



RENEWING THE HEART OF HEALTHCARE

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A RESOURCE FOR HEALTHCARE LEADERSHIP

Reflections from Dr. Izzo



Dear Colleague,

Over the last fifteen years I have worked with several hundred hospitals and health systems on creating more engaged employees, on creating more compassionate patient service, and helping providers keep a sense of purpose in their work. Yet sometimes it is not until you have your own encounters as a patient and family member that simple ideas you have been teaching for years become real.

As many of you know, almost four years ago now my wife had a stroke following a surgical procedure. Since she was only thirty-seven years old, it came as a great shock for both of us and changed our world (let me note that she has now fully recovered). I cannot speak for her experience as a patient, but as a family member the thing that stood out for me is that not one staff member asked me how I was doing during this experience or how they might help the family. Of course, the attention should always be first and foremost on the patient but I believe it is easy sometimes for staff members to forget that even a small gesture of asking how a family member is doing can make a big difference

When I used to work in organization development at Kaiser Permanente, I used to walk through the halls and say hello to visitors. Even though I was dressed in a suit, not a uniform, I would make it a point to ask family members why they were at the hospital. Over my several years there, I can think of numerous occasions when I could tell that my kindness made a difference for that person. I will never forget the time I was simply grabbing a coffee at the lobby kiosk and asked an older woman what she was doing at the hospital. She told me how her husband of over sixty years was on the third floor and that he was dying. "I am on death watch," she said, "just waiting, waiting for the inevitable." I lightly touched her

hand and said: "I am much younger than you and I cannot imagine how hard that must be to say goodbye to someone you have shared so much with." Long ago I learned that often in those situations what people need most is not someone to try to make it better but simply a loving presence. After our brief encounter, she thanked me for my kindness.

One of the things that separates compassionate hospitals and compassionate providers (whether physicians, nurses, housekeepers, managers, etc.) is the recognition that we are always able to heal even when we cannot cure. Whether with family members or patients it often begins with simply asking people how they are. The film *Wit* (a deeply moving film starring Emma Thompson) follows the experience of a cancer patient. At one point the main character notes that in hospitals the standard answer to how you doing is to say that you are "fine." The patient comments that she is waiting for them to ask how she is doing, only to discover that she is already dead.

Many years ago a gifted physician told me that during hospital rounds he would routinely ask the patient: "How are you doing?" Then he would say "I don't mean your body, I mean in here (and he would point to his heart) and then simply listen. During a recent hospital stay myself, I was taken by how many times people asked how I was doing but that only a few staff members asked a slightly different question such as "So you've been through a lot the last 24 hours, how are you doing?" That simple change of words told me they wanted to know more than that I was fine or perhaps cold or hungry.

A few years ago now I conducted a full day leadership session for St. Francis Medical Center in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. At the time, they were in the top 2% in patient satisfaction compared to all other hospitals in the United States.

At their hospital, they often used a simple question when speaking to patients and family members "What do you need?"

They recalled many stories of how that simple question had opened doors



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especially from family members who felt permission to say what they really needed.

One thing a stay in the hospital taught me is that the difference between compassionate medicine and less compassionate care-giving is often very subtle. It is the difference between saying hello to family members and taking the time to ask them how they are doing. It is the difference between asking a patient how they are and asking how are you REALLY?

The final thing I learned when my wife was in the hospital was how easy it can be for providers to forget that what is routine for us is not routine for those we serve. When my wife had her stroke there was no room in the neuro-intensive care unit so they set her up in a room on a med-surg floor with one-on-one nursing care. The nurses were deeply compassionate and I believe one reason is that unit rarely dealt with new stroke victims. For these nurses, they knew this was not routine. But the next day she was transferred to the neuro-intensive care unit. She had been there for almost two hours and no one had even come to welcome her. Filled with anxiety and a feeling of loss from that one on one care, my wife asked me to let the nurses know that no one had come to see her.

A few minutes later, Betty came in and said: "Your husband told us you are upset because no one has come to see you yet, what do you need." I could see my wife's heart sink. What she needed was just someone to remember that this had never happened to her before, this was not routine. Later on during her stay, I realized that this was a compassionate nurse but in that moment she had forgotten that while she had seen hundreds of patients like my wife, for us this was a life defining moment.

Sometimes improving the experience of patients and families is a very subtle thing but we need to remember that their experience impacts their trust and their trust impacts their healing. Thank you all for the work that you do to improve your patient's experience.

Enjoy your fall,

Dr. John Izzo

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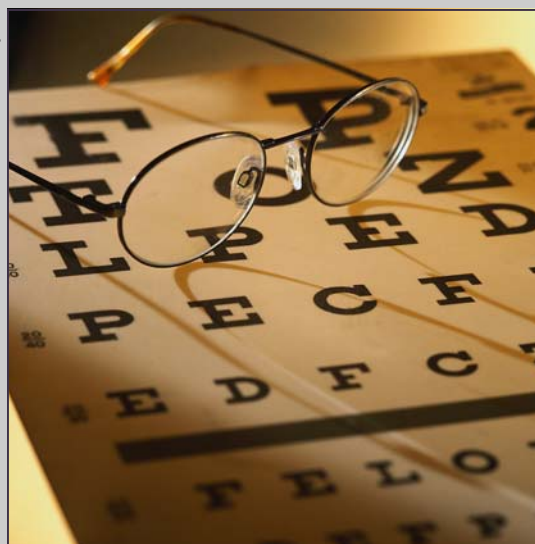


Compassionate Care Seminars

Dr. Izzo and his colleagues have developed a one-day workshop for front line health care professionals titled: Compassionate Caring: For Self, For Each Other, and For Patients/Families. The workshop was designed by a team of nurses, physicians and Dr. Izzo for in tact teams as well as cross functional groups of nurses and other health care staff. The workshop is highly interactive and helps staff members reconnect to their sense of

purpose, understand how to care for themselves better, understand how their behavior impacts other team members, and then helps them understand the true needs of patients/families. Organizations that have used these workshops report increases in patient satisfaction and team collaboration. The workshops can either be conducted by our team or as a train-the-trainer for you organization. If you want to know more, contact Leslie Nolin at 604-913-0649 or

leslie@theizzogroup.com



Nurse Leader Series

Dr. Izzo and Dr. David Kuhl, M.D. have been conducting a series of sessions with nurse leadership teams across the United States and Canada helping them rekindle their own spirit at work while learning how to lead with a servant's heart.



“We do not have to wait until we are old to become wise. We can discover these secrets at any age and the sooner we discover them, the more fulfilling our lives will be.”

From *“THE FIVE SECRETS YOU MUST DISCOVER BEFORE YOU DIE”*
By **Dr. John Izzo** (release date Dec.2007)

Reawakening the Soul of Nursing

Renewing Joy & Wonder at Work

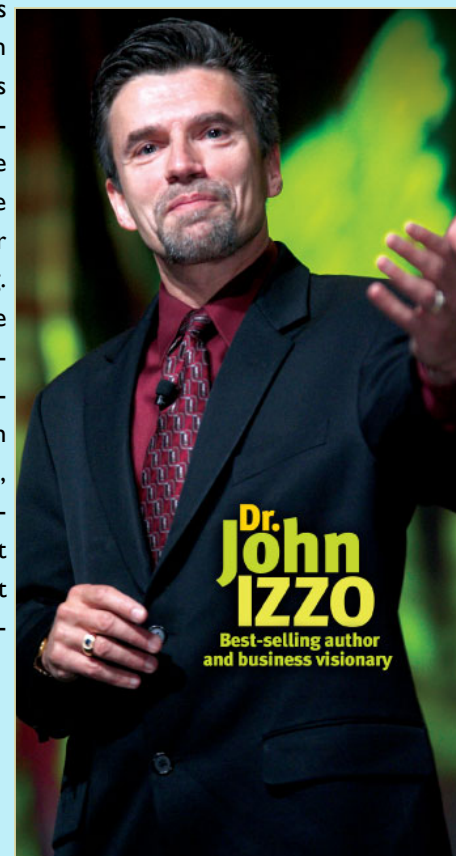
Amidst all the many tasks of leadership, we often forget that creating joyful, purposeful workplaces is our central role. When the soul is awake and joy is present, many of the most challenging outcomes we seek—patient satisfaction, employee engagement and market share—become attainable. But how do we awaken joy amidst the challenges and how do we renew ourselves as leaders? In this session, Dr. Izzo will inspire your heart, challenge your mind, and bring fresh ideas on creating soul at work. He was one of the pioneers in the "soul" at work movement and has worked with over 400 health care organizations.

Dr. Izzo is a best-selling author and one of North America's most respected voices on leadership and the creation of soul at work. His groundbreaking book *Awakening Corporate Soul* established him as a pioneer in deeper conversations about work while his book *Second Innocence* explored how we keep our sense of joy and wonder throughout our lives and careers.

Contact us for more information

Nurse's Week Events

The month of May is a time when healthcare sets aside a week for celebration, education and appreciation. In past years, Dr. John Izzo has been the keynote presenter for a variety of hospitals, health centers, health regions, health systems, nursing associations and federations. With the likes of AARN, AANA, NWONE, AWONE as well as the Mayo Clinic, Providence Health System, The Benedictine Health System, Kaiser Permanente and a regions across Canada Dr. Izzo's has spent the past seven years delivering programs to Nursing Audiences globally. His programs ignite appreciation for the people who have dedicated their lives to helping and healing. This year Dr. Izzo will be presenting for the American Association of Occupational Health Nurses in Salt Lake City May 1-2, 2008. If your health organization is planning an event let us know if we can assist you in creating a memorable program





The Five Secrets You Must Discover Before You Die



- Based on a Biography Channel and PBS series
- Features dozens of moving personal stories, as well as questions for reflection that will help you live each of the Five Secrets

Based on the Biography Channel Series “the Five Things you Must Discover Before You Die” PBS series, this book takes the reader on a heart-warming and profound journey to find lasting happiness. After years of wondering what makes for a truly satisfying and fulfilling life, John Izzo had an “ah ha” moment. “Whenever I am going to take a trip, I choose hotels by using a website which taps into the experiences of hundreds of other travelers”, he writes. “It occurred to me that one could apply this same method to discovering the secrets to living well and dying happy.” So he and two colleagues asked over 15,000 people to identify the “wisest” person they knew, and based on those recommendations he chose 235 people, aged 60 to 106, to interview. From town barbers to Holocaust survivors, from aboriginal chiefs to CEO’s, these people had over 18,000 years of life experience. He asked them questions like: What brought you the greatest joy? What do you regret? What do you wish you had learned sooner? What ultimately mattered and what didn’t? Here Izzo shares their stories—funny, moving and thought-provoking—and the Five Secrets he learned from listening to them.

This is a book for people at every stage of life. We do not have to wait until we are old to become wise. We can discover these secrets at any age and the sooner we discover them, the more fulfilling our life will be.

“No matter your age, you’ll have wished you read this book sooner. Its personal anecdotes and genuine wisdom will capture your heart.-- Stephen R. Covey, author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* and *The 8th Habit: From Effectiveness to Greatness*

“Like a profound conversation that lasts deep into the night, this book will captivate readers in search of purpose and a meaningful life..”--

Richard J. Leider, author of *The Power of Purpose* and coauthor of *Repacking Your Bags* and *Claiming Your Place At the Fire*

Dr. John Izzo is president of The Izzo Group, an international training and consulting firm. Each year he speaks at over 100 corporate and association events—past clients have included the Mayo Clinic, IBM, Sun Microsystems, Kaiser Permanente, and IMAX Corporation. He is the author of *Second Innocence*, the coauthor of *Awakening Corporate Soul* and *Values Shift*, and is the host of a five hour PBS series, also entitled *The Five Secrets You Must Discover Before You Die*. He is also an ordained Presbyterian minister.

Dr. Izzo’s Speaking Schedule

October 2007

- Oct. 2nd - CP Railway - Calgary, AB
- Oct. 3rd - SunLife Financial- Waterloo, Ontario
- Oct. 10th - Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems-Baltimore
- Oct. 11th - Howard College , Baltimore, MD
- Oct. 15-16th - Mercy Medical Center
- Oct. 23rd - WESTJET - Calgary, AB
- Oct. 24th - The Center - San Diego, CA
- Oct. 30-31st - St Anthony’s Health Center, Denver, CO

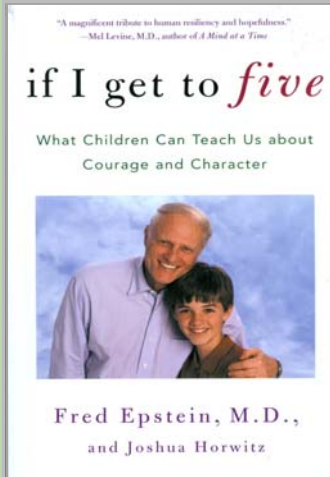
November 2007

- Nov. 2nd - HOLD Canadian Bureau
- Nov. 2nd-5th - HOLD Canadian Bureau
- Nov. 7th - Northrop Grumman - Los Angeles, CA
- Nov. 8-9th - HOLD Canadian Bureau
- Nov. 15-16th - Thunder Bay Catholic School Board
- Nov. 19-20th - Mercy Medical Center
- Nov. 21st - HOLD Canadian Bureau
- Nov. 27-29th - PBS Live Telecasts - Dr. John Izzo



Recommended Book

**if I get to five: What Children Can Teach Us about
Courage and Character** by Fred Epstein, M.D. and Joshua Horwitz



“I used to think that courage meant taking on the toughest cases, being the guy who dared to make the life-and-death judgment calls in the operating room. I now know that holding a child’s hand while he undergoes Chemotherapy can be a lot scarier than holding his life in my hands during an operation.”

Dr. Fred Epstein's book “if I get to five” takes us through his journey as a Neurologist as he works with kids who have cancer. The character, strength and courage of the kids he fights for and with become evident as he introduces you to the lessons they taught him about life, about strength and about love.

“Kids have a special gift—we all had it once—that allows them to live in the moment while retaining a motivating vision of their future.” If you are in the healthcare profession you have to read this book. It has exceptional depth and warmth and the real stories are ones that will make you laugh, make you cry and touch you deeply.

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**This Newsletter is produced by The Izzo Group
and Dr. John B. Izzo.**

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Four Generations, One Workplace

... Recruiting, Retaining & Leading the Changing Workforce

Leaders today are waking up to the stark reality that it's no longer about how workers must adapt to their employers, but how employers must now adapt to their employees. Partnership. Balance. Personal Growth. Community. These are only some of the current values shaping the new world of work and transforming the workforce. For the first time in history there are four generations in the workplace at the same time and it's causing a bit of a stir. The primary challenge today is how to navigate amidst four generations differing styles, strengths, communication styles and needs in order to create a long lasting and successful team.

- Are you seeking unique and innovative recruitment and retention tools?
- Are you are confused about the different levels of work ethic and loyalty among employees?
- Do you notice a difference in values and behaviors across generations?
- Are you looking for ways to build stronger collegial relationships and improve communication?
- Are you getting the best that each generation has to offer?

Being able to answer these questions and understanding that new workplace transformation is essential for business leaders wanting to attract and retain the brightest stars in their industry.

Four Generations- One Workplace promises to deliver sound suggestions, build leadership confidence and take the mystique out of how to interpret, interact, and get the best from the four generations in your workplace.

This half-day seminar is for **anyone** who wants to create understanding among the different generations and benefit from having a multi-generational workplace. www.theizzogroup.com.

[Client references available upon request](#)

