The Science and Art of Team Building

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One ship sails East,
And another West,
By the self-same winds that blow,
'Tis the set of the sails
And not the gales,
That tells the way we go.

Like the winds of the sea
Are the waves of time,
As we journey along through life,
'Tis the set of the soul,
That determines the goal,
And not the calm or the strife.

From The Winds of Fate by Edith Wheeler Wilcox

Covid-19 + "We're All In this Together"

- This phrase is one of the most commonly repeated phrases in association with the COVID-19 pandemic.

- A recent search of these two terms together returned about 1,980,000,000 results.

- The phrase connotates collaboration, cooperation, commonality, shared experience.

- There are mixed views about the validity of this phrase in the current climate
  - Differing perspectives and points of view
  - Inequities: access to healthcare; COVID relief resources; unemployment; ability to work from home; childcare; food insecurity; systemic racism and social injustice; the political climate; social mistrust

We're All In This Together

"We've got to get that message out that we are all in this together, and if we are going to contain this we've got to contain it together." Dr. Fauci

- Team building in unpredictable times exposes the challenges and the beauty of team-based processes.

- Nowhere is this more clear than in healthcare.

- Healthcare teams are associated with clinical care, doctors and nurses

- But those who work in healthcare know that teams require a diverse list of team members to get the job done.

- Healthcare settings bring great value to patients and to their staff when they value and build highly effective teams.

Highly Effective Teams Are Not Unicorns

Your current team can get even better

- Highly effective, resilient, and accomplished teams are built that way.
- This type of team can be built whether you are starting from scratch or joining a team already in progress.
- This type of team can be built regardless of whether your team is homogenous or heterogenous relative to titles, union membership, skill level, years of employment.
- This type of team can be built regardless of the team's current reputation
- This type of team can be built to withstand varying degrees of change and unpredictability
- This type of team can turn internal/external naysayers into cheerleaders

My Team Story.

How it started

- Lots of work, not enough staff.

- Novice leader with a mix of experienced and novice team members.

- Titles didn't match actual roles.

- Lots of "That's not my job" and "That's not how we do things here."

- Previous leaders with unique leadership styles were living legends.

- Expectations about this team were mixed but expectations about my performance were high.

- The stakes were high: financial, quality, patient care, staff engagement.

My Team Story.

How it's going: 2.5 years later

- Increased staffing by 178%

- Went from a Monday – Friday, 9-5 operation to a

- 7 day a week, 24 hour a day process.

- Realigned roles to fit titles.

- 12% started and completed graduate degrees.

- 16% received promotions.

- Built a reputation for responsiveness and effectiveness.

- Demonstrated financial return on investment and regulatory

compliance.

- Poised to do it again: two new lines of business have

been added to the department.

A portion of the Care Experience Team @ Kings County.
Photo courtesy of Public Affairs, NYC Health +Hospitals/Kings County

The Science

Proven Principles transcend unpredictability

- Don't team-build by yourself
- Assess your team and team members
- Cast the vision every day
- Put in the time
- Put in the work
- Put consistent practices in place
  - Daily huddles
  - Daily shout outs
  - 1:1
  - Unit and organizational wide events
- Work with the willing until the others are willing to work
- Use a problem-solving methodology
- Use an idea-generating methodology
- Goals, goals, goals

Teams should have a mission and a motto

"Being all things to all people is a recipe for burnout."

What is your team's mission?

- Nike: Bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete* in the world

  - Our mission is ==what drives us to do everything possible== to ==expand human potential==. We do that by ==creating groundbreaking== sport innovations, by making our products more ==sustainably==, by ==building a creative and diverse global team== and by ==making a positive impact in communities where we live and work==

What is your team's motto

- Nike: *If you have a body, you're an athlete

Teams should have goals and scope of practice

"Being all things to all people is a recipe for burnout."

What is your team's scope?

- The advocacy of a person-centered care environment for patients, family, and staff at NYC Health + Hospitals/Kings County utilizing ICARE values and amplifying Joy In Work
  - Sub-scopes per team and role
  - Operate within scope as much as possible

What is your team's goal

- Teams may have more than one goal for more than one audience and for more than one pace.
  - "Improve the memorializing of compliments and recognition of staff via the patient's voice."
  - "Close 100% of grievances within the determined timeframe"
  - "Word of the year: Validate"

The Art of Team Building to Transcend Unpredictable Times

This is the how.

Foundations

- Established a meaningful daily habit that does not change
  - Regardless of the level of motivation, maintain the discipline
  - Daily huddle, building success one component at a time
    - Starting on time
    - Taking attendance
    - Following the script
    - Highlighting readiness
    - Monitoring a process
    - Identifying what matters
    - Solving problems
    - Generating ideas

Relationships

- Established a connection to each member of the team
  - 1:1
  - What Matters to You?
  - How do you matter to the team?
- Built in breaks from collaboration
- Recognize and address inequities
- Understand what each team member gives
- Understand what each team member gets
- Measure change and approximations to the goal by recognizing and rewarding at every opportunity
- Reward the change you want to see before you see it.

The Art of Team Building to Transcend Unpredictable Times

This is the how.

Empowerment=great communication in practice

- Everyone on the team has power
  - Decision-making, access, "skin in the game"
- The art of the catchphrase
  - From my team: "No surprises" "Feedback aint going nowhere" "Dr. Denham you said no surprises"
- Feedback is a two-way street
  - 1:1, huddles, hallway conversations, great listening is respected over great talking
- Was I clear, Did I hear, Did we win?
  - Win-win interactions as often as possible
  - Closed loops create momentum

Do in your team what your team does for others

- Care about health and wellbeing
- Advocate
- Balance work loads
- Create a sense of safety
- Team smarter, not harder
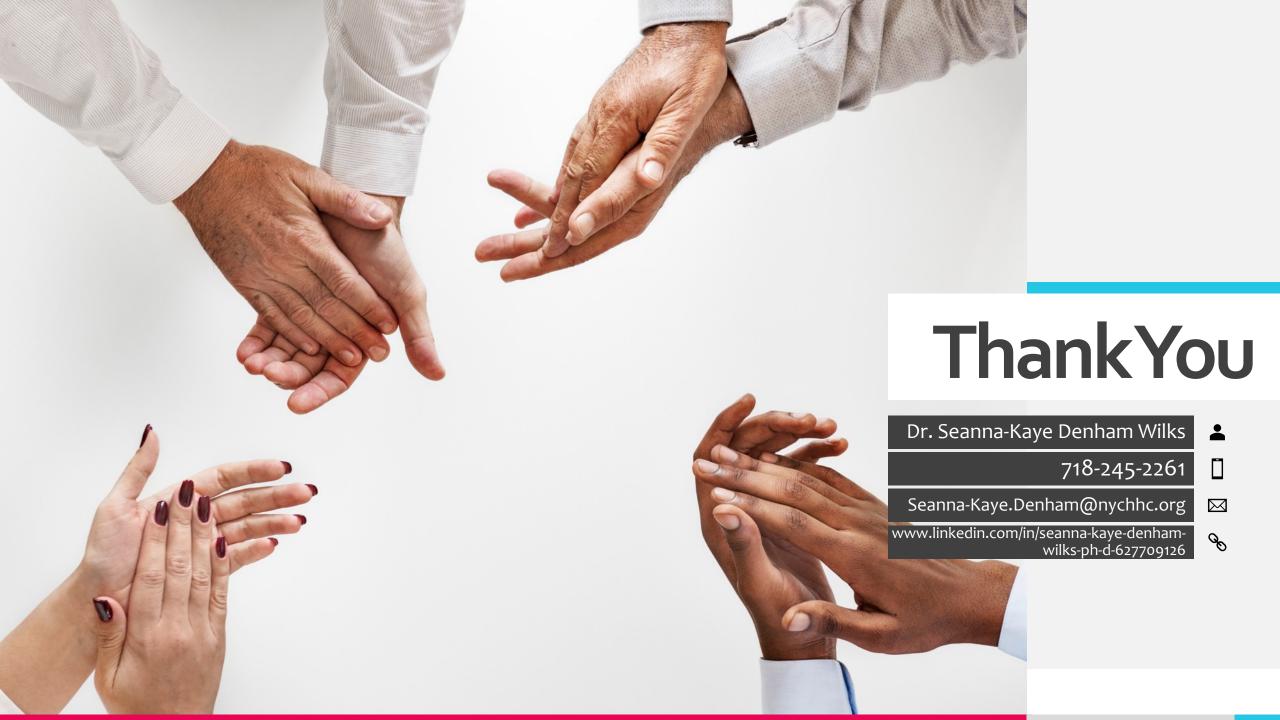- Absorb each other's truth

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Thank You

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