

**The Long View By Peggy Maguire & Courtney E. Martin  
End Well Symposium, December 6, 2018**

Start of Transcript

[Crowd Applauding]

Courtney: So Peggy, that's a hard act to follow. Can you sing coz I can see...

Peggy: Unbelievable! That was so amazing! I'm really choked up.

Courtney: It was gorgeous.

Peggy:... And I thought about what I wanted to tell you about. The Cambia Health Foundation and I think that she just demonstrated what we're all about. You know I thought I'd come out and tell you we've talked about universal truths today and you know, one of them, is that every person matters, whether you're a black woman with cancer or a white woman with a brain tumour or a caregiver suffering in silence or a new baby coming into the world. Every person matters. That's a fundamental tenant of what we believe. And the next thing is every moment matters. Every single moment we're on this planet is important and none of us know how **[00:01:00]** long we'll be here. Tomorrow is not promised but we all wanna make the most of the time that we have here.

Courtney: Right.

Peggy: And we have invested in palliative care so heavily because we think that it helps people realise the beauty in every moment. It really is about what matters to people as opposed to what's the matter with them. We see people as whole people and not as vessels of disease so I've just been so honoured to be a part of this work and a part of this movement. And I can't tell you how choked up I am to see a person living with serious illness and thriving with serious illness.

Courtney: That's so moving.

Peggy: Yeah.

Courtney: And this investment you talked about in palliative care sounds totally organic in this room, like? We're all like, "Of course!" But actually it was a huge risk when you first stood it **[00:02:00]** about a decade ago. People were not funding in that area. There's a lot of political fear around death panels and what will people think. Is this gonna seem self serving? And you had your own folks around you who were worried about it and you guys went for it anyway.

Peggy: Yeah.

Courtney: What gave you that courage and was there a backlash?

Peggy: Two things. What gave us the courage was really a personal experience — I'll start there — that when we founded the Cambia Health Foundation, we talked about what were the areas in healthcare that needed transformation. Coz as you said we're part of a larger company, the Cambia Health Solutions, and we really exist to advance Cambia's cause of serving as a catalyst to transform healthcare to make it more person-focused and economically sustainable. When we stood up the foundation, we didn't want it to be something that was off to the side, something that made us feel good about **[00:03:00]** what we were doing on the

business side. We want it to be purposeful and strategic and directly tied to healthcare transformation. So we sat about thinking what are the areas in healthcare that matter most and what needs to be transformed. And we talked about — personally my father was diagnosed with lung cancer at age 48. And he was diagnosed in October and he died in January after just... you know, brutal treatment that left him, his body devastated and really impacted the quality of life for our whole family.

Courtney: Right.

Peggy: Our CEO who was also a founding member of the foundation board, his mother had experienced some pressure at the end of her life to undergo unwanted diagnostic testing when she had made peace with the fact that she [00:04:00] she was dying. She was a very spiritual woman and you know, she declined a test and one of the hospitalist said, “Don’t you care about your children?” You know, that kind of guilt feeling and then another one of our leaders had lost a child to leukemia and all of those interactions with the healthcare system were broken. They weren’t person-focused. They weren’t about helping people deal with all of the aspects of serious illness, of seeing people as whole people, and so we looked at palliative care which was actually a relatively new medical specialty at the time and we thought it should be a model for the entire healthcare system. You know — thank you [Chuckles]

Courtney: You’re in the right room for that one, yes!

[Crowd Applauding]

Peggy: Palliative care really starts with [00:05:00] goals of care and understanding what matters to people. And then developing a treatment plan that addresses the whole person and their family. And it’s the big fallacy is that it’s giving up. In fact, it’s really honouring life. It’s keeping up. It’s keeping the spirit up. It’s addressing all of the social aspects of serious illness and the emotional and we thought that was something worth investing in.

Courtney: Yeah.

Peggy: Anything that will really help ease the journey of people and families through serious illness.

Courtney: It’s so great. I think for me it’s an example for those of us who’s in some kind of power and privilege can sometimes overestimate the risk to ourselves of doing things differently and it feels like philanthropically you’re such a leader and I so admire that. Now you’ve been joined by about twenty or thirty other foundations [00:06:00] and individual philanthropist and others who are like, all right! They did it, we can do it, too!

Peggy: Yeah.

Courtney: What does the field philanthropically look like now? Like what are the gaps? Coz I know there are a lot of people in this audience who may be interested in getting involved. What are the opportunities? What are you excited about?

Peggy: Yeah. Well, I will say you know, when we got into the work we did have detractors. People would said, “You’re crazy to invest in this work [Chuckles].” People will question your motives, people will think you’re trying to withhold care and for us it was never about that. Our CEO, again, he coined a phrase when people would ask us, you know, “What’s the ROI on this?” What people, “Worry about the ROI. Don’t worry about the ROI.” He put all of that

discussion to rest and he said, “This is not about a return on investment. It’s a return on humanity.”

Courtney: Wow.

[Crowd Applauding]

Peggy: Yeah. And with that, I think we always knew that we were acting out of love and that detractors [00:07:00], you know the naysayers, were acting out of fear. And I think we have you know, as we move forward with this work, with that clear sense of purpose, we didn’t experience as much backlash and really any backlash. We are joined now by twenty or thirty other foundations. We’ve made so many friends along the way including many people in this wonderful audience, so our lives and our work has been enriched by those associations. I think what’s next for us and for the field, is coming together on a set of a common language. You know, we know that a lot of people are still confused about what palliative care is, they tend to equate it with hospice and giving up. And we wanna normalise the conversation. We want people in the field and people with serious illness to be using the same language [00:08:00] so that people with serious illness know what to ask for. And as brave as the last speaker, in demanding it. And demanding the kind of care that they want for themselves and their family members.

Courtney: Right.

Peggy: So I think you’re gonna see us trying to drive collaboration around the use of language and consumer awareness. And I think many other foundations are interested in this work and we look forward to partnering with them. And then I think we really wanna focus on caregivers. I was so moved by Alex’s talk of you know, about the vulnerability of being a patient and realising that you’re in relationship with a caregiver.

Courtney: Okay.

Peggy: This is all about relationships. Whether it’s relationship between the doctor and the patient, the members of the interdisciplinary palliative care team or the caregiver and the family, we need to recognise those relationships [00:09:00] and really promote and celebrate them and support caregivers as they navigate through the system.

Courtney: Right, right. I feel like we should — when we do that campaign to rebrand it, I feel like we could do a whole campaign around I don’t receive it in the name of Jesus.

[Crowd Laughing]

Peggy: I like that.

Courtney: And get her in there. And like, wow!

Peggy: Yeah, coz I was thinking, “See me, not my disease.”

Courtney: Yeah.

Peggy: But hers is a lot more promising!

Courtney: It’s pretty bold, yeah. It’s pretty great.

[Peggy Laughing]

Courtney: It's also interesting coz last night at the film screening we did, Dr. BJ Miller and I were talking about his suspicion of language, which is gonna be a thread throughout the day also. You'll see after lunch, we're gonna keep talking about language. What are you all finding helps demystify the language around palliative care? I mean do you feel like we should actually be throwing the term out and trying to like, completely re-language it or do you feel like it's a matter of educating people?

Peggy: I think we should say **[00:10:00]** what it is, what it provides, so if you say this, a doctor or a member of the interdisciplinary team is gonna talk to you about what matters to you, is going to be really clear about your choices, and is going to work with you to manage the pain and symptoms of your serious illness. It's going to include your family in the treatment plan is going to support you as you heal from this disease or not. That if you describe the services that are included in palliative care, everyone wants them. And make it about really living well. And living life to the fullest until you take your last breath. Just as you shared with us. I think that's really what palliative care is. I think someone once said to me, "We need to hire a marketing firm and rebrand it." Right?

Courtney: I'm **[00:11:00]** serious. I think we do!

Peggy: Right?

Courtney: Yeah!

Peggy: We're on the cusp of a major rebranding effort that will drive the social movement.

Courtney: That's great. So if you're interested in that, obviously get in touch. What are...

Peggy: Yes, please.

Courtney: What are other things for those in the ions and thinking they wanna be part of this growing movement of philanthropists in particular who are putting their money behind some of these efforts, what should they be thinking about as they start that journey?

Peggy: Well, I think make it personal. Remember that all of us at some point will be patients. All of us will be caregivers. All of us will have our own journey and experiences and think about creating the kind of healthcare system for the world that you would want for your self and for your family members. I think healthcare essentially is personal to all of us and we need to always keep that at the forefront. It's **[00:12:00]** not some big system, amorphous payment model. It's like, what do you want? And how do you wanna be treated?

Courtney: That's good. Thank you so much, Peggy. Let's give a big round of applause for this amazing woman.

Peggy: Thank you.

[Crowd Applauding]

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