Talks at GS

Karl-Anthony Towns on Leading with Purpose on and Off the Court

Date of recording: February 20, 2026

Nicole Pullen Ross: As you think about the vision that you have, the leadership that you share, your legacy, etc., what is the voice that you want the younger generation to hear from you?

Karl-Anthony Towns: There's different ways to lead than what you see on TV, or what social media tells you what a leader really is. When you hear sports, you hear about the person who's screaming the loudest, directing everybody and doing all the rah rah. But a lot of the times that's not the true leader. The true leader is the one that's in the background, making sure that characters and egos are all meshing together and personalities meet each other where they need to meet each other. And for me, my leadership style has always been since day one about servant leadership. I've always felt that my purpose in life was to serve others, I feel that in doing that, not only have I felt that I've gotten the best out of my teammates on the basketball court, but I've learned a tremendous amount of respect off the court. And it wasn't more about making them feel like I was the best or I was the top dog or anything like that, but instead making us all feel at the same level and accountable, and to be able to be talked to, to be able to be reached. It's something I've gotten more joy out of than actually getting the contracts or scoring the 60-

point games or stuff like that. I live with one motto. Who I am is more important than what I do, even though what I do gets more attention than who I am. And I really live by that. And that's why for me, it’s always been regardless of what's said about me, what's perceived of me, I continue to walk out that door every day and try to spread love. I may not be accepted for it, but as long as I do my part, I can feel good going home every day, looking the man in the mirror and say, I've tried my best to make the world a better place today, and tomorrow we'll redo it again and we'll try to accomplish that goal again.

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