



ONCE UPON A TIME IN A LAND FAR, FAR AWAY, there lived an aspiring princess who wanted to make the world a better place, a place where a girl could make a difference and her story would be heard....

The Philosophy that Gets Me Through the Day

In a recent interview Dr. Lorraine Dickey spoke of the guiding principle of her life: **Be married to the process, not to the outcome.** "I learned this the hard way after practicing for 20 years as a neonatologist and leading a large Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) for the last 9 of those years. I found I could not guarantee the outcomes of the critically ill babies I cared for, and I could not always give parents the baby they had hoped for...but I realized I could provide an experience that they could live with while they were in my NICU. Regardless of the outcome, I want parents and families to be able to look back on this traumatic experience and be able to live with it. If I meet them at the local grocery store I want them to be able to talk to me, perhaps smile, knowing we did the best we could by honoring who they are as parents and who their baby is within their family. I want them to know we care about their culture and their values, and that we care about them as people, not just as patients." Dr. Dickey is now the Asst Medical Director at St. Luke's Hospital with OnSite Neonatal Partners in Allentown, PA.

One person can make a difference and everyone should try.

-John F. Kennedy

Neonatal & Pediatric Palliative Care

In 2013, Lorraine took what was considered by many to be the craziest of roads less traveled and stepped away from Neonatology to enter a second Fellowship in Hospice & Palliative Medicine. She now cares for babies and children with serious illness or life-limiting conditions and their families facilitating the alignment of parental goals of care and medical goals of care while also providing complex pain & symptom management. "It is critical to know what brings a person joy, both as a patient and as a parent. Family-centered care is honored when medical therapies match and enhance the goals a parent has for their child while helping them make decisions under the most difficult of circumstances. Physicians and other health care clinicians need to understand that providing therapies that match parental values and family culture **IS** providing good medical care. Practicing with this philosophy in mind supports what we as physicians got into this profession to do: Help someone do what they cannot do for themselves." Her work with patients and families is also influenced by her personal experiences with breast cancer. Dr. Dickey is now developing a Neonatal and Perinatal Palliative Care Program where she works. She is also a certified Pediatric Bioethicist and End of Life Palliative Care Educator.

The Narrative Initiative

Dr. Dickey is the founder and executive director of **The Narrative Initiative**. She works to bring people in health care together to address staff-identified barriers to providing high-quality health care experiences for patients, their families, and health care staff using research-based, published facilitated narrative techniques. Some topics include resiliency, the wounded healer, compassion fatigue, professionalism, dignity therapy and the principles of Patient- and Family-Centered Care.

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The Rest of the Story

In 1983 Lorraine graduated with the 4th class to include women from the U.S. Air Force Academy with a full scholarship to the Univ of Nebraska College of Medicine. She married her husband, Douglas, of 32 yrs in 1983, earned her M.D. in 1987, and completed her Fellowship in Neonatal-Perinatal Medicine in 1994. She has 3 brilliant children: Benjamin (29), Anna Leigh (27), and John Patrick (23). All are grown with only fur babies now at home: 2 pups and 2 Bengals cats. In 2001 life stopped on a dime when she had a catastrophic ski accident. Told she would never work as a physician again due to a significant traumatic brain injury, she earned her MBA in Health Care Mgt while undergoing nearly 3 years of rehabilitation. She had the privilege of returning to the profession of medicine in 2004 though returned with a vastly different perspective as a now long-term patient in the U.S. health care system. Armed with the new philosophy of Patient- and Family- Centered Care she embarked on leading changes that truly matter to patients, their families, and health care staff.

