

# **Beyond Illness: A Patient's Road Map to Re-negotiating Life**

**Linda Noble Topf MA**

**Michael Topf MA**

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

My barn having burned to the ground,  
I can now see the Moon.

Japanese folk saying

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

- No matter what the diagnosis, the name of the disease, or the mode of treatment, always remember that who you are is not somebody with an illness.
- Who you are is somebody, somebody who matters!
- Embrace that somebody. Love that person.
- And you will discover your true identity beyond illness.
- This is perhaps the most important insight I have to offer others.

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## Welcome and Introductions

- Linda Noble Topf MA
- Michael Topf MA
- Who we are!
- Why we are here!
- Why us!

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## Purpose of this Session

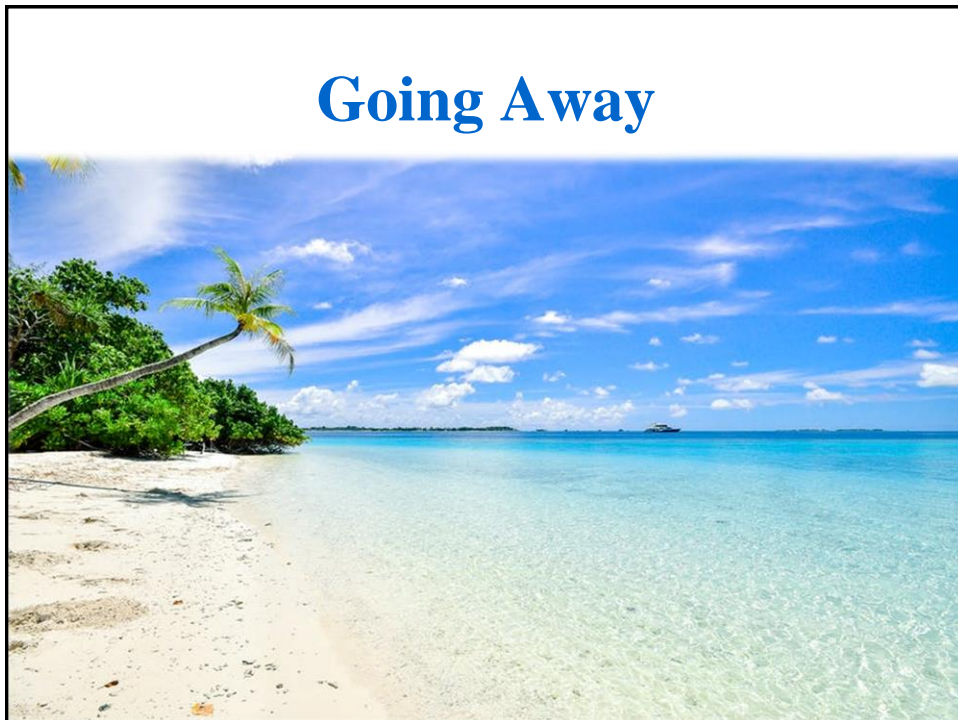
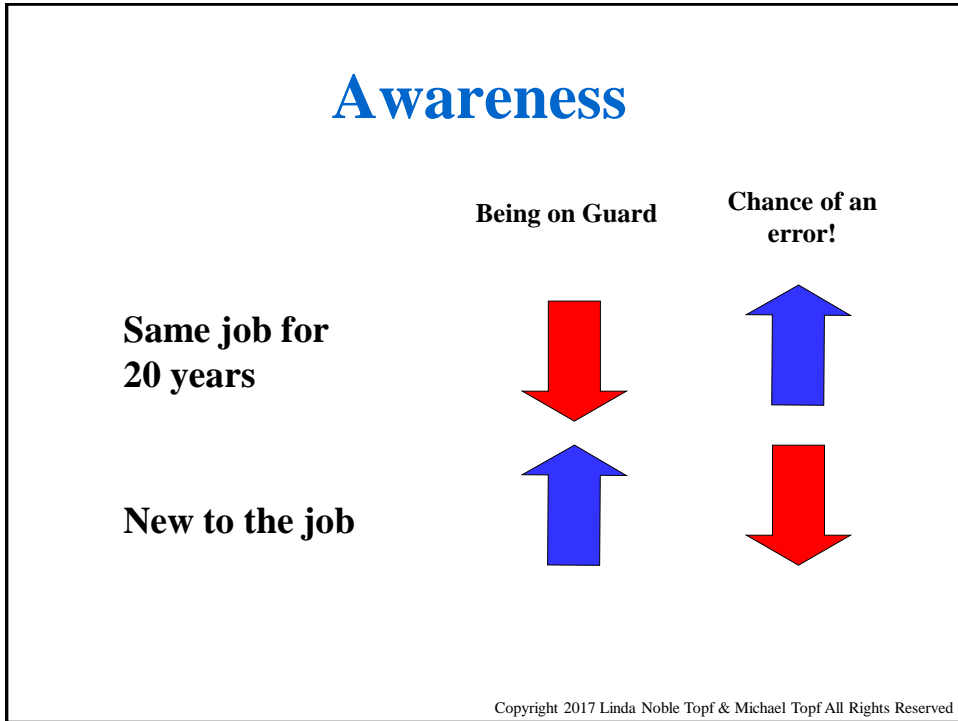
- Provide a patient's/family member's perspective
- Gain insight, inspire and motivate yourself
- Reconnect you to your purpose or mission
- Discover new ways of Being and Interacting with patients and their families
- Enhance and strengthen your ability to listen
- Learn effective ways to empower and encourage your patients
- Take a greater responsibility for their illness, condition and recovery process

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## Methodology

- Our stories by Linda & Michael
- Exercises by all of you
- Raise awareness
- Paired sharing
- Large group sharing
- Questions and answers

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved



## “Going Away” Effects

- Ability to focus
- Communication

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## Examples: Why We “Go Away”

1. Jobs become **automatic** and we get bored.
2. We **don't understand** something.
3. We are thinking about how we can accomplish **another task or project**.
4. We think of something we **forgot to do**.
5. We are projecting into **the future** about possible outcomes.
6. We are under **stress** and think about the source of the stress.
7. We are **overworked** and **tired** and need sleep.

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## Going Away, continued

- When you **become aware** of “going away”, you will be able to come right back to whatever you were doing in the moment.
- Then you **take responsibility** for having “gone away”; find out what you missed; and focus again on the task at hand!

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## Going Away, continued

- Stop talking and ask them politely to “come back”.
- Then you take responsibility for their having “gone away”, find out what they missed, and make sure they understood accurately what you were saying.

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## Summary

“Going Away” is a **normal** human mechanism. It will not change or stop, but from this time forward **you will be more aware of it** and will **notice** it more and more, each time you or others do it.

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## “Going Away” and Perception Checking

- To assure accurate communication, we suggest you:
  1. Stop talking
  2. Ask them non-critically to “come back”
  3. Have them tell you what they heard
  4. Check what they heard against what you said
  5. Make the necessary corrections or additions
  6. Continue until you are complete
  7. Check again to assure accurate communication

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved



## Our Stories: Linda and Michael

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## Questions We Have as Patients

- What affect will this have on me? P, M, E, S?
- Will I die or be disabled?
- What are my choices?
- What am I missing?
- What am I avoiding?
- What can I do?
- What are new options around the corner or are there any alternative approaches?
- What can I learn?
- What is possible?

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved



## Emotions - Good and Bad!



Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## Self-Forgiveness

- “Forgiveness is the only way to true health and happiness. By not judging, we release the past and let go of our fears of the future. In so doing, we come to see that everyone is our teacher and that every circumstance is an opportunity for growth in happiness, peace and love.”

Gerald G. Jampolsky, MD

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## Your attitudes about your workday? How many of you?

- Are wildly enthusiastic each day about the work you are doing?  
Seeing patients, providing whatever services you do?
- Strong interest?
- Mild interest?
- Could do it or not?
- Wonder why you are doing the work you are?
- Are bored?
- Daydreaming about doing something else?
- Are “going away” a great deal?

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## Why did you become a Health Care Practitioner?

- What was your calling?
- How old were you?
- What was your mission or purpose?
- Were you told to be.....
- Did you have a role model?
- Parent, Movie, Book?
- To make a difference?
- **HOW DID THIS MAKE YOU FEEL?**

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

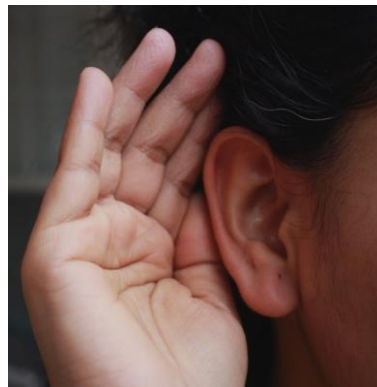
## Errors can be caused by how we listen!

Listening is one of the most important tools for having an effect on error prevention and excellence in Health Care!

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## The Difference Between...

**ORDINARY**  
performance for  
Healthcare excellence  
and **EXTRA-  
ORDINARY**  
**performance** for  
Healthcare excellence  
is our ability to  
**LISTEN** effectively!



Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## Pick a Partner, Choose an A & B

- One person is speaking, the other person just listens!
- Then we will switch!
- What were you aware of as a listener?
- What were you listening to?

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## True or False?

- Listening is a learned skill.
- A person can listen and talk at the same time.
- There is a difference between hearing and listening.
- A common error among people is that they do more talking than listening?

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## As the Listener

- The internal conversation occurs with yourself and includes your thoughts and interpretations about the speaker's actual words.
- Another internal conversation may be about how and what you want to say in response.
- While you are listening to yourself, who might you not be listening to?

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## Listening

- Everyone listens this way!
- Take responsibility for how you and others listen.
- Confirm out what your listener heard.
- Ensure it was accurate.
- Ensure it was genuine and real!

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

- One approach to insure accuracy is to ‘perception check’:  
“Let me repeat back to you what I heard, I want to make certain I heard you correctly”.
- This approach allows you to take responsibility for your interpretation.
- Another approach is:  
“Please tell me what you heard, I want to make certain we have the same understanding”.
- Here, you are taking responsibility for the other person’s interpretation.

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## Listening Summary:

- To insure accuracy:
  - Let me repeat back to you what I heard, I want to make certain I heard you correctly.
  - Please tell me what you heard, I want to make certain we have the same understanding.

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## Listening is a Sign of Loving

- When a person feels heard by another human being, he or she feels loved by that person. Listen to yourself. Listen to your heart. *When you listen to other people, listen through your heart to their heart. When you do, you become one with them.* Their sense of self-worth can be enhanced, and their sense of identity may grow stronger. They feel valuable, worthwhile and lovable. What a gift of yourself you can give to another person!

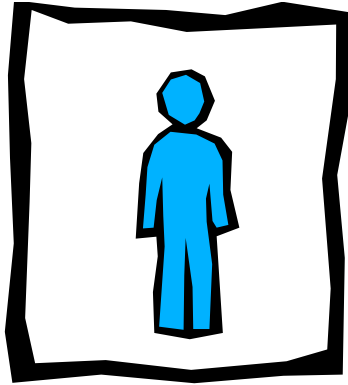
Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## Definition of Responsibility

- The state or fact of being responsible, answerable or accountable, as for **something within one's power, control or management.**
- Chargeable with being the cause of something. (Proactive)
- The willingness to acknowledge your **ability to make a difference in the situation.**

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## Being Proactive Requires Moving Out of Your Comfort Zone! Are you Willing?



Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## Kong-Frontation vs. Care-Frontation

- Are you **Communicating** like King Kong or the Lion King?
- Are you **Communicating** with people in a caring, respectful manner?



Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved



## Levels of Responsibility



Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

## Breakthroughs in health care will occur out of your commitment!

- Commitment is what transforms a promise into reality. It is the words that speak boldly of your intentions, and the actions which speak louder than words.
- Commitment is the stuff character is made of; the power to change the face of things.
- What does your commitment look like?

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved

**Linda Noble Topf  
Michael Topf**

**Contact**

**(484) 434-8020**

**(484) 434-8023 FAX**

**[lnobletopf@comcast.net](mailto:lnobletopf@comcast.net)**

**[www.lindanobletopf.com](http://www.lindanobletopf.com)**

**[mtopf@TopfInitiatives.com](mailto:mtopf@TopfInitiatives.com)**

**[www.topfinitiatives.com](http://www.topfinitiatives.com)**

Copyright 2017 Linda Noble Topf & Michael Topf All Rights Reserved