

Inventing the Future

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Have you ever noticed when problems arise, most people concentrate on the problem? They constantly replay the problem, telling everyone who will listen, empathise with them and agree that things are awful, could not be worse etc. It's like a self-fulfilling prophecy. By concentrating solely on the problem and its consequences, people live the problem and, as sure as night follows day, all the consequences of the problem come true. But instead, why not concentrate on the future? Ask the question: What does it look like if the problem isn't there?

Let me give you an example. Did you know that when Grand Prix drivers are being trained they are trained in the following way: When the car leaves the track at 150 miles an hour heading towards a wall, they are trained to look towards where they want to be on the track. They don't look at the wall, they look at the track. They concentrate and visualise being on the track and, more often than not, they wind up back on the track gravitating towards what they think most about.

In February 2002, our youngest daughter Orla was diagnosed with cancer. At the time she was 15 years old. She had a lump on her neck and this was eventually diagnosed as Hodgkin's Lymphoma. The day the doctor told me and my wife Anne that our youngest daughter had cancer, our world went upside down. The thought of telling Orla she had cancer was awful, but Anne had the answer. "We've done it before so let's do it again." You see, over 20 years earlier our first born daughter Niamh was born with a lung and heart defect and died at a year and nine months old. We nursed her and took care of her for that time. So we had done it before so let's do it again.

We told Orla she had cancer and needed chemotherapy. Obviously, we cried and hugged, but then Orla invented the future.

"Will I lose my hair" is the question which would obviously be uppermost on a 15-year-old girl's mind about to undergo chemotherapy. We told her she would and before you could say "Jack Flash" she decided to have a sponsored head shave to raise money for the local cancer support group. "I'm not giving up my hair without a fight." Those

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words will always be etched in our minds. She raised over \$10,000 for the Cork Cancer Support Group.

So the chemo began. Anne, my wife, took care of the day to day care: taking Orla for the Chemo sessions, Doctors visits, taking care of her when she got sick and always being the emotional back bone of our family. She was a tower of strength. So one day I told Orla I had a \$30,000 cheque for her. You see in Ireland with your Critical Illness cover, your children are automatically covered for \$30,000.

Critical Illness insurance works like a life policy, paying out a lump sum, but it is your health that is insured, not your life. Payment is made on diagnosis of up to 42 specified illnesses with no restrictions on how the payout is used. When talking to clients, we regularly ask "If you were to become critically ill and unable to work, would you rather lose your house or lose your mortgage".

As you can imagine Orla was surprised. But you see with \$30,000 in her pocket she was looking forward, imagining the future. Eventually she decided what to do with the \$30,000. She decided to keep \$18,000 for herself to be invested until she was 21. Looking Forward. Obviously as her financial advisor I got the order. She decided to give \$1,500 to each of her three siblings: sisters Fiona and Sinead and her brother Ciaran. The balance she decided to give to Anne and myself because nearly every two weeks we took her on a trip. Always looking forward, inventing the future.

We were told that Orla's chemotherapy would last for six months beginning in March and finishing in August. So we decided to ask the question, What does it look like if the problem isn't there?

If the problem isn't there, we would be on or planning a family holiday. So I asked Orla did she believe she is cured when the chemo ends in August. This was in May. Orla said she believed the Chemo ends in August, she believed the Doctors; she believed there was no other outcome. So we asked her to pick a destination anywhere in the world for a family holiday to be taken during the school half term in October.

A few days later, and I now know in consultation with her brother and sisters, we were going to Hawaii. Ireland to Hawaii - what a journey. The holiday was great.

If the problem isn't there what does it look like. It looks like being on holiday.

June 2002 MDRT was in Nashville. I didn't want to go. What do you do when your daughter says "If I'm cured why can't you go? If everything is ok why can't you go?" Everything was ok so I went.

By concentrating on the problems of life, people internalise the problem. The problem is always on their mind and, believe it or not, we gravitate towards that which we most think of. So I would ask you when a problem arises, visualise yourself into the future. Visualising what it looks like with the problem gone. Do it with emotion and feeling. Constantly focus on the future and your creative subconscious will create the solutions.

You see, the problem exists at a conscious level. By concentrating on the future with feeling and emotion we are creating another reality at a subconscious level. If our subconscious image is stronger than our conscious image, our creative subconscious will create the new image.

Finally our daughter Orla is fully recovered, enjoying the joys of being a teenager and looking forward to life.