

Reversing The Compassion Crisis in Healthcare

Re-imagine the
art and science of
caring for better
quality, outcomes
and profitability.



The Compassion Crisis in Healthcare

Nearly half of all Americans believe that the U.S. healthcare system and healthcare providers are not compassionate. Physicians routinely miss emotional cues from patients and actually miss 60-90% of opportunities to respond to patients with compassion. Perceived lack of caring, rather than negligence, is frequently what gets a doctor sued.¹ Forty percent of physicians deal with burnout on a daily basis.

According to research by Dr. Stephen Trzeciak and Anthony Mazarrelli in their book, *Compassionomics*¹, the “hidden curriculum” in medicine is a set up for burnout. The problem is a faulty mindset that has emphasized the science of medicine while neglecting the art and science of caring. As a result, physicians are unable to make a personal connection with patients and lose touch with the purpose of their work because they misunderstand caring as something they do to the patient, not how they are with them. This depersonalization increases the odds of a major medical error.

Lack of compassion hurts patients, doctors, and hospitals.

These statistics paint a grim picture. Why are physicians so lacking in compassion in an industry that needs it the most? Research on physician compassion identifies five reasons for the gap.

- They don't see it
- They don't have time
- They don't care
- They don't know how
- They don't believe it really matters.

This is unacceptable and unsustainable.
Compassionate healthcare should energize us,
not lead to burnout.

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Compassion Improves Patient Experience

Patients view healthcare first and foremost as a personal interaction, not just a medical transaction.

Three times the number of patients value human connection and caring from their physicians more than the prestige of the institution where the physician was trained. Compassion accounts for 65% of the variation in how patients rate their satisfaction with their healthcare provider and confidence in the healthcare team's competence.¹



Compassion Improves Medical Outcomes

Improving the patient-provider relationship can have as big an impact on clinical outcomes as some of the most well-known advances in clinical practice, such as aspirin to reduce heart attacks.^{1,3,4}



Compassion Improves Adherence to Treatment

Patients who feel connected and supported by their healthcare team are more involved in their treatment, experience higher quality of communication, and have a greater purpose for living and getting well.



Compassion Improves the Quality of Care

Physician compassion lowers the odds of committing a major medical error.¹ Moreover, investing in communication training can decrease medical malpractice risk. For instance, a 2015 analysis of the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) found that the percent of patients who reported that their nurses 'Sometimes' or 'Never' communicated well is correlated with higher claims costs than expected.⁵



Compassion Improves Hospital Profitability

Press Ganey, one of the largest administrators of patient satisfaction surveys, published a report in late 2018 indicating patients are more likely to select a practice because of a positive experience than if the practice has an extensive consumer marketing campaign. In that same report, 70% of respondents said their most recent healthcare visits influenced their loyalty to an organization.³

According to Deloitte research, hospitals with better loyalty and patient-reported experience perform better financially. Between 2008 and 2014, hospitals with "excellent" overall HCAHPS ratings had a net margin of 4.7%, on average, compared with 1.8% for hospitals with "low" ratings.⁴



Compassion Lowers Burnout Risk

Physicians with lower compassion are more likely to experience burnout.¹ In contrast to the destructive effects of empathy fatigue and depersonalization, compassion actually increases resilience and wellness among caregivers. Empathy stimulates the pain centers of the brain. Compassion stimulates the reward centers. Compassion is intrinsically rewarding and energizing.



Compassion Can Be Learned

Several misconceptions about compassion present barriers for healthcare providers. For example, most people believe that compassion is all about empathy and self-sacrifice, that it's a "soft skill", or that it can't be learned. These are all false. Here's what the research says.^{1, 2, 3, 4, 5}

- Compassion is about practicing behaviors, which can be learned.
- In 80% of the most scientifically rigorous published studies, compassion training successfully increased physician compassion.
- Best results come from people who are intrinsically motivated and have a growth mindset.
- Compassion training is the marriage of a shift in mindset coupled with small-scale behaviors and strategies that can be implemented into everyday practice.
- Implementing a compassion mindset maintains efficiency and actually saves time through higher quality of communication and patient adherence.
- Compassion training not only changes the patient experience, including better physician-patient relationships and clinical outcomes, but it changes the provider as well. Physician compassion is associated with greater professional satisfaction and resilience against burnout.

Compassion Reimagined in Healthcare

What will it take to bring compassion back to healthcare?

Medical practices and practitioners need a **clearly defined compassion mindset, skill set, and process** for bringing full compassion back into every interaction in a way that **energizes** and **engages**, saves time, and is intrinsically rewarding.

Compassion is the practice of demonstrating that **patients and caregivers are valuable, capable, and responsible. The Compassion Mindset** is the solution for reimagining the art and science of caring.

With The Compassion Mindset, Next Element has developed a practical, scalable, and easy to understand methodology for implementing compassion at any level of healthcare, with an impressive track record.

At the micro-level, applying The Compassion Mindset in the patient visit does not open Pandora's box and does not lead to time-wasting conversations. Our methodology requires about 30-50 seconds and saves time in other ways. The Compassion Mindset provides a **four-part template anyone** can learn and implement **that can dramatically change the trajectory of the healthcare relationship and outcomes.**

At a macro-level, The Compassion Mindset provides a framework for **reimagining and improving** every aspect of the patient experience and delivery of care. The Compassion Mindset isn't another thing to do and it doesn't add new tasks or time to our busy schedules. **It's a different way of doing what we are already doing.**

The Compassion Mindset is a framework for engaging differently for breakthrough results.

If you are ready for higher patient engagement, better clinical outcomes, higher lifetime patient value, more caregiver satisfaction, and lower burnout, give us a call today about Compassion Mindset training, coaching, consulting, and certification.

WORK RELATIONSHIPS SHOULD ENERGIZE US AND HELP US BE MORE EFFECTIVE

Next Element is a global leadership training firm dedicated
to bringing more compassion to every workplace.

next-element.com



To learn more about how you can bring more compassion to your workplace, visit

TheCompassionMindset.com or call us at 316-772-6174



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