

Transform healthcare by tapping into a great low-cost resource –

Focus the *patient experience* on healing by empowering each person to be an *agent* of healing.



*“When we reform the healthcare product, we should focus on tapping the greatest low-cost healthcare resources: the mind, heart and spirit of the patient.”*

Patrick E. Linton, CEO  
North Hawaii Community Hospital

*Deb Andelt*

experience in motion

March 2009

*“To be healed means that you have gained a new insight  
and shifted your perception in a way that you are able to become  
who you are meant to be  
and that you now occupy a space  
where you are able to be at peace with your station in the Universe.”*

California Pacific Medical Center & Institute for Health

With current estimates that up to 50% of the nation’s hospitals  
are operating in the red, now is the time for a powerful shift.  
Focus the *patient experience* on healing  
by empowering everyone to be an agent of healing  
and tap into the powerful low-cost resource  
of the patient’s mind, heart and spirit.

### **To Understand Where We Can Go, First Understand Where We Are Setting the Stage – The Current Healthcare Experience**

*“We really have to address the quality of the experience,  
because patients expect it,  
and it is an opportunity to improve their emotional well-being . . .”*

Toby Cosgrove, CEO  
Cleveland Clinic

“You cannot not have an experience.”<sup>i</sup> Every moment we are having an experience. This is the result of our systems taking in about 20 million bits of data a second through our senses. 98% of this is processed below our conscious radar, by the subconscious. The people (language, actions and attitudes), processes (how things flow and work; or don’t work) and sensory environment (colors, textures, aromas, sounds and tastes) all send messages that become our moment-to-moment experiences.

Let’s start by getting a glimpse of how patients generally feel about their current hospital and healthcare experience. While 51% of patients say the most important thing for doctors to focus on is them, as a person, 49% of patients feel that their healthcare experience is becoming less personal.

Access delays, lack of continuity and wasting time all degrade the patient’s experience of care. Besides having a less than desirable experience, degraded experience of care can become a barrier to seeking care in the future and has been linked to decreased outcomes.<sup>ii</sup> Our experience impacts our healing. Our experience impacts outcomes.

*What we have is an experience we feel is impersonal; and we feel “contained.”*

*We want an experience that is personal; and we believe being able to “move” evidences health and well being.*

Research by cultural anthropologist Dr. Clotilde Rapaille indicates that for most Americans, we equate the hospital experience to a “processing plant.” Maybe we don’t use those words, but the nature of the hospital environment results in a sense of foreboding – with scary equipment, generally impersonal environments and artificial smells. “The unconscious connection we make with hospitals is that when we are there, we are not people, we are products.”<sup>iii</sup>

Though there are certainly some exceptional experiences, in general as we enter a hospital, the majority of us enter with a less than positive perception that this is a place for wellness and healing. We’re not totally confident that whatever activity we’re engaged in within the hospital walls will really ease the cause of our suffering.

Rapaille points out that much of the hospital experience is about “containment,” while our perception of what it means to be healthy is about “movement.”<sup>iv</sup> Whether we’re knitting, doing a crossword puzzle, learning a language, engaging in a great conversation, gaining a fresh perspective, or sky diving, movement confirms we are healthy and alive.

In an era when there’s a focus on wellness programs to inspire us to take responsibility, it’s interesting to learn that Rapaille discovered we view doctors as Heros. We’re imprinted with the notion that doctors save lives – it’s something doctors do *to* us that saves us. How does this imprint impact our success, or lack of success, to change our habits and lifestyles? We may need to change our underlying belief for these programs to truly succeed.

Just like the Hero imprint, all the perceptions we bring with us into the experience, our *belief effects* (more about this later) are also part of the experience. The result of these cumulative perceptions is that less than one in five of us are an active participant in our healing. About 15 – 20% of patients are viewed as problem patients because they demand to know what is happening. But, here’s a profound statistic: **problem patients actually get better faster.** They study and research, select the treatment they want and select their doctors.<sup>v</sup> This group is engaged in healing parts of themselves and they aren’t just expecting doctors to do something *to* them to heal. The good news: 60% of patients want to be involved, they want coaching that will bring them to the point of having a result that will work for them. This is a huge opportunity for the healthcare system to tap into the hearts and minds of 60% of the patients.

The attitudes and behaviors of these “problem patients” reflect the characteristics present in the patients Dr. Bernie Siegel refers to as Respants – being a responsible participant in healing. This introduces you to a “role” (roles are a tool) of the experience. While this term is new and may be awkward, moving from the role of being a “patient” to being a “Respart” (or problem patient, if you prefer) and empowering each person to be an active participant in healing, is an important aspect of the experience.

## Leveraging Science to More Easily Create a Healing Experience

*“The tangible attributes of a product or service have far less influence on consumers’ preference than the subconscious sensory element derived from the total experience.”*

Gerald Zaltman, Ph.D.  
*How Customers Think and Marketing Metaphoria*

Each moment hospitals, and all organizations, are delivering experiences. The question becomes how to manage that experience so it’s not haphazard, but rather so it meets our goal of creating a healing

experience. This isn't as much about a new initiative, or embarking on a massive overhaul of processes, as it is about moment-to-moment opportunities to easily engage in activities with a new awareness that we are indeed agents of healing.

There is a rich amount of scientific information that points us to how to make this easy and effective. If you're bored by science, just read the information in the boxes and head to page 6. If you choose that path, be advised you'll miss some interesting observations and questions the science brings to light about measuring satisfaction, patient "quality" ratings, why "amenities" are more than pretty environments, keys to loyalty and preference, and why scripting misses the mark.

## **Biology**

"It's the environment, stupid," states Bruce H. Lipton, Ph.D., in his book *The Biology of Belief*.

Lipton's work with cellular biology determined that cells actively seek environments that support survival while at the same time avoiding toxic or hostile ones. "The cell's operations are primarily molded by its interaction with the environment, not by its genetic code."

That *environment* is everything we take in through our senses, everything in those 20 million bits of data. **Our cells are programmable, like a computer, downloading information from the environment.** Biological behavior can be controlled by invisible forces, including thought. Lipton concludes: "We are the drivers of our own biology . . ."

"There are tremendous healing potentials within each human being. When we are talking about designing healing environments, what we are really trying to do is find effective ways to engage those inner healing potentials within each human being."<sup>vi</sup>

*From biology we learn our environment, everything that has been in our environment over time, and our resulting beliefs drive our biology.*

The qualities of a beautifully designed building aren't merely for visual ascetics or to keep up with some amenities race. The sensory qualities send messages to our system, and those messages impact our biology. The environment also includes the "people" aspect of an organization. Language, attitudes and behaviors all send messages to our systems.

As a patient, once I understand this, what hospital or practitioner experience will I select? Will it be one that provides information to my system that says "heal;" or one that provides information to my system that says "processing plant or container?" What environment will staff, in a range of job functions, choose as their place of employment?

Lipton's work indicates that the "treatment" is only part of the environment that impacts each of us. While patients and their families may not have the knowledge to evaluate the technical quality of a treatment (for example: was a surgery technically as precise as possible?), they can, and are the ones who should evaluate the *experience* – the impact of the total environment on their healing. As patients, our stories reflect how we *feel* about our experiences. Do you know what stories your patients are sharing?

## **Neuroscience**

Back to our 20 million bits of data. Current neuroscience tells us that our systems process this data emotionally. Our first response is an always an emotional response. Always. The brain doesn't catch up until six seconds later. At that point we begin to rationalize our response to an experience. Wow – no wonder we are stumped when people don't seem to act rationally. "Rational" satisfaction isn't the determining factor guiding our behavior – what matters is how we *feel*.

Without emotion, we can't make a decision. When businesses recognize this, they can work in tune with what consumers actually want – we want our *experience* to feel positive. When organizations focus on meeting customers' emotional needs, the organization connects in a way that works.

*From neuroscience we learn human beings aren't rational decision-makers.*

*We are feeling creatures who always respond emotionally. Always.*

Neuroscience gives us clues about the limitations of scripting. We know it's impossible to script for every situation. Beyond that, scripting isn't infused with genuine emotion. We hear language, but we may not feel the associated emotion – resulting in inconsistent emotional messages.

Emotion can be easily infused into the experience by equipping everyone with the desired positive emotional feeling to be generated from the experience. This approach makes it easy for all staff to engage in a genuine manner. It saves time training and scripting, while it easily creates the all important emotional connection.

It's interesting to observe that most healthcare organizations measure quantitative indicators of "satisfaction" to determine how well they're doing in meeting their customers' needs. How many of us return and refer when we're satisfied? That usually isn't enough to be wowed to the point of wanting to return, or refer. "Before a customer will refer, you must engage their head and their heart."<sup>vii</sup> In general, companies which focus on creating value for their customers – not just themselves – are the companies that grow and prosper. **Because we are emotional beings, value is determined by how we feel.**

There is an opportunity here for a new measurement of how well hospitals and all healthcare providers are doing – which is *how people feel*. Do people feel healed? What does healing mean to the patients and families? In our research, we uncovered five core healing feelings. When we feel comfortable, understood, connected, strengthened and renewed, we're in a positive emotional space to heal. That can be the basis for new measurements.

### **Quantum Physics**

Your eyes may be rolling at the mere mention of this term. And we're not experts. We do recognize that some understanding of our quantum worlds helps us understand how workplaces and human beings work – which helps us understand how to more easily create an effective healing experience. So, take a breath and we'll keep this pretty short. Or, just read what's in the box and move on.

*From quantum physics we learn our experience is an interconnected, holistic system.*

*Every aspect of the business – the people, processes and sensory environment – is a part of the energy of the experience, and every aspect has a role.*

Physicists have come to believe that the universe is not made up of matter suspended in empty space. It is made up of energy. In quantum physics, as one gets to the subatomic level it is very difficult to see where the boundary of a human being stops and the boundary of his or her environment begins.<sup>viii</sup>

"Quantum physics reveals that the universe is an integration of interdependent energy fields that are entangled in a meshwork of interactions."<sup>ix</sup> There is a massive complexity of intercommunication among the physical parts and the energy files that make up the whole.

What Descartes took apart, splitting the mind and body, the quantum universe reconnects. The patient, the staff, and the visitors to your hospital are enmeshed in this quantum world. We really can't easily distinguish between the parts of the whole experience. We're constantly communicating and reading our environment through our energy fields. **It's all connected, it's a system.**

If you have a beautiful building, designed by loving architects who embed the best of their knowledge and experience to create a healing sensory environment, but staff attitudes and actions are not aligned, or paperwork processes are too complex or patients don't feel *understood*, that will be in conflict with the "messages" of the healing sensory environment. It all needs to work together as a *system*, to have an impact in changing the *belief effect*. Linear approaches don't fit with how things work in a quantum world.

## Infusing Consciousness and Intention with Tools

*"Be the change you want to see in the world."*

Gandhi

When we talked with a group of hospital facilities managers, we briefly discussed just three aspects of a healing experience: neuroscience, positive emotions (our Emotional Target tool) and the sensory environment (our Sensory Palette tool). Afterwards, one man was moved to tears as he described how he couldn't keep his facility cool enough in the summer and warm enough in the winter. There was a technical solution, but upper management was resistant to the change. He intuitively knew a *comfortable* temperature was important, beyond just being his job.

*In less than two hours, he had a new awareness of his role in healing.*

*He most likely will never look at the aspects of his job the same way. He now knows he is an agent of healing.*

In less than two hours, this man had a new language and new awareness that he is an agent of healing. He most likely will never look at the aspects of his job the same way, regardless of where he works. He can now consciously enter each situation, each project, each staff meeting and each patient interaction with that awareness, knowing that everything he and his team are doing will have an impact on healing. **He now knows he is an agent of healing.**

How would this mindset, this attitude, impact your organization? What happens when every housekeeper (and they tend to have the most patient interaction after nurses), member of the IT staff, lab technician, pharmacist, human resources specialist, marketing manager, nurse and doctor all have the same awareness, the same consciousness, as this man?

Ask yourself: if everyone is equipped with the same knowledge and tools (for example: applying the healing feelings; understanding experience roles, like Respart; and knowing more about metaphors like "movement" as opposed to "container") then:

- How smoothly do projects flow, how much time is saved making decisions?
- Is this a place that attracts and retains people you want as part of the organization?
- What is the collective impact on patients' healing?
- When people feel better – healed – as a result of your organization's experience, what is the impact on revenue and costs?
- How does it create alignment between departments when everyone has the same fundamental tools to be an agent of healing?
- Will this create a renewed sense of purpose for each person in your organization?

## The Four “C’s” of Healing:

Imagine the impact on patients and business measures when every person comes to work each day equipped and empowered to be an agent of healing. People heal themselves. It’s important that the messages we receive from our environment are “healing messages” creating the *belief effect* that healing is always possible.

*When compassion is  
consistently delivered,  
it creates the opening for patients to collaborate in their healing  
and courageously engage in their journey.*

You cannot give what you don’t have. By focusing the patient experience on a healing experience **this will also have a similar impact for the entire staff**. That’s what we learned from the science – in an organization, we’re all together in the same environment, all getting the messages from that environment.

## Inspiration to Get Started

*“ . . . so many of us are living limited lives not because we have to  
but because we think we have to.”<sup>x</sup>*

Bruce Lipton, Ph.D.

It’s our perceptions, what Lipton calls the *belief effect*, whether they are accurate or inaccurate, that impact our behavior and our bodies. “Beliefs are contagious! Our beliefs are like filters on a camera, changing how we see the world.”<sup>xi</sup>

Change the culture, the feel, the attitudes and actions of staff, processes and the sensory environment of the hospital *experience*, and that will impact the beliefs of the patients too. The more of those 20 million bits of data that are gradually aligned toward healing the more a patient’s *belief effect* can change.

What are *your belief effects* about creating a healing culture and equipping each person to be an agent of healing? How can you begin to create a shift?

***Change the “belief effect” that changing the experience will be difficult.***

It’s as easy as the story we shared about the facilities manager. Equip each person with tools (see the next page to get started) to be an agent of healing. It’s about awareness. Much can be accomplished with knowledge, discussion and changes in daily interactions.

*“We are all in the process of healing all of the time.  
The only distinction between caregiver and care receiver is one of acuity;  
both have the potential to heal from the experience.”<sup>xii</sup>*

***Change the “belief effect” that it’s up to a particular department or staff person to start.***

Find just one nugget of information in this paper that you can immediately apply. Begin to approach your job with intention (and some tools) to be an agent of healing. Start the conversation. Be the change. Be the Ghandi of your organization.

*“In this brave new world, we will all be born to become patients and/or healthcare providers. . . . The central question confronting Americans is: do we want a healthcare or a healthcaring system? . . . I believe our inability to clarify the distinction between healthcare and healthcaring is the root cause of our failure to provide effective, affordable, and compassionate medical care for everyone.”<sup>xiii</sup>*

### **Change the “belief effect” that you’re not ready.**

Patients are now asking, some might say demanding this. (Look at increased interest in patient quality ratings.) The economy is begging for a change. Who can afford not to be ready?

*“If the importance of healing-oriented education is not stressed, medical costs will continue to escalate as dependence on the most expensive aspects of care, pharmaceuticals, physician visits, and diagnostic tests continue to rise.”<sup>xiv</sup>*

### **Change the “belief effect” that this is a big undertaking.**

Yes, just as each aspect of the human body system is important, every aspect of a business plays a role in the experience. Yes, it’s a system, and the more aspects of a hospital that are aligned to support the mind, body and spirit of the patient and healing feelings, the more that alignment will consistently send the “heal” message to patients and staff.

Here’s the other thing, one person can make a difference. Know that your actions, attitude and intentions matter. Know that the best way to create consistency is with tools, and consistency and alignment will happen naturally.

*“Man is a tool-using animal. Without tools he is nothing, with tools he is all.”<sup>xv</sup>*

## **Let’s Begin . . .**

Think of this as a grand adventure, a journey. Everyone can be Lewis or Clark.

### **All explorers need a map. Know the terrain:**

- Understand a bit of the neuroscience – we’re wired to feel.
- Understand a bit of the biology – we all have *belief effects*, those beliefs impact our biology and our beliefs are influenced by our environment. Environment means people aspects and processes (how things work), as well as the sensory environment.
- Understand YOU matter. How you engage every moment, your intention, impacts the “system” of the experience. (And there’s a bit of quantum physics too.)

### **Explorers have binoculars to help them navigate. Engage with a new lens:**

- Embrace that YOU (we all) are an agent of healing. This is our role in every action and interaction. Discuss what “healing” is and what it means with patients and colleagues. Know that healing is always possible, even when curing is not.
- Grab a Tool. Start with the tool of feelings. What feelings will be your “north star” to guide your attitudes and behaviors? Select from the healing feelings, or ask your patients how they want to feel and find common themes. Use this to make decisions that don’t seem “feeling oriented,” like technical processes, and you’ll be amazed. P.S. Determining what technology to implement is about the *feeling effect* it has for patients and staff. Ask: is this technology that supports the healing feelings (or your other chosen feelings)?

- Grab another Tool: Let's look at that idea of "movement." This is a metaphor tool. At a very deep level we all use and respond to metaphors. Where is there movement for patients (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual)? Notice where patients and processes seem to be stuck. What can be done to create a sense of movement?

**Take your first steps:**

- Infuse intention into everything you do. What's your intention for the day? What's your intention as you enter a patient's room? What's your intention as you go into a budget meeting?
- Apply your Emotional Target in your actions, words and decision-making. This is your north star as you engage in all aspects of your job.
- Actively look for ways (apply your tools) to equip patients to be active participants in their healing. Embrace problem patients. Learn from them how to equip others to also be problem patients.

Find opportunities throughout the day to do something differently. Discuss what works and what doesn't work (always from the view of how patients *feel*) with your colleagues and adjust.

**Enjoy the process. Share your stories.**

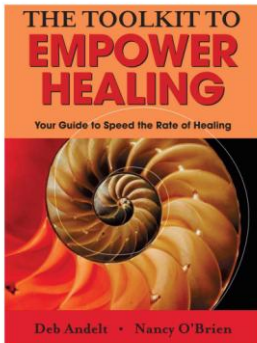
**About Experience In Motion**

**We empower organizations to easily create an effective healing experience by equipping each person to be an agent of healing.**

Energize your organization with education and tools (based on evidence-based research) that connect the head and the heart. This enables you to swiftly align people, processes, and the environment, shifting the experience to increase the most effective low-cost healthcare resource – supporting patients to heal – while at the same time improving efficiency and loyalty in a way that is:

- **Easy.** Engage in focused education and discussion to equip everyone to be an agent of healing.
- **Fast.** Start with a ½ day education session. All the tools can be discussed in two days.
- **Budget Friendly.** Meet tight budgets with per-person workshop pricing.
- **Scalable.** Expand as you're ready. Engage in "train the trainer" programs for maximum benefit.
- **Flexible.** Start with a handful of people in a department. Start with a cross-functional project.
- **Adaptable.** Understand this is a framework, and lens, that complements any other methodology.
- **Holistic.** Address all the senses, and the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual aspects.
- **Inspiring.** Infuse a fresh perspective. Create more joy in everyday work.

To learn more about our educational workshops, train the trainer opportunities and how you and your patients can benefit from the tools in ***The Toolkit To Empower Healing*** contact us:



**Deb Andelt**  
**480-945-7035**  
**deb@experienceinmotion.net**

experience in motion  
[www.experienceinmotion.net](http://www.experienceinmotion.net)

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<sup>i</sup> Lou Carbone, *Clued In*

<sup>ii</sup> Nancy Guinn, M.D., L. Gordon Moore, M.D, *Practice Measurement: A New Approach for Demonstrating The Worth of Your Work*, American Academy of Family Physicians

<sup>iii</sup> Clotaire Rapaille, *The Culture Code*

<sup>iv</sup> Clotaire Rapaille, *The Culture Code*

<sup>v</sup> Patrick E. Linton in *Innovations in Healthcare Design* by Sara O. Marberry

<sup>vi</sup> Patrick E. Linton in *Innovations in Healthcare Design* by Sara O. Marberry

<sup>vii</sup> Fred Reichheld, *The Ultimate Question*

<sup>viii</sup> Patrick E. Linton in *Innovations in Healthcare Design* by Sara O. Marberry

<sup>ix</sup> Bruce H. Lipton, Ph.D., *The Biology of Belief*

<sup>x</sup> Bruce H. Lipton, Ph.D., *The Biology of Belief*

<sup>xi</sup> Bruce H. Lipton, Ph.D., *The Biology of Belief*

<sup>xii</sup> Patrick E. Linton in *Innovations in Healthcare Design* by Sara O. Marberry

<sup>xiii</sup> James Duffy, M.D., Director of the Institute for Religion and Health at Texas Medical Center, *Healthcaring*, in *Spirituality and Health*, October 2008

<sup>xiv</sup> CAM Education: Promoting a Salutogenic Focus in Health Care by David P. Rakel, M.D. et al, *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, Volume 14, Number 1, 2008 pp. 87-93.

<sup>xv</sup> Thomas Carlyle

The cover image of the butterfly was selected because it is the symbol of transformation, one of three key healing metaphors.