

Michigan Health & Hospitals

The Unspoken Crisis in Healthcare:

The need for executive renewal

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The passion that led to a career in the health care field has given way to the fantasy of escape or career change. Creative thinking feels like the last strategy to use in facing daily problems. While fixing the *system* is necessary, renewing the *leader* is essential. Renewal springs from a day-by-day personal appraisal of limiting beliefs combined with nurturing the body, mind and spirit.

APPRAISAL: REFLECTING DEEPLY

We all have created personas to achieve success and avoid emotional danger. Although this process is largely unconscious, we use personas to protect us from hurt, loss and failure. The goal is not to eliminate personas, but rather to halt their automatic behavior, escape their grip, deploy them consciously and be free to choose. To shift out of a problem persona into authentic renewal, develop the following new habits:

- ◆ Catch Yourself—I just noticed that I'm feeling trapped by all my commitments, and I'm once again complaining about how flawed the system is.
- ◆ Acknowledge Your Feelings—I'm frustrated that I'm trapped doing work I really don't want to do, but which needs doing.
- ◆ Notice Familiar Patterns—This feels all too familiar. When work needs to be done, I feel like only I can do it. I go into overwork and feel resentful toward the health care system which appears to have caused the problem.
- ◆ Determine your Core Belief—Sacrifice is valuable. It means I'm a better person and my colleagues and family will love me more.
- ◆ Look for Your Underlying Noble Intention—My work feels beneficial to the community, and I'm willing to sacrifice myself and my personal life to provide value.
- ◆ Identify a "Better Idea"—I can be more effective by caring for myself rather than by sacrificing myself.

AWARENESS: EXPERIENCING MINDFUL LIVING

Mindfulness is a moment-by-moment, non-judgmental awareness of life as it is occurring. It's like holding up a mirror without distortion and not feeling the need to change what's in it. Mindfulness allows you to reclaim a natural quieting of your busy mind. Daily practices, such as meditation, prayer and yoga help you shed old behaviors and restore inner peace and harmony. Mindfulness offers the opportunity to experience life directly and gradually allows you to look at the world and your place in it differently.

APPRECIATION: EXPRESSING GRATITUDE

It can be easier to criticize than to appreciate. But critical thinking, which is inherently an act of distancing, compares "what is" to what we think it should be and immediately takes us out of mindfulness. Appreciation, on the other hand, builds optimism, trust and collaboration, and opens the door to untapped creative possibilities. Appreciation is based on expressing gratitude for someone or something. When you appreciate, be genuine and specific, and state how the person's actions truly benefited or touched you.

Conscious living is the foundation for executive renewal. It's a way of being—a daily experience rather than a mental model. The move toward health, passion and profound satisfaction can begin this moment, with a deep breath and a choice.

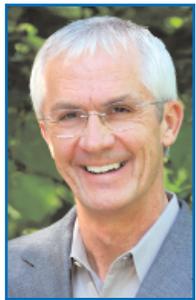
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Kate, a widely recognized executive coach, speaker and author, founded Worth Ethic Corporation in 1988. Her BS in engineering and PhD in psychology give her a unique approach when working with analytical, data-oriented executives, who want to expand their emotional intelligence and create company cultures where people perform at their peak. Kate has worked with over 1,000 senior executives in a wide range of industries. She has coached executives globally on all major continents.

Previously, she was vice president of human resources for a high-tech Silicon Valley company. Her books include *The Worth Ethic*, *Earn What You're Worth*, *The Corporate Mystic* (now in its 11th printing).



Eddie Erlandson coaches executives to transform entrenched leadership habits, especially leaders who need to make their style more inspiring or more trustworthy. As an accomplished physician, Eddie draws on his knowledge of the physiological aspects of change, he's also developed a strategies from competing in endurance sports that he applies to leadership. He's worked with executive teams across a number of industries, including consumer products, education, government, high tech, heavy industrial, medical care, pharmaceutical, and the military.

Previously, Eddie served as Chief of Staff at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where he also practiced as a vascular surgeon for over 20 years and co-directed a wellness program.

Eddie Erlandson and Kate Ludeman consult both individually and together, and have co-authored *Alpha Male Syndrome* (2006) and *Radical Change, Radical Results* (2003). They live and work in Austin, Texas.



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