



The Journey Upstream... Cod, Complexity, Corporations, and Your Health

The "Journey Upstream" presentation is designed for both lay and professional audiences. In today's complex world it is important that people use accurate models to be successful. This presentation creatively brings together medical, engineering, scientific, and business principles to help individuals develop accurate models and lead sustainable personal and professional lives. It challenges participants to examine their own beliefs and to consider changing their behaviors. We believe that when people practice sustainable behaviors and understand successful innovation they can lead happier, healthier, and more productive lives.

The presentation begins with the story of the destruction of the greatest fishery in the world – the Cod Fishery in the Atlantic Ocean. We review a model that demonstrates how the pursuit of corporate growth, the introduction of "improved" technology, and the belief that the market and/or government would save the fish were wrong. The destruction of this fishery, an example of a commons, resulted from the collective behaviors of many individuals using the models of conventional capitalism and stable industrial systems. These same models are being applied within today's healthcare industry. This is resulting in the loss of our individual and collective health, as well as the loss of our economic well-being. Reversing this situation requires models based on the best science and an understanding of complex adaptive systems, natural capitalism, and proper change strategies as they relate to individuals, teams, organizations, and communities.

The presentation uses relevant scientific evidence and case studies to support models that can improve individual health and our medical care delivery system. The scientific studies involve nutrition, exercise, and meditation. They demonstrate the pros and cons of reductionistic studies in improving health in the complex system of the human body. The case studies involve advances in healthcare delivery. These demonstrate the importance of the design of systems to eliminate all forms of waste. The presentation concludes with a proposal of a complex commons, an extension of the more generally understood commons, as the ultimate goal.

This presentation can be used to extend the lessons from the "The Nutrition Prescription" presentation, or as a separate presentation modified to meet our audience's needs.