

health futurist

LEANNE KAISER CARLSON



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who is LEANNE?

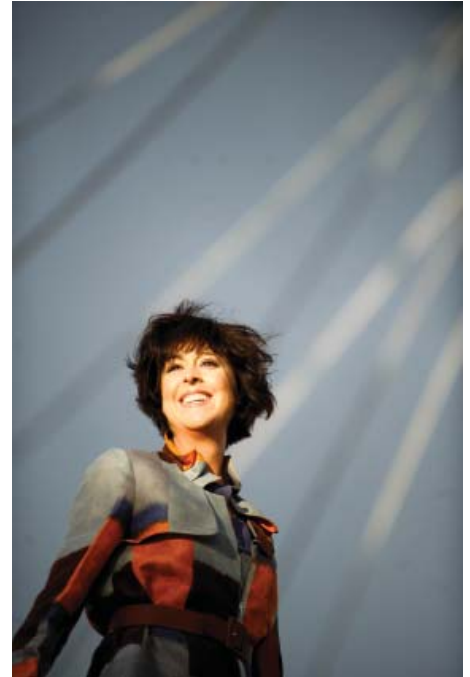
Leanne Kaiser Carlson is a health futurist who helps organizations and individuals consciously evolve. She sees potentials and resources in unusual places. Health systems seek her to think in new ways and create paths to a preferable rather than probable future.

Leanne is one of three founders of the Kaiser Institute, an organization that equips people with essential skills for the future. One of its newest initiatives is the Alembic, a program that teaches the 13 elements of transformation. The word *Alembic* comes from alchemy and means container of transformation. The Alembic began with 20 founding CEOs from innovative health systems.

She also initiated an innovation circle called Theater of Generosity. Organizations in this circle are designing hospitals and clinics where patients think about generosity, experience it in surprising ways, and are drawn to participate as philanthropic partners. Generosity comes alive as the heartbeat of the culture and unleashes hidden abundance.

Leanne is a Senior Fellow of the Estes Park Institute in the areas of Futures, Innovation, and Wisdom Cultures. She serves as a hospital trustee and has been a board member of other organizations including the VHA Health Foundation. Here she chaired the grants committee, reviewed the innovation strategies in hundreds of hospitals, and funded novel prototypes.

She began her career working in hospitals, attained her Masters degree in health administration, and rapidly became one of the youngest and most recognized health futurists in the industry.



what is FUTURISM?



Futurism is the art of both predicting and creating the future. Prediction is the beginning point. Many trends are visible as waves of momentum. But these waves do not impact all places at the same time. What is yet to sweep healthcare or one organization often already exists somewhere else. A futurist looks in different places—on the margins and edges.

A trend is simply a shift in energy. It propels as powerfully as it destroys. To see the way the world is changing is to be able to ride the momentum to a new destination. This is the second and more essential part of futurism—creating a preferable future.

The future is not a simple extension of the present. Neither is it fixed. For everything that is, there are other things that could just as well be. They exist as parallel futures and alternative realities. Which one occurs is a matter of choice.

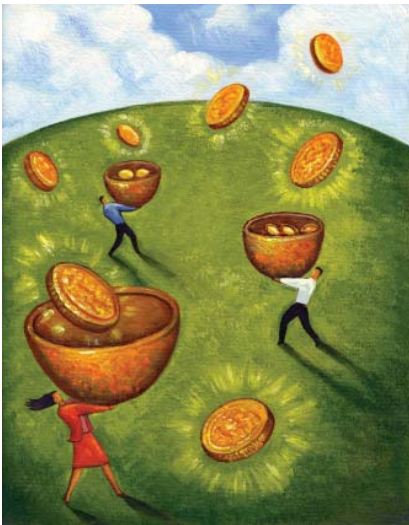
The future is also determined by what we do, or fail to do, in the present. Each time *we* change, the *future* changes. In this sense we happen to the future as much as the future happens to us.

Futurism is the ultimate challenge for all leaders. We cannot have what we cannot imagine. What holds the future in its probable form is that we tend to think in the same ways and do the same things. But there are infinite possibilities waiting to happen.

Futurism is a path of power. It is a position of hope. It is a challenge and privilege for us all.

SINGULARITY

Many individuals and organizations can integrate as one—a singularity. Attaining singularity may be the greatest challenge of our time. But its potential is vast. In a singularity, we tap our collective intelligence to crack tough problems. Groups coordinate work across collaborative platforms and cross the chasms created by geographic separation. Organizations that are not part of the same system collaborate to do together what none could do alone. Anything can happen anywhere as organizations intertwine with more partners in fluid combinations.



GREAT CHALLENGE: *when the sky opens*

Everything you need is already here. When you align with the evolutionary impulse of life—what is trying to happen—resources rush toward you. You precipitate and release resources rather than generate them.

the ABUNDANT future

There is no true scarcity—only disconnection of resources. We live in a sea of possible partners and allies. Yet we often engage and capture the imagination of only a tiny portion. Many of those who could bring resources, intelligence, and energy are right around us. But we must learn to engage these allies in new ways. In some health systems, philanthropy exceeds the amount of money left from operations. Novel partnerships with payers and consumer product companies provide both resources and expertise. And donors work with clinical and executive leaders to develop centers for innovation and new care models. The potential for abundance exists even in apparent scarcity.

METAMORPHOSIS

Something new is emerging. Catch its outline and you see something so profoundly different as to be almost unrecognizable. This new creature is the future form of healthcare. It arises only partly because of legislation and political mandate. The greater forces are powerful global shifts, technological breakthroughs, economic changes, and cultural trends. These usher in an era of precision medicine, new services, intertwined organizations, market upheavals, cheap and smart competitors, and advances in human enhancement. This is a time of radical deconstruction and rebirth.

GREAT CHALLENGE: *cracking the shell*

Every reality is a shell. What is inside appears to be all that exists. When you crack the shell, you emerge into another world—which you will ultimately outgrow again. Cracking a shell is an extremely brave thing to do.

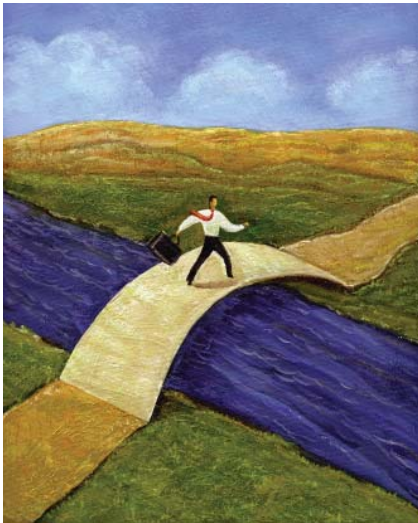


continuum: RETHINKING EVERYTHING

As we are able to anticipate serious clinical events before they occur, we rethink when to intervene. As big and expensive medical devices become portable or even implantable, we also rethink where to intervene. Ultimately we even rethink who should intervene and build new clinical teams with different people. In the new continuum of care, homes become extensions of hospitals, and smart phones connect patients and providers. Organizations win in new ways economically and collaborate across geography. The challenge is daunting, but the potential is compelling. It's time to rethink everything.

the ALCHEMIST

Many people think of alchemy as an ancient art, a precursor of science. Yet its quest is the same as ours—transmuting one thing into another. In every organization there is lead that can become gold. The new alchemical skills are things such as *perceiving* that which may not be obvious on the surface, *fusing* unlike things, *incubating* new forms, *putrifying* what is no longer necessary, *precipitating* missing elements, *symbolizing* in ways that provide enabling meaning to events, *connecting*, *energizing*, and *purifying*. Alchemical leaders approach reality as a set of mutable possibilities rather than an unalterable series of circumstances.



GREAT CHALLENGE: *you are the bridge*

An alchemical leader becomes the bridge for transformation. Often the essential element either does not exist or the polarities repel each other and require someone to span the difference. You are the bridge between *what is* and what *could be*.

conscious EVOLUTION

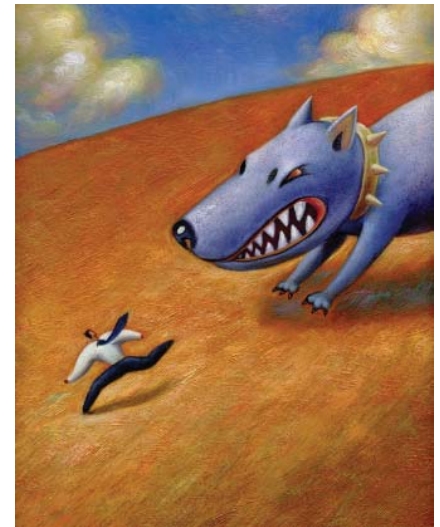
The things that occupy us are often important but not transforming. It is easy to immerse ourselves entirely in the routines and responsibilities essential today. Without a conscious focus on the future, all energies and resources flow into the immediate. The great management imperative of our time is to create a new kind of organization—one that continuously evolves and regenerates itself. Here innovation becomes a cultural imperative. It is approached with as much intentionality as cost and quality. Leaders think about future prosperity as much as present survival, and change is a proactive choice rather than a reactive response.

CHEAP AND SMART: *racing down the pyramid*

The race is on. Entering it are entrepreneurs and healthcare organizations around the world. The goal is a new generation of services with strong outcomes and stunningly low cost. This challenge is much more daunting than innovating for the top of the wealth pyramid. But those who create novel solutions will own the future markets of the world. Look at what we can learn from innovators designing healthcare solutions for those with the least resource. Their breakthroughs ultimately reshape healthcare for everyone.

GREAT CHALLENGE: *facing fear*

Fear is a sign you are getting ready to do something significant. The past creates a safety zone of comfort, but ultimately becomes a prison. Fear accompanies all exploration and breakthrough. Instead of moving away from fear, move through it.



evolving for the **FUTURE** *together*

Most organizations learned to survive using an old-style ethic of individualism and domination. When confronting something different or threatening, they attempt to conquer or eliminate it. And every encounter is a contest. Although much of the world is still shaped by this approach, something profoundly new is also occurring. This new thing is often called a business ecosystem. Here everyone's fates are intertwined—the prosperity or demise of one impacts all. Individual entities learn to work with each other more intentionally. Although they may compete, they also collaborate and co-evolve. In the future, no one thrives alone.

the WISE organization

There is a deeper wisdom—a wisdom that appears crazy on the surface, but represents the twist in perspective essential for the future. If we can embody it, we will flourish. If we cannot, we will struggle without solutions. This wisdom is ancient, with roots extending into all the world's great sacred and philosophical traditions. Now it is appearing in healthcare, business, politics, and economics. Meet wise organizations integrating this uncommon wisdom. Explore how those even in the most demanding environments are thinking more universally, developing conscious capitalism, and using spiritual insights.



GREAT CHALLENGE: *plugging in*

Nothing is out of reach. But it must be approached in a way that assures mutual benefit. Synthesis is the skill of putting things together. Often everything needed for the next stage exists, but is out of alignment.

INVENTING *how we AGE*

Aging is perhaps the largest growth field of the future—the area where imagination, innovation, and investment intersect. The results are radically new: prolongevity, longevity medicine, biogerontology, anti-aging, successful aging, sage-ing, and conscious aging. We are beginning to understand why we age, why some people and populations age differently, and what can be done to help people age optimally. Think about the possibilities ahead and what it means for health systems.

FLOURISHING *against the ODDS*

For many organizations, the odds and norms seem almost irrelevant. Somehow they flourish where others struggle. Often these exceptional places are invisible to us—we rarely hear about them, learn from them, or celebrate them. How, for example, did a hospital organize for innovation and unleash its human potential? How is another system approaching \$100 million in retail? Where are the flourishing exceptions in clinical quality, organizational culture, and philanthropy? Hidden within the majority is a minority of positive deviants breaking all the rules and flourishing.

GREAT CHALLENGE: *finding the door*

There is always a doorway from where you are to where you want to be. But it may not be visible to you. When you imagine the place you want to go, you produce a resonance that draws you toward it. At some point you will see and walk through the door.



FUTURE *on a SMALL SCALE*

What if you could visit the future today somewhere inside your hospital? What would it be like to touch the future and interact with it? Every day in healthcare, we make decisions about the future. But we rarely create the futures we are considering on a small scale first. Now this is beginning to change. Look at how to approach prototyping and learn from leading healthcare organizations. Consider a world beyond healthcare that has greater experience prototyping new services and products. From these organizations on the edge, we have many clues about how to create the future in small ways today.

