a part of this. And that's been my experience too, many episodes ago. I talked about when I returned to Grand Valley after being gone, that some of my instructors were still here. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. So either that means they couldn't get a better gig, which I don't think is true because they were very effective, or they cared. And I don't know a lot about other universities if that kind of tenure of having those folks around and having them involved is common or uncommon. I do know that what we do at Grand Valley is very unique with our connections with the community at large. And I know you're a part of that too, spending other time at businesses doing consulting. You're not just a guy in the classroom doing lectures.

Kevin ([06:33](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Well, I mean, I think who we are as people right? Extends beyond that. As a faculty member, who I am as a faculty member and just someone who teaches. And I think it's really easy to forget that I am my most authentic self in the classroom. You don't get more Kevin than the Kevin in the classroom. But to be that in the classroom, you have to be elsewhere. And it's that connection, it's that community. And it's that notion of caring. I like how you used the word caring because to care right, means to, to ex- to express love to ex- you know, maybe not like emotional, but to, to express a, an openness and a willingness to help. And that's something I think we often forget in terms of mentorship. Especially as a young person who's searching for mentorship, we forget that willingness to help.

Kevin ([07:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And at Grand Valley, that's, that's really what we're talking about when we talk about caring. When we talk about that willingness to help, it's not, it's not being nice. It's not being easy. It, it's understanding and, and caring about the people who are coming to us for an education, for mentorship, for guidance. And I think oftentimes young people feel that, that there, there's a reticence to that. Because we do care and we're just like, well, just come, come to me, you know, and I'll help. And, and we forget that that's hard. And so you're right. You know, in the classroom and in the Grand Valley way, there's that notion of caring that really does speak to that authentic caring. We give a, well, we're on a podcast, but, but we do. Right? We really do. And I don't think you succeed at Grand Valley unless you do, because that's, that's our culture.

Gerry ([08:27](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

What is the thing that you wish students today would do that they don't do?

Kevin ([08:31](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Oh, man. Be vulnerable.

Gerry ([08:34](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

What do you mean by that?

Kevin ([08:38](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So, so in class we talk about trust and, and trust. Trust is a gift, we forget that. We think, oh, you know, trust, trust in marketing is important. Trust is a gift. And, and what that gift is when you trust someone is a gift of vulnerability. You say, hey, this business, this thing, could take advantage of me. Because I don't, I don't know everything, you know, I filled my car up with gas, but I'm assuming it's the right octane. I don't know. I'm, I'm vulnerable, but I trust, I trust that the gas station's going to give me this stuff and my car's going to, to run. It's not going to assure in the gas tank. But we're scared to be vulnerable. We're scared to be hurt. And in the classroom, students are scared to be vulnerable. So they don't wanna raise their hand because they're scared of being hurt.

Kevin ([09:22](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

They don't want to put out an opinion, they're scared to go to office hours because they don't wanna seem like they can't do it. And so we're, we're scared. We're scared to be vulnerable. Cause we eq- we equate often vulnerability with, with not being good enough. And, and that's hard. I mean, golly gee, it is hard. It's hard for me. It's hard for you to, to, to co-op and say, I don't know. And, and I really wish students would be like, you know what? I don't know. Please help to be vulnerable to, to say, you know what, maybe I'm wrong. I don't know, but this is just my point. This is my viewpoint. This is what I think. And, and hopefully, you know, the faculty on the other side or the mentor on the other side's caring enough to say, cool, that's interesting. That may not be aligned with the learning objective, that we are aligned with. Well, let's take it, let's find the nugget of truth in that. The Jesuit philosopher Bernard Lanigan says that there's no such thing as a counter position. And in class they say, well, so what's a position? You know, you have a position. And, and so you know, who would win in a, in a fight? Batman or Superman? And do you have an opinion on that?

Gerry ([10:34](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

That's a tough one, right? Because this has happened. So without angering half the lore that believes one way or the other, I don't know. I like Batman better.

Kevin ([10:42](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Okay. So, okay, that's my play, right? But I

Gerry ([10:45](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Don't know if he would win, but I like him more. Yeah.

Kevin ([10:47](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So I'll take Superman, right? You have a position? I have a counter position. Do we know? No, we don't know. We don't know. Where's the truth? We don't know. And like we said, we're worried. Oh no. Did I just, did I just defend mm-hmm. <Affirmative>, you know, the, the other half of the cosmos out there. It's okay. You know, somewhere along the line you have a viewpoint as to why Batman would do it. He's always prepared, he's willing to fight dirty somewhere along that line. You know, the person who thinks Superman's going to do it, well, because Superman's superman, he can go back and tie, he can move mountains. And then you got that person, who's like, doesn't matter, Wolverine would kick both their butts. Right? <laugh>, right. That's the point though. I mean, you gotta be vulnerable. You gotta be one to stand up and say, you know, this is it. And, and to recognize that that's not, that's not an attack on you as a person. You not knowing, you being vulnerable is not an attack on you. It's, it's, it's an attack on, on the ignorance, on, on the sacrifice, on the, on the vulnerability. That is us. That's the human condition. And that's okay because that's what we are, we're trying to, to find that pathway to, to be vulnerable to one another so that we can lift each other up.

Gerry ([11:59](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

How does a student practice vulnerability?

Kevin ([12:03](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Oh wow. You know, if I had the real answer to that, this, would it be the podcast <laugh>? I mean, you know, I'd be writing that book, you know, I was speaking to you. I, I think the student practices vulnerability by by being honest with themselves. In other podcasts you talked about the introvert, the extrovert. I think it was Plato who said that the only thing we know is that we know nothing. That I know nothing. And the, the point of that right, is, is that vulnerability. The, when you raise your hand in classroom, right? Raise your hand and the teacher calls on you. And when you raise your hand, the teacher calls on you and they say, Gerry, you raised your hand. You have a question. And you say, yes, professor, I didn't understand this. But what happens when we raise two hands, when we raise two hands?

Kevin ([12:56](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

What's that mean? Touchdown. No, no, it means, it means surrender, right? We, we certainly, it, it's, I don't even understand the question, right? You're speaking words, right? But when you put them in that order, it doesn't even make sense to me. I call that accounting <laugh>. Yeah. But it's like the Charlie Brown teacher, right? Womp, womp, womp to recognize that that's okay. To just to be lost. To be lost in the throes of wonder. And so if we understand ourselves, you know, if we, if we don't just say, I got it to myself, but we recognize that we don't get it, that's the first thing a student can do. The second thing they can do to practice, is define pathways. To share that vulnerability. Raising your hand in the classrooms. That's hard. That's hard. I get that. Write that question down. And after class, talk to the teacher about it.

Kevin ([13:45](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Write that question down and send it to them in an email. Hey prof, thanks for the lecture. When we were talking, I had a statement, I had a comment, I had thought, and I didn't, I didn't really want to share it. But you know, I, I, I wanted to share it here. And, and a good professor, you know, what I do is, when I get those, because I recognize not everyone can raise their hand, is I'll bring that back to the class, say, hey, one of your colleagues had this opinion and this great viewpoint. And I share that viewpoint. I won't even call the student out, but I'll say, you know, I'll share that viewpoint. And then that gives the student the strength to say that their, their viewpoint is heard. That their question was heard, that their vulnerability was, was heard. And surprisingly, what happens is the next time I don't get that email from that student, what do you think that student does? They raise those hands. Office hours. Go to them.

Gerry ([14:37](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So I, I shamelessly plug your office in your office hours. Because when I was back at Grand Valley, I did a very secret technique. I learned from one of my mentors called management by walking around. And so I wandered around the building to see who was here. And I remember you go to Professor Lehnert's office, and as you pass by, you notice it's different than other offices that you see because you have cool stuff in your office that's saying it's an invitation to, to come in and look at my stuff, right? So you have the quintessential academic books on your bookshelf, right? But you got a turntable in your office, you got a little record collection thing going on. And I think you're listening to some tunes. The first time I came by, you have comic books, right? So there's something different about this guy.

Gerry ([15:23](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I, I want to find out. You're, you're, you're sending out a signal there. Your bat signal is up. And I'm like, I wanna see what this guy's about. And I have referred more people to your office hours. Because I think you're just an approachable guy. And for the people out there listening, especially your Seidman students who are like, I wanna practice networking, or I want to test out this vulnerability, then step outta your comfort zone. And if you've never experienced office hours, they're very easy to find a professor and pick somebody you like and find out what their office hours are. Because most professors that I see at office hours are very lonely. I describe them as shelter pets waiting for somebody to come and adopt them for this short period of time. But I'm gonna just go ahead and throw it out there. And you can come to mine and you can come to Professor Lehnert's anytime and just say, hey, I'm here to practice my networking. I'm here to meet somebody new. What classes do you teach? You know, you have a great rating, by the way. On rate my professor 4.7 over 13 years. That's pretty impressive. Wow. I took the liberty of our, our research committee, which is me took the liberty of doing that. But office hours, a great way to do that.

Kevin ([16:33](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I, and with office hours, don't, don't feel like it's the office hours, just stop by the office. If the door's open, we're, we're willing. And if that doesn't make the time, put some times out there. My office is that way because I'm there. I work, you know, five days a week in that space. That's my space. So it's, it's for me as much as it is for someone else. And, and I love the, the idea of just coming, doesn't, you don't have to have a reason. A friend of mine, his name's Ryan, and we call him, "tell me a story Ryan", because Ryan has a story, wants, wants to know a story about her. He doesn't have a story. He wants to, he'll walk up to me, he'll sit down to you, never met you before and say, tell me a story. Not who are you, what do you do, tell me a story. And that's cool because that's life. Life is nothing but a series of stories and chapters. And if your story's boring, right? You know, so, so even if you just walk in and sit down to that professor and say, hi, you know my name, my name's Gerry. I'm an MBA student, former MBA student. I saw you're a marketing, tell me a story. I mean, it throws the faculty member off, but that's okay. We need to be vulnerable and uncomfortable too, right?

Gerry ([17:44](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

For sure. And I think that's part of being a community. And I hope people can take that and do that when they're riding the Laker line or when they're sitting in the commons for lunch and meet somebody they don't know. But they do know them, right? We're kind of trying to establish that you're part of the Laker community, yet you, you paid your tuition, you're here on campus, you're part of it. You, you, this is a benefit you're paying for.

Kevin ([18:08](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

It's a small world, right? Access. I've been here 14 years, 13 years. And a lot of people have had me, you know, a lot of people have had the great faculty members here. And I bet as you as a student, you, you've had them too.

Gerry ([18:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And they're still here.

Kevin ([18:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

You've had some of those the first years, right? And so when you meet someone else, right, who's also a major or was also an MBA, there was also those things, Hey, did you have Professor Lehnert for ethics? No, I didn't. Ah, man. You missed out. Who'd you have? Oh, I had Professor Lynch. Oh, that's cool. Because I had her for something else. You know, that's, that's the connection. That's the common ground.

Gerry ([18:44](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Can't do justice to a conversation between you and I without talking about our shared geekdom. And you used a term earlier, but we had a great conversation and we might need a whole nother podcast, a different time to do this. But I want to touch on it. So consider it the teaser. Talk about the throw of wonder and talk about how we don't have that as much in modern day society with all of our technology that we have now. And use the nostalgia that I heard you the first time you talked about it.

Kevin ([19:14](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Man. I mean, that was one of those conversations that just kind of was magic at the moment. <Laugh>, you know, and you ask me to go back and think about it, but you know, when, when I think about the throw of wonder, right? The thrill of wonder, I, I'm always referenced to a comedy bit that Pete Holmes did. And if you Google Pete Holmes, Google not knowing, you'll get the bit that he did for Conan. And, and, but the bit talks about this idea that and he does it much, does it justice, and the, the humor in it is there as the professional comedian that Pete Holmes is, but he says, you know, look, we've got this phone, right? We got this brick of technology that is the sum total of all human knowledge just sits in our hand. And I can find anything I want, anything I want.

Kevin ([19:57](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Pete Holmes does the example of where's Tom Petty from? And he hits the phone and hits it. Boom. Done. And, and that's it. And the idea of knowing is the exact same as the idea of not knowing. And if you think about higher ed, right? You know, what's the purpose of higher ed? It's supposed to help us gain knowledge. And, and I I say in all seriousness, really what we do is not gaining knowledge, just trying to gain wisdom. Because I can pick up my phone and I can hit a button and I can find the issue that you know, you know, what issue is the issue where Batman and Robin dies at Dawn. You know, what issue is that? What's the first appearance of Venom and Spider-Man? Spider-Man 300? You know, I mean, I, I can hit the button, right? And, and if I wanna know how old Tom Cruise is or if I want to know any of this stuff, Google will give that to me.

Kevin ([20:46](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And so does this act of not knowing is the same as knowing, but without that, right? If we don't have that, if we have these problems, these questions, these concerns, right? We're anxious. We're, we're, we're tense. I don't know. I don't know what's gonna be on the exam. Time, value of money, I don't know. Oh, you know, it's hard. But you live with that and, and you struggle with that. And then you come to terms with that and Pete Holmes says, you're at a bar one day and you look across and you see a girl with a Tom Petty, and the Heartbreakers T-shirt. And you walk up and ask her, where's Tom Petty from? And she says, Florida and a wave of endorsements flows over you <laugh>, right? And think about, think about that class you had. That was hard. That sucked. Right? That was just, but you worked through it.

Kevin ([21:33](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

You got through it. And now as you reflect upon it, right? Maybe at the end of the class you're getting bad evaluations and you're really upset and it's a hard class and how dare they make you, you work so hard. But you look back upon that, like the value of that, right? The value of the hard work Thomas Edison. Like, you know, the, the light bulb's not one success. It's a thousand failures. Because we don't learn from the, we learn from the failure. We learn from the not knowing. And when you, you have that break from the not knowing to the knowing the wave of endorsements because of that throw of wonder, because of that throw of not knowing. And that's why I like higher ed. That's why I like, you know, being with my students because I don't know I'm, I'm raising a teenager today in today's world, I don't know. But they do. Right? And it's magical and it's brilliant. And that's my vulnerability in the classroom. And the students help me with that. And that's how they mentor me. And that's joyous. And we forget that. We forget that in the work we do because we get weighed down by the weight, by the struggle, by our times and the effort. And when we own the work, when we own the vulnerability, when we own the anxiety, when we reach that success, that's the throw of wonder. That's, that's the joy, the glory, right?

Gerry ([23:04](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Spending time in that space where you actually don't know and go ahead and struggle with it.

Kevin ([23:08](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Right? Right. Because when you break through, right? When you break through that barrier and you find that pathway, wow, that's cool.

Gerry ([23:17](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I think of all the great rolling playing games and, and the image in my mind is the hand with a handful of dice or the D 20 or whatever, cuz we don't know. We're about to find out mm-hmm. <Affirmative>, but we really don't know. We're gonna toss the dice, roll the bones, and, and actually see what happens. Spend time just having a great argument. And that doesn't happen as much anymore because we can pull out the phone. Mm-Hmm. <Affirmative> recently I went to a gathering of some friends and they pulled out the, you know, the phone basket, right? So everybody's gonna put their phone in the basket and then, you know, we can talk about something and, and do that. And I don't advise doing that by the way, out of the blue at your next party pulling out the phone basket. But it was kind of fun to kind of throw back to that. And, and one of the things that I think our mentees and our students see us do is this. And it's kind of magical to them. And in our pre-work for this show, I had asked you a question and this, and the answer you gave me at the time surprised me. And it's also a teaser to a podcast in the future. But who were your mentors?

Kevin ([24:18](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Well, I mean, I don't think I had any, and I've got mentors now. I've got mentors who maybe mentored me then, but I didn't realize it. And, and for me that was, that was a failure, right? You know, I, I, I was behind the eight ball because I didn't find those people. I was the person who didn't.

Gerry ([24:40](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

How did you do it? I mean, you're a successful guy, right? You obviously made it. So the person out there who is self mentoring, which is one of the podcast topics we're going to talk about, what did, what did, I don't want to, I don't want to cue up too many things, but I, I've seen you in class and you tell this really passionate story after an ethical lesson about, and here's the day I decided, Kevin decided he wanted to become a professor mm-hmm. <Affirmative>. And it was profound and it was beautiful, and I don't want to steal the thunder, and I'm not asking to tee up that story because it requires the buildup. So you gotta take Kevin's class, you gotta take ethics with Professor Lehnert if you want to hear the story. But how does the, tell me the transition then, how you became self mentored, it sounds like, to, to bridge to your success.

Kevin ([25:27](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Well, thankfully I've got the, the, the value of time, right? I mean, I'm, I'm old, I'm an old fogie right? But that, that self-awareness I think is really the case. It's, it's the drive that I have in, in myself to try to do more, to be more, and, and the, the drive to help others. And, and what, what I found, what I found is my, my biggest mentors were the people who I felt I was mentoring them. And, and you know, that's, that's the magic, right? You know, it's cliche, right? I didn't teach them, they taught me. But there's a lot of truth to that.

Gerry ([26:12](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Was that professionally? Was that just socially with the people you chummed around with?

Kevin ([26:16](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

It was everything. It was everything. You know, you know, being there for my, my friends and recognizing, you know, I'm a big academic with, you know, letters behind my name, but man, I'm not lick smarter than anyone else, just means I'm focused and driven in, in this pathway. But, but you know, the people who've been there to help me and, and realize holy, holy, you know, they're, they're, they're helping me, you know and being there for them. So, you know, being there for my friends, but more importantly, my friends were there for me when I stumbled. And it goes back to that vulnerability, right? To, you know, I found that the greatest mentors I had, and the mentors I have today are the people who pick me up when I fall or who catch me before I fall, who reach out to me and say, you know, Hey, what are you doing? I haven't heard from you in a while.

Gerry ([27:05](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So powerful when, when you do that. And my, my favorite mentors today and some of them have been on the show, Bob Stoll was on the show and has been a mentor of mine, was a Grand Valley person for 30 some odd years the other day, out of the blue as if he has the, the sixth sense and shoot you a text. How you doing? Haven't heard from you in a while. What, what's going on? And man, sometimes that hits on the exact day you need it. And from, I don't know, maybe it's part of the cosmic human experience, we could debate that, but it just arrived. If you do that enough, it's gonna arrive one of those times when you really need it. And I had the same thing with a good buddy the other day who just had the sixth sense, you know, picked up the phone, gave me a call, man, I'm thinking about you. How you doing? It's so powerful. Oh, yeah. And so simple.

Kevin ([27:52](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. And that, that's it right there. And, and thank you for saying that because A, it reminds me, there's some people I need, I, I owe some people some phone calls, <laugh>

Gerry ([28:02](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

You and me both.

Kevin ([28:04](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

But, but you're exactly right. That's, that's the play. And that's where I found, you know, the people who've, you know, out of the blue they call, say, Hey, you realize the impact you've made on someone's life when they do that too. You know, some of my friends are musicians and, you know, every often I'll pick up on their albums and I'll drop them a note and say, hey, I'm listening to the album you wrote, you know, years ago. And I've got to tell you, you know, all the bands that you've been in throughout your life, Chris Graybar is a musician out of St. Louis, and he is been in lots of different bands, and I've known him since my undergraduate years, and he's been in four or five bands as and his, his music's been the soundtrack of my life. And I drop a note, just so you know, man, it's summertime and I'm picking up the Magnolia Summer album again, listening to it.

Kevin ([28:49](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And thank you for being there. Thank you for, you know, I, I haven't talked to him in years and, and, but he's there for me, right? And it works both ways. And so if I was to give advice to a young person, you say, what's the thing you want a young person to do? Do that, man. Take, go, go to Walgreens, go to CVS. Get yourself a $5 pack of thank you cards, or just blank cards and sit down and say, Hey, insert teacher's name here. Hey, insert just person you're thinking about. Just wanna let you know, thinking about you. One

Gerry ([29:25](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Of my mentors, you mean professors like to get those too?

Kevin ([29:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Oh, <laugh>, yeah. One of my, one of my professional mentors, Dave Good. Dave Good, is a former sales professor here at Grand Valley State. He retired a few years ago, but he said, Kevin, your relationship's like a helium balloon. And what happens with that helium balloon, you know, sits around for a while, it deflates, right? You know, that balloon deflates. So what you have to do is you have to blow that up with air again. And so it requires that, you know, that's how relationships keep happening. But, you know, just like with the balloon, right? It doesn't take a lot of air. You know, one or two breaths will reinvigorate that balloon. And, and I think students are afraid of that because you're not putting us out. You're not putting anyone out. Trust me, most of us as humans are really, really good at looking busy.

Kevin ([30:14](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

But there's time I, not to get too geeky, I think it was one of the Star Trek movies Captain Kirk William Shatner, I think it was maybe four or three. But there's a statement in there that says, you make time for what's important. You know, Captain Kirk, captain of the enterprise, right? It doesn't matter what iteration, what's Chris Pine? What's William Shatner? Whatever busy job you make time for, what's important? And you will find very quickly and easily that mentors and mentees, what's important is the person asking in front of them. And if I'm an undergraduate, if I was to go back to, to young Kevin, you know, future Kevin goes back to young Kevin. I, I would say, you know, it's okay to ask and just, just do it. Father Tusully Jesuit priest out of Boston College, we got to know each other over a common thread of horror films, right? Jesuit priest likes horror films. He would show horror films in the library at BC on Friday afternoons, got to know each other. And he's one of those people I deserve, I needed a phone call. But, but yeah, you know, you make time for what's important. And the times I've reached out to him, he's always replied back with a, yes, I have time for you because it's important. And when someone asks me for help, that's important, and I will have time for that.

Gerry ([31:37](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I like to describe mentorship as where I get to say yes to students. Not all of my roles and responsibilities at university allow me to do that. But I'm always trying to find that way to, yes. So I wanna wrap up with a quick speed round, because I don't know, speed rounds are fun. Okay, so wait,

Kevin ([31:56](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Wait. Us move through topics quickly.

Gerry ([31:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Well, I mean, I'm gonna do that old speed round where I'm gonna say this or that, and you get to pick one. And, you know, it's no judgment call except for we listened to this three years ago and be like, yeah, you picked this thing. So you know, I, I know you're a St. Louis Guy, so let's start with some quick barbecue. So brisket versus wings, brisket, brisket. I agree that blues versus jazz,

Kevin ([32:19](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Jazz,

Gerry ([32:20](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Jazz, DC versus Mar

Kevin ([32:22](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Depends on the type of jazz though. You know, I'm, I'm, I'm a smooth jazz guy, right? I'm not, I'm not like a Mingus kind of, it's a

Gerry ([32:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

DC versus Marvel.

Kevin ([32:29](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

I'm a DC kid all the way. I'm so sorry. My friend, my friend Kurt's a Marvel guy and he's like, I can't believe you don't have any Marvel <laugh>. You know, I mean, for me DC comics are about Gods and Marvel comics are about humans. And interesting. You know, that's another conversation that's not mentorship, but a whole nother, but I'm a DC kid all the way

Gerry ([32:48](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Grand Rapids versus St. Louis

Kevin ([32:50](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Grand Rapids.

Gerry ([32:51](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

That's a big deal. Because I know that, that you, and especially Professor Hinch, I mean, you, you guys are Missouri, St. Louis guys. I mean, there's always, when it comes time to defend St. Louis or there's an opportunity for you guys to represent, I know you always do.

Kevin ([33:02](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

You know that's true. St. Louis has a lot of great things. It really does. It's I grew as a person. I am the person I am today because of my St. Louis experience. My fr-, deep not friends, brothers, family is in St. Louis. but it's, it's a hard place right now. And if I'm to think about the, the place I wanna live to raise my family that community, right? We, we started this conversation about Laker journey, right? Right. And my past is in St. Louis, and I always thought I'd go back home there and I might, but my life and my present is in Grand Rapids.

Gerry ([33:37](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Well, we are fortunate as a community and as a university, and me fortunate as a colleague to share a relationship with you. Professor Lehnert, thank you for taking the time today. And all the days that you do when you're in your office and you're here working and the passion that you bring for the students and for the community at Grand Valley on behalf of Grand Valley we're grateful. Thank you for that.

Kevin ([34:00](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Well, you know, hey, the pleasure's mine. The gift was given to me. And I say that in all honesty and it's continued to be a gift and I will take it and embrace it and run with it for as long as that gift has continued to be given. So you're welcome. My wife says I need to, to just accept the thanks <laugh>. But it does work both ways. And any student listening or any non-student listening, stop by the office third floor Seidman, and you know, ask, ask a student. They'll get you to the left or the right for the even side. But I'm here and I'd love to chat with everyone.

Gerry ([34:35](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Oh, we appreciate that. And thank you for your time. Thanks.

Kevin ([34:37](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Thanks Gerry.

Gerry ([34:39](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/uRZZODML6aapUujbmqgx_PnnN6GtidSJ5osqSBqwg7_9YX-PNTEbR-sFvhifFm4NwCHBeE47OT3iBny40buKfjUU-fg?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

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