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COVID – 19: The perfect opportunity to lead utilizing the Novation Dynamic.

The coronavirus pandemic has created unmatched stress on the health care and economic system across the globe. At times like these, effective leadership is essential. In June, our paper that describes the Novation Dynamic leadership paradigm will be published. The contemporary use of the word novation has a legal connotation having to do with contractual language. However when you trace the route of the word novation back to its Greek origin, the word novare means to make new. So we use novation in this context.

The Novation Dynamic has three components: innovation, renovation, and exnovation. It is imperative that leaders in these turbulent times leverage their skills in all three of these areas.

Let's first start with **innovation**. Never in the history of civilization has there been a greater need for innovation. COVID-19 has placed tremendous demands on all of our systems around the globe requiring nimble, thoughtful, and disruptive innovation. At a time when much of the NIH funded and academic research grounded to a halt, innovation is thriving. Innovation-based practice (IBP) fills the gap between what is known and what is needed. By definition, innovation is something new or novel that brings value and fills that gap between what's known and what's needed. Innovation is a noun and a verb. So the innovation we are seeing may be new things or procedures or it may be taking existing things or procedures and implementing them in an innovative way. If you look around right now you see innovation everywhere. New therapies, new ways to disinfect masks, new vaccines, new processes and procedures, as well as many other ways to protect the public from this virus. I would contend that many if not all of what is being done now is void of evidence. So there's never been a better time for innovation. And it is through innovation that we will get through this very difficult time.

The next component of the Novation Dynamic is **renovation**. Renovation is taking what currently exists and changing or altering it to make it better, much like process improvement. Renovation is also driving much of our response to COVID-19. If you renovate your kitchen, it's

still your kitchen but it works better, becomes more efficient, and produces better outcomes. The same is true when we apply renovation to this pandemic. A great example of this is moving from office visits to telehealth visits. Telehealth visits aren't new or novel, it's just a different way for a provider to see a patient. There are reports of organizations that have been working on telehealth for months, only to have this pandemic drive implementation of telehealth in a matter of weeks. Renovating the outdated processes of different types of regulatory approvals or practice barriers are other examples of renovation that has positively affected our ability to meet the demands of this pandemic.

The final component of the Novation Dynamic is **exnovation**. Some refer to this as de-implementation. Exnovation is removing outdated practices, practices that don't work, and or practices that are not evidenced-based or lacking in scientific principles. COVID-19 has presented opportunities to really challenge the norm and ask why we have done it this way. It is also a time to get rid of the inefficient way of doing things, , because of the stress and strain it

places on the system. Typically, at the end of any innovation or any innovative process there should be some assessment of what can be removed. However, it is much more challenging to remove an existing practice than it is to implement something new, because behavior and habits are hard to change. So as leaders we really need to challenge the norm and get rid of things that just don't work or don't add value just because we've done it that way or just because there's some outdated regulation requiring it.

In conclusion, leaders during these turbulent times need to be well-versed in all aspects of the Novation Dynamic. Being nimble, willing to take risks, aligning actions with values, transparency, and being driven by the data are all essential qualities of a leader. Just look around and you can see examples of all aspects of the novation dynamic. And behind each of these examples I'm sure you will find a highly effective leader. I appreciate your thoughts and your feedback..... stay safe.