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Bonnie Wesorick

Thank you!!



Needed: Transformative Leaders in Healthcare

Over the years I have listened to many healthcare leaders talk about their leadership experiences. It occurred to me how much I enjoy listening to their stories and am especially drawn to patterns in their stories. I am most intrigued by the patterns that reflect the ways they are developing a culture within their organizations. There are unique similarities in these stories with the ways Bonnie Wesorick describes transformative leaders.

Transformative leaders discuss how they build relationships in their organizations. They describe having a deep feeling of responsibility for nourishing healthy relationships. This includes relationships with and among patients, families, providers, and with one another. Successful and transformative leaders master the art of developing relationships that involve partnering and focus on accountability for helping people see how each person contributes meaningfully to an organization, how they are an important part of a team, and how this contribution is from a person's highest potential. We recognize that people in our organizations reflect how they feel about partnerships in their stories. When we take the time to listen carefully, we can see a reflection of the transformative leader's belief in them. People working in organizations with transformative leaders tend to go beyond a task report of what they did and focus on how they came together with patients, families and one another. Their stories involve more than accomplishing work assignments.

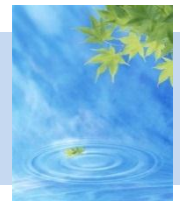
The complexity of healthcare problems requires transformative leaders who empower their employees to create cultures where people can give and receive the best care. This work requires gifted and talented graduates of healthcare programs. The Bonnie Wesorick Center for Health Care Transformation in partnership with the Kirkhof College of Nursing works at establishing curricula, activities, and scholarly work to develop transformative leaders who understand the principles (intention, mission, equal accountability, potential, balance, and trust) of partnerships (Wesorick, 1996).

The foundational principle of partnership is the intention to make a personal choice to connect with another human being at a deeper level, not to control another person, but to become more attentive of another or others. Transformative leaders must go within to be able to reach out to others. They must become self-aware of feelings, desires, motives and thinking. Yet, they must be willing to learn and take risks or become vulnerable to connect with another person. Recently, a student shared her story of being intentional when she approached a very angry and verbally belligerent patient who was threatening to leave against his doctor's advice. She explained that this act of entering the patient's room and approaching him required tremendous courage because she knew that she was taking a risk as she sat down close to him to "connect" with him. She understood that she was making herself vulnerable, as she became a partner with him during a very difficult time in his care. Her patient connection was at a human level and the patient recognized her intention. Wesorick (1996) explains that intention is similar to a light switch: always there and waiting for someone to complete the circuit. At The Bonnie Wesorick Center for Health Care Transformation, we are about creating transformative leaders who can transform healthcare...one graduate at a time. We thank you for being involved with the center and hope you enjoy this edition of our newsletter.

Evelyn Clingerman, PhD, CNE, RN, FNAP

Executive Director, The Bonnie Wesorick Center for Health Care Transformation

A Message from the Dean



The overriding purpose of The Bonnie Wesorick Center for Health Care Transformation is to honor and sustain the legacy of Bonnie Wesorick, a true leader for nursing, health care, and humankind. This prompts an exploration of how a legacy-driven perspective can define leadership. A common definition for legacy is “anything handed down from the past, as from a predecessor or ancestor.” But in the context of leadership, this definition is broadened to include guiding principles for the authentic leader who seeks to serve.

Kouzes and Posner (2006), in their book *The Leader's Legacy*, deliver a key message: “legacy thinking means dedicating ourselves to making a difference, not just working to achieve fame and fortune. It also means appreciating that others will inherit what we leave behind.” Determining the difference one wants to make and doing things that matter lead to the legacy that will be left for future generations. Leadership is about producing results and the “bottom line” is critical -- but a truly influential leader knows that success is not just quantifiable measures. Being a leader comes with the responsibility to do something of significance that makes a community, a work organization, or the broader world a better place. Inherent in this is a willingness to serve people with courage, a focus on relationship-building, and an understanding of the need to suffer along the way.

People follow a leader and develop intense loyalty when the leader cares about them as human beings and acknowledges their aspirations, fears, and ideals. A service-driven leader is sincerely concerned about the welfare of others, more than his/her self. Genuine care to advance others is a primary goal. Remarkable legacy leaders are ones who identify a vision that is purposeful in making a meaningful contribution and mobilizes others to join. Inspiring others draws out their spirit, initiative, creativity, and energy.

The notion of a leader suffering is a bit more challenging to understand. Kouzes and Posner (2006) explain this by examining the meaning of the word suffer. Leaders often talk about leading with passion, which in fact derives from the Latin word for suffering! A compassionate person is one who shares the suffering of others and works to eliminate the cause. Many acts of leadership necessitate a choice between personal success and that which is for the greater good; the ability to see beyond one's own needs. Successful leaders then are known not for what they achieved for themselves, but for what they achieved for others.

It is apparent why The Wesorick Center strives to honor and sustain the legacy of Bonnie Wesorick. Her professional and personal journey in life provides the consummate model of a legacy leader. Her work was always targeted for the point “where the hands of those who give and receive care meet,” and was driven by the need for transformation in the work place culture. Her work is known for what it has achieved for others. As students, faculty, and community partners join in the work of The Center, we anticipate future legacy leaders will be developed. The attributes of legacy leaders will surely advance the Institute of Medicine's desired competencies among all health care professionals.

To lead as a legacy leader takes “courage” – The Center is where the collective wisdom and support exists to develop that courage. Please join in our collective work. We encourage you to learn more about Bonnie Wesorick, her legacy leadership, and how you can extend her legacy!

*Cynthia McCurren, PhD, RN
Dean and Professor
Kirkhof College of Nursing*

THE VISION of The Bonnie Wesorick Center for Health Care Transformation is to provide scholarly leadership that unites interprofessional healers in the research and implementation work essential to transform practice at the point of care.

The work of The Wesorick Center has the potential to expand nationwide, preventing needless deaths and lowering the financial and human cost of healthcare. The Center will fill a leadership void and affect every aspect of healthcare where the hands of those who give and receive care meet.

Bonnie's Pearls of Wisdom



There is much written about transformational leadership. However, there is one major point that has become apparent to me over the years. I have noticed that many believe that leadership is about position and title. The outcome of that belief has stifled the creativity, speed, and ability to expand the capacity of humanity. Transformational leadership is more fundamental than position. It starts with the individual. I believe Ghandi said it best, "You need to be the change we want to see in the world." It is about the individual's vision, passion, understanding, authenticity, respect, hard work, integrity, and desire to serve and develop others; all the fundamental skills to be a transformational leader.

Peace,
Bonnie

The Paradoxes of Transition

We need to know self

But cannot, unless we know who we are with others.

We can disconnect and become paralyzed with divergent thinking

But without Polarity Thinking we become paralyzed in old ways.

Creating collective thinking is essential

But individuals must stay true to the voice of their soul.

We must be a team

But the team is weak without strong individuals.

We must create an integrated health care system

But each part must be self-sufficient.

There is no margin without mission

But there is no mission without margin.

We must be collectively certain what matters most

But first we must unmask personal certainty.

Positive energy ignites action

But negative energy also ignites action.

Our passion can provoke the action of others

But our passion can suffocate the fire of another's passion

We transcend polarities when we connect at the soul

But the soul holds no polarities only Greater Purpose.

-Bonnie Wesorick,
RN, MSN, FAAN, DPNAP



Inaugural Interprofessional Summer Institute for Polarity Thinking in Health Care a Great Success!

Healthcare requires successful leaders who know how to manage polarities in addition to solving problems. The Wesorick Center hosted fifty-eight interdisciplinary leaders at The Center's an inaugural *Interprofessional Summer Institute for Polarity Thinking in Health Care* July 23 – 25 in Grand Rapids, MI. Attendees were provided an added benefit with a surprise visit and presentation from Barry Johnson, founder of Polarity Partnerships.

University Students and Young Adults: Givers, Donors or Supporters of a Cause?



As the cost of a university education increases, few students find themselves with extra money for philanthropy after purchasing textbooks and covering tuition and daily living expenses. It is important, however, not to overlook or fail to benefit from the ideas of this group. Born after 1979, millennials comprise approximately 14 million from 20 to 24 year olds and nearly 32 million from 25 to 34 year olds employed in the United States (U.S., Feldman et al., 2014). By 2020 they will make up approximately 50% of the workforce (McDonald, 2014, http://www.nonprofitmarketingblog.com/comments/7_strategies_for_mobilizing_millennia). Soon millennials will transition from the “next gen” to the majority of our co-workers and employees. They currently are building the next culture of contribution to solve health care issues and address other societal concerns. We owe it to them to actively listen and learn from their collective wisdom. Feldman’s (2014) research group describes millennials as highly interested in organizations that will have a positive effect on our world, and thus they want to know that what they do, or give, contributes to this effort.

Millennials needn’t look any further than The Wesorick Center to see a positive and lasting effect on the health care of our nation and our world made possible through giving. With a mission to transform health care at the point of care, the return on investment for contributions to The Wesorick Center checks all their boxes. The difficulty lies in articulating the transformation specifically. Because of this, The Wesorick Center began collecting stories on our website from patients, their families, and providers, describing our broken health care systems. As stories continue to come in, we systematically listen

and share the data to make meaningful improvement at the point of patient care.

Millennials, their families and friends will eventually become patient populations. The Center leverages a framework driven approach that partners interprofessional students with expert faculty and community practitioners to identify specific ways to transform healthcare through scholarly projects such as interprofessional education and collaborative practice, polarity thinking, evidence-based outcomes, and safety and quality in healthcare organizations designed to save healthcare dollars. This work benefits all who participate. Other worthy causes perking the interest of millennials may be decreasing the current 17.7% of the gross national product spent on healthcare costs (<http://blogs.wsj.com/economics/2013/07/23/u-s-health-spending-one-of-these-things-not-like-others/>) or supporting the Wesorick Center’s work to lower preventable adverse events accounting for 1/6 of all hospital deaths in the U.S. each year (http://journals.lww.com/journalpatientsafety/Fulltext/2013/09000/A_New_Evidence_based_Estimate_of_Patient_Harms.2.aspx).

The millennials are not interested in recognition, rather they look to make a tangible difference. They are our future philanthropists, givers, donors and supporters of a cause!

Evelyn Clingerman, PhD, CNE, RN, FNAP
Executive Director, The Bonnie Wesorick Center for Health Care Transformation

To share your story, please visit <http://www.gvsu.edu/wesorick/tellyourstory.htm>

Meet Our Students in the Wesorick Center



Please allow us to introduce Katherine Braspenninx, a senior-level undergraduate nursing student. Katherine will be leading the development of a new interprofessional leadership initiative for The Center. Katherine’s interest in pursuing leadership knowledge fits well with her senior undergraduate work at Kirkhof College of Nursing (KCON). In addition, as a student volunteer in The Wesorick Center, she will have opportunities to showcase her skills and abilities while working with Bonnie Wesorick personally. Her foundational knowledge and interest of interprofessional education came about during a required IPE course at KCON. Mentoring relationships with Bonnie Wesorick, Dr. Evelyn Clingerman, and other interprofessional leaders will further enhance Katherine’s abilities to work with multiple interprofessional groups following graduation. Please join us in welcoming Katherine to The Wesorick Center.

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