

A Values Coach Inc. Solution

The Pickle Challenge™



**For a More Positive
Workplace Culture**

**A Positive Way to Eliminate
Negative Behaviors and
Build a Stronger
Culture of Ownership**

Silly Name – Serious Results


No Cost – All Benefit

The Pickle Challenge

The Pickle Challenge replaces killjoy with make joy!

Toxic emotional negativity (TEN) hurts every dimension of your organization, including employee morale and engagement, quality and safety, patient satisfaction, productivity and financial performance.

Join The Pickle Challenge is a proven intervention to eradicate TEN by raising awareness of and intolerance for bullying, disrespect and incivility, gossip and rumor-mongering, and chronic whining and complaining.



**The Pickle Challenge
makes it fun to be
positive and easy to
confront negativity!**

“Joy in work – or the lack there of – not only impacts individual staff engagement and satisfaction, but also patient experience, quality of care, patient safety, and organizational performance.”

Perlo J, Balik B, Swensen S, Kabcenell A, Landsman J, Feeley D.
IHI Framework for Improving Joy in Work. IHI White Paper.
Cambridge, Massachusetts: Institute for
Healthcare Improvement; 2017.

8 Reasons Why Your Organization Should Take The Pickle Challenge for Charity

1. You will engage your team in a **dialog about mutual expectations** regarding acceptable attitudes and behaviors in the workplace.
2. You will help your people become more aware of, and more intolerant of, toxic emotional negativity in themselves and in others.
3. You will give your people the tools and the words to **confront toxic emotional negativity** in a way that is fun, lighthearted, and effective.
4. You will redirect thousands of hours of paid time currently wasted on complaining, gossiping, and other anti-productive behaviors into caring for patients and investing in personal growth and education.
5. You will spark a friendly competition that will inspire creative approaches to **foster a more positive culture**, including the amazing pickle jar decorating challenge.
6. You will stage a media-worthy series of events and activities that will **give visibility to your organization** and also help to raise public awareness of the personal health impact of attitudes.
7. You will **raise money for a worthy cause** – one that pulls on the heartstrings of your people.
8. You will be part of launching a national movement to **help people take greater personal responsibility for their attitudes and emotions**, making an important contribution to reducing compassion fatigue, burnout, and dropout.



Who Benefits?

Employees

Your people get a more positive and pleasant work experience, which will be reflected in higher employee engagement.

Families

Employee's family members get a happier and less stressed spouse or parent coming home at the end of the shift.

Patients

Your patients get more genuinely pleasant and empathetic caregivers, which will be reflected in improved patient satisfaction survey results.

Administration

Engaged employees, improved productivity, restored joy in caring, and a focus on the true mission of the organization.

Hospital Finance

You will see a significant increase in productivity and a reduction of overtime and agency expense as all those thousands of hours that are now wasted on complaining, gossiping and other forms of TEN are converted to productive use.

Middle Managers

Your middle managers get new tools for eliminating incivility, bullying, and toxic emotional negativity from their areas.

Human Resources

As your people hold themselves and each other to a higher standard of behavior, your HR department will have more time to work on important priorities and waste less time on petty complaints.

Risk Management

A toxic emotional climate prevents people from reporting problems and confronting inappropriate behaviors – and has been associated with patient harm and deaths.

Your Charity

Your designated charity gets a nice check, and you both have a beautiful photo op to share your story.



I've Taken The Pickle Pledge

**"I will turn every complaint
into either a blessing or
constructive suggestion."**



By taking **The Pickle Pledge**, I am promising myself that I will no longer waste my time and energy on blaming, complaining, and gossiping, nor will I commiserate with those who steal my energy with their blaming, complaining, and gossiping.

* So-called because chronic complainers look like they were born with a dill pickle stuck in their mouths.

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This is a
Pickle Free Zone



PLEASE!

Leave your
Gossiping,
Complaining,
Criticizing,
and
Toxic
Emotional
Negativity
at the door.

THANK YOU!

VALUESCOACH.COM
THEFLORENCECHALLENGE.COM



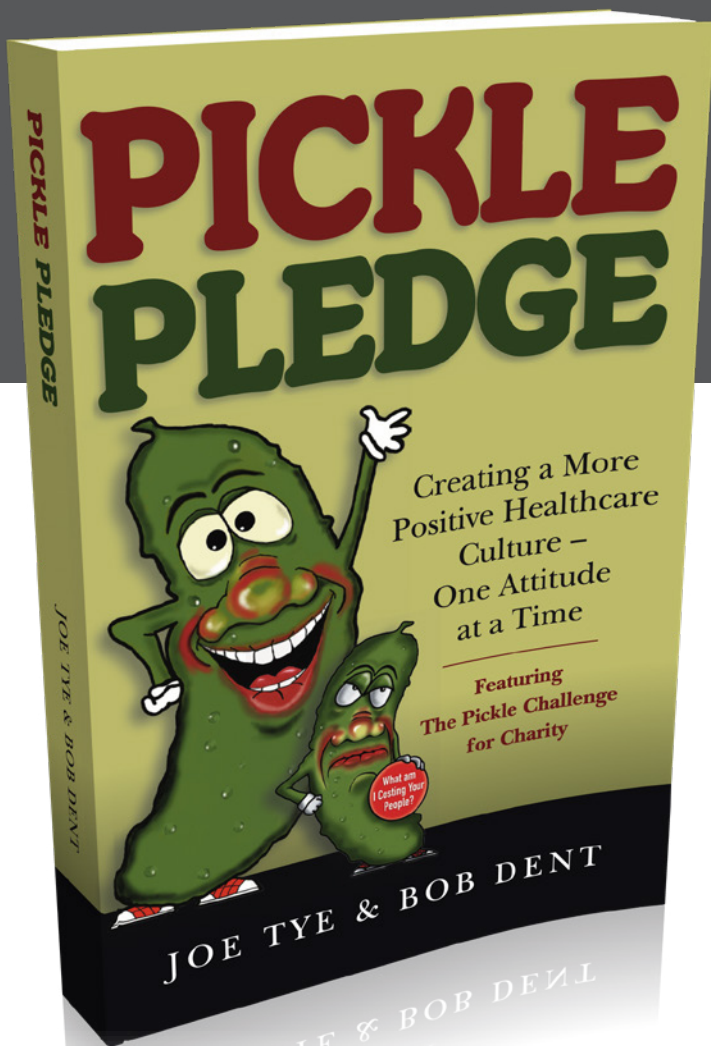
Pickle Free Person



Pickle Free Workplace

Values Coach Inc.
PicklePledge.com

Order at
ValuesCoachStore.com



TEN – Toxic Emotional Negativity (noun): Negative attitudes and behaviors that are reflected in bullying and belittling, gossip and rumor-mongering, chronic complaining and venting that pollute the culture of a workplace and deprive employees of the experience of joy and satisfaction in the performance of their work.

When Bob Dent and I were researching our book *Building a Culture of Ownership in Healthcare* (AJN #1 Book of the Year in 2017) we were alarmed by the frequency of such terms as burnout, compassion fatigue, dropout, and even suicide in the healthcare literature. And we were appalled by the prevalence of terms like bullying, incivility, disrespect, and “nurses eat their young.”

Our research convinced us that there is a causal relationship between the toxic emotional negativity reflected in the second set of terms and the personal and professional damage reflected in

Toxic Emotional Negativity is the Healthcare Crisis Within

the first set. We termed this “the healthcare crisis within.”

While the external healthcare crisis – the challenges imposed by the overall healthcare system – might be beyond our immediate control, this “healthcare crisis within” is absolutely amenable to leadership influence. In fact, **protecting your people, and the patients you serve, from the harmful effects of TEN is a leadership obligation.** The Pickle Pledge and The Pickle Challenge for Charity are proven methods to help hospitals promote a more positive culture of ownership, beginning by eradicating the scourge of TEN.

We wrote the book *Pickle Pledge* because through Bob’s experience as COO/CNO of Midland Health and my experience working with hospitals and health systems across the country, **we have seen the positive impact of this simple promise on the lives of people, and of this fun and lighthearted challenge on the culture of organizations.** Please join us and take The Pickle Challenge!

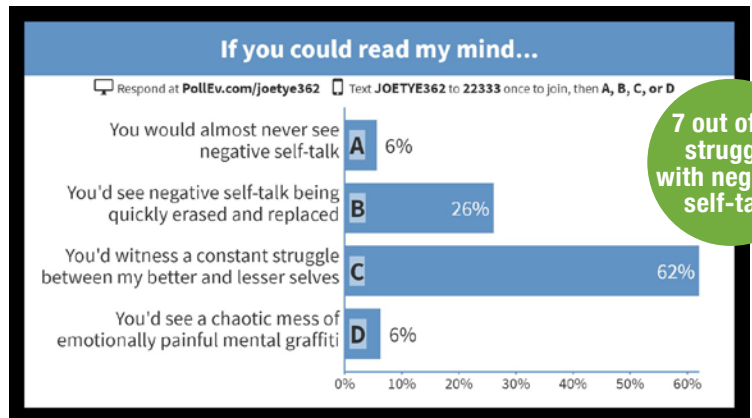
Joe Tye, Founder and CEO, Values Coach Inc.

**Purchase the Pickle Pledge Starter Kit
and Pickle Pledge book at:**

ValuesCoachStore.com

An investment in your organization that is also a gift to your people

When Joe Tye gave a keynote address at the 2019 ACDIS conference, he asked the 2,000+ attendees what he would see if he could read their minds. As shown in these live polling results, seven out of ten reported that they struggle with negative self-talk. Since complaining is almost always an outward projection of inner emotional negativity, **The Pickle Challenge is an investment in your organization and The Pickle Pledge is a gift to your people.**



TWENTY WAYS That Complaining Diminishes Your Life

1. Complaining is malignant and contagious and can pollute the emotional climate of an entire workplace.
2. Complaining is depressing.
3. Complaining is an expression of ingratitude.
4. Complaining is an excuse for laziness, avoidance, and procrastination.
5. Complaining is an excuse for the cowardice of inaction when courageous action is needed.
6. Complaining is resistance that prevents you from taking effective action to deal with the problems you are complaining about.
7. Complaining keeps you stuck in the dramas of the past.
8. Complaining is an outward projection of inner negative self-talk.
9. Complaining is an energy suck that enervates you and everyone around you.
10. Complaining is an insidious form of gossip.
11. Complaining is an insidious form of bullying.
12. Complaining is finger-pointing instead of acting responsibly.
13. Complaining makes you boring to others as it causes you to bore even yourself.
14. Complaining is holding on to a grudge.
15. Complaining is parenting malpractice—by your example teaching kids to be whiners instead of achievers.
16. Complaining crowds out compassion.
17. Complaining fosters pessimism.
18. Complaining is the ultimate waste of time.
19. Complaining takes years off your life, both metaphorically because time wasted on complaining isn't really living, and literally because toxic emotional negativity is harmful to your physical as well as emotional health.
20. Complaining is taking up residence in the valley of the shadow of depression instead of walking through it.

Excerpted from *Building a Culture of Ownership in Healthcare* by Joe Tye and Bob Dent

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Culture does not change unless and until people change!

The culture of your organization is shaped by the collective attitudes, behaviors and habits of the people who work there. The reason that so many “program of the month” initiatives fail to have a lasting impact is that they do not inspire people to change themselves. Make a sustained commitment to being a PFZ – a Pickle Free Organization – and your people will never go back to a workplace culture that is polluted with toxic emotional negativity, the way we will never go back to tolerating a workplace that is polluted with toxic cigarette smoke.

Download your copy:
<http://bit.ly/ownershipposter>

The Power of Pickle Jars



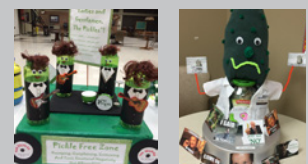
When you launch The Pickle Challenge you will spark incredible creativity and a friendly spirit of competition. This **promotes self-awareness** – when someone puts a quarter into a jar they are acknowledging they need to change – **and cultural accountability** – when someone asks a coworker to make a deposit we are holding each other to a higher standard.



Whining and complaining has never solved a problem – those are *not conversations that matter*. It takes courage to actually work on solving problems instead of complaining about them.

Talking about someone behind their back never helped that person be a better person – *those are not conversations that matter*. It takes courage to talk to someone to their face instead of talking about them behind their back.

Several of the thousands of decorated pickle jars that people have created for The Pickle Challenge for Charity.



The Pickle Challenge is Taking on a Life of its Own!

The creativity that goes into The Pickle Challenge is limited only by the imagination of your people – and if there is an upper limit to that creativity, we have not found it yet!





The Pickle Challenge™ is the culture change program that is more play than it is work, and that is guaranteed to have a positive and lasting impact on your people and your organization.

CNO Jamie Wiggins (at far right) and COO Matt Schaefer (back row third from left) from Children’s Hospital New Orleans and members of the Midland Health Values Coach team. Pickle Pete is a 2,000-pound chainsaw carving created by Don Hill, a Midland Health Respiratory Therapist. It is stationed at the employee entrance where it has also become a tourist attraction. The Pickle Pledge and The Pickle Challenge were among the first steps in a profound cultural transformation at Midland Health.

“The Pickle Challenge has been a vital factor in the positive culture transformation at Children’s Hospital New Orleans. It gives people a polite way to have difficult conversations. It’s a lot easier to invite someone to deposit a quarter into a pickle jar than it is to tell them to stop complaining, especially knowing that all those quarters will go to support a charity we all care about. And it’s amazing how many of our people now know The Pickle Pledge by heart – and more than just know it, take the words to heart.”

Jamie Wiggins, Senior VP and CNO
Children’s Hospital New Orleans

Watch these video clips then ask yourself: Do your people have this much fun – and this level of emotional intelligence?



[Watch the Environmental Services Department surprise the management team at Children's Hospital New Orleans](#)

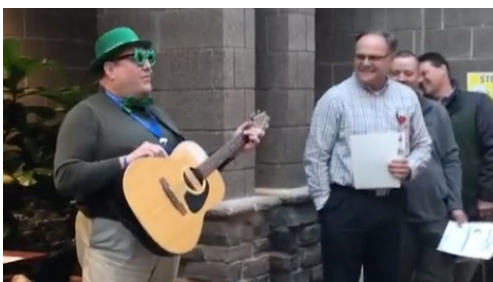


[Watch the Pickle Jar video from Carilion Clinic](#) – the Pickle Challenge raised over \$17,000 for their chosen charity.



[Third grade class at General Tommy Franks Elementary in Midland, Texas](#)

– where teachers say the kids are now holding each other accountable for attitudes. Midland Independent School District has joined with Midland Health to embrace our Values and Culture Project.



[How to know if you're a pickle and what to do about it if you are](#) from Tri-County Health Care in Wadena, MN



Change your organization by helping to change the world

Midland Memorial Hospital in Midland, Texas has conducted The Pickle Challenge four times over the past four years, raising thousands of dollars for their catastrophic employee assistance fund, victims of Hurricane Harvey, and most recently their project for a new neonatal intensive care unit.

Each time, it has been more successful. Not because people are complaining more, quite to the contrary. Rather, The Pickle Challenge is helping people be more aware – and with that awareness has come a greater spirit of generosity.

Making The Pickle Challenge a cultural ritual and tradition will have a much greater impact than seeing it as a once-and-done program.



The Pickle Challenge at the Iowa Veterans Home raised money for Puppy Jake which trains service dogs.

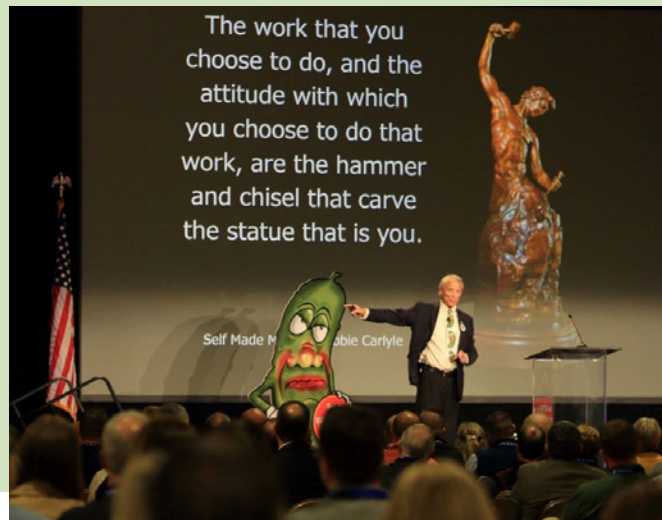
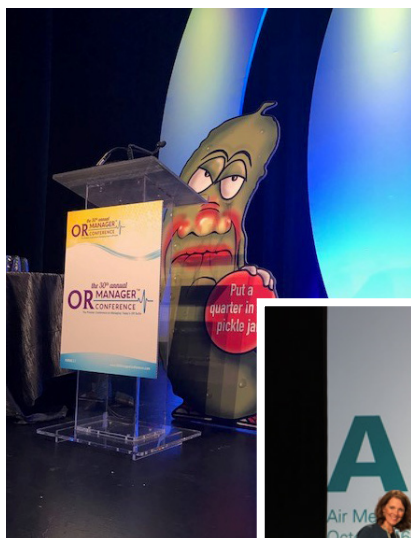
Community-wide Pickle Challenge in Geneva, Nebraska



Casey's, Cornerstone Bank, and Nick's Farm Store were three of the community businesses that participated in the second Pickle Challenge of Fillmore County Hospital, raising more than \$3,000 for the local Christmas store charity.

Bring Joe Tye and The Pickle Challenge to Your Hospital or Association Event

For the past 25 years, Values Coach Founder and CEO Joe Tye has been inspiring healthcare audiences. Having Joe personally present results of your Culture Assessment Survey, and challenging your team to do better, is one of the most effective ways to launch The Pickle Challenge.



“The Kaleida Health Leadership Advance of July 2018 was hands-down our best ever, and Joe Tye’s presentation was a big part of that success. He took the time to get to know our organization and tailored his presentation for our needs. The VCI-17 Culture Assessment Survey was a real eye-opener, and Joe gave us practical ideas to work on the culture enhancement opportunities that were identified. Within a day after the event, we began seeing Florence Challenge Certificates of Commitment, Pickle Free Zone door hangers, and other visible reflections of our team’s enthusiasm showing up all over the organization.”

Jerry Venable, SPHR, SHRM-SCP
Executive VP and Chief HR Officer
Kaleida Health, Buffalo, New York

For Association Events

Having Joe keynote your event is a great way to inspire your audience and use The Pickle Challenge to spark a positive culture change while also raising money for your foundation or other great cause.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Is this really free? What about donations?

Absolutely. No strings attached. Because we have seen the positive impact of the Pickle Pledge for individuals and organizations, we want you to join the movement to make our world a PFZ – a Pickle Free Zone. And we want 100% of your Pickle Challenge proceeds to go to the charity of your choice. There is a nominal cost for the optional Pickle Challenge Starter Kit.

2. What if we don't have a problem with bad attitudes and emotional negativity in our organization?

Research conducted at the College of Public Health at the University of Iowa shows that the higher one's position on the organization chart, the rosier the glasses they wear when assessing their culture.

3. Will The Pickle Challenge prevent people from openly talking about real concerns?

Absolutely not. Quite to the contrary, the commitment of The Pickle Pledge to turn complaints into constructive suggestions will encourage people to distinguish between identifying and working to solve

real problems and just whining about perceived problems.

4. Won't this encourage people to complain more and thus make our culture more negative?

We've actually never seen this happen in practice. Rather, most people are appalled, and often embarrassed, by how many of their conversations include complaining. People who make The Pickle Pledge a part of their personal DNA usually find that this commitment not only changes their outer behavior, it also *helps them do a better job of challenging their inner negative thinking.*

5. What about legitimate venting?

While “venting” might feel good to the person who is doing the venting, it *is almost always unhealthy and culturally destructive* for several reasons. First, venting can be an insidious form of bullying, especially when the person doing the venting is in a position of formal or informal power over those who are being vented upon. Second, venting often turns into an emotional shark feed in which each participant seeks to one-up the others with comments like “You think that’s bad – you should see what I have to put up with!” Third, venting about a problem

never does anything to solve that problem, and more often than not interferes with effective action by creating a false sense of satisfaction that something has been done.

6. Should we make this mandatory?

The first thing to understand is that the people who are most vociferously opposed to The Pickle Challenge, and who are most likely to undermine the effort, are almost certainly the ones who are contributing to cultural negativity. *They are also the ones who could most benefit, both personally and professionally, if they could get their egos out of the way and participate.* We recommend that when The Pickle Pledge is incorporated into daily staff huddles that everyone be expected to say the words. For even some of the most truculently negative people, the words will eventually sink in. But under no circumstances should you make it mandatory for anyone to have to drop quarters into a pickle jar. The Challenge should be fun, lighthearted, and 100% voluntary.

7. People don't carry change anymore, especially if they are wearing scrubs – how can they participate?

There are many ways around this. Managers can keep a candy dish full of quarters to serve as a loan fund. The Pickle Challenge has a downloadable IOU slip that people can use in lieu of depositing quarters. Some people will pay in advance.

8. How do we assure security for money in the pickle jars?

If someone steals money from a charity

pickle jar, they probably need the money more desperately than does the designated charity. Say a prayer for the thief and lock the jar up when no one is around.

9. How do we sustain our momentum and prevent this from being just a one-time event?

Your executive team *must* lead by example through their own commitment to positive attitudes and behaviors – including demonstrably making their offices become PFZs (Pickle Free Zones). Incorporating The Pickle Pledge into regular rituals and routines such as daily huddles keep the promise front-of-mind. Keeping The Pickle Challenge physically visible with decorated pickle jars, work area decorations, and other visible displays helps people *remind themselves and each other to replace whining with positive thinking and constructive action.*

