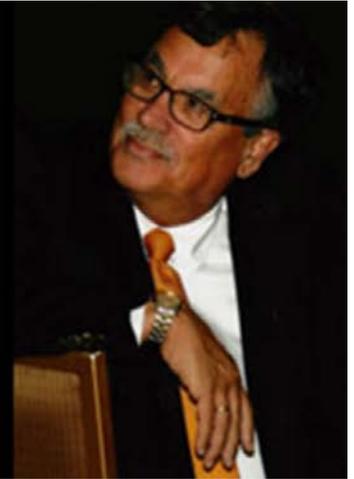


MY VIEW



Founder Wayne Fortin



WAITING

My wife and I have an old Jack Russell Terrier whose name is Sherlock. Over the last year we have watched as Sherlock has aged and struggled to get around (he has already surpassed the life expectancy for Jack Russell Terriers). Recently we awoke to find Sherlock lying on the kitchen floor unable to walk. I picked him up and put him in his bed. Then my wife and I talked about putting Sherlock down. We considered bringing him to the Vet that morning but we decided to wait.

Later that morning I went into the kitchen and I slipped, then slipped again. It turns out that there was some grease got in the floor the night before, and the floor was very slippery. It took a while, but then it occurred to us that maybe the slippery floor was why Sherlock couldn't walk.

Sure enough, when we cleaned the floor and put Sherlock on it...lo and behold... he began to walk. He continues to walk to this day.

What a lesson for me and my wife about how a situation can be misinterpreted. When we saw that Sherlock couldn't walk in the kitchen we were sure why (not being able to walk is common in old dogs in the final stages of life) and we were sure what we needed to do (put him down).

How wrong we were, and what a lesson we learned about making assumptions and about waiting before making big decisions!

My wife and I decided to wait to take Sherlock to the Vet because we were stunned and didn't know what to do. But I believe waiting can be developed as a skill and practiced consciously in our everyday lives and in the TIP organization.

How can leaders and TIP volunteers practice the **Waiting Skill** as we lead our organization and respond to TIP calls?

1. DECISION MAKING: Before making major decisions, TIP leaders need to slow down and wait. As Stephen Johnson in his book *Farsighted* says “*Give your mind the free time to mull the decision over. Go for long walks, linger in the shower a little longer than usual, let you mind wander.*” I try to do this. Now, when big decisions regarding how to solve a TIP problem come my way I almost always say “*let me sleep on it.*” Interestingly, after I sleep on it one of two things happens....

- I have a clearer idea of what decision to make.
- The problem resolved itself as I slept. It's amazing and humbling how many situations resolve themselves as I mull over what to do.

2. TIP CALLS: “*It’s good to wait and watch the call unfold.*” (TIP Volunteer)

There are a number of instances on TIP Calls where the best course of action is no action. The best course is often **WAITING...**

- **WAITING** before entering a home if there are no responders present (safety).
- **WAITING** before talking (silence).
- **WAITING** before leaving the scene (the fine art of hanging around).
- **WAITING** before judging our clients and their situations. (There is always more to the story)

Sherlock is still with us. He is old, deaf and sleeps a lot. But he still enjoys sniffing around our courtyard and eating his biscuits. If he could talk he would probably say with a Jack Russell attitude: “*I can believe you were getting ready to put me down. I hope you learned a lesson about waiting before making a decision and doing something stupid. You owe me a biscuit.*” If he could hear I would respond, “*Yes you taught us a lesson. We will **WAIT, WAIT, WAIT** before making major decisions about you or anything else. Here are two biscuits.*”