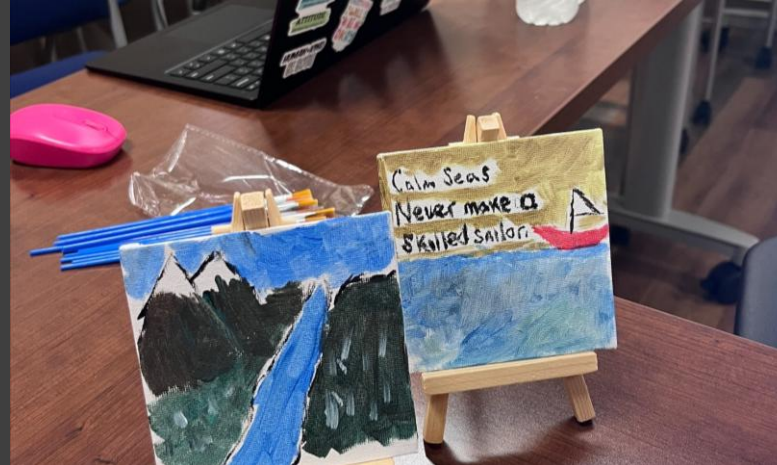


A Decade of Growth: Building and Advancing a FNP Residency Program

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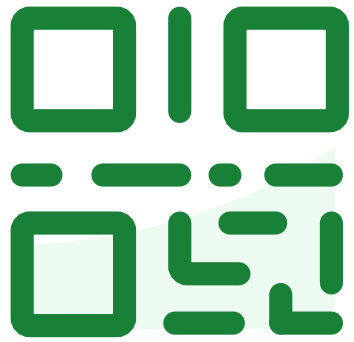
Disclosures

I have no financial relationships or conflicts of interest to disclose.

Learning Objectives

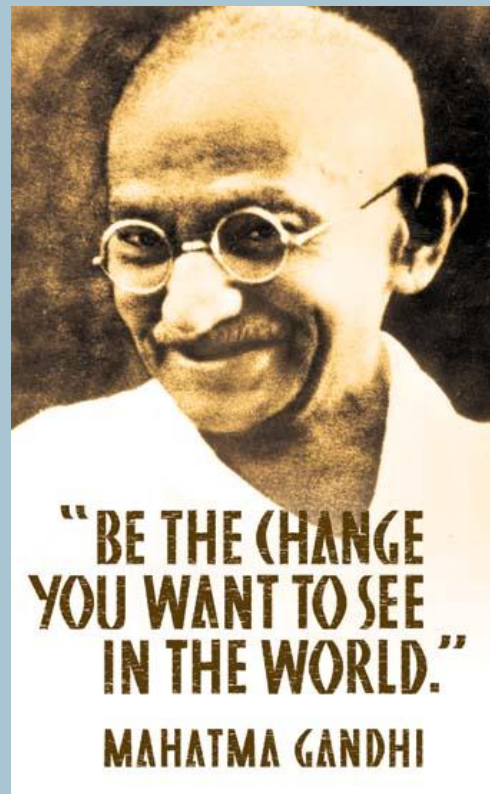
By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Describe the key phases and challenges encountered in building and sustaining a Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) residency program over a 10-year period.
- Analyze strategies used to adapt to organizational, regulatory, and workforce changes while maintaining program integrity and outcomes.
- Identify practical approaches for scaling and evolving NP residency programs to meet future healthcare demands.
- Apply insights from a decade of experience to inform the development or refinement of advanced practice transition-to-practice programs.

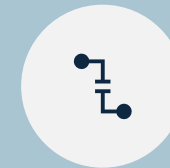


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Inevitability of change



CHANGE IS A
CONSTANT IN
LIVING SYSTEMS,
ORGANIZATIONS,
AND PROFESSIONS.



STABILITY WITHOUT
ADAPTATION LEADS
TO MISALIGNMENT
AND EVENTUAL
FAILURE.



IN HEALTHCARE
AND EDUCATION,
EVIDENCE,
SYSTEMS, AND
EXPECTATIONS
CONTINUOUSLY
EVOLVE.



KEY INSIGHT



CHANGE IS NOT A
DISRUPTION OF
NORMAL—IT IS
NORMAL.



Definitions

- **Change:** An external shift (process, role, structure, policy)
- **Transition:** The internal psychological process of adapting to that shift

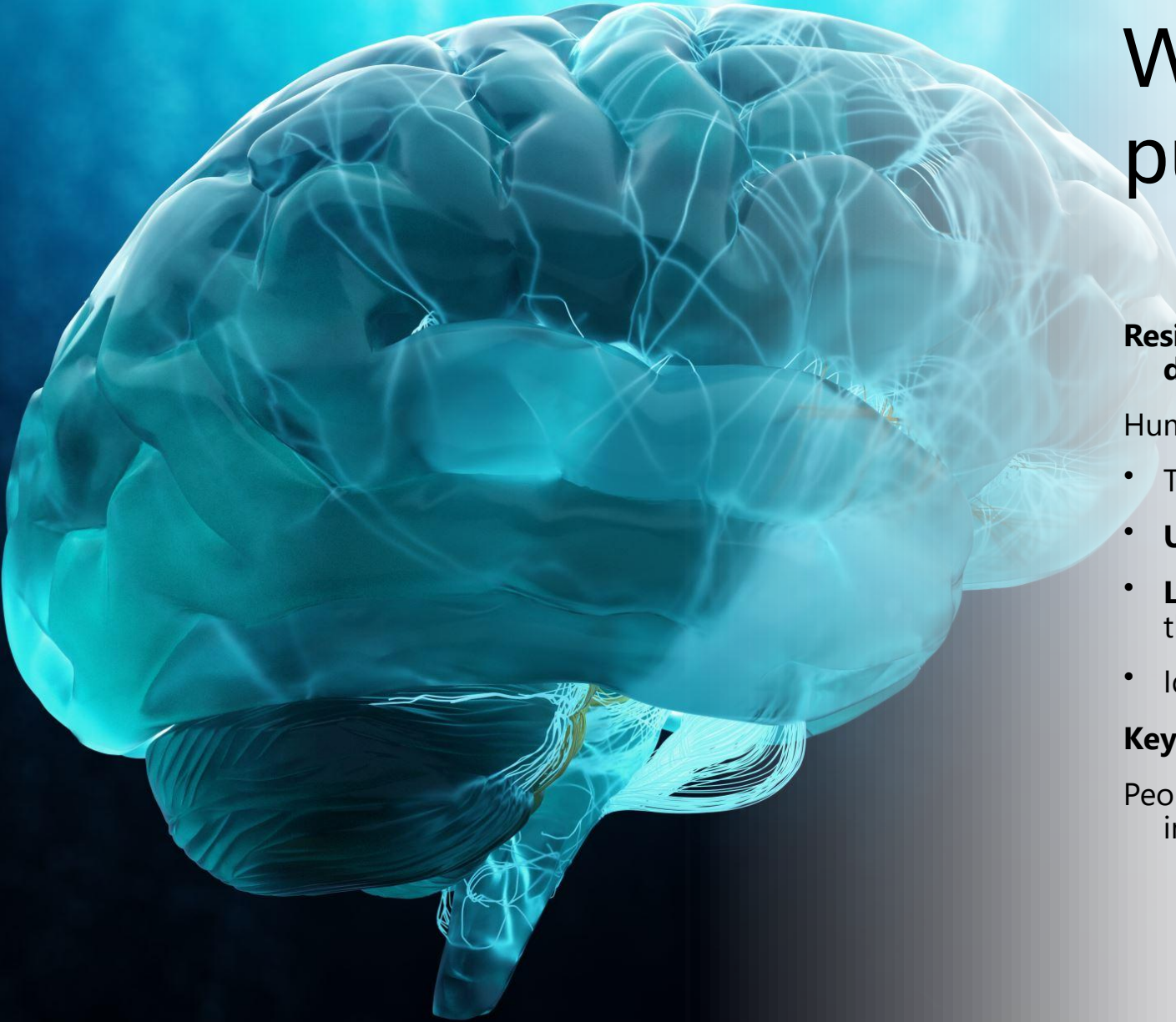
Why this matters

- Organizations often execute change well
- They fail when they ignore the *human transition*

Key insight

- Events change quickly; people adapt slowly.

What is “Change” really?



Why humans push back

Resistance is a survival response, not defiance

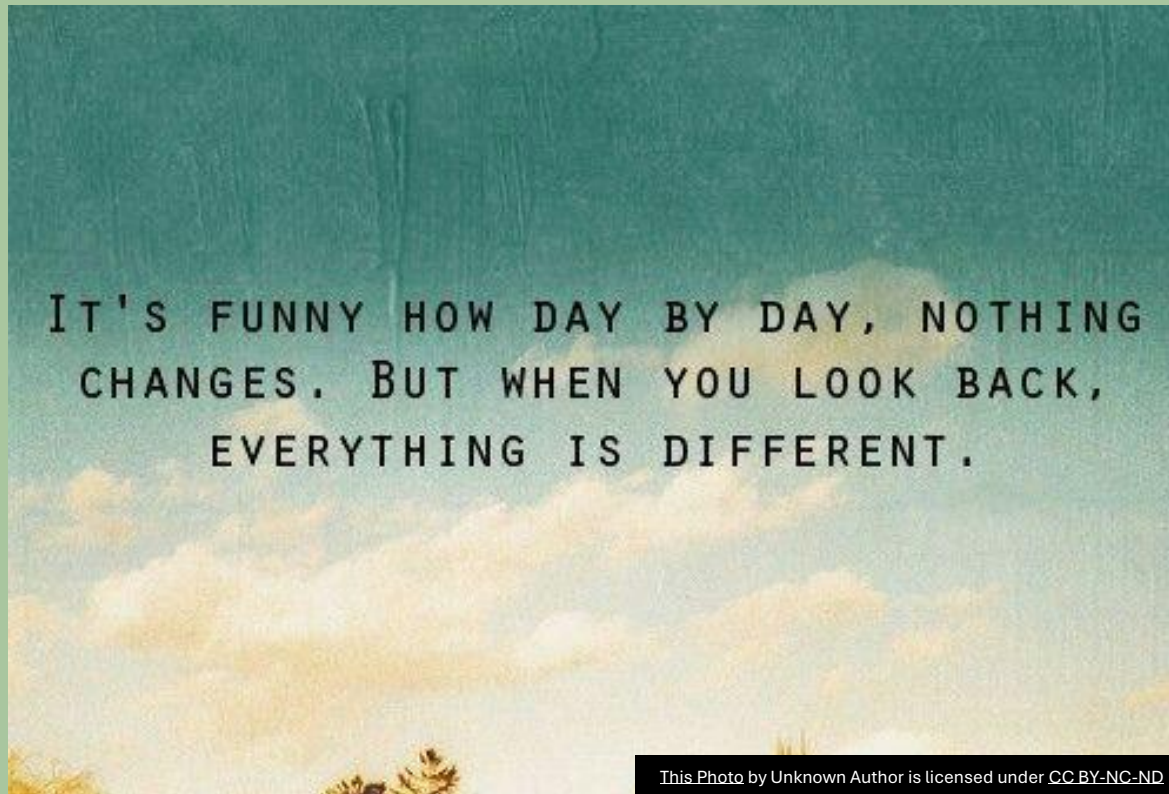
Humans resist change because:

- The brain is wired to prefer **predictability**
- **Uncertainty activates threat responses**
- **Loss aversion:** losses feel more powerful than equivalent gains
- Identity and competence feel at risk

Key insight

People resist *loss and uncertainty*, not improvement.

What reduces resistance



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Psychological safety changes the experience of change

Psychological safety

- A shared belief it's safe to speak up, ask questions, and make mistakes

Evidence shows

- Facilitates learning during uncertainty
- Predicts team effectiveness
- High-performing clinical teams report **more** errors because they feel safe to do so

Key reframe

Resistance is information about unmet safety needs.



When you hear the word change in healthcare, what is your immediate reaction?

Why postgraduate training is a unique change challenge

- Rewires **professional identity** — a software update while the system is still running
- Disrupts **norms, roles, and power structures** everyone quietly agreed not to question
- Learners *and* systems must **grow simultaneously** — renovating the plane mid-flight
- Success = navigating the **human transition**, not just checking the implementation box

The bottom line

Challenge wasn't the obstacle — it was the *curriculum*.



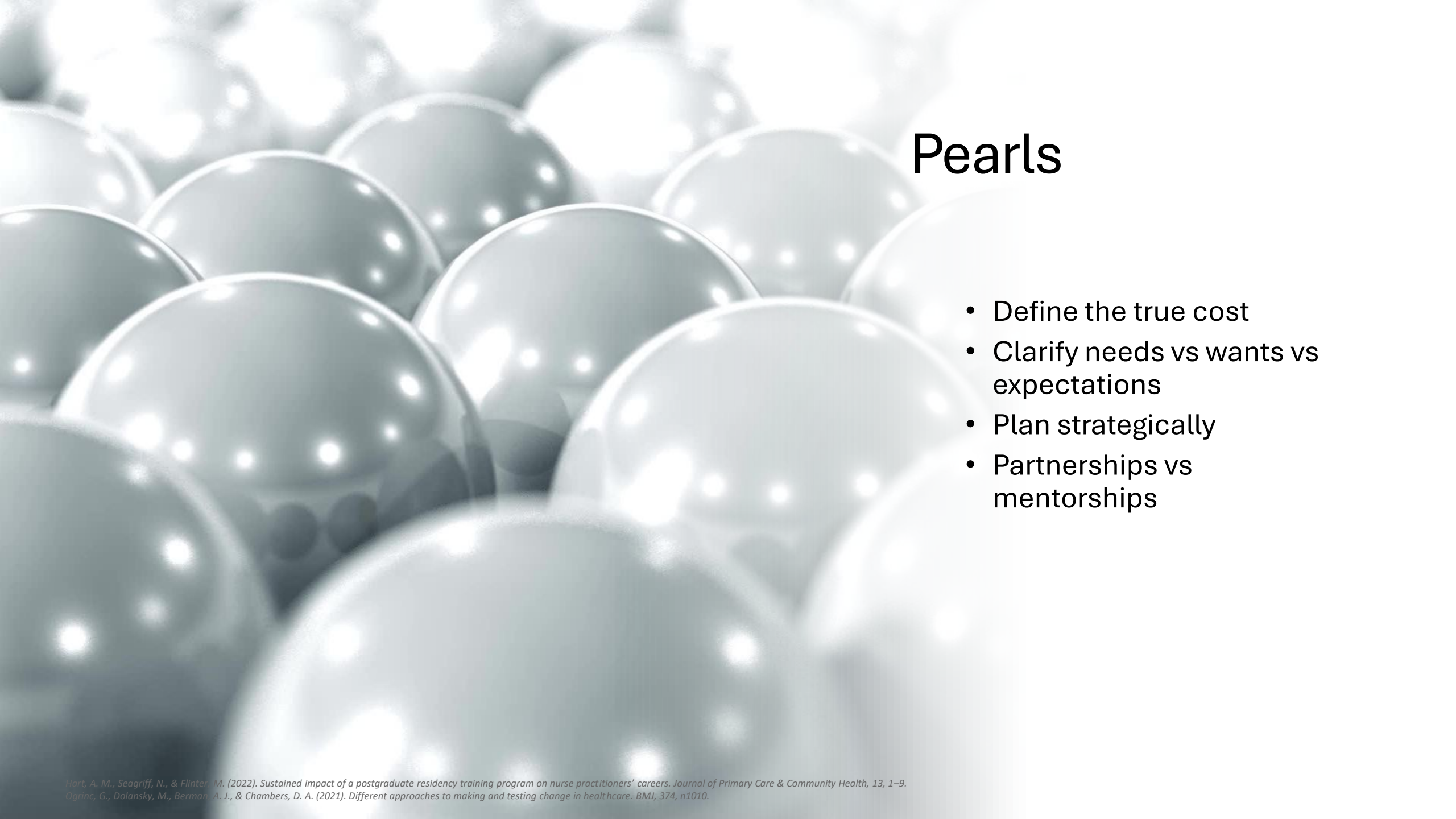
Program Trajectory

- **2015 – Foundation** · Vision set
- **2016 – First cohort** · Learning by doing
- **2017 – Intentional scale** · 3 residents
- **2020 – Adaptive resilience** · Pandemic
- **2021 – Quality formalized** · Accreditation
- **2023 – Structured growth** · 2nd site (Mishawaka)
- **2024 – Stability validated** · Reaccreditation
- **2024-25 -Programmatic clarity** · Redefining the program beyond CHC mentorship
- **2025 – System Complexity** · Back to Valpo, 2 time zones, 4 residents
- **May 2026 – 10 years of growth** · Celebration

A seat at the table

- Every program starts somewhere...
- The spark
- The “why” was already clear
- The ask (or assignment)
- Early strategy: partner to start fast
- Early lessons learned



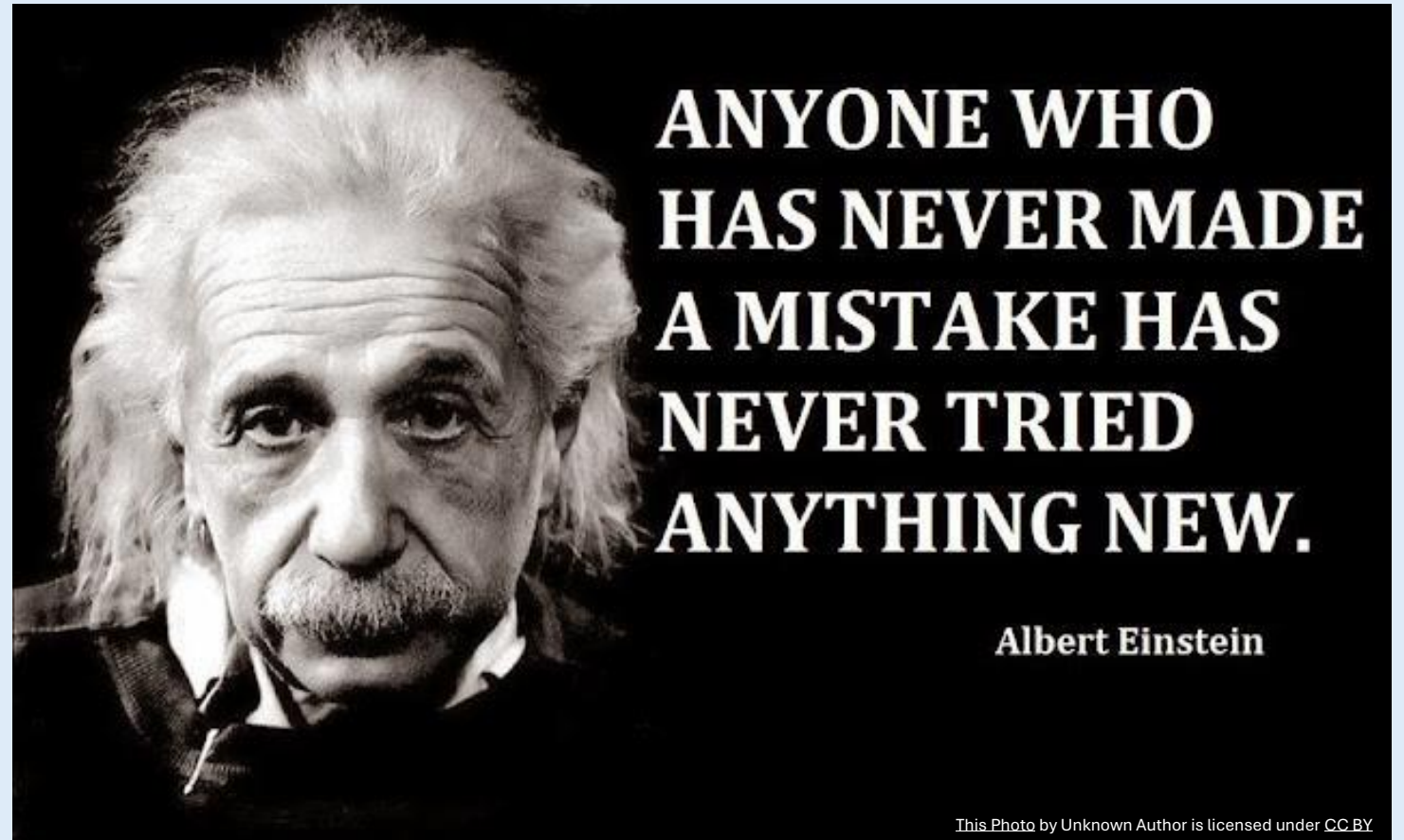


Pearls

- Define the true cost
- Clarify needs vs wants vs expectations
- Plan strategically
- Partnerships vs mentorships

Wonderful Year One

- Built while moving
- Program existed everywhere—and nowhere
- Decisions before definitions
- Developmental gaps surfaced in real time
- Mentorship without a clear anchor
- Missteps shaped the model
- Outcome mattered—but so did the lesson



**ANYONE WHO
HAS NEVER MADE
A MISTAKE HAS
NEVER TRIED
ANYTHING NEW.**

Albert Einstein

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Pearls



Gaps are signs of development



Willingness to adapt to decisions



Learn from your missteps



Mentorships nurtures growth



Structure sustains growth



**Which challenge most resonates
with early postgraduate practice?**

Maturing the program



Productive turbulence



Expansion outpaced definition



Behavioral Issues=Program Issues

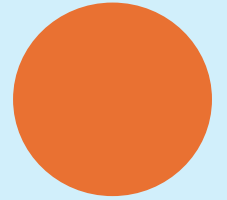


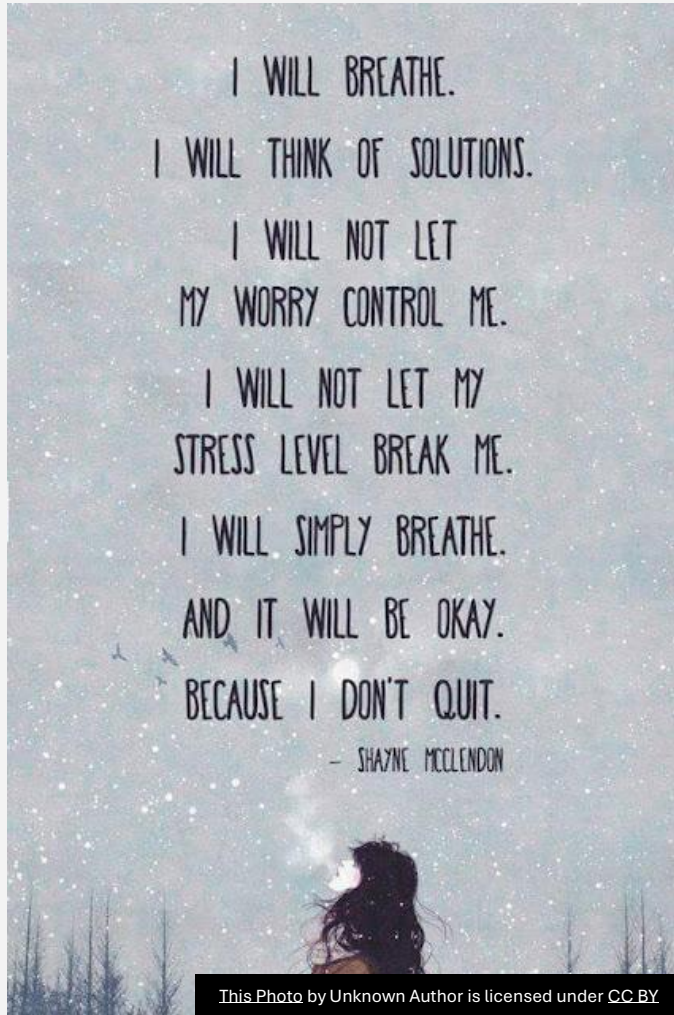
Preparing for accreditation



Pearls

- Productive turbulence is a sign of growth, not failure
- Behavior issues often reveal program gaps, not learner gaps
- Role clarity beats more voices at the helm
- Accreditation forces clarity
- Dedicated coordination is the true game-changer





Year 5: Accreditation or Bust

- **Accreditation Chose Us**
- **Translation gap exposed**
- **Prep=Learning the language**
- **Burden drives clarity**
- **Met standards=found footing**



Pearls

- Accreditation creates clarity
- Honesty matters more than polish
- Sustainability requires systems, not heroics



Which factor most influences long-term program sustainability and success?

Sustainability

- **Post accreditation=More chaos**
- **Simple anchoring works**
- **Learning expanded beyond the clinic**
- **Growth, validation, and the next disruption**



Pearls

- Structure during uncertainty matters
- Regular coaching stabilizes Development
- Small, consistent leadership
- Sustainability means managing change, not ending it.



Leaving the nest

- **Breaking away = No safety net**
- **Everything reimagined in real Time**
- **Expanded scope outpaced capacity**
- **Leadership reset + Culture shift**
- **Burnout was real**
- **Outcome: Not perfect—persistent**



Pearls

- Breathe through it
- Rally your troops
- Elevator speeches galore
- Trust the process





Which statement best reflects your experience with change in programs or practice?

No longer quicksand- Year 10

- **Sustainability requires clear expectations**
- **All-Skate support made it work**
- **Structure: Not too much, not too little**
- **Shifting to a learner-Centered model**
- **Communication + Flexibility = Sustainability**



Pearls

- “Engagement” word of the year
- Teamwork makes the dream work
- Give gratitude in everything
- Negotiation is key
- Support is success





The Future: Growth to Integration

- **We stopped guessing — Residents guided the model**
- **Buy-In → Engagement → Leadership**
- **The 4 C's + Cadence created structure**
- **Programs learning together, not separately**
- **Early signals show it's working**



Key Takeaways

- Change wasn't a disruption- it was the curriculum
- People, not perfection, built this program
- Structure + heart create sustainability
- Growth happens when we keep showing up
- The best chapters are still ahead

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Questions

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