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CEO of my health 00:51

Health Hats: I am the CEO (Chief Executive Officer, the boss) of my health team with a ton of subcontractors: my primary care doc and her practice, my neurologist and his practice, the radiology department at my local hospital, the neighborhood pharmacy, the utility companies... You get the idea. They get paid through my employment benefits, your and my taxes, and out of my pocket. Right now, I directly employ my massage therapist and acupuncturist – fee-for-service. I also have pro bono team members: my wife (my care partner), my family, friends, and coaches.

As CEO of my health team, I try to manage, lead, and learn. Managing as in managing the project of my teams and me, knowing and selecting team members and clarifying who does what and when do they do it? Keeping track of it all. Sharing information. Experimenting (trying stuff) and then adjusting when something doesn't work. Managing as in negotiating service agreements (contracts), maintaining the team and its connections, and trying to fix what isn't working with the team.

Leaders create 02:37

Seth Godin says,

Leaders create the conditions where people choose new actions.

The choices are voluntary. They're made by people who see a new landscape, new opportunities and new options.

You can't make people change. But you can create an environment where they choose to.

I'd add that leading is also fundraising, cheerleading, and succession planning. Paying for health and healthcare, encouraging yourself and your team, be sure that someone can lead when you can't? I'm going to need some help understanding leadership in the context of my health and health team. I know it's a bitch to lead when you feel like crap. It's a tough system to lead and manage. It's exhausting.

People are born with different capacities and circumstances to manage and lead. Certainly, many people can learn to manage their health and health team. I don't know about leadership. I'll need to learn more about leadership in this context before I know what it takes to get better at it.

And now a quick break to hear about our sponsor, Abridge. I see many clinicians on a regular basis, way too many. I'm appalled at how little I can remember when I get home. My wife asks, what did she say? What about this medication or that test? I'm happy to remember half of it. To help me remember everything, I downloaded a new smartphone app called Abridge.

Now, when I go to the doctor, I ask if it's okay to record our conversation. Nobody has said no yet. I push a big pink button to record, and after I'm done, the transcript from our audio appears -- not the whole thing that's too much, but sections around medical keywords like fatigue, pain, tests, exercise meds. Now when I'm done, I can share my visit with my wife, and she can listen to exactly what the doctor said. Abridge was created by patients, doctors, and caregivers. Check out the app at abridge.com -- [a b r i d g e .com](http://abridge.com) or download it on the Apple App Store or Google Play Store. Record your health care conversations. Let me know how it went!

Learning to fly as pilot and passenger 05:51

So, what is learning? I read an interesting description on a web page about aviation training.

Knowledge of the general characteristics of learning help an aviation instructor use them in a learning situation. If learning is a change in behavior as a result of experience, then instruction must include a careful and systematic creation of those experiences that promote learning. This process can be quite complex because, among other things, an individual's background strongly influences the way that person learns. To be effective, the learning situation also should be purposeful, based on experience, multifaceted, and involve an active process.

The authors go on to say; Learning is a result of experience. Learning is multifaceted. And Learning is an active process. We could learn about learning from flight instructors. In health, we are both the pilot and the passenger. Intriguing.

Decisions 07:03

The fourth dimension of being the CEO of your health is decision-making. Managing, leading, and learning - living - all include decision-making. Decisions about the care team and the care plan. Decisions about whether to do the tasks that are ours to do. Decisions about how or whether to manage, lead, and learn.

OMG, I'm overwhelmed already. I should be good at this. I'm an old white man of privilege wearing many hats as a patient, caregiver, nurse, informaticist, and healthcare leader. I am blessed with a lifetime of experience managing, leading, learning, and deciding.

My wife and I built a house. The whole house. Everything but drill the well. Foundation, structure, walls, windows, electricity, plumbing. All of it. We had only built a changing table out of one piece of plywood before we built a house. But we were driven, we sought help. We learned, we managed, we led, and we decided. We homeschooled our kids. Neither of us was a teacher. But we were driven, we sought help, and we learned, we managed, we led, and we decided. On a smaller scale, we learned to keep chickens and bees. At 16, I learned to be a draft counselor when faced with the prospect of having to fight in Vietnam. I learned to sew and play clarinet and saxophone. More recently, I learned to blog and then to podcast. I was driven. I sought help. I learned. I managed. I led. And I decided.

See the show notes or my website www.health-hats.com and click on blog/podcast for more information, to subscribe or contribute. If you like it, share it. Thanks.

Patient and CEO sound different 09:22

I've been a leader for much of my life. Often a good leader, sometimes inspiring. Leading myself and a team for me is a different animal. Or is it? I've also been a manager, a project manager. It's easier to

picture managing myself and my team. I have some of the skills I need to be CEO of my health and health team, but nowhere near all. There's very little training for Health Team CEOs- no certificate or degree. The pay stinks. There's no vacation. I can't resign. Almost no one looks at me on my health journey and says, "There goes the CEO of his health team." People, if they see me at all, say, "there goes the patient." *Patient* and *CEO* sound very different. My image of a patient is barefoot with their bare butt showing while a CEO has a suit and bling.

I'm grateful for the continuing opportunity and capacity to learn, manage, lead, and decide. I'm grateful that my multiple sclerosis has pushed me to be more mindful of learning, managing, leading, and deciding about health and healthcare. MS has not affected my ability to learn and adapt. My management, leadership, and decision-making are all changing. That's life.

Stay tuned. Jump in. 11:04

This podcast focuses on people managing, leading, deciding, and learning on their health journey. I've focused recently on young adults and parents learning, deciding, managing, and leading. That's made me even more curious about what we can learn about this deciding, managing, learning, and leading. You hear that I have no consistency in the order of lead, manage, decide, and learn. Why? That's only one of many questions I've been listing over the past couple of months. Here's a taste of some others.

- How can people learn to be the best CEO of their health?
- Is leadership of your health similar to leading a team or a company? How so?
- Is leadership of (and learning about) your health when you're 12, different than if you're 50?
- Different if you're privileged or if you're not?
- Is being CEO of your health be different if you're well or if you're chronically ill?
- What can we learn about the leadership of health from people who are learning experts, but not experts in health or the healthcare system?
- How do we/can we, as parents, teachers, and clinicians, introduce young people to begin making health care decisions - managing?
- How do we, as adult children, introduce our parents to making health care decisions proactively? End-of-life, but not just end of life.
- How can primary care clinicians model taking charge of their health? Or introduce people to making health decisions.
- What decisions have you made about your medical care? What challenges have you had making those decisions? What worked, what didn't?
- Has anyone been a leader in your health journey? How did you recognize it?
- What if we figured out managing, and started to lead? What might be different?
- Have you, as a family member, friend, or clinician, wanted someone to make a different decision than you thought was right? How'd that go? How'd you handle it?

I want to be a better CEO of my health team. I want to learn, manage, lead, and decide. Most of us are only fair at any of it. Few are good at all of it. And our lives depend on them all. Let's explore this further together. I encourage you to share your questions with me through comments on your podcast server, on LinkedIn, on my website, or directly send me an email with "Question" in the subject line.