



From Strategy to Sustainability . . . What's Next for Healthcare Leaders?

When you consistently hear words and phrases like: unprecedented, cataclysmic, and once in a career, then you know that the change you are in is truly like no other. And because it is not going to stop and wait for you to get onboard, the only question you need to pay the most attention to, if you are going to be a part of it, is *how* are you and your organization going to navigate it successfully. The answer begins to emerge within an old African proverb. “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” I suggest that following the format of **RCT** – acting as a Reflective, Collaborative and Transformative leader will get you and your organization to the successful and sustainable results you need and desire.

Reflective

Slow down your breathing to slow down your mind. Calm and clear your mind in order to be more responsive, and less reactive. As you become more responsive and less reactive, you make better choices in the present. This reflective awareness of being able to manage emotions and thoughts has been popularized as mindfulness. When we are mindful of ourselves and others, we create the conditions for the best of ourselves and others to emerge. There are individual practices, like meditation and contemplation, that are helpful towards a more mindful way of being and doing in the world. And one of the most obvious and least practiced ways of being mindful with others is in our conversations.

A reflective way of having a conversation is to practice the art of dialogue. Dialogue slows down our conversations. It invites us to listen more deeply and to speak with greater clarity and intention. Dialogue is the inhalation and exhalation, the giving and receiving, the

contraction and expansion of our hearts, as we listen and speak with one another in a way that honors us and the other.

One of the key elements of dialogue is the willingness to seek shared understanding. In order to do this, one has to be willing to be curious. For leaders in change, curiosity is the antidote for certainty. When we are curious, we enter into a larger and more expansive space where mystery and surprise can play. This is the field of co-creation, where we come to realize that everything, including us, is evolving. Because we are interdependent and connected, how I understand myself comes to influence how I see you, and us, and well – everything. Through this portal of curiosity and mystery I have an opportunity to see with new eyes – eyes that liberate me and others to be collaborative.

Collaborative

In the workplace of intended and unintended silos, one can find themselves more alone than together. The old hierarchical model of top down leadership kept the power at the top with just a few. The collaborative approach honors the connectedness and complexity of any organization and looks to liberate the passion and action of all. What might this look like in practical terms? It can be as simple as making room for folks to participate in the decision making. If we want engagement and participation, we have to create processes that allow this to happen. A mantra that has been helpful in terms of how and when to involve others is – **Don't do anything about me – without me.**

When we involve the folks, who we are talking about as part of the problem/solution, we create room for them

to co-create solutions that they own. Please pay attention to the language. If we involve them in the process of co-creating solutions they have *ownership*. If they *own* it, I do not have to *sell* it to them. I do not have to try to get *buy in*, because they already *own* it. I do not have to seek more engagement, because they are engaged in co-creating their own solutions. When you have a group that owns the work, co-creates the improvements, and holds themselves accountable for the results, you have a collective that will go far, together. A great resource for a multitude of processes that do this is www.LiberatingStructures.com.

Transformative

Within the context of healthcare, new ways of thinking and doing co-create the environment for the

transformation of individuals and teams to successfully navigate their way to what Ian Morrison calls the “Second Curve” for healthcare systems. If you and your organization are committed to achieving Second Curve outcomes, then you need to be thinking about redesigning yourself and your teams, and utilizing collaborative and co-innovative processes that allow for integrated and sustainable results. We call this transformative change because it is not incremental. The journey from the First Curve to the Second Curve is not an adjustment or fine tuning. It will demand that you transform your ways of thinking and behaving as a leader and organization. Contact us at Emergent Success if you would like to get to the Second Curve by “going far – together.”