

Living and
Practicing
by Design

*Saving the Hearts
that Care for Our Lives*

Dr. John Hayes, Jr.

**Outskirts Press, Inc.
Denver, Colorado**

The opinions expressed in this manuscript are solely the opinions of the author and do not represent the opinions or thoughts of the publisher. The author represents and warrants that s/he either owns or has the legal right to publish all material in this book.

Living and Practicing by Design
Saving the Hearts that Care for Our Lives
All Rights Reserved.
Copyright © 2008 Dr. John Hayes, Jr.
V1.0

This book may not be reproduced, transmitted, or stored in whole or in part by any means, including graphic, electronic, or mechanical without the express written consent of the publisher except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews.

Outskirts Press, Inc.
<http://www.outskirtspress.com>

ISBN: 978-1-4327-3234-9

Library of Congress Control Number: 2008936622

Outskirts Press and the “OP” logo are trademarks belonging to Outskirts Press, Inc.

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

This story begins with my not so unique fascination of what makes things work, most especially human beings. In reality, mostly how we, as physicians and healthcare teams of all disciplines help fix them when they break.

I’m sure my fascination with doctors is the result of being a sick little kid. I spent so much time in bathrobes, pajamas and slippers that now

I do not own, nor will I any of them. Just ask my wife; it drives her nuts especially around the holidays.

I don't know why, but it's probably by some greater plan that those experiences, especially at the hands of loving parents and great doctors and teachers along the way, that I now help doctors be the very best they can. It's in me, as it is in you to be a healer. Patients are magnetically drawn to true healers.

Why have I, and those who follow the systems we design and advocate the lifestyle choices we choose been so successful at this?

Because it's not just healers knowledge, but also *everything* about us that patients sense, trust and embrace. Unspoken dialogues that let them know they are in the right place or not. There are great academicians in all the healing arts with terrible manners that repel patients. We all have had some of them as instructors. Now too many "review" insurance claims.

And then, let's remember there are the great healers, in *all* disciplines. I learned this at age 22 when my path crossed with Dr. Ed Crealesse, a phenomenal chiropractor and just a damn fine doctor.

I was having acute mid back and abdominal pain after working a summer construction job. Dr Ed took me in, at almost no charge, and put me through one of the most comprehensive physical exams I had ever had, (and believe me, I probably had hundreds as a kid). It was walking out of his office that day when I realized he was a great *doctor*, even though DC and not MD were after his name. He told me what he believed my problem was, and what it could also be, but surprisingly recommended no drugs. Simply, reassurance and a few chiropractic adjustments. Dr Ed's kind hands and heart touched me permanently.

Shortly thereafter I reenrolled in college, became a 3.8 GPA student after floundering as a freshman, and took a job as a hospital orderly at Milton Hospital, while I finished undergrad nights. While there, I met some fabulous MDs and RNs, that cared enough to take me under their wings, teach me, guide me, let me experience first hand the preciousness of life and the death of human beings from trauma, bleeding to death secondary to blood dyscrasias, and the slowing and ultimate termination of life due to cancer. All the while administering to their patients in peace and dignity. The simple acceptance of the

fragility of the lives that they'd care for, and then going home every night, hoping they have been at their very best again stays with me daily.

I will never forget the eyes of a mature surgeon, peering at me over his mask multiple times during a code, while the patient with these doctors hands in his open abdomen bled out and died. I sensed the surgeons initial dejection, and a few hours later saw first hand his quiet acceptance because he knew he was simply had been a good doctor, above all else.

I clearly remember watching a wonderful ER doc coming to the floor with me at 2 AM issuing a death certificate after a final listen to Mrs. Bs' chest. And then we would together with the RNs would accompany way too many on the final gurney ride to the morgue. And the viciousness of traumatic premature death, when the ambulance drivers need to hose out their machines after delivering patients on their last rides to the ER.

But mostly, I know I was stuck at an impressionable age by how much of the human suffering I saw during these college years at Milton, Hinsdale Hospital and the two or three other extended care facilities I worked in while a student could be eliminated by better and preventative lifestyles.

At the time, DCs were the only ones I saw who vocally embraced this least invasive most conservative approach to healthcare. No, not just back pain. Drs like Ed Crealesse openly *taught* his patient's nutrition, public health and lifestyle, way before it became a modern mantra of movie stars and self-help gurus.

Now, as DCs my profession risks losing that position, because way too many are afraid to take a strong stand. Our forefathers who went to jail for practicing healthcare by these very same principles now weep at our softness.

Many overnights while a student, and working at the hospital I read Palmer, Homewood, and Janse, which further peaked my chiropractic fascination and culminated with my acceptance into National College in 1977. During this process, I also declined acceptance into an MT program, which I had initially sought as a pathway to a career as a pathologist.

In any event, what a journey it's been. What a wonderful life it has given me! Thousands of patients, hundreds of colleagues and continuous shared learning experiences with doctors, nurses, PAs, PTs and caregivers from all disciplines. We practice the healing art as a team while laughing and crying with wonderful patients and their families. This has always been my vision.

Simply, these are all excellent human beings, every day caring for each other's most basic but essential needs first.

As I write this from the balcony of my stateroom on the final day at sea on my first trip to Alaska it has given me much time to reflect. Now, I get to teach, write and travel extensively, while helping doctors improve their practices, and their personal lives all while working in an environment that has become anything unlike I envisioned back in 1977.

You see, up until 1990 or so, the private practice of healthcare was hallowed and respected territory. Doctors and nurses were still the final authority on patient care; after all, it is us who sacrificed *so very much of our lives*, just to learn how to make effective, critical decisions. Too many too easily lose sight of this.

Now, almost everywhere, third party and administrative garbage, under the guise of "Managed Care", (the "beast") has benefited greatly CEOs of insurance companies while too often successful at destroying the "right livelihoods" and societal benefits of truly excellent physicians from all disciplines, as well as stripped hospital and "provider" autonomy. Now we have less and less a consumer driven system, despite mounting efforts to the contrary.

The *Private Practice* of healthcare everywhere is becoming a dying art. It gets more challenging each passing year, and the regulatory BS continues to flow like water. Many more "providers" are seemingly forced to band together into larger and larger groups in an attempt to fight this beast. Now, many good doctors are leaving our ranks, or worse yet, decline to enter.

For some of us however, this simply will not work. There are so many left like you and I who simply have that entrepreneurial streak that makes America and now many other advancing countries so great.

But, this same streak also makes us unemployable by anybody but ourselves. Why? We still call our own shots. We don't mince words. And simply render the best care we possibly can at each turn. And you know what? Patients still seek us out, and often times pay substantial sums out of their own pockets to see us. And those who can't pay are treated just the same.

But why? I think it's because they know we still love what we do. We are the embodiment of Commanders of Change™ in healthcare. Remaining unafraid to speak the truth. Willing to assist patients in getting to whatever healing discipline is best for them in their hours of need. Provide effective lifestyle advice.

And many times unbeknownst to ourselves, we become spiritual sounding boards for so very many.

But, as a caregiver, all of this can be extraordinarily stressful, and economically unfeasible without excellent systems. You can lose yourself in the process, and wind up resenting your chosen path.

Or, you can focus on what's most essential to *you* in life, and deliver services to your patients in ways that fully supports *them*. Live a phenomenally enviable lifestyle, while advancing humanity as the "beast" destroys itself.

And that's what this book is about. These are my short takes on preserving the fine art of private healthcare practices, no matter what letters follow your name.

To that end, I wish you the very best along your journey!

Acknowledgements

None of this endeavor would be possible without the tireless support of my entire family, especially my wife Patti and daughter Caitlin. I will always love you both.

To my entire staff, but especially Jes, who is my right arm in the office, I could not be doing this without you. Thank you! None of this would be possible without the assistance of all my friends at J&R Graphics, especially Janet's eagle eye and knowledge of the English language, and Dick's relentless encouragement and flexibility.

Finally, to all my patients from whom I learn so much, this book is dedicated to the very best in life and health for you.

Table of Contents:

| | |
|--|----|
| “LIFE IS A CHECKER- BOARD...” | 1 |
| THE POWER OF DECI- SION | 5 |
| WHAT DO YOU STAND FOR? | 7 |
| THE 1ST MOST TYPICAL BARRIER TO SUC- CESS IN TODAY'S OFFICE IS | 9 |
| SO WHAT'S THE PER- FECT PRACTICE? | 11 |

| | |
|---|----|
| THE SINGLE MOST POWERFUL PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT TOOL | 13 |
| THE DECISION TO MOVE FORWARD | 15 |
| STAYING FOCUSED | 19 |
| THE SIX MOST COMMON ROADBLOCKS TO AN EXTRAORDINARY PRACTICE | 23 |
| WHEN NOTHING SEEMS TO BE WORKING OUT | 27 |
| THE POWER OF CREATIVE ENERGY | 29 |
| THE MARATHON CALLED PRACTICE | 31 |
| ON JUST DOING IT ALL | 35 |

| | |
|---|----|
| JUST WHAT MAKES YOUR PRI- VATE PRACTICE UNIQUE? | 39 |
| IS YOUR PRACTICE “USER FRIENDLY” ? | 43 |
| WHAT LENGTHS NEW PA- TIENTS WILL GO THROUGH TO FIND OUT WHO YOU REALLY ARE... | 47 |
| THE MINDSET OF SUC- CESSFUL DOCTORS IN PRIVATE PRACTICE | 51 |
| TIME MAN- AGEMENT | 53 |
| THE HALL- MARKS OF CHAMPI- ONS | 55 |
| LIFE IS BRIEF | 59 |
| LIFE IS BRIEF, PART II | 61 |
| | |

| | |
|---|----|
| WHAT'S IN YOUR LIBRARY? WHAT'S IN YOUR HEAD? | 63 |
| GOING THROUGH THE "CHANGES"? A NEW WAY OF LOOKING AT THE FUTURE | 67 |
| STAFFING WITH THE POWER OF WRITTEN INTENT | 71 |
| THE MAGNETIC POWER OF COMMON COURTESY | 75 |
| THE VALUE OF EXCELLENT TRAINING | 79 |
| HOW TO BUILD A WINNING TEAM | 81 |
| HOW TO DEVELOP A MARKETING PLAN THAT WORKS! | 87 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| HOW TO DRIVE RE- FERRALS WITH BET- TER IN- TERNAL AND EX- TERNAL EVENTS | 93 |
| NEW PATIENTS FOR FREE? | 97 |
| MULTIPLY YOUR MARKET- ING | 99 |
| THE JUST DO IT 10 STEP “JUMP START” | 101 |
| INCOME GEN- ERATORS | 103 |
| TOWARDS IM- PROVED PATIENT COMPLI- ANCE | 105 |
| BEFORE DIS- ASTER STRIKES... | 107 |
| A NECESSARY EVIL? LES- SONS FROM TECHNOL- OGY MELT- DOWNS | 109 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| CORE STRENGTH AND BAL- ANCE | 113 |
| YOUR OWN LONGEV- ITY REVO- LUTION | 117 |
| ME AND MRS. JONES | 121 |
| HIGH PER- FORM- ANCE TOOLS AND TOYS | 123 |
| ARE DECEM- BER WEEKS SLOW IN THE OF- FICE? | 127 |
| THE PERFECT TIME FOR CHANGES ... | 129 |
| “YES DOCTOR HAYES, I UNDER- STAND. IS CASH OK?” | 131 |
| HOW TO DE- VELOP A MARKET- ING PLAN THAT WORKS II | 133 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| EXPANDING YOUR PRACTICE IN CHAL- LENGING TIMES | 137 |
| “THE DIS- TURBING FACT | 141 |
| MIXED MES- SAGES? | 145 |
| THE REAL REASONS TO LIVE AND PRACTICE BY DESIGN™ | 149 |
| PERSONAL POWER, PROFIT, AND IN- FLUENCE | 153 |
| Annie..... | 157 |
| DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A “COM- MANDER OF CHANGE”? | 159 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| APPENDIX HOW TO DEVELOP A THRIVING PRACTICE WITHOUT GIVING UP WEEKENDS AND WITHOUT SPENDING A FORTUNE ON SEMI- NARS... GUARAN- TEED | 161 |
|--|-----|

“LIFE IS A CHECKERBOARD...”

One recent morning while rereading Napoleon Hill, I came across this quote. Now, he has it in quotations too, but does not attribute it to anybody else.

“Life is a checkerboard and the player opposite you is time. If you hesitate before moving, or neglect to move promptly, your men will be wiped off the board by time. *You are playing against a partner who will not tolerate indecision*”. (Emphasis added).

So, why then, in the face of numerous challenges in practice today do so many Drs. just back away from essential decisions and allow their own futures to be jeopardized or their livelihood and professional futures held hostage? Quite simply, I believe its fear, and most especially, not knowing what to do first. They fear making a mistake going the wrong way or making the wrong choice. They have always been taught to know what to do and what to say; when they reach a point where they don't know the answers they are afraid of what to do. Too many are afraid that there is something they don't know and that people will not respect them because they are asking for help. So many just shut down, and take the path of least resistance.

The good news is, with appropriate tools, you too can develop the learned skill of making rapid and more effective decisions. That's what I see from focused doctors. That is why focused doctors are, or learn new ways to become, true care givers, and not insurance pawns. In the process, they fall in love with their practice once again. Their practice blossoms, financial security and fulfillment ensue. Focused people know what they want to achieve, in specific, detailed terms. Successful doctors know this, too, despite obstacles that might be encountered along the way. They know there will be obstacles to overcome and that sometimes getting help is the right way to overcome that obstacle. Remember you build your practice one step at a time. To solve the problems will take one step at a time.

So, how can you get results? Start by taking a hard look at where you are right now. Have you drifted off course? Have you followed what you have written in your mission statement? More importantly, are your daily actions and attitudes moving you closer to your targets or not? Don't forget, your life right now is a product of the decisions you have made (or failed to) so far. This, of course, includes your professional practice. The first step in getting back on track is to acknowledge this fact. Take responsibility to act is paramount!

Since decision making is a skill, it can be learned. But it has to be specific to the situations at hand. The first thing to do is make one decision. Then make the next decision. What are the first and the next decisions? The first decision is the hardest – it is admitting you need to make a change to correct the situation and get you back on track. The next question is the hardest; do I need help to make the changes and where can I get that help? Often the hardest part is to admit that you need help, there is just too much you don't know. Many times the most successful practices and doctors have one thing in common, they realize they didn't know everything and looked for help. This is where the counsel of others, such as coaches can really help, especially in a complex arena like today's private healthcare practices.

And remember, real success is built upon strong foundations. What better way to achieve it than by working with those who have already mastered the skills you may need to acquire? After all, if you look at other trades you will note that they move from apprentice to tradesman to journeyman to master. However, there are times when they have a guild conference. What is the point of a guild conference?

When one master has made a discovery or found something that helps him become better, he calls a conference and then imparts that discovery onto the other masters so that they can use it. Reaching out and asking for help is not a sign of weakness but one of strength. The wise and most successful know they do not know everything they need but they learn where to look for the help they need and then ask the experts of that field to help them. The most difficult part of this situation is reaching out and asking for help. Once you start reaching out, you find there are people out there who know what to do and how to do it.

When you need help with your taxes, who do you ask? When you need to find a house or a business, who do you ask? When you need a car, who do you see? When you need appliances, who do you see? When you are buying a suit, who do you see? When you need medical supplies, who do you see? Why do you go to these people? Because they have the knowledge and experience to help you get what you want and get it when you need it. They are the experts.

Napoleon Hill in his book, Think and Grow Rich, commented on Henry Ford and his team. What Mr. Ford did was understand that he was often not the expert but he found out whom to go to and went and asked them the questions he needed to be successful. You don't need to know everything to be a success. You just have to be willing to find those who know the answers and ask for their help. The biggest problem is not finding out who can help, but getting past your fear and asking for the help you need to solve your problems and get back on track.

So, start to be a better asker! You will be glad you did.

THE POWER OF DECISION

In my experiences over 26 years with patients, and the last few with clients, I can tell you that the single most powerful thing one can do to bring change and forward progress is unwavering intent following the Decision that something must change!

Remember, the natural state of the universe is toward disorder (entropy), and the harnessing of power to cause change is energy.

But too many of us forget that the single spark that ignites it all is Decision!

So, this is where we all must start. DECIDE to do something about what's not working in practice or life!

AND, always remember, our lives to date are the accumulation of our DECISIONS. Decisions about everything. What to say, do, how to practice, how to handle tough times, save, spend, everything!

And the way to real progress is to make better DECISIONS! Gather facts first, and consider ALL the ramifications.

Especially on what I call Future Affluence! I don't mean just next month.

Start looking at least 5 years down the road with all decisions. For example, where will you wind up, 5 years from now with this or that decision.

Be a little more cautious before making major ones. And make the more mundane ones faster!

You will be glad you did.

WHAT DO YOU STAND FOR?

It has been said, that "If you don't stand for something, you will fall for anything".

To be truly independent, you need to know where you stand on the major cornerstones of your life (Personal, Spiritual, Material, Fitness and Financial). A strong personal philosophy on each of these is vital to your success, and developing an evolving professional life and practice. This is a great day to ask yourself if you are truly living the personal and professional life you deserve. Are your actions leading you in the direction of the goals you set at the beginning of the year? If not, make the midyear corrections NOW to insure not another pre-

scious moment of your life is wasted! (This is one place where one-on-one consulting can really help this to take shape for you!)

While I thought and read about what our American forefathers accomplished, (while spending the Fourth of July on Nantucket Island, steeped in American History), especially in light of the challenges they faced, most of the tasks we have at hand seem to pale in comparison. (I firmly believe this is also why America needs to continue to be clear on what we stand for!)

What do you stand for? Make sure your patients and your staff knows your personal philosophy on these vital cornerstones or you are liable to ‘fall for anything’!

If you are not crystal clear on your personal philosophy, or even if it needs some updating or fine tuning, get out a blank legal pad, sit in a quiet place, close your eyes for a while and list what comes to mind. Just make sure you do it before you go to sleep tonight!

All successful people can clearly define their stand. You must count yourself in these ranks.

THE 1ST MOST TYPICAL BARRIER TO SUCCESS IN TODAY’S OFFICE IS:

An Inadequate Game Plan for the new Rules.

It’s no secret. Things ARE very different than even a year ago. Patients are more savvy, competition for alternative care dollars is higher, and third party insurance is a bigger pain. Unless your game plan addresses all of these, simultaneously, something will fail, and it’s usually staff or Dr. Burnout or worse yet, a devastating financial hit.

So start with details, about how you and your team addresses all these issues. Policies for patients and Insurance companies.

Which of each to let go of or embrace.

How does your phone script change, how do your communications to patients change, which procedures to drop or add.

See where I am going here? All these things are critical to moving forward into the next week and beyond!

Remember again, you cannot build a fortress without a strong foundation!

SO WHAT'S THE PERFECT PRACTICE?

That's the question I have been asked many times in the last few years, as our consulting company is growing. Here's how I define a perfect practice.

1. The emotional and financial rewards are greater than the stress levels, all the way around.
2. It's easy to maintain excellent clinical records (which really can avoid huge amounts of stress).
3. Time-sensitive marketing is on autopilot, mapped out, executed by staff in a timely manner, after the input of my creative energy.
4. Staff rarely gives me grief. Honestly. My staff always knows where they stand, both by policy and great open lines of communication.
5. Patients say thank you frequently, complaints are rare. Same with my staff.
6. Patients want to be in our office, actively seek better home care, ask about nutrition and exercise programs. We don't force feed

any education, it's simply there, just like with my staff. And it gets asked for all the time.

7. We draw our lines in the sand with nasty insurance personnel, and don't participate in junk plans. We tell our patients why, most of them get it, and still choose our office.

8. I don't cringe when my payroll is taken out, as staff produces revenue for me.

9. I feel lucky to be able to really help patients who need the extra mile.

10. I never stress about new patients, as we always have plenty. Largely in the form of self-generating referrals from simply excellent office procedures.

11. I like sharing all this with other docs (you!), and watch them change their lives, and those around them for the better.

THE SINGLE MOST POWERFUL PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT TOOL

I have been thinking about this a lot lately. More and more docs want to know, and of course ask us the quickest way to build or rebuild a practice, or take it to "the next level".

And I have to ask myself all the time, what is the single system, if I had no other, to start or grow a practice. Even if budget was never an issue, what would it be?

Logically, it also has to be that "thing" that is missing, when a doc tells me her practice is not doing well.

Likewise, it's the same "thing" that accelerates one to phenomenal heights, and periods of profound personal and professional growth when you are on a roll.

Now, it makes no difference how long you have been in practice, especially today, when the pace of change is so rapid.

That thing is Intention. Always. Because, when intent is absent, missing or unclear, the universe always rewards in kind. Get it straight, write it down read it three times a day, fine tune it, and just stay with it!

* * * * *

So how do we effectively apply intention to private practice? Only by regular examination of measurable yardsticks (basic numbers), and written reworking of your personal targets and purpose.

The price? Your precious time! So really make your planning count. How often? At least weekly, with more detailed sessions at least quarterly, if not monthly. And it's not enough to just talk! You must do it, and write it all out!

This is perhaps the most critical place where consulting helps. Let's face it; there really are very few people you can bounce your plans off when it comes to your professional life. You *should* be asking!

That's what good consultants do. Help you refine intent. And that, by far, is the highest service we can provide. All the other nuts, bolts, tools and systems will fail, without intention. Always!

THE DECISION TO MOVE FORWARD

Indecision still remains a major stumbling block of many of the doctors I have the privilege of working with on a daily basis. Indeed, the slowness or lack of making even simple decisions, but most especially putting off critical decisions sometimes slows forward progress by weeks, months, and in some very unfortunate circumstances, years.

But I believe that the reason this most frequently occurs is a lack of clarity, a lack of vision. All too often, people, even ourselves as highly intelligent doctors, are unaware of the vast opportunities that wait in our personal and professional lives, simply for the asking.

Those who are happiest, most prosperous and effective realize that it is this willingness to take action in meaningful directions on a moment-to-moment basis that is the ultimate in accomplishment.

Doctor, the decisions you make today will have profound impact on next year. And the direction that you take professionally as well as personally next year will also have very significant impact not only on the rest of your professional career, but on the quality of your personal life as well.

Right now, is simply the very best time to reflect very carefully on what this past year worked right, what needs to go, what needs to stay.

The reason for these rapid and effective decision-making skills set is frankly is that the speed of change is ever accelerating.

As we discussed in our groundbreaking Commanders of Change seminar, there has never been a better time to be in private practice, but only for those who possess clarity, a phenomenally well written game plan, remain strong, ***effective*** communicators, capable ***and willing*** to provide only the very best in health care services.

But there's something that's extraordinarily important to clarify first, and that is your personal vision.

First (not last), the quality of life you want for yourself, as well as those closest to you.

Reality dictates that this future style of private practice will require breaking with the rank and file. Future practices will require blending all the best technology has to offer, the very best in cost-effective systems and procedures all combined with time-tested humanistic skills, and compassion.

It will simply not be enough to have pieces of this puzzle. Rather, all pieces must fit together with exact precision.

Therefore, I respectfully suggest that you start assembling your puzzle now.

And in doing so, carefully consider all ramifications of your decisions. This is where exercise, quiet time, reflection as well as inspirational reading and study while developing fully your game plan, all carefully written out and diagramed on paper will make a tremendous difference not only in how you *feel*, but how you *act*.

Once you have clarified this new vision, it is essential that all the steps you wrote as necessary to actually pull off its execution are first set into motion, and be put into written timetables.

Then, perhaps most importantly choose your support system.

In my experience, it is those doctors who fully utilize great Support Systems, who accomplish far more throughout the year than those who do not.

The best support systems provide you with all the information you will need, the personal as well as professional associations, camaraderie and affiliations that supply the building blocks, systems, plans and tools necessary to complete your puzzle.

But only YOU can reach out and grab it.

Remember, the best tools and systems are now here for you 24/7/365.

As a consultant this is what I strive for.

But you must *fully take advantage* of fabulous opportunities for personal and professional growth.

As progressive doctors teach me every day, you DO have what it takes to be Commanders of Change™.

STAYING FOCUSED

Staying focused is certainly the biggest issue for many of us in private practice. It is, however, critical to measurable results. No, some days it's not easy at all. But it is a trained, learned skill and one you can teach yourself. And you can not stop, as long as you want to move forward. Once you stop all forward movement is stopped and it takes twice as much effort to get going again. It does take some discipline. Discipline is another skill that you can also learn with practice and patience.

Create a habit

The good news is you can make it a habit. Your best results will come from a written reference. The written reference works best because it uses three reinforcements at once. You say it (even if it is just in your mind), you write it, and you read it. I still prefer a white legal pad. The pad should always be at the one place you will see it the first thing every morning and the last thing every night. It should be the last thing you read in the PM, and the first you see in the AM. You should have at least your fundamental goals and targets, and game plan for the following day, even if it's just a few words.

Using the subconscious

Working this way allows your subconscious mind to help clarify. This process of reading it morning and night with EMPOWERING words builds and attunes your mind to move toward these goals. Your subconscious will then begin to program you toward your goal and work without you having to prime it every day. Things you need to do and decisions you need to make will become increasingly clear as your subconscious works through them. Then, you can really, comfortably “detach from outcome”, because you have gained clarity.

Trusting the process

Trusting (faith) in this process is another learned skill. This requires you to stay with the process long enough for it to work. Remember,

you could not run before you could walk, you could not walk before you could crawl, you could not crawl until you learned how to use your arms and legs. Now you walk and run and move about at will and never even think of the process. Your education started with lessons before school or in preschool, followed by grammar school, then middle school, high school and finally college. And yet everything you learned along the way is still with you and the knowledge you have you don't even think about how it got there. Be honest with yourself and set a time frame. "I will do this every day faithfully for one month and see where I am." If you make it at least 6 months, you will see a definite change and people around you will remark how you have changed.

Creating a clear focus

This technique only works when you use positive action words. If you want to be a better father, define what that means. If you want to have the best practice, define what exactly that means in positive action words. The subconscious is powerful but it needs clear directions.

Starting the process

We can not only focus years or months ahead. Focus needs to start with today, tomorrow and this week. Write out clear instructions and read them each and every day in the morning and at night. Once this is mastered and you practice daily, then begin to work on next week and this month. Remember the start on the long road to success starts with: one step followed by another step; each step leading to the next step.

Adjusting the process

You may discover as you go that from time to time the directions you had written down are not what you need now. The directions you write down are never permanent. We all change as we grow and our directions will grow too, sometimes in ways we never anticipated,

but we are free to make those changes. The willingness to make those changes and adjust the directions for the subconscious is what will create the blueprint for your success. Our world is constantly changing, and if you do not adjust and change with it you will not lead but be struggling to catch up.

The great minds and leaders of this world have always known these secrets. They consistently and constantly wrote down their directions for the mind and used the practice faithfully everyday. What things can happen? Abraham Lincoln wrote the Gettysburg Address on the back of an envelope on the train to Gettysburg, PA and let the words come out without changing them. He knew his subconscious was at work. It is still one of the greatest speeches of the world and he just allowed his mind to produce it and trusted that it would be good enough. Do as the greats in history have, and harness the power of your mind, by giving it clear, specific directions, and frequent mid-course corrections. You will not be sorry! And you might even be amazed when you look back and see where you started and where you are.

THE SIX MOST COMMON ROAD- BLOCKS TO AN EXTRAORDINARY PRACTICE

Time after time, I have had the chance to observe what makes a practice extraordinary. Universally, patterns emerge. Almost always, there are six basic tools employed by the most successful, modern practices that are almost always missing in the office that fails to reach its full potential.

The good news is that these tools are available to those who want to invest time and effort into the properly structured foundation of modern private health care practices. The fact of the matter is, change has occurred so rapidly that what worked even five years ago now, in many cases is obsolete and quite likely ineffective.

The first most common roadblock in today's office is the absence of a cyclical calendar of events and promotions. I consider this a core system in every office. Realistically, the competitive nature of today's private practice makes a detailed calendar of events and promotions mandatory. This enables staff and the doctor both to know exactly what's expected daily, weekly and monthly to provide effective execution of the plan.

Now, this can be something as simple as a pencil taken to a paper. The good news is, that once this is effectively developed, with minor modifications, it can be used as a template year after year.

The second roadblock that most doctors encounter, or more accurately create, is staffing with antiquated systems or no real systems at all. Doctors do not perform adequate reference and background checks, and perhaps most importantly fail to provide guidelines for their employees. The fact is that any modern office will not tolerate waste in time or actions.

Skills testing today must include rapid keyboarding and web skills, accurate filing and effective communications and time management. It is your responsibility to other team members to make sure the inherent capacity is there to perform as a team player as the practice expands.

The third area that also requires substantial attention in today's practices is the Finance Department. If you choose to participate in any third-party plans, you must thoroughly understand what constitutes covered and non-covered services, and exactly what expected reimbursement will be, and how long it will take. Also, you need to be sure that participation in these plans does not automatically include you in other plans, without your knowledge and consent.

Perhaps the biggest mistake is not having a comprehensive system in place to collect on non-covered services as well as self-paying patients. This is where you really need to do your homework, and understand thoroughly what today's patients are looking for in their doctors as well as what they will gladly pay for.

The fourth area that needs significant attention is how the patient findings and care plans are performed and administered. Right from the start, your entire team needs to communicate that patient compliance with your recommendations is going to be essential to achieve

the results they are seeking. Explanations as to why a particular treatment plan is suggested need to be simple, yet adequate, and always based upon truth.

Within this area of practice, I find the most overlooked impact on a patient's compliance is thoroughness of the patient's first visit. Simply be a good doctor first. Perform any essential diagnostic tests before treating your patients, regardless of third-party incentives not to. Patients and their families long remember the doctor who makes an accurate diagnosis and presents a care plan that gets the patient better within reasonable time frames and finances.

The fifth roadblock, and a component of practice that is all too often missing today is not giving patients the big picture of health. I believe that for today's doctors to be effective, they must live the message they are attempting to communicate. This includes practicing, and advocating the lifestyles and systems of health care that promote long-term health, fitness, and overall life satisfaction and personal fulfillment.

Some of these components may very well include the practice of well-patient care, dietary supplements, massage, fitness programs and physical therapy. Also essential, is that today's doctors and their teams are effective at sharing this extraordinarily valuable information with their family and friends, as well as their children, and the community at large.

Lastly, one of the biggest factors that leads to burn out and dissatisfaction in practice is doctors not having enough time away from the office. The realities are that to maintain a private practice requires extreme physical demands, and taxes your mental, as well as emotional capacities. There is no way that you or I will ever perform near our capabilities, without being adequately rested and completely healthy.

In order to do this, it is essential to be as effective as possible while in the office. Indeed, your goal should be to increase your efficiency and effectiveness in the office more each passing year.

This balanced approach to your lifestyle allows you to pursue new and other interests in your time off that keep you fresh, and passionate about what you do, for many years to come.

In summary, failure to think critically about all these issues, and their long-term impact on your personal goals and lifestyle will have a significant impact on so many areas of your life.

This is why we advocate the doctors of the future only continue to Practice by Design™, not by default.

WHEN NOTHING SEEMS TO BE WORKING OUT...

...it's time to totally step back, regroup and put it all on paper. I was so reminded of this on a recent Monday, as I was presenting my Tele-seminar Core Module 1, designing, or redesigning your practice with "The End in Mind".

Now, keep in mind I practice what I advocate for my clients, and there have just been some things, not quite right in my practice, simply because of rising overhead and poorer reimbursements, even with limited insurance participation.

By Wednesday afternoon I had made major decisions about which services we continue to offer, changes in staffing, overhead etc.

But here is the point. I made the changes, took immediate action, and formulated a new plan, all within a few short hours. I didn't just say 'I should'.

Now, I am really excited again to see what the next quarter brings, in terms of higher productivity, reduced stress and life simplification.

* * * * *

It's all well and good to stew about, or tolerate what's not working in practice and life, but those that get rewarded are the ones adapting, growing, and finding new ways of doing things.

THE POWER OF CREATIVE ENERGY

All the Great masters throughout the history of time have written about or alluded to tapping into a Higher Power, God, Infinite Wisdom, Universal Mind, or Collective Consciousness.

If you will, this might be a source of focus, and clarity, and peace, far greater than most of us ever seem to touch, much less attain on a regular basis. Some invisible, intangible, infinite source of wisdom far greater than that most of us ever connect with in most of our daily experiences.

And as doctors, do we even acknowledge amongst ourselves, or teach our students about “Innate Intelligence” any more? Do we practice in our offices this mindfulness and respect for something far greater than ourselves? And do we teach our patients about harnessing their own “Center”? Or is this no longer politically correct for us.

In my work with doctors, I call harnessing this power, tapping “Creative Energy”.

Creative Energy is the knowledge base, any of us can tap into, that will help us solve even the most pressing problems. The problem though, is too many never drop anchor long enough in a “Safe Harbor”, to even remotely accomplish a sense of peace and well being.

Creative Energy IS the source of Ideas, Personal and Professional Growth and Taking the Next Steps, that so many fail to use. Quite frankly, failing to harness this Creative Energy is why too many docs end up with financial or health issues, or worse.

In today’s practice landscape they end up putting out fires, spinning their wheels, and this seems to consume every waking moment! And this is why too many are left frustrated, burned out or worse.

Just why is this? I firmly believe it is because too many of us fail to have as a regular, SCHEDULED part of our lives the space, time and recreation that allows us to tap Creative Energy!

Now, tapping into this is not something that can be forced. Quite the contrary. You can't just sit on the floor, face the sunrise and demand answers. It only arrives if you are prepared. Well rested.

And have made the space in your head. And your life.

What you can do though, and in my opinion **MUST** do is to **SCHEDULE NON-CANCELABLE** time away from the office, **MORE** each passing year!

For me, Creative Energy arrives just after or during skiing, boating, running, and motorcycling. Virtually every day, in season of course, I engage in one or more of these passionately!

Every **DAY**, we must have a place to retreat to morning and night. Usually this space (your home) is surrounded by things of meaning, with pets and family in close proximity.

Vacations, hobbies you engage in, and things to regularly retreat to when you're not working. To do this, you must learn to see as many or more patients in less time. Have a Market Domination Strategy in your area. Get paid like a doctor. Save and invest in a low-stress, safe fashion.

And this is what "Practice by Design" is all about.

THE MARATHON CALLED PRACTICE

Training for and running a successful professional practice is a lot like training for and running a marathon. It takes dedication, persistence and courage. Dedication is the strength to carry you through the process. Persistence is carrying on when others think you should quit or it starts to get hard. Courage is the final quality to continue on and finish even when everyone else thinks you should quit. Remember it is your race, your training and your goal.

Now, speaking from some experience here, I can tell you that the most critical part is the training program, and if you do this right, the race is actually the easiest part. Like all strong performances, it takes hours and days and months of training for the small time in the spotlight. But do not rush the training. Many good athletes have missed their events because they ended up injured. If you have all the details worked out in your plan and the plan is working well, stick it out and stay with it. It will give the best results in the long run because you are in better condition and better prepared when it is time for the big race.

Really, this is what I advocate for your professional life. You set your “training” program up, so that the execution is as smooth as it can be. Your training will start out lighter and get heavier. This is because as you get in better shape you can handle more. When the training begins to become easier it is time to add some more effort and push a little harder. By practicing in this way, we minimize surprises, develop resilience, and prove to ourselves we can accomplish much, much more than we may have ever thought possible.

So let’s move on and talk about some basic practice parallels.

Phase one is planning. Select the race, about 4-6 months ahead of time. If you’re not in great “shape” it should be 1-3 years out! Next, get out a calendar, and work backwards from the goal. Mark the key points where you have to be ready for each step from the final step to the first step. Only by working backwards do we give ourselves enough time and strategy latitude, allowing for all the unforeseen obstacles. You want to move steadily from one step to the next but you also want a little room to handle problems that will try to throw you off schedule and get you discouraged. If you get to the next step a little faster than the schedule, look to see if you have missed something. If every part of the training program has been covered in that step, then congratulate yourself on exceeding your goal and start working on the next step. But with a clear vision of the race, training with this type of plan is much more palatable. And each step becomes a victory. Each victory becomes a pattern of success and makes you stronger and more confident and ready to take on more.

Don’t forget plan details! The more details are filled in the better. More details give you little benchmarks that you can check off against and make sure everything is prepared from one step to the next. This also forms the foundation for your daily meditation and written visualization, which all great athletes and performers do.

When do you train, how long, and how far? When do you rest? What other things are critical like nutrition and hydration? When do you really ramp things up? How many miles do you put on your gear before adjusting or renewing it, especially basics like great shoes or your Perfect Practice Platform, the basis of your entire professional life.

Lastly, you must be prepared to get bruised, and scraped up with minimal consequences. You get the best tools you can afford. Use great “orthotics” to fine tune your stride if need be. You have a great coach, with real world experience. You take advantage of the wealth of expertise she has, so as not to ignore the benefits of working closely with someone who has done what you are trying to accomplish! Beware of the danger of comparing yourself to the coach. Just because the coach did it in a certain amount of time doesn’t mean that is your benchmark too. Each one must evaluate his own levels and what they need and how long it will take. The coach can help you avoid mistakes and problems that could set you back, but must not be the one you must be better than.

Then you benchmark yourself. You set up the race the way you want it; you go do your best. Even if you don’t finish the race like you wanted to this time, what have you learned? What do you leave in or drop from your next training schedule. Now, get out the calendar and again select your target and work backwards and compare what you did to what you need to do. The benchmarks are there for you so you know what you need to improve on to reach your goal.

Congratulations! Just by planning, you are way ahead of where you would have been, and feel great about what you learned. You know you are prepared, you know you have strengthened and improved yourself. And you are pumped, because now you know with a little more refinement, you are ready to plan your next PR (Personal Record).

ON JUST DOING IT ALL.

Time is the one commodity that we only have finite amounts of. Some use it so well, phenomenal accomplishments result. For others, even basic functions seem to elude them. Some seem to know how to parcel out time to the different parts of their lives and success and growth seems to just draw to them. Others are chasing one thing after another and never seem to have enough time to accomplish anything.

Keys to time management.

Are there really any keys to doing more with the time we have? Yes! And it's not nearly as difficult as you may think. What I want to discuss is a very simple time management system I suggest you try. You only need a black pen and 2 or 3 white legal pads. How much time is this going to cost you? Just a few minutes every day that will save countless hours of wasted effort and time. Why two or three white legal pads and a black ink pen? Black ink stands out well and is easy to read against a white background. Have one pad for each aspect of your life: Professional, Personal, and Social. Professional is for your practice, your profession and your success. Start with where you will be in one month, then one year, then five years and finally ten years.

Clear directions

The first is to be very clear on what you want. Write it all out in black ink on white paper. It has been said that most people never get what they want, because they never figure out exactly what they do want. So, this has got to be task number 1. If you want to be a better husband, don't just write a better husband; spell it out exactly and identify specific items. **IMPORTANT!** If you find yourself in a crisis, this should be the **ONLY** item for now. The crisis **MUST** be resolved before you can move to other goals! When the problem is solved, then and only then can you deal with all the rest of the goals you want to reach.

Maintaining the lists

Once done, you should be refining these lists every week or so. These lists should change almost constantly at first. Why? You are learning what these insights are and how to write them. You are also learning about yourself and what it is you really want. Sometimes

what you want is disguised as something else but you do not know it until you start to work at it. Sometimes you find things in one place that you want to include in other areas. One doctor wanted to be a better husband and said he needed to be a better listener and more attentive to what his wife said and found out that that same attitude to his patients made him a better doctor so he added it to his professional goals. It's OK to change these lists, in fact you should be updating your targets every week or so. Why? Because you will have a better idea of what it is you are looking for as you work towards it and secondly as you may find that what you once thought was important no longer is. And that is okay, it is part of your growth.

Charting the path

Then, write out a list of action steps that move you closer to your target every day. This does not have to be elaborate! It doesn't need to be a paragraph. A sequence of events can be as brief as two or three words for each item. I still find large legal pads; one for each important area of my life clipped together works best. It can be as simple as if you were describing how to get dressed: 1-get out of bed, 2-shower, 3-dry off, 4-put on your clothes. As you work with this formula you will find that you will want to include more detail. I keep it simple on the pads. More elaborate data, of course, lives in my computer.

At least three times per day take the goal sheet and three pads out. Read the targets, then do what you can that's on the list for that area, and then cross it off! Next, move on down the line. And keep the same list until all actions are completed or eliminated by other accomplishments. You may find that as you accomplish one thing on one list and cross it off it actually takes care of another item on another list.

Morning and night, I spend quiet time, even just a few minutes on some days reviewing, updating and really internalizing where I am going, by using these simple lists. It has been said that the single most productive time is the first 30 minutes after you wake up when your mind is free before being burdened by the thoughts of the day. Use this time to review your lists and make adjustments. This will give you a chance to look at where you're going without the pressure of the day coming at you.

What is the total daily time for all these steps? Less than one hour. What are the results: Priceless. Peace of mind, a sense of accomplishment and financial security. If you want to see the difference and accomplishments, file the completed lists, then a year later, pull them out and see what you have done and compare that to what you have been doing the last four or five years. Which was more fulfilling? This is what living and Practicing by Design is all about.

JUST WHAT MAKES YOUR PRIVATE PRACTICE UNIQUE?

Although most doctors think their practice is unique they never really look at what they do and what is their specialty. Have you looked at which techniques and treatments are most effective for you? Probably, quite a bit, because the beauty of private practice is that you tailor it to your likes, dislikes, hours, procedures, etc. Do you use these successes in all of your marketing and networking? Extraordinary practices communicate these to their patients and their community by effective “positioning”. But most offices never effectively communicate this, and thus they leave a tremendous marketing opportunity on the table. And I am not talking about big buck campaigns here, just simply what your staff and your patients perceive, as to why they should be in *your* practice and refer patients to YOU!

Mission statements

Have you written a mission statement? Have you applied this statement to all of your policies, marketing, employee policies, patient policies and decision making. The mission statement is one of the most important steps in building your practice and making it unique. The mission statement identifies where you are going and what you are all about. The quickest way to do this is to make a list of what you enjoy about practice most. After all, this should be about your own fulfillment, as well as excellence in patient care. Once you have completed your mission statement, look at all of your policies.

Finding the focus

Now that you have your mission statement, do your meetings, newsletters and business cards reflect this? If not, why not? You must start today, right away, now to put this statement into everything you do.

So, today, start to weave a common thread into staff meetings, patient newsletters (which you do every month, right?) and even your phone messages. This statement should live and breathe in your practice all the time. Once this is accomplished, do your patients know it? Does your staff know it? Is it included in your newsletters? Why is this important? Post your mission statement in a prominent place in your office where your staff, your patients and any other visitors will see it. Because if you live and breathe your mission statement, your community, patients and staff recognize one thing that is said loud and clear: “I care!”

Defining your mission

First of all, what is your favorite case type or types? What types of conditions do you treat best, for example, and how do patients identify them. A good example here is asthma, or whatever other conditions you may excel at. Most staff are really observant about this part, and will gladly help you. What you are best at is always the case types that interest you the most. Your staff and patients can tell which they are because of your excitement and energy.

Maybe yours is a Family Practice, and your focus is Athletic Injuries or Nutrition Counseling. One of the things that will help you the most is a short catchphrase. So, you might use a statement like “Preferred Practice of Local Athletes”, “Ask about our “Energy Boosting Programs” or “We Care for the Entire Family”. Just be sure it is short, simple and concise. Beware of too short or too general. Although “We care” may be great, it does not communicate what you care about! Watch out for the common phrases everyone is using. Ones that are too common are hard for people to remember. Take a common one and twist the phrase a little and you have one that you can remember.

Next, use simple tag lines, which identify what makes you unique, like “Practice dedicated to Families”, “Early Morning Convenience”

or “Four nights a week ‘til 7 PM” (which is ours at HSG) in all your communications and advertising. Whatever this tag line is, it should be so much a part of you and your practice that when people hear the phrase they naturally think of your practice. This simple measure will start to drive more referrals to your practice, with very little expenditure of \$ or effort. Why not do it today? This is “Guerilla Marketing” at its finest.

Next, set up every marketing system in your practice to be congruent and make sure every system is set up to be on autopilot, as part of your Perfect Practice Platform. All you have to do to fix this is: ask yourself the simple question, “Does this agree with my mission statement?” This technique will always have you on autopilot. When you benchmark everything you do to your mission statement and your focus for your practice, it will automatically point you in the right direction.

Never be afraid to make a change. However, always make sure a change is needed before you make it.

IS YOUR PRACTICE “USER FRIENDLY”?

In asking this question the first thing you must remember is that any practice is focused on customer service. What people think of your practice is based almost totally on how responsive you are to your patients whether it is answering the phone or meeting on the street. They care about how they are treated and they will tell others whether you are helpful, courteous and attentive or not. They will spread the word either way.

Phone Responses

Answering the phone can be the single most important point of contact and can be what makes them decide to use your practice. Are you user friendly? Let me give you a prime example. I was reminded

yesterday about how critical it is that our offices be easy to contact, have live, literate humans on the other end of the line, and not have a me-me-me attitude. I spent over 30 minutes trying to get an understanding of a phone bill from one of the largest companies. I was answered by a recorded voice and then shifted around on hold. I had to redial three times before I got to a human voice who actually spoke to me. They couldn't answer my question and their responses concerning the policy were different than mine. At the end of this process, I decided I will NEVER use one of their products again. The "small print" gives them latitude to change agreements without notice. I was peeved, and their staff couldn't care less. Is this a good description of your practice procedures on the phone? Is this how your patients feel? Does your staff respond well to the calls? Can they answer questions and concerns? How many times do patients have to call back to get answers? Do they have questions about your policies? Does your staff understand the policies and explain them to your patients?

Customer Service

Don't ever let this happen in your office. You and the staff must be quick, courteous, and clear in all communications. The best way to get patients to be responsive and to feel better about you is to answer the call quickly with a live human voice. And, make sure everyone knows you never win by making a patient wrong. Patients are looking for someone to listen and help them. Answering a call quickly, listening to what they have to say and then calling them by name and helping. Patients will understand that you care and are trying to help them. One last point; do not leave them on hold for a recorded message saying their call is important.

Clear concise policies

Review all of your policies and have an independent third party read the policy and explain to you what it says. Is this what you wanted it to say? If yes, then your policy is clear and concise. If not, then rewrite it until the person reading and explaining the policy is stating it as you meant it. To help avoid misunderstandings, make sure the policies you have or write are simple, concise, and clearly understood, whether for staff or patients. Train your staff on the policies for patients. Have your staff explain the patient policies to you. Is

what they said the same thing as what you intended it to say? Make sure they understand everything and can explain it to patients. You also should survey your patients once a year and ask them to critique you in all these areas. Then share the results with your team. Have the staff review all of your policies. Again have them critique all areas of the practice. Are there areas they do not understand? When you discover a problem, fix it quickly. Be ready and prepared. Nothing aggravates a caller more than when no one can answer their questions.

The three most important things

What are the three most important things: Customer service, customer service and customer service. Keep one thing in mind at all times: Is this the way you want to be treated when you are calling in for help? It is important that your staff exemplifies the same courteous, attentive and knowledge in person as they do on the phone and vice versa. When your patients think of your practice do they think of attentiveness, responsiveness, quality care and clear, concise policies? This should be your goal. Your patients want to know you care and nothing says you care more than the way the patients are treated.

Excellent service with a human touch is becoming a rarity, just like John Naisbitt warned all of us almost 25 years ago with the onslaught of high tech.

WHAT LENGTHS NEW PATIENTS WILL GO THROUGH TO FIND OUT WHO YOU REALLY ARE...?

I recently had a very interesting new patient. Very apprehensive, but enthusiastic, young, highly educated, past consumer of chiropractic care from the Midwest. When I asked her how she found our office a story unfolded.

First, she got our name from a local listing on line. Then she Goggled me. Now, in case you don't know, consumers are doing this more with all their professionals, especially those more upscale, when

choosing professional advice. Next she went to my website, and finally, she went to the college website from which I graduated in 1980. She had had prior good experiences with NCC docs, and decided to schedule and come in. She was polite, but apprehensive. We first chatted about her job, a drug researcher (which really fascinated me because she did not want to take any medications!) and the fact she was just back from 10 days on a beach in South America. Then, we just chatted for 2-3 minutes about her past doctor experiences.

That, of course, is why she was checking us out. We finally were laughing together, and she completely relaxed, then her entire physiology changed. I commended her for going through her investigation, and promised I would do all I could to help her, starting TODAY!

This scenario is being played out more and more, but many docs are oblivious to it. There are several lessons here.

1. Make sure your website is up, and up to date.
2. Put your complete bio, and list of accomplishments online!
3. Google yourself! See what comes up, and correct any inaccuracies at the source.
4. Make sure your SYSTEMS are modern too, starting with your front desk and intake procedures.
5. Make the best use of technology in your office. That is what many patients now expect, especially in areas with big cities or medical centers.
6. Be human, not a stuffed shirt in the first patient meeting. It might not be fair, but everything that happens on the very first encounter, indeed within the first four minutes, will determine whether the patient accepts your message or not.

**What patients are really looking for are
well-rounded human beings...**

Have you Googled yourself lately? If not, I strongly suggest you do, because patients, their friends and families are Googling you and you

don't even know it! More and more patients are telling me, because I always ask how they found me.

I am seeing this more and more in my office, and those of my clients. Consumer-savvy patients, especially 25-35 years old are thoroughly researching their "teams" of Drs and other professionals.

For example, patients that Google me know (and you would too) that I practice Chiropractic, consult with Drs, sponsor a race car team, and have a 100 ton Merchant Mariners License, and in the summer will charter my boat. (Now, this combination seems strange to some, but trust me, my other captain friends are psychologists, a school administrator/author/ski instructor/tackle company owner and one even consults in labs at MIT).

On being yourself...

This other stuff (hobbies, interests, other business pursuits) is all you and me, like it or not. But I also find, unfortunately, that some doctors let their practices become their entire life, and fail to personally develop and fully self actualize. To fully grow as Maslow wrote about many years ago. And they deprive themselves of the greatest practice builder of all, letting their patients see what fun a well-rounded doctor's practice is like! These doctors wind up ultimately frustrated, and very often unfulfilled, because they just have not either taken the time, or allowed themselves another life. This ultimately can make the latter years of practice a major challenge, as the time for life transitions starts to naturally occur.

I am often telling docs to step away, really away from their practice! Not just vacations (which for some seems like a monumental event). But to really develop a very rewarding personal life that you go to every night if you want, but most especially on dedicated days off. Even this is a challenge to get many to see, despite their own severe stress, and failing relationships with all whom they contact every day.

The Key to a fun practice...

As my clients will tell you is Creative Energy! It NEVER visits you while fully engaged in the routines of practice. I find it only visits

after complete relaxation and then either by divine inspiration or introspection. For me, it comes while on the water, motorcycling or carving down a mountain on skis. What is it for you? Whatever it is is to be engaged in regularly!

The Lesson here...

My best advice is always being 100% transparent with your patients. They do not want stuffed shirts for their Drs anymore! Besides, it makes you human to them, and this will make or break many relationships both with staff and patients in the office. And you will spend much more time enjoying, not only a rich personal life, but your practice as well.

THE MINDSET OF SUCCESSFUL DOCTORS IN PRIVATE PRACTICE

This is something I get to observe each and every day as a consultant, and indeed as a treating doc. What separates the hugely successful from the rest in most areas of life? You probably have read similar stuff dozens of times. But if you are not “confidently advancing in the direction of your dreams”, right now, take some time with these typical successful characteristics.

1. A Clear vision of what practice and private life ideally looks like. Daily time is spent meditating and visualizing your ideal.
2. The Physical capacity and energy to execute the vision through fitness, rest and nutrition. This alone is a priority. Those around you are energized as well, or they just can't keep up, and may pull you down.
3. Growing financial savings from managed expenses and wise investing. Each passing year looks brighter and brighter, moving you

closer to a goal of financial independence (defined: you can live on interest income only).

4. Daily, basic tasks are systematized, on autopilot; you simply inspect what you expect. Don't get me wrong, you must initially create and start these. This includes marketing, accounts receivables and payables, your front desk, savings plans, and whatever else you can simplify. Then, YOU, and only you must inspect what you expect.

5. The systems that run your office and home are simple, straightforward and easy to adapt as the environment throws changes at you. You don't have so much house, so that your upkeep becomes your downfall.

6. You make use of good coaches and your own support groups. You maintain personal touch on a regular basis!

7. Your daily life and actions are true to your "highest self".

8. Regular inspection and adjustment of all these takes place (we call it The Ultimate System).

TIME MANAGEMENT

This is one of the biggest issues facing today's private practices. In a recent staffing article, I spoke about the demands for administrative time, marketing time and staff training and attention. Furthermore, the fact of the matter is that we all need to maximize patient visits in order to meet rising overhead. And, this does not even allow for the increase in practice volume necessary to insure prosperity now, and also for years to come.

There are real practical solutions to this problem today's Drs. must be aware of. The first is, you need to walk through your day as an efficiency expert. Seriously, in today's busy practice, there's not a moment to waste. Absolutely everything, from your patient intake procedures, to your maximizing patient exam and treatment times by

using appropriate staffing and technology and most especially data management must be thoroughly examined for potential areas of improvement.

It is vital to understand the cost of not doing so. For example, let's say you found an additional twenty minutes per shift, by improving efficiency of basic office procedures. Let's also say that in twenty minutes, you are able to treat two additional patients. For the sake of argument, let's say this translates into ten additional office visits per week. At an average of fifty dollars per visit (the minimum acceptable in today's world) times 15 weeks, is additional 25 thousand dollars practice revenue. Most practices who truly implement, maintain and upgrade great systems are able to find at least double, and quite possibly triple this improvement, and therefore are able to produce an additional 50 to 75 thousand dollars per year without any increased overhead.

For most practicing doctors, this represents a substantial increase in revenues, which not only significantly improves financial stability but also the likelihood of long-term financial freedom.

Unfortunately, too many doctors are in perpetual search of the "next big thing". This might be new equipment (for which many doctors fail to collect any or adequate revenues for the usage of) or spending far more than needed on the areas of the practice which do nothing to increase the real capacity of the practice to produce more revenues and process additional patients.

Tough talk? To be sure. However, these realities are visited and continually mastered by the very best practices before spending significant amounts of time, money and energy on the next big thing.

I think it was Jim Rohn who said, "There are no new fundamentals." In most practices, there are only five.

What many people neglect, however, is that there are probably fundamental areas in their office right now that when analyzed in this manner will yield the quantum leap in practice growth that the doctor is looking for.

When all these fundamental areas are operating smoothly and efficiently then it's time to think about adding additional profit centers to the practice.

And this is what practicing by design, not default is really all about.

THE HALLMARKS OF CHAMPIONS

Whether you are a sports fan or not, you have to admit that the 2007 baseball playoffs and World Series games have provided not only great entertainment, but significant life lessons.

Those of you who know me, know that this is difficult for me to express, being a life-long Yankees fan. However it is entirely possible, that the Red Sox have become the New Yankees! New York, despite being the highest paid team in the game, could simply not finish the job, and become World Champions one more time.

There are several things that came to mind, while watching the 2007 World Series unfold.

The first take away is this “New Red Sox” sense of purpose. The New team owners a few years back, wrote a new mission statement that included the following words: “We *will* win multiple world championships.” Clearly, this has not been forgotten. This attitude permeates every fiber of the team.

Apparently, those behind the scenes see to it that the actual execution of reminders of this mission statement to the players occurs on a consistent basis.

And although it did not exactly appear that way to outsiders in August, (resting some key players, seemingly on the verge of letting a massive lead in the standings slip by), it may very well turn out that the team’s late summer strategy was absolutely brilliant.

Focus, energy, determination. This team has had it all. In addition, they have built-in fabulous redundancy. At every position, the varying replacements for those positions show late season execution that

has been nearly perfect. Seemingly, at least three different people may cover each of their positions.

During training, this team has had adherence to unified principles, including specificity, focus, determination, and adequate periods of rest.

There are many parallels here, to professional practice. A professional practice is not unlike a professional sports team.

All members must play well, on a consistent basis. All rules are posted. Players know rules need to be followed. The managers, and the owners, reiterate this at every opportunity.

Training is impeccable. All positions need to be covered. There can never be any question that this must be a basic operating strategy of any effective practice.

Furthermore, as Perfect Practice Web advocates while staffing an effective practice, redundancy must be built into every position.

When there is failure, each failure is carefully examined, dissected, and practical solutions are developed to keep this situation from wasting an entire year's worth of work, or more.

The managers, both of professional teams and professional practices, never fail to meet with the team players, and ask for their input, as indicated and as often as needed. Good managers value the input of their team players, and make every effort to incorporate any reasonable suggestions into the playbook.

Ultimately though, the best decisions are made and executed only by those with significant experience. I'm sure this can be a challenge with any team, and I'm also sure with multiple talented players, your office is no different.

Quite frankly, while watching the 2007 World Series, I think this was an amazing feat, given the multiple, young talented players on the Red Sox and Rockies. As a manager yourself you have to admire the steadfast amount of decisions that need to be made, almost instantly, without minutes to spare.

This is where you really need to realize, your best role as an owner both on the field, and in any office, is the ability to take a look at the greater picture, and then make effective, and rapid decisions, that fully draw upon your experience in similar situations.

This management of the processes behind the scenes is what actually gets things done, and gets your team to produce fabulous results. This is also where maturity, focus and consulting with your own coaches regularly have a very significant advantage.

Just like a single decision might cost the championship team to lose the World Series, similar decisions in your office also cause you to lose significant time, money, and forward momentum and practice growth.

With each passing year, your effectiveness, should improve. This is why the most valued managers and coaches have been around the game for many years. With the right tools you, too, can become one of these great managers.

LIFE IS BRIEF.

While reading the Sunday paper, I was painfully reminded of the fragility of a professional life that can teach us all a valuable lesson. As you know, Perfect Practice advocates Building your private life first, and your practice to suit. We talk about this extensively in Module 1 – “The End in Mind” Your close friends, spouse and family know your passions, and how you incorporate them (or fail to) into your personal life every week.

In any event, the story was about an executive, 58 years old, who built a very significant company upon tons of personal time, travel and a grueling schedule, but little time off, so he could “enjoy his retirement”.

Retirement never came because he was dead of brain cancer in 90 days. He reflected back in his last days, even writing a book encouraging his colleagues not to follow in his footsteps.

Life IS brief, with no second chances. How many times I see clients and friends go down this same road.

I encourage each of you to look beyond your practice life each day, not only to distress, but to make sure you have scheduled enough time off EVERY WEEK to DO and LIVE with passion. Make sure you are using the tools, especially those which allow you to accomplish the financial freedom now, so you can enjoy life now, without waiting for something that may or may not be.

LIFE IS BRIEF, PART II

For those that spend any time in an ER or as an EMT, you see some of this every day. Back in our nice clean offices though, in private practice we are sometimes shielded from harsh realities.

Two stories, both true, touched my life last week.

Alex, age 48, dies in the ER. Previously healthy, maybe hypertensive, was looking forward to his early retirement. Always had a smile, and pleasant greeting for everyone he met.

Gary, age 45, is sitting in his truck at a stop light. Gets a sudden blinding headache, throws the truck into park, clutches his dog, and according to the ME, is unconscious in 15 seconds, and a short time later dead of a cerebral aneurysm. He was a self-made, financially independent, fun-loving guy, still very much in love with his life and friends. Wiped out in 15 seconds.

Again, what is it that you are putting off, not confronting or handling? What might you miss out on, if you don't take action TODAY?

Tough question? Maybe. Easy to answer?

Probably.

But only if you stay brutally honest with yourself.

Again, we suggest you take time every day to reappraise where you are going in practice and life. Make sure your decisions are moving you closer to ideal. And really enjoy each day.

WHAT'S IN YOUR LIBRARY? WHAT'S IN YOUR HEAD?

Probably tons of books, videos, audiotapes and CDs, if you are like most docs.

A bigger question is which ones have the biggest impact on you and why?

For the last few months, one of my recreational reads has been “Truman”, by David McCullough. All 996 pages. Now, biographies can be laborious, but this one captures the detailed essence of one of the men to make multiple landmark decisions that changed the face of the planet forever.

The thing that is perhaps most striking to me is that he embraced a very simple lifestyle, despite everything else, even while in the White House. He never lost his sense of values of family, focus, true friendship and physical fitness. In fact, today, we might call him a fitness freak (except for the shot of bourbon following each morning's exercise session).

He frequently retreated, much to the chagrin of the Secret Service to hide-a-ways, really cherishing his time in Key West. Loved his time off.

And then in the office, hit it hard, often accomplishing way more than those around him thought possible. Worked incredible stints. Pissed a few people off with his habits, more than once, usually those who couldn't get out of their own way.

He was doggedly persistent, blowing away entire teams of staff with his energy, purpose and convictions. “Give ‘em hell Harry!” was way more than a slogan.

The chapter on the 1948 presidential campaign is worth reading by itself. This was a very driven man, who despite incredible odds, and adversity, brutal media swipes at him, pulled off one of the biggest upsets in history, while Dewey, his opponent, destroyed himself, little by little each week.

* * * * *

So what’s my point? Several takeaways here. First of all, he knew what he wanted. Never stopped till he got it. NEVER! He stayed incredibly fit, well into later life. Knew when to back away, and frequently mentally retreated to refresh his mind and spirit. Incredibly organized, scheduled, focused.

Sound familiar? It should, as these are the same characteristics of the happiest, most successful men and women throughout history.

And, of course, the very same philosophy Perfect Practice continually asks its members to learn and adopt.

What exactly are the steps? Here’s how Harry would do it with The Perfect

Practice Platform.

1. Find out FIRST exactly what you want. And this, of course, changes throughout life. Regularly seek the guidance of your coach, and your soul. (Module 1).
2. Unshakeable data management and retrieval systems. Use all the most modern and fastest tools available to the biggest advantage, to save tons of personal time. (Module 2).
3. Staffing. No BS here. Only hire appropriate staff members. Lovingly guide those around you with vision and purpose, eliminate those who can’t or won’t. (Module 3).

4. Let everybody know just what you are about, and why. Gently describing benefits of doing things your way. Not paying attention to those who reject your philosophy. (Module 4).
5. Austerity. Accumulating eventual wealth, even having previously miserably failed or bankrupt (like Harry). (Module 5).
6. Continually reassess, adjust and fine tune. On a regularly scheduled basis. (Module 6).

GOING THROUGH THE “CHANGES”? A NEW WAY OF LOOK- ING AT THE FUTURE.

Is there life after career? This admittedly, is one of the biggest issues facing today's doctors, and other health care professionals. Let's face it. Anybody who has been in a private practice or a healthcare career ten years or more especially will tell you, almost invariably, that their perception of practice and their personal role in it has changed dramatically over what it once was even a few short years ago.

Some of this naturally is just a shift in various attitudes as we age, but in my opinion some of this also is deeply rooted in the numerous challenges that we are faced with, with ever increasing frequency.

It wasn't that long ago, that health care professionals, indeed most professionals, chose one career pathway, and simply stayed on that very same path for forty years or more. Some just retired from work entirely.

And no doubt, some of you reading this right now have never even thought about retirement or a life after work or practice. Perhaps you are new to this, and the concept of doing something totally different with your life seems very distant, not necessarily a priority. But, the fact of the matter is, that the vast majority of doctors and other health care professionals are 30 years old or more before they even start to

glimpse financial security. Many of us are now, or will be, even older than 30 by the time we reach that same point due to rising prices of education. Not to even mention those costs associated with starting a private practice. Next, for most of us, the years spent from 30 to 45 or 50 are spent raising families, as well as paying down physical, emotional and financial debt that's left over from early in our careers.

Now add to this the unforeseen circumstances such as those associated with work, living the lifestyle you and your significant others imagined as students, the natural physical and emotional changes of getting older, a significant illness or disability of yourself, spouse or close family member, unforeseen divorce, the ever-evolving practice landscape... I call this collection of life circumstances health care professionals face simply, the "changes".

Well, I hope you see where I am going here. Are you going through the "changes"? Somehow, years have passed since graduation and life isn't quite what you had imagined.

One of the major consequences of this, that I see every day in consulting, are people in their early 30s to mid 50s who have a very difficult time producing the fun and fulfillment in their practice, that not too long ago seemed natural and easy. Indeed, these are the major issues that led to the development of the *Perfect Practice Platform™*.

And it's also why, I have for years advocated that caregivers play hard and often, work and practice on their *own* terms, while simultaneously finding out precisely what's *right for them*, RIGHT NOW. This includes professional practice structure, lifestyle, finances, and perhaps most especially personal and professional fulfillment.

Now, I can also tell you that those who study and implement the *Platform* concepts have accepted and dealt with the "changes" in a far more effective manner than those who resist, assume the world is still the same, or simply dig in their heels and refuse to believe that the playing field as well as the rule book is radically different than it was even a few short years ago.

But there's way more to it.

For many of us who chose a healthcare pathway, our entire identities are wrapped up in our careers or private practice. * This is a well-

known fact. This is also why we're sometimes blindsided by the future. There are certain personality profiles, and early life experiences that drive us to become who and what we are as caregivers today. This is certainly not all bad. However, those who fail to recognize this are also the same people that have a very difficult time adapting and dealing with the "changes". This is precisely one of the core issues upon which our company, Perfect Practice Web was founded.

There is also another very significant issue here. That is that most of us are living far more active lives and longer in years than our parents, and certainly our grandparents.

The acclaimed author of "Too Young To Retire -101 ways to start the rest of your life" Howard Stone, (who joined us in Miami in October 2007) correctly calls these the bonus years. For many of us, the bonus years could last 30 to 40 years or perhaps even longer! Sadly, too many health care professionals are amongst the worst in planning for their bonus years. This quite frankly is due to the attitudes and perceptions about the "changes" we have just discussed.

With all this said, I have some practical suggestions.

Number one. Recognize, that the pace of the "changes" you will deal with does not slow down, and if anything will accelerate.

Number two. Strive to develop a comprehensive game plan, on an on-going basis for the rest of your life. Start where you are right now. Use the concepts and philosophies of "practicing on your own terms" as the facilitative tools they were designed to be. This can be done from any point in your career, the earlier the better.

Number three. Identify your attitudes and perceptions about money that may be blocking your accumulation pathway. Seriously, failure to thoroughly explore these issues is inviting certain disaster.

Number four. Recognize the value of interacting with other like-minded people such as our membership on a regular basis. Quite often, personal growth is accelerated when you're fully immersed in quiet reading and study, but especially while attending Teleseminars, "Breakthrough Sessions" and most especially mastermind and live events.

Number five. Seriously consider working with Howard Stone and myself as we present together, “On your own terms – Transitioning for fun, profit and fulfillment life and work”. Shortly, we will have more details, and will be jointly hosting a focus group for you on this exciting interactive program designed exclusively for health care professionals that could literally save you years of stress and many thousands of dollars.

Number six. Enjoy the process of self-discovery and personal growth. Remember, you are part of one of the most gifted groups of human beings to ever walk the earth. Enjoy your patients. Love your families. But above all, plan now to live life to its fullest, at any age, every day!

*(Tip: If you have never read a Melody Beattie’s work on codependency and healthcare professionals, you owe it to yourself to do so.)

STAFFING WITH THE POWER OF WRITTEN INTENT

What is the single most difficult problem that occurs in an office: Written communications. Nothing, and I really mean nothing, will move you forward in office management without clear, brief written communications which are discussed, and then adapted as policy. Usually the problem is trying to put too much into a manual or a memo so that it becomes confusing and unclear. What is the intent of the written communication? Avoid covering every situation; it is impossible to be prepared for everything. Take care of the commonplace and the usual in distinct, short, brief statements and review them. Ultimately, these should reside in your office manual. At any stage of practice, you should make sure all policies are clear, updated as needed and disseminated to all staff persons (even if it’s just you right now, new Doctors). Don’t trust your policies and procedures to memory. Written communications are clear and unchangeable from one time to the next. Whenever a change in policy is done, destroy any old copies of the outdated policy, review the policy change with

all of the staff and in the case of patients make sure they are all aware of the change. Nothing is more embarrassing for a patient and staff as when the patient is caught unaware with a change in payment policy. (This is bad for your practice as it makes the patient feel as if you are not concerned about how they feel!)

One of the most common errors in policy and manual writing is putting in too many words. For example, “a fly” is much clearer and more precise than “a small winged insect found in or near a house”. If you think about it the insect could be any number of other possibilities but a fly. Although this makes a manual thicker and more colorful, it does not make it easier to read and understand without confusing issues. Remember, brief, clear, concise communication takes practice and will avoid confusion and conflict. It will also reduce stress in the office by staff trying to guess what you meant and having different reactions to the policy or manual.

One of the ways to greatly decrease office stress is to have a very clear list of Patient Policies. The biggest problem is knowing they are clear. I recommend having someone that is not associated with your office review them. They should be able to explain in their own words and it sound similar to what you meant it to be. Then make sure the staff knows what the Patient Policies and are thoroughly versed in them. It is in your best interest if you can post the Patient Policy in a conspicuous position in the office so everyone can see it. Always make sure the office and the patient both have a signed copy of the policies so there is no confusion on what was said or read. In our office, these are 2 part NCR, and must be signed by each patient or guardian prior to examination. However other methods are acceptable as long as both sides have a copy of the form or policy.

With staff, we advocate a basic manual, with policy changes and additions disseminated in writing, and reviewed on a regular basis. Always maintain a printed master copy in the file. When a change is made make sure the change is in the file for the master copy or print a new master copy and destroy the old one. Always check the changes and additions for not only clarity but also to avoid conflicts with other parts of the manual. Divide the manual into sections. Use a table of contents. This also prevents you from leaving things out and then having to scramble to create a policy and have problems getting one concise and clear on the spur of the moment and then remembering it later. Each section is about a specific item or policy. Then if you make a change in policy or a change in the manual you

put it in its specific spot and keep them together. And by all means if you have more than one item in your manual, Number them! It is much easier to keep track of changes when you can number them and keep them in order as well as by date.

Recent examples in our office include policies on scheduling by the front desk (one exam to the next), and clarification of collection of payments at or before the time of service. Seems simple on the surface, but at any stage of practice both become major issues, unless you clearly communicate to patients and staff alike. If you make changes, schedule meetings for just those items in the manual and in patient policy. Throughout the year, have periodic reviews of items in the manual and patient policies. This keeps them fresh and everyone is informed on the manual and policies

Anytime you have a problem in the office, stop, take a look at it and break it down. Resolve each part of it and then put the solution of the parts together and see if it works together. If it doesn't, find out why and fix that. Sometimes fixing the individual parts will create a conflict but until you fix the parts and then reassemble them will you discover the problem and be able to fix it. Don't do it by yourself. Work on it with different people. Any policy, procedure or changes needs at least two people to look at it from two different points of view. This avoids the most common problem: Tunnel vision. Tunnel vision is seeing things from only one perspective and only seeing one way to solve it. Now that it is all completed, share your results with your fellow members and guests. New Patient Policies need to be distributed to the patients. There are several ways to do this but make sure the patients get the change, especially if it involves payment, exam and appointment policies and procedures.

THE MAGNETIC POWER OF COMMON COURTESY

Recently, I had the opportunity to travel to St. Louis, Missouri. This really turned out to be a fantastic trip! I got to mingle with other con-

sultants and coaches from around the world and to spend additional time developing ideas for new services and products to bring to our clients.

Now, I had spent four years in the Midwest, attending National College, but admittedly it's been some time. I had forgotten how common courtesy seems to permeate the entire culture of the Midwest, in stark contrast to those of the Northeast. Again, I don't think this is just perception, because last week when I related my experiences to various colleagues they reported similar encounters. One even called us Yankees the "Grunt Society".

Upon arrival at my hotel, I asked the concierge if Busch Stadium was within walking distance. Fortunately, not only was the stadium within walking distance, but so were the St. Louis Cardinals Hall of Fame, the famous Arch and National Park, and riverboat dock. Fortunately, it was a warm sunny afternoon so I ventured out for about two hours.

My first stop was the stadium. I spent considerable time admiring the architecture and how well it is cared for. As baseball stadiums go, this one is magnificent. While wandering through the stadium store, I wondered if my friends would consider me a traitor for bringing home an Albert Pujols T-shirt.

Next, I ventured down towards the river. Along the way, I had the opportunity to stop for a cup of coffee. Now, this was similar to any ordinary coffee shop in any city. However, the counter clerk could not do enough to make sure I was completely happy and satisfied. I was actually blown away by his full attention to be sure that everything was just right.

I spent some time walking through the National Park along the river. Having not been to St. Louis in 17 years, I had forgotten what a nice place this is!

On the way back to the hotel, I stopped at a small city supermarket and had a very similar counter experience. I'm beginning to think, is it just me? Am I more relaxed than usual, or is this place really special?

The next day, hotel restaurants were naturally jammed during the breaks so I ventured outside and down the street once again. I stum-

bled upon a local restaurant in the business district, with the line almost all the way out the door. I decided this would be a great place for lunch. Not only was the lunch fabulous, but also the service was absolutely impeccable. Everybody from the front counter down to wait staff wanted to make sure everything was just right, and I was completely comfortable.

In retrospect, it seems like the entire five days was magical. Not only did I get to spend some time with very special people from 20 different countries, but also was made feel right at home everywhere I went.

There is, of course, a message here. ***People remember how they are treated at a more emotional level than they do the actual product or service they are seeking.***

Therefore, it is no secret that this type of attitude, a feeling from the top down in your office, has substantial impact on patients to return, refer their family and friends, and take care of their finances.

This, of course, is a key element of Practicing by Design™. As much as possible, procedures must remain patient friendly. They must be easy for the staff to execute. They must be clear, and easy to understand. Patient benefits must be stressed, but above all they need to be conveyed and delivered with exceptional courtesy.

So, I would recommend that you share this message with your staff as I have. This would be a good opportunity to review point-of-contact systems and procedures, especially telephone and front desk procedures. Spend some time here, watching for tone of voice and attitude etc. Anybody who is not completely focused on the patient in front of them needs to be reminded that a simple courteous attitude of service forms the basis of every encounter.

It is, of course, extremely important to hold your ground on policies and procedures but to convey them with genuine passion. Again, by making the benefits obvious to your patients, your entire practice benefits.

Needless to say, this is an extremely powerful time of year to reinforce these concepts with your entire team. We suggest you weave this through all holiday events you may have planned for the rest of the year.

Also, this is the perfect time to examine your own management systems, to measure their own user-friendly characteristics. Ask staff for input in terms of fine-tuning communications with the entire team for better execution.

Dr., really take some time with this. Incorporate some of these simple ideas into policies and procedures, and regularly check to make sure they are being completely implemented. You will reap the benefits many times over.

THE VALUE OF EXCELLENT TRAINING...

Becomes self evident, the longer you practice. Best staff training practices allow your practice to move forward without skipping a beat when somebody leaves for vacation, or permanently.

At LEAST weekly, you need to meet as a team although we advocate a brief AM huddle each day. Also, when you have an extra few minutes here and there, spend some time reviewing and updating your office flow, scheduling, supplies ordering, or whatever else needs “tweaking”. Then, on those most challenging of days, you will be thrilled with the results. And, it’s great team building and an investment in your future too.

How does this “training time” happen? Only if you make it so.

HOW TO BUILD A WINNING TEAM

Without a doubt, one of the toughest aspects of managing private practice today is staffing. We don't have the same resources as a hospital or clinic, where an MBA or Human Resources professional is typically available to handle staffing issues. Despite this lack of resources, one fact remains: Failure to acknowledge and successfully address this key component will lead to more stress, less income, and ultimately a far less rewarding career.

It is unfortunate that most of our grad schools fail to provide doctors with even a modicum of training in this extraordinarily important part of private practice. Failure to appropriately manage staffing issues leads to costly mistakes, lost revenue and potential legal issues. Most doctors, unfortunately, learn to take these issues seriously only after making very costly mistakes; however, you *can* learn the skills you need to build a winning and successful team.

Think of office staffing as a system, with five basic tenets.

Identify all positions that need to be staffed or outsourced

Payroll is usually the most costly element of practice. Hiring should only take place after you have carefully designed an organizational chart showing which roles will be filled internally, and which must be filled externally.

Decide which tasks will require on-site personnel, and which tasks are suitable for outsourcing. In today's practice environment, it is imperative not to hire people for tasks which could be more appropriately outsourced, subcontracted to other professionals, or handled by existing technology. A perfect example here is transcription, which can largely be eliminated with a good electronic records system. Some collections and billing duties can also be shifted to more affordable subcontractors.

Before you ever place an ad for a potential employee, you should have a clear picture of the staff structure you would like to eventually achieve. This careful consideration is essential to profitability, and an important part of practice management. Staffing your office is an evolutionary process that must be both complimentary to your practice style, and fiscally responsible.

Find and select appropriate candidates.

In order to find the right candidate, you must have a clear vision for the position or role. Create a detailed job description for the position before you begin the hiring process. If you are not sure what you are looking for, you have no chance of finding the right person.

Spell out the duties, responsibilities, and career path for this position. Outline the necessary skills, competencies, and experience a candidate must possess in order to be successful in the position. Define what “excellent performance” in this role would look like. Failing to do this is like attempting to build a skyscraper without an engineering plan.

With a clearly defined role in hand, you are now ready to begin the search for the perfect candidate. Begin by working with as big an applicant pool as possible. Local or regional newspapers work great in most areas. Personal referrals from existing employees can be a good source of great candidates. You may also get good results from posting openings in your office, in any newsletters you send out, and on your website.

Direct potential candidates to submit their résumé, references and cover letter to your office via email. This accomplishes several things:

- Screens out applicants without a basic level of computer literacy
- Allows you to check submissions for spelling, grammar, and style
- Allows you to see if applicants are able to follow basic instructions

If you are not able to accept applications via email, ask potential applicants to fax in their résumés. Do not accept phone calls about open positions. Never allow an endless stream of phone calls from applicants to disrupt the day for your team.

Interviewing is an art in and of itself. Always plan to conduct interviews with a partner, preferably with a staff person of the opposite sex. Interviewing an applicant side-by-side with a trusted ally has the additional benefit of allowing you to compare impressions and ask different questions. Before making your selection, it is a good idea to conduct skills tests and a second interview. Remember to have a sec-

ond choice to fall back on, in case your first choice does not work out.

Establish management policies

The establishment of sound management policies is a critical step. The creation and maintenance of an effective policy and compliance manual is crucial. Do not neglect this very important part of the team building process.

This manual will ultimately become your practice playbook. Have you ever known a top-notch team or organization to function at high levels without a system of policies, directions and basic rules? Your office is no different. The clearer your manual is, the better the results you will obtain from your team.

Many doctors need assistance with this task. There are some well-written resources, templates and components you can purchase online. It is vital however, to ensure that your manual and policies comply with state and federal employment law.

Visit your own state's website to ensure that you understand local labor laws, wage guidelines, and antidiscrimination policies.

Have a good employment attorney in your state review your policies and procedures. Any costs spent here will be paid back in spades. Many employment law firms can design an excellent manual on your behalf.

Once you have your preliminary manual, review it to ensure it meets legal requirements for hiring, nondiscrimination, time off, etc. Assemble your final manual and put it in accessible locations in the office. Ensure that all employees have access to the manual, placing one at every workstation.

Create clear written duties and checklists

Each position within your office should have not only a written position description, but also a written checklist of responsibilities.

Record every task and responsibility, from how to open the office locks, safe, and phone system, all the way through to end-of-the-day

responsibilities. The safest assumption when writing these is to assume nothing. The more detail oriented you are when going through this process, the less chance there will be for future employee misunderstanding and error.

There are many excellent templates and resources available online that you can use as a starting point, but the key to success will involve customization, so that your documentation exactly matches your requirements. This information should then be integrated into your office handbook.

**Create exact mechanisms for dealing with staff negligence,
non-compliance or willful disregard**

Ensure that you have clearly written policies, procedures and mechanisms for dealing with staff negligence, noncompliance, or willful disregard. These topics must be fully covered within your policy and procedure manual. When developing your practice policy, tap all of the knowledge and resources available to you. Obtain the advice of solid legal counsel, and have them review your end product before distilling the information to your staff. This can save you countless legal headaches in the future.

By adhering to these five basic tenets, you can begin building a winning and successful team.

HOW TO DEVELOP A MARKETING PLAN THAT WORKS!

Marketing Your Private Practice

Marketing is one of the most misunderstood and frustrating areas of practice development. Many doctors struggle with marketing and very few have an organized marketing action plan in place.

It is easy to see why marketing can be difficult. It is rare to find doctors who are effectively utilizing a practice development plan, and even fewer have a calendar of planned marketing events and procedures. Without careful planning and timing, your marketing may not unfold in a rational or effective way. Non-systematic, scattered marketing attempts are ineffective and yield very few results. This lack of success may lead doctors to conclude that attempts to market their practice will always be met with the same lack-luster outcome, and may cause the doctor to think that marketing is an exercise in futility, or unnecessary.

If you want your practice marketing to succeed, you must ensure that your efforts are part of a larger strategic plan. There must be planning and foresight. Your marketing approach must be organized, relevant, and plainly visible to employees and patients alike. You must make an effort to create a linked series of marketing events. Marketing efforts must not only have individual impact, they must also have impact when considered as part of the larger plan.

Plan for Success

Before you begin planning your marketing strategy, you need to sit down and decide exactly what kind of practice you would like to have. Will you focus on occupational care? Care during pregnancy? Sports Injury? Will you have a blended focus? Envision your ideal practice as you would like it to exist in five years.

Think about the types of patients you would like to treat. Who are you most comfortable treating? Unless you can clearly define and target your market, you will have considerable difficulty developing and communicating a message that prospective patients both understand and respond to. If you don't know who your target audience is, how will they?

Before you begin actively working to reach your target market, take a look at your practice. Are your practice systems developed to the

point that your entire team can process new patients in an organized, efficient manner? It is pointless to spend time, money and energy looking for your new patients, unless you will be able to process and care for them once they come to you for care.

Once you are absolutely sure that your practice will be able to effectively care for new clientele, you are ready to work on the next phase of your marketing plan development – figuring out how to reach your desired target market. Think again about the type of patient you would like to work with. Once you have the patient in mind, think about what types of marketing would be likely to reach and attract this kind of patient.

Perhaps you would like to have a significant sports injury component to your practice. Where might you find these patients? You might consider things such as speaking before the local PTO, putting on an injury prevention seminar for local coaches, sponsoring local teams, and purchasing advertising in the school newsletter and yearbook. Initially, you may simply need to show up and introduce yourself at local athletic events with business cards so people actually know who you are, where you are, and what you do.

Taking the time to thoughtfully consider each of these areas will help you to develop a marketing plan that is much more likely to deliver the results you desire.

Make the Time

Even the best marketing plan will not be effective if you don't set aside dedicated time for implementation. Set aside a minimum of one hour per week where nothing else but calendar development and marketing implementation takes place. This time must be protected – it is non-cancelable and needs to be viewed as essential to practice development. Make sure that staff knows not to disturb you – no phone calls or interruptions should take place during this time.

Begin planning your marketing efforts. Brainstorm about marketing initiatives that make sense for your practice and target audience. Take a paper desk-size calendar and schedule the exact days and times when each step should be executed. Calendar only the items that you are sure you will be able to do completely and effectively, not halfway.

Plan your marketing so that it occurs more or less simultaneously, and not necessarily in a sequential manner. The reason for doing this relates to the principle of massive action, which is often neglected in private practice marketing. This principle says that massive action equals massive results. In marketing, too many doctors try a haphazard step here or there. When they fail to produce the desired results, they become frustrated and actually abandon their marketing program. A much better way to approach marketing is to be sure that linked steps are performed simultaneously. You will be much happier with the end result approaching your marketing in this manner.

Creating a Loyal Following

An essential component of private practice marketing involves maintaining close contact with those who have utilized your services in the past, along with members of the community you may have met at civic events and social functions. Maintaining steady contact helps to ensure that all of these potential clients and referral sources translate into more patients for your thriving practice. Never forget that patients (and their families) who previously utilized your services are much more likely to not only refer their family and friends, but to actually see you again as well. Make them feel valued by staying in touch. Seek to build long-term relationships with every patient and potential patient you come into contact with.

Create a database where you can track each of these important people. In this day and age list maintenance is simple and can easily be handled by a trusted employee. There are hundreds of different database tools you can use to track your clientele, and there options available in every price range. You might also choose to work with a mailing house that can create and distribute newsletters and bulletins on your behalf. For example, you may decide that every month your list of coaches will receive a newsletter focused on preventing sports injury, including tips and ideas for making their lives easier. Your marketing database can be used not only to cost-effectively send out newsletters and promotions, but to inform your clients about practice changes such as hours, new partners, and more.

Each time you treat a new patient, find out how they arrived in your office. How did they find you? Where did they first hear of you? Who referred them? Enter this information into your database, so that you have a written record of new patient sources. This tracking is essential so that you know in the short term and in the long term exactly where patients come from and which marketing efforts are producing the best results. Periodically analyze the results and adjust your marketing plans as needed.

You should only consider spending money on external marketing (such as extensive newspaper advertising) if you are sure that you have implemented procedures that will ensure you can stay in touch with existing patients and referral sources, and effectively track which of your marketing efforts is bringing in results.

The implementation of an organized marketing program is essential to the success of any private practice. It may seem like a daunting task at first, but once you have established it, it becomes much easier in succeeding years to maintain a thriving practice. You will have a strong foundation of loyal, repeat clients upon which to build. Paying attention to these simple principles will ultimately result in the development of the practice of your dreams.

HOW TO DRIVE REFERRALS WITH BETTER INTERNAL AND EXTER- NAL EVENTS

“EVENT”. Even the title should conjure up images of excitement and anticipation. And so it is with your family of patients, and your community.

Events have some key qualities that make them the perfect direct response advertising medium.

Here are a few of my favorites:

1. They have a set date.

2. The events take place only at a specific time.
3. Events last only a specific duration.
4. They create anticipation.
5. Events create energy throughout the project.
6. When done properly, the effects last for weeks and when done right, years!

Internal Events

So, let's talk about some events that can be used to help drive new patients into your practice and former patients back to your practice. Let's start with some of the most common.

The first is some type of patient care classes. Now whether these are done regularly or only done periodically, when executed properly they are successful at not only educating your existing patients but also introducing new patients to the practice. These classes also naturally generate large numbers of both patient referrals and better existing patient compliance.

With regard to patient classes, I am a firm advocate in making these voluntary. In fact, we never advocate force feeding any patient education. However, when you tell your patients that their attendance is likely to *increase the effectiveness of their care and shorten its duration*, they are more likely to not only attend but bring guests as well.

The key to making these patient education events successful, like all direct marketing, is to stress benefits. Now obviously, two of these patient benefits, I mentioned above. The additional benefits include getting out of pain faster, spending less money on treatment, and certainly less time in your office.

Don't be afraid of stressing these benefits in all your promotional materials too. Just by doing so, you will find the effectiveness of your presentation improving as well as the class attendance increasing dramatically.

Perhaps the next most successful events are health screenings of some type. Health Fairs, when done inside your office can also be extraordinarily effective. I have done these in my office with MDs, DMDs and PTs too.

In Chiropractic, scoliosis screenings are not only legendary, but still remain a very effective way of introducing new patients to the practice. They are also very effective at educating parents of adolescents and children about the devastating effects of scoliosis on spinal and general health when left untreated.

Again, simply apply the same basic strategies. Specific date, time, duration, applied staff and office energy, and appropriate promotional materials, all stressing benefits.

External Events

I really like external events, because they are very effective at not only bringing new patients into the practice but also very effective at introducing you to the community. One of the greatest advantages of participating in external events is that there is a wide array of media that is available to you. This includes newspaper, radio, external fliers, as well as the energy you and your team actually generates in your office.

There are many types of external events that have proven quite successful for many practices around the country. Basic spinal screenings, scoliosis checks, weight loss clinics, group body composition screenings, blood pressure clinics, SEMGs, etc. The list is limited only by your vision.

Just be creative here, but be very sure to stay aligned with your personal direction and purpose. If you have a particular focus in practice, so should go your promotions. In this day and age however, a limited focus is not a strategy I advise, as the private healthcare market is just so competitive in so many areas.

One of my favorites, out of all these external, is forming alliances.

What I mean by forming alliances, is that you agree to sponsor events for a certain group or organization at their place of business.

This group or organization, also in return agrees to prominently display your business cards and your literature in their place of business.

Now, not only do you get the benefit of being a featured guest speaker or presenter, but also you become a known quantity. When a group member needs your services, the owner readily points them in your direction.

Honestly, I will refuse to speak for or work with any group or organization that does not reciprocate. My time is just too valuable, as should be yours. Simply take a polite, business-like stance, and be firm. Make sure staff knows your policy too. Last year, I simply refused to do an event for a very large fitness center that did not promote, or reciprocate as they had agreed to do with a prior event.

Compare this with the strategy of blindly seeking places to speak, sponsor screenings, where there's no reciprocity. This can represent many hours of frustration, wasted energy and most especially a waste of finances.

Plus, with this strategy, like me, you will get to build lasting relationships. In my main office, some of these relationships have spanned more than 20 years, and made me hundreds of thousands of dollars.

With an effective marketing calendar, you too can skyrocket your practice, regardless of where you practice with effective event planning, and these very simple tools.

Now, have at it! Only action produces results!

NEW PATIENTS FOR FREE?

Yes, that's right! In most offices, there are many people who express interest in your practice, but you never know it because no one is assigned to collect this vital data! Too many times we look for difficult answers instead of the simple ones. Do you have people who stop in and ask what your practice is about? Do people meet you and ask

you what you do? Do you attend community events and talk to people? Do you get their name, their address, a phone number or are they greeted with just a polite hello and explanation and then left to go on their way. These are all opportunities to gather a new list of clients for free. Always look for opportunities. Talk to your children, neighborhood children, your neighbors, your friends, your business associates. Do you belong to a local community group? Do you belong to a general business group? Opportunities come in all shapes and sizes but they may not be noticed because no one was looking for an opportunity.

As part of any modern marketing plan, you need to have systems to collect prospective patient data, for potential New Patient marketing. What method you use is not all that important. What is important, is that it's part of a systematic collection and processing for getting new clients. This can be an elaborate database, or a simple 3x5 card file. I find MS Excel works great. Every office has it (it's in MS Office), and if you hire as we advocate, your employees know it well! However, it does not matter how elaborate or simple the system is it will not work unless it is used all the time, every day.

You can start right now by assigning all prospects to a staff person for daily database enrollment. First, make sure that all information is collected. For example, if a person walks in and asks a few questions make sure that a staff member gets her information and make a quick note even if it is on a sticky but it is collected. It may be one person's responsibility to enter in the database but it should be everyone's task to gather it if the opportunity is there. Lastly, there needs to be a systematic process for using this data. The marketing process should be separated into the methods of contact, mailings, phone calls, or email. Mailings should be preprogrammed and one person selected to perform the function of adding in the names, dates and address and getting them into the mail. One person needs to be selected for the email listings and a template created with INDIVIDUALIZED emails (That means just one name). And finally the phone calls need to be handled by one person. That way one person is responsible for each function and will see that it gets done.

So what's a prospect? Anyone who expresses an interest in your practice. This can be by phone, email, workshops, direct referral, etc. If you are at an event, collect business cards. They give you lots of information to fill the database and allow you to reach others as well when you include them in your marketing campaigns. Offices are

great places to send leaflets or other mailings because more than one person is in the office. You should be contacting these people systematically too, in your monthly marketing efforts. One way to look at it, anyone who is not a client or patient is a prospect, if they talk to you then you have an opportunity to gather their information and add them to your database for a prospect.

In our Marketing NP sections we teach the entire system to you. Please use it to your full advantage. It will also give you new ideas where you can get clients, follow them up. Never be afraid to try a new technique. Sometimes stepping outside the box will give you a new perspective and new ideas. Perhaps all they are looking for is a reason to visit you. Give them one. Offer to let them tour your practice. At the end of the year, it's a significant group of New Patients for free! And each successive year you will continually add new clients with the techniques you have in place. These techniques and plans will continue to evolve and produce a steady stream of new patients. The prospects will continue to flow in year after year. Now, you are trained to look for those prospects and to make it a systematic part of your practice each and every day and work it daily.

MULTIPLY YOUR MARKETING

Because competition is much greater now than at any time in private healthcare, you must expand your marketing efforts, even more than ever before. This means you must now do it all!

No longer will a simple periodic mailing or lecture cut it. There simply is too much other stuff in your patient's face. This can drown out your message through continual bombardment by big media, even at the supermarkets!

Consider adding extra professional referral programs, 'MD/PC Referrals' lectures, appreciation days, screenings, direct response letters and ads, etc. etc.

As we teach in our teleseminars, you must have cost-effective staff persons in charge of executing the plans you have designed. Designate a corner of your business office exclusively to marketing. Place

all your resources here and post your annual marketing calendar (you do have one, right?) above it.

So, consider this carefully, and commit right now to add at least one new arm to your marketing plan this week. Remember, we are here to help.

THE JUST DO IT 10 STEP “JUMP START”

Every practice has less productive periods. If you are following our advice, you know where you are at and what's next to implement in private practice each week.

Sometimes, the regular things don't seem to bring more OVs. Consider the following “Jump Start” you can start today.

1. Mail Thank You cards and gifts to all referrers, professional and patients.
2. Phone patients that are acute, or just had treatment for the first day.
3. Name badge all staff.
4. Decorate the office for the season.
5. Post your newsletter. Put copies at the front desk too.
6. Call and schedule your local health club, Spa or fitness center for a workshop.
7. Rearrange the reception room.
8. Place a “Profit Center” in your reception area.
9. Be the picture of health in your patient's mind.
10. Say thank you, to your staff and patients at every opportunity!

The Cost? Priceless.

If you really want to move the energy up a notch (for short money), throw a party in your office by Friday, just because you care about your practice, and it shows.

INCOME GENERATORS

In today's practice, multiple sources of income are a must! Whether your practice is all cash or not, the following items added to any practice, will make your professional life more rewarding.

In my mind, they are a must. But too many in the profession are nowhere near capitalizing on them all.

Here are my Current favorites:

Nutrition Support Center -includes some supplements, testing, and separate CASH consult fees. You don't need to spend thousands extra to learn this either.

Massage Rx -when combined with chiro care, really Enhances cash OVs. (NOTE: make sure if billing insurance you are careful with YOUR provider # attached to this.

Rehab -many patients will gladly pay. Look what they spend on trainers and clubs. Again, if you are NOT doing this personally, careful with insurance billing.

Complete Bundled Care and Support Packages -It is the next big one in Practice Income. Cash. Right now it's a huge chunk of our weekly practice sales.

Physical Therapy -A fabulous addition, or an albatross, if not done right. This is why I produced our program called "Physical Therapy works"TM.

Shoes and Orthotics -Big source of former patient returns for replacement. Great markup potential on the orthotics, too.

A **Complete Practice by Design operating system** (our Perfect Practice Platform) that ties them all together. Frankly, you're lost without this one to run all the rest.

TOWARDS IMPROVED PATIENT COMPLIANCE

Getting to “Yes, I understand...” by the patient is a multi-step process that actually starts on the first encounter with your office. This is typically by phone, and honestly this is also where too many offices just blow it.

If the patient does not feel they are calling the right place, the rest of your job becomes much harder. Be careful what you ask for, and how you present the questions here too.

The next place where an encounter can likely stumble is at the front desk. Of course your staff person on the first phone call got the patient to be there in plenty of time to handle the first visit intake forms.

Your intake forms should be crisp, precise and fully compliant. I insist upon black ink only (it copies much better in legal cases). And I ask the staff to highlight the forms for the patient, so they know exactly where to sign.

There should be a very clear statement regarding your financial policies too. Think this one out well in advance.

I am a firm advocate of “all the cards on the table” in every encounter and written policy. This is the only way that lasting relationships with your office can develop.

I start with a 2 part NCR office policy, that the patient reads, signs, agrees to follow (in writing) and then is given the copy bearing a signature for their own files.

Next, any waivers, such as the Medicare ABN needs to be handled, competently, before you ever see the patient. Any and all non-covered services as you understand need to be fully addressed as well.

Lastly, the patient should be made to feel comfortable, that they are in the right office and the very first thing on your mind is starting them on the path back to good health.

BEFORE DISASTER STRIKES...

It's not a question of if, but when. The bigger and longer your career gets, and the more dependent upon technology we become it's only a matter of time before some very important component of your system fails.

Could be something as simple as a power outage, or something potentially much more devastating such as the willful act of a former employee.

Whatever the case, unless all your data is safe and secure, you run the risk of taking a potentially devastating blow.

A few months ago, we suffered a catastrophic server failure. Fortunately, we did not lose any data files due to redundant systems and backups. Nevertheless, it has been a major project to rebuild the system, and get us back up and running.

Fortunately, due to the work of great professionals both hardware and software, we are almost back to 100 percent.

As good as our back up and data preservation systems were, we're taking steps now to make them even better.

Here are some very simple tips that will allow you to preserve data integrity.

Make sure you take a hard and external back up off site, every day.

Number two; make sure both your hardware and software support teams will be there for you, when disaster strikes. You also want to make sure that your servers are running mirrored drives, and that their integrity is checked on a regular basis.

Also, make sure your staff office policy and compliance plan has technology (internet) violation penalties clearly spelled out.

Finally, make sure that your in-office systems such as data entry and patient management systems are simultaneous and on paper, so when the time comes for data updating and reentry, the job is made infinitely easier.

A couple of very simple paper systems here will keep you fully operational, and able to collect payments, and code patient data for electronic entry.

We now have much more information on this, as the complexity of data systems, as well as their service potential to you, continues to escalate with each passing month.

A NECESSARY EVIL? LESSONS FROM TECHNOLOGY MELTDOWNS.

By now many of you are familiar with the catastrophic server failure in our clinic.

I have a clinic with 10 computer clients, all of which work to the max all day long. A business class server runs this entire client system. We also have a terminal services remote dial in, and a sonic wall

hard firewall. Pretty much bullet proof (for three years and one week). One week out of warranty, the server fails.

I have long prided myself on the extensive (early and frequently upgraded) usage of technology in practice. Indeed, it has been a hallmark of success and has allowed maintaining a large practice in these rapidly changing times and escalating data management requirements.

As we are getting back to normal, some very poignant lessons are emerging.

First, we are in really good shape. No patient or clinic data was lost due to redundant back-ups and mirrored hard drives. We did however lose some custom templates and settings. They are probably in a file that was corrupted.

Nonetheless, it has been 40 plus hours of labor, at a MINIMUM 100\$/hr, plus additional time with software support at 5\$/minute getting things integrated and operational again. So already, we are pushing seven grand in costs, not to mention the time and extra staffing needed to reenter an entire week's worth of data from the paper records we managed.

Naturally, insurance policies weaseled out of any coverage.

But, like with so many things in life, unexpected side benefits emerged.

First of all, as stressful as it was to be stripped of the usual tools my staff rose to the challenge very quickly, and were immediately able to fall back on their redundant but very simple paper systems.

Secondly, both the front office and the back, as well, realized how much more enjoyable patient encounters were. And I believe this is because both areas of the practice were able to donate 99 percent of the encounter time to simply greeting and interacting with the patients. In the usual day, we probably spend a minimum of twenty percent of encounter time on record keeping.

And don't you know (of course) during this hassle, our office volume jumped as well.

Like so many areas of life in this day and age, technology isolates and has stripped us of valuable, humanistic interactive time. Indeed, is this not where the real joy in practice still comes from? I dispute anybody who loves the healing arts to say otherwise.

In any event, once we were back up and running, we realized fully what was happening. So I next redesigned our routine patient encounters, most especially I further simplified routine record keeping, through the redesign of and extensive use of customized but editable templates.

Last week, when I shared the new designs with my staff, we were both amazed at how (long ago) obvious this all should have been.

But another extraordinary side benefit of this entire experience was that many patients commented on how our office procedures did not seem to miss a beat. Other than the fact we could not provide precise account balances, the office remained fully functional, productive, and in attendance to the immediate needs of patient care.

In fact, we were actually able to train a new front desk person in the midst of our technology meltdown. And yes, she did stay on really enjoying our patients, as well as her new team's flexibility.

So, what's the take away here? Honestly, I recommend if you haven't spent time recently in practice reviewing what gives you the most joy and satisfaction in the office, that you refocus your attention in that direction.

I'll also caution you to employ technology as a tool, but never become a slave to it.

As I advocated extensively in my "Practice by Design"TM writings and conference, realize that we all have the need, no the obligation, to be unplugged from technology, engaging quiet time whenever possible. This means, no computers, no cell phones, no TV, radio or blackberries or pagers.

In any event, I hope you will be able to learn from our experiences. In this day and age of private practice, technology is absolutely necessary but does not have to be evil. Like Sarah Connor, be ever vigilant for the rise of the machines!

Make sure you know your software inside and out. Make sure you have support teams that will be available to you when you need them. Make sure there is redundancy in all your systems.

But lastly, do not become a slave to technology you employ. Figure out better and better ways to employ technology, to help bring you more joy, peace, and prosperity in practice, while never becoming slave to it.

Then perhaps most importantly, don't forget to unplug from everything, on a regular basis. Get outside, do something physical, read a great book by the oceanside or in the mountains.

I Guarantee, your entire perspective on practice, and life will change immeasurably for the best!

(This article was originally published by MPA Media)

CORE STRENGTH AND BALANCE

With winter off to a quick start, and better December snow than we have had in the Northeast in many years, I hit the slopes last Friday for the first time this season.

This was the fresh, deep and sticky snow. Again, real unusual in recent memory in December in New England. Now, those of you who Ski downhill know that first run can be tentative, and rightly should be.

I had been unable to workout (running) for a week after some minor surgery, so I was not really as sharply conditioned as usual. So I was a little apprehensive and vowed to my wife not to go nuts the first day out.

Don't get me wrong, I'm in decent shape. I have run for 30 years, and the last few years have added back a few races, some real trail running, and even a run 'til you barf trail race last fall.

This past year though, I have trained harder since January, having run several 10ks and a 20k hill run, 12-14 mile training runs and maintained a disciplined regimen of road and trail running. I have added more spinal stability, calisthenics, stretching and balance exercises. I'll also do some biking when I can.

Anyway, I get to my favorite local mountain, conditions are great, and crowds were surprisingly minimal. No sweat with a great parking spot too. I had a little boot trouble, before I realized my right ankle was a little swollen and tender, but with a change in larch adjustments I soon felt great in the boots (which is so critical to performance).

Now, I had not been on the boards since March, but within 3 runs, I was skiing one of my best first days ever. You know the type, smooth linked turns, reasonably fast speeds, etc.

I felt so good after the first 7 runs, I went right inside and demoed for the rest of the day the new Skis I have been eying (Nordica Speed-maker Mach IIs, which by the way, cost way more than my first car!).

By the third hour, I was a little surprised at how good I felt. I knew I had trained hard most of the year, but "What's so different this year?" I kept asking.

Then, on my next ride up the quad, it hit me "Core Strength and Balance. That's it!"

As simple as it is, I had done more of my stability and balance regimens at least 2 nights a week on the floor after coming home from practice, usually while watching sports.

And what enormous gains in skiing performance, especially on the new high performance boards! The difference in trunk strength was so noticeable. Turns were much smoother, edging and initiation much better than ever. Really big gains in balance too. (I know, you're thinking this guy's a DABCO, is he getting soft?)

And then I looked for the lesson here. It really is Core Strength and Balance which has kept me going hard in so many ways.

And it's also *always* Core Strength and Balance in my top performing clients too!

And you know what, all of my teleclasses, writings and products at Perfect Practice are based upon these very same principles too!

* * * * *

Like my ski adventure, *enormous* quantum and exponential gains in practice are really about *simultaneously* mastering (The Steps) time-tested, core principles, which form a rock solid life and practice.

Then adding high performance tools and systems (The Platform) for producing maximum gains! The bigger you want your practice, the more systems you add that produce revenue!

You probably know by now I am nuts about the core strengths, and what happens when they are missing in practice and especially in life. I still remember, and my friends will tell you 20 years ago even, it would always drive me berserk when one of my colleagues would complain about practice (how hard it was, patients won't pay, staff is killing me, insurance companies still suck) you know all the usual gripes.

In my early days, I really had no patience for complaining (and still don't). These same complaints from doctors haven't changed much, but I learned very early on in practice that there are right and wrong ways of dealing with these realities, some of which are in the long term especially very counterproductive.

Because by year four in practice 200+ visits were already reality. I had an associate, and a big paycheck. And I was building a fabulous private life, even while getting an MS and DABCO! Every time practice or the environment changed, I went to mentors, master-minded and then redesigned systems that worked better. And when things got really tough 11 years into practice I totally reinvented my practice, and have done so at least twice since then!

This is how my Steps, Gold, Plus and Platinum Clients especially are experiencing phenomenal periods of growth, gains in income and reduced stress they spoke about (call if you want the download). And it's all done at Perfect Practice Web with solid Principles of Core Strength and Life Balance. One Perfect Step at a Time!

Lets face it, if anyone can do this, you can too!

Now, when someone asks, I say this is what we do at Perfect Practice Web. Share time-tested principles and, above all, help to implement modern systems. That work in today's world. Help teach each other doctors Core Strength and Balance. No BS.

And help Doctors fulfill their dreams. All *you* need to do is choose which pathway is right for you, and stay with it!

YOUR OWN LONGEVITY REVOLUTION

Anybody in patient care for any length of time comes to realize the importance of his or her own health and fitness. What too few recognize is the phenomenal opportunity their own lifestyle habits can do to build and promote their practices.

This is something I learned about 30 years ago, as a student. A member of the athletic injuries club, and a runner myself, I had the opportunity to meet and interact with not only clinic patients, but fitness center members, running store employees and fellow athletes.

Early on in my career (3 months) I started to treat the Boston University track and field athletes. Even before I had my own office, the college van would bring the team to the office I was working in on Fridays. Man, did I learn a lot, and meet some phenomenal athletes and coaches. I was also having fun doing so.

Very shortly, I began to see the benefit of just letting people know what I loved to do in my off time that related to health and fitness. Before I knew it, I was invited to speak to area clubs and participate or treat or screen at local events.

In a large way, that's how I built a big, profitable practice, very quickly. It was fun, required less effort than otherwise may have been the case, and magnetically drew cases I liked, and could help. And I kept many of these activities up for years. Of course, it's less now as

I spend so much more time with my colleagues, clients, not to mention toys, travel and vacations.

But, here's the bottom line. I confidently learned (and now teach members) how to gather a group of new patients, just for the asking!

Now, there are so many more options to use this same strategy. Fitness clubs, dance studios, you name it. The possibilities are endless.

However, one of the simplest, easiest and least time-consuming ways to do this is with "table talk". That dedicated time you share every day with your patients can build an enormous practice, with little stress and strain.

So how do we do this?

First of all, patients need to have accepted you as their authority on health. And nowadays, hopefully, wellness and longevity. For some patients, this may take a while. Others know you from outside the office and these, of course, are much easier encounters.

This is where I differ with many other consultants, and never advocate force feeding of patient education and information. That's stressful, too often unwanted, and a total waste of your valuable time. Not to even mention, despite all our banter in society today about wellness, some patients really couldn't care less. Harsh words, but very true, more so in some circles than others. Plus, it really leaves a bad taste with too many prospective patients, who now have ended up with tainted views of what we (as DCs especially) actually do. In reality, this group of patients never got the whole story anyway.

Instead, if you are health, wellness and longevity oriented, and especially live that lifestyle, *patients and their resulting inquiries for themselves and from family and friends are naturally drawn to you.* And these are the patients who really want to learn from you.

So, this is where "table-talk" should begin. To initiate this with less forthcoming but health-oriented people, I commonly will use examples from the media, especially sports. Like Johnny Damon's migraines and chiropractic. And like some local celebrity athletes too. Remember, the patients who want to know about what makes us tick, and keeps us energized and fit are the most rewarding and easiest to help in all of healthcare. Your practice is no different.

Doctor, here's another really important reality check. Those uninterested patients who fail to accept responsibility for themselves, and especially their own wellbeing, will attempt to bring you and your staff down to their level to self justify. Somehow, this personality type is always right. Not to mention these very same people are often a huge burden on our society and our healthcare system. Again, not politically correct for me to say, but true. And these are the ones you don't usually have successful long-term relationships with in your own office anyways.

All of this discourse leads to another powerful admonition not to retain patients who are non-compliant.

But what about the majority of your patients who want your help and guidance on health, longevity and fitness?

My best advice is make it easy for them to learn. Engage them in appropriate table talk about their health, fitness and longevity goals and watch their referrals flow.

Offer freely throughout the office in private areas, complimentary, modern well-written educational media. Make sure your professional colleagues would not be embarrassed to read it in your office either! Avoid unsupported claims, but don't be afraid to show good empiric evidence based treatment options.

But most especially offer them you.

Complete, unadulterated genuine you.

Do periodic workshops both in and outside the practice, as we show you how, only on your own terms. Just don't invite or attempt to educate those who couldn't care less. You will drive yourself and your team nuts if you do.

But doctor, just be careful what you give away. Any extended discussions, rehab or nutritional consultations should be paid for by the patient. This is the only way to ensure the patient gets lasting value.

And as a result of all of these steps working as a system, you build a phenomenal practice, and get paid like a doctor.

ME AND MRS. JONES

Patient management, regardless of the type of case is elementally very simple, and stress free, BUT only if you start out exactly right with the Mrs. Joneses, from day 1.

I had a patient show up recently, in agony, who just stopped treatment 10 days ago (chronic post op LBP) “to see what would happen”. The real reason she stopped, of course, is that even though she had initially agreed to pay beyond her 12-visit coverage, and she agreed to be compliant, she did not want to pay anything out of pocket.

Of course I did what I could to alleviate her suffering, helped her up, and said “Mrs. Jones, as we discussed initially, if you fail to follow my advice, I am forced to discharge you from care.”

She looked absolutely aghast. I proceeded to reiterate that not only do non-compliant patients not get better, they become a professional liability.

I think she finally got it. She knows it’s not about the money, but in her own best interest. It remains to be seen whether she will follow up or not.

In any event, this is practice today. Hold your ground, be polite but firm, and ever vigilant for patient encounters that potentially create trouble for you and your team.

Practice by design, on your terms, earn the respect and income you deserve, and above all get patients back to health who want it.

Remember what I say to patients, “Mrs. Jones, I can only be about your health, not your insurance.”

Mrs. Jones, Part II, 3 days later

If you have been following this story, you’ll remember Mrs. Jones, my formerly non-compliant patient. For those new to this series, I posted the original to my blog, which you can access through our website.

Anyway, to be truly successful in private practice now, financial barriers must stay down.

Perceived value, your level of service must remain high at all times. Your intent as a doctor must be unshakeable.

This is exactly what prompted Mrs. Jones to bring her husband in to meet me, and tell me she wants to continue long-term care, now gladly self-paying.

Mr. Jones is now very happy as well.

Remember, our Mrs. Jones is a post-op, chronic LB patient. Numerous other approaches just have not given her adequate results. Axial distraction (manual), SOT, and intersegmental traction are working great. I added more TLC, nutrition and exercise personalization as well. I am working with her PCP to help reduce her meds too.

Nothing fancy, but solid results, reasonable cost and confidence in her doctor's ability.

Doctors, sometimes we make practice so hard.

It really is this simple. Be a good doctor first, have excellent support systems in place (and today there are many you need), and be only about your patients' health.

A phenomenally rewarding life awaits you, but only if you take all the right steps, by design.

Learn to fully Practice by Design, not default.

HIGH PERFORMANCE TOOLS AND TOYS

Not too long ago, I wrote "Core Strength and Balance", after the first ski trip of the year. I also told you about my new high-performance skis, my Nordica Speed Machine Mach IIs. These are the most powerful skis I've ever owned. I've probably skied stronger and faster

than any time in my last 53 years. So much so, I scared myself to the point of nausea early one recent morning.

Well, tons of stuff has happened in the last 6 weeks, just an incredibly busy stretch. Practice is off to its best January in several years, thanks to the marketing tweaks and performance tuning we did in the last quarter.

Last week, I worked about 50 hours in four days M-Th, doing a one-hour teleconference, radio show and live presentation, all within 36 hours on Wednesday. I was at the Voc Tech Board meeting until late Thursday and then wrapped it all up just before noon Friday with a media development meeting for Perfect Practice.

Despite the heavy schedule, I always block out me time. This week it was Fri 12 noon to Sunday 6PM. I have written extensively on the power of creative energy and where it comes from, (and its *not* the office day). I have also preached the value of blocked scheduling, and how powerful a concept that is.

So, when one of my attorney friends called Friday night and asked me to spend the day Saturday at the boat show, I didn't even bat an eyelash. We really had a great time. Literally, we spent hours at one exhibit with factory personnel from Grady-White. I was like a kid in the candy store. I have owned and operated Grady-Whites for twelve years. They really are the Rolls Royce of 2030' boats. It was so awesome to talk with engineers and designers, as I so admire their commitments to continual improvement and ultra high performance.

We also spent lots of time reviewing the latest marine navigation equipment and software, and talking with the factory representatives – Garmin, Furono, Navtec, you name it.

The advances of the last five years are nothing short of phenomenal. Touch Screen technology, TFT displays with higher resolution graphics, polarized lens compatible coatings on the screens, smart routing that works like your car navigation. Really cool stuff.

Sunday was another fabulous play day. Up before dawn, two hours to the mountain, three hours of skiing before the crowds, another two hours back, and then 90 minutes on my BMW motorcycle. God, I love cracking the throttle on this baby. I'm going on 5 years next month with my R1150RS Sport Tourer.

Then, I even got to watch the Chargers upset Indy. I was so bummed for Peyton Manning and Tony Dungy.

Boy, Sunday was one great day.

So, what's the point? And why the name-dropping? Believe me, its not to impress.

The fact is that there comes a point in time and life to move beyond just basic skills and tools, and yes even possessions. When you really start to crank things up, the best tools really shine, and allow you to push your limits further than you ever imagined.

Practice is no different. Once you have mastered all the basic skills, applied the principle of Constant And Never-ending Improvement, (CANI) you find yourself ready and capable of producing so much more. By using only the highest performance tools, skills, and staff, your output is so much greater and your level of satisfaction rises substantially as well. This is so true, regardless of how long you have been in practice, the type of practice you have, and the systems and people you employ.

Two years ago, while writing, "Creating your Perfect Practice", I spoke extensively about the concept of blue printing. Blue printing involves taking an engine, typically from a race car or other fine machine, and rebuilding it to very precise tolerances, just as the engineers intended. Essentially, you start with exactly the same size engine, but end up with one that produces so much more horsepower, torque, fuel economy, performance, as well as a phenomenal sense of satisfaction when you really put it through the paces.

Again, practice is no different. Blue printing like we do with clients really can produce enormous gains. Absolutely everything The Perfect Practice Web team has written and designed allows you to accomplish so much more, with much greater efficiency, high performance, satisfaction, producing infinite rewards in exactly the same amount of time, if not less, than you may ever have thought possible.

In this day and age, higher performance tools are so necessary to accomplishing more in less time. Besides, as your skills improve, just like my toys, you will enjoy these so much more.

This is also the secret to having a life outside of practice, being able to pursue your other interests and aspirations, or being stressed out, burned out, and financially dissatisfied.

The reality is, when you use the appropriate high-performance tools and toys, input effort correspondingly decreases. So, not only do you accomplish more, save time, have more fun, have less hassles with repairs and maintenance, and produce better results, you actually end up expending less energy.

So, with virtually all your office systems, see what is outdated. See what needs to be replaced, and then, invest only in the highest performing tools and systems available today.

ARE DECEMBER WEEKS SLOW IN THE OFFICE?

With our members, the Holiday Weeks are anything but. Most of our clients have sponsored special events, put products and services on sale, decorated the offices for the holidays, and have had special contact with their referral friends.

Our members also have sponsored de-stressing patient events, as well as provided a fun up-beat atmosphere. Our patients have also made generous donations, and helped with our sponsored events for a local shelter.

As much as we anticipate the holidays, we are most excited about what next year brings.

Our marketing schedule is written already for the entire year. Travel plans and vacations are being solidified. Our fee schedules have been adjusted. We are deciding to dump more insurances.

We have also tweaked certain office policies and procedures that have not been executed quite as well as they could have been.

Our list of next year's fees has been printed. Our upcoming patient work-shops for January have just been announced.

On, and on, and on. These are all hallmarks of Championship producing doctors and staff.

Do you count yourself in these ranks? If not, what are you waiting for?

Again, it's simply a matter of knowing where you want to go, and then designing the way to get there. Of course in the perfect practice family, there is significant guidance, planning.

And it's the steps that were executed, starting in September that have allowed all these events of the last two weeks to take place.

While making your plans for next year, don't forget to include all the changes that will be necessary, including carefully choosing professional support system, to produce the fabulous practice of your dreams.

THE PERFECT TIME FOR CHANGES...

...is today. People today expect changes. So, if you have not done so already, post new fees, office hours, but most especially policy changes, designed to make *your life less stressful*.

In our previous chapters, reside numerous areas for effective change and growth in modern practices. Please don't neglect your own vision, goals and purpose in this process. If you have not done this vital work already, get up earlier, stay up later, whatever, because it's that important! Write it all down, and reread it three times a day minimum. It will be a work in progress, putting you light-years ahead in the "game" called practice.

Complete this by next Monday AM at the latest. Now the hardest part is consistency in follow through. If you have made decisive

shifts, some staff and patients will doubt you. Be real steady handed with daily implementation for a month, then you will wonder why you ever did things the old way. By the time the month has passed, you will be on your way to personal and professional fulfillment.

“YES DOCTOR HAYES, I UNDERSTAND. IS CASH OK?”

Getting to “Yes, I understand, ...do you take cash?” by the patient is a multi-step process that actually starts on the first encounter with your office. This is typically by phone, and honestly this is also where too many offices just blow it.

If the patient does not feel they are calling the right place, the rest of your job becomes much harder. Be careful what you ask for, and how you present the questions here too.

The next place where an encounter can likely stumble is at the front desk. Of course your staff person on the first phone call got the patient to be there in plenty of time to handle the first visit intake forms and necessary time with you, to get all this stuff out of the way before you get down to their health.

Your intake forms should be crisp, precise and fully compliant. I insist upon black ink only (it copies much better in legal cases). And I ask the staff to highlight the forms for the patient, so they know exactly where to sign.

There should be a very clear statement regarding your financial policies too. Think this one out well in advance.

I am a firm advocate of “all the cards on the table” in every encounter and written policy. This is the only way that lasting relationships with your office can develop.

I start with a 2-part NCR office policy, that the patient reads, signs, agrees to follow (in writing) and then is given the copy bearing a signature for his or her own files.

Next, any waivers, if you do participate in any health plans (think harder on this one, its not a trick question) such as the Medicare ABN needs to be handled, competently, before you ever see the patient. Any and all non-covered services as you understand need to be fully addressed as well.

Lastly, the patient should be made to feel comfortable, that they are in the right office and the very first thing on your mind is starting them on the path back to good health.

Now, this all sounds easy. Admittedly, too often the Doctor spends not nearly enough time learning this. And this is where too many offices blow it. To have a really powerful practice, you can't hide the finances behind a staff person. I firmly believe the Doctor needs to do this on visit 1.

Of course the staff needs to be fully knowledgeable about all the doctors policies and preferences, and competent at collecting from the patient on (or preferably before) every encounter.

I also believe this leads to a much stronger doctor patient relationship. Besides, this approach also fosters a no BS approach to the other very critical components of your practice.

There are many, many more precise steps you can take here. And unless you really master all these skills, practice can really become a nightmare.

And that is precisely why I will be teaching this system live in great detail around the USA in "Getting to YES! I want care and will gladly pay for it".

I hope to see you there!

HOW TO DEVELOP A MARKETING PLAN THAT WORKS II

Marketing the private practice has got to be one of the most misunderstood and frustrating areas of practice development that most doctors encounter. The reasons for this are multiple. **Certainly, most private practices seldom post, let alone and utilize effectively a calendar of events and procedures. In fact, a very small minority of private practices has any marketing action plans in place.**

This is a disaster waiting to happen. Most commonly, there is no linked sequence of events in any rational manner. This ultimately may lead the doctor to conclude that marketing their practices is ineffective, perhaps even unnecessary.

But today's modern world no longer tolerates an approach to marketing the practice that is not organized, relevant, and plainly visible to the employees and patients alike.

The very first step in the developing a marketing plan that works for you is to sit and write down exactly the type of practice you desire, and indeed the precise type of patient you are most comfortable treating. Unless you can clearly target your market you will have considerable difficulty developing and communicating a message that prospective and existing patients understand.

The next step is to make sure that your practice systems are developed to the point that you're entire team can process the new patients you attract in an organized, efficient manner.

It is pointless to spend time and money and energy looking for your new patients and then being unable to process them. Doctors failing to plan in this way first may ultimately and erroneously conclude that their marketing efforts have failed when the desired result is not achieved.

The third thing that needs to happen, once practice development is at the point that it effectively processes new patients are a clear

list of the steps that are likely to attract the type of patient the doctor actually wants.

For example, let's say you want to build a significant sports injury portion of your practice. The steps needed to obtain this would include things such as speaking before the local PTO, perhaps putting on a injury prevention seminar for local coaches and quite possibly paid advertising in the school newsletter and yearbook. Initially, you may simply need to show up and introduce yourself at local athletic events with business cards so people actually know who you are, where you are, and what you do.

Once you have identified the area of the practice you wish to develop, and the list of steps to take to draw people to you it is time to incorporate these in the written calendar.

I suggest taking a paper desk size calendar initially, and scheduling in the exact days and times that each step will be executed. Remember, this will require you to set aside time developing and actually writing this calendar. For most doctors, I suggest a minimum one-hour per week where nothing else but calendar development and marketing implementation actually takes place. This time is non-cancelable and needs to be viewed as essential to practice development. You also need to make sure that no interruptions by staff or phone calls take place during this time. Make sure that all the steps you have previously written or noted, are placed on the calendar and they actually are done more or less simultaneously and not in sequential manner. The reason for doing this is quite simply the principle of massive action, which is often neglected in these plans.

In marketing, too many doctors try a haphazard step here or there. When they fail to produce the desired results, they become frustrated and actually abandon their marketing program. A much better way to approach marketing is to be sure that linked steps are performed simultaneously. You will be much happier with the end result approaching your marketing in this manner.

Once your practice begins to grow, you will find it nearly impossible to continue the examination of new of the patients and processing of existing patients without delegating some of your marketing duties. This is where trusted employees really come into play. **For example you may have scheduled that every month your list of coaches receives an article from you relating to your services, including**

how what you do makes their lives easier. You must understand that this type of constant contact with referral sources develops a thriving practice initially and also builds long-term relationships, and indeed actual referrals for many years to come.

Probably, the most overlooked portion of private practice marketing is maintaining close contact with those who have utilized your services as well as members of the community you may have met at events, and social functions.

All of these people need to be entered into a database, which you will maintain on a regular basis. What many doctors forget, is that patients and their families who previously utilized your services are much more likely to not only refer their family in friends but actually see you again as well.

In this day and age list maintenance is fairly easy. It is something a trusted staff person as well as a mailing house that distributes your newsletters and bulletins can help you do. Approached in this manner, it is much easier take a cost-effective approach to getting the word out on promotions, practice events, and practice changes such as hours that invariably occur over the life of the practice.

Only after this very important approach to internal marketing is fully operational, should the doctor consider spending money on external programs such as extensive newspaper advertising.

Final thing to ensure is that complete records are kept of all sources of new patients in your practice. This tracking is essential so you know in the short term and in the long-term exactly where patients coming from and which steps are producing the best results. Then, analyze results in such a way that allows you to grow your practice as large as you want, for as long as you want.

This article should help you understand how important an organized marketing program is to any private practice. Although it may seem like a daunting task at first, once organized, it becomes much easier in succeeding years once you have a strong foundation on which to build. Paying attention to these principles ultimately results in the development of the practice of your dreams, regardless of what is going on in the outside world.

EXPANDING YOUR PRACTICE IN CHALLENGING TIMES

Fuel prices. Surcharges. Layoffs. Real Estate mortgage cruel jokes. Stupid property valuations of the last few years. And now for those needing health care services its health insurance benefits that are often laughable. 40\$ co pays. But, this is the stuff swirling with angst in your patients head, and in some areas of the US and abroad, in differing socioeconomic strata way more than others.

For most practices this *is* Future Shock!

So, doctor, when the patient before you today has little or no insurance benefits, or a third party system gets yanked from your area, are you just continuing to try sell just an office visit?

Or, like I teach my upper level clients, are you and your entire team offering absolutely everything that an office visit and great patient care can create in your patient's life? Do you have all the tools and systems to really create the practice of the future?

The answer should be obvious. And doctor, do you continue to be only about their "coverage", or are you really and honestly only about their health, just like I had to tell and then wrote about my "Mrs. Jones" many months ago.

If you are only about their health, does every one of your staff know this, and reinforce it on every visit? Or, do you play games like free services, forgiving co-pays and deductibles, dual fees? I certainly hope not, on ALL the preceding issues.

Do you instead of games have systems fully in place to deal with all these issues in your patients mind? And what about your team? Without having your doctor's income, it can be tougher around their homes too these days.

So what's the solution to these issues going to be in today's world?

Its Pollyannaish in my opinion not to acknowledge all these issues of today's brave new world. To do so could be really insensitive in dealing with staff and patients.

It is however a huge error in judgment to let these current economic changes dominate your thoughts. The only constructive thing to be done *right now* is to work on continually evolving your systems, mechanisms and procedures to deal with all the issues at hand.

But most especially, first take a hard look at your *attitude*. Is it "Chicken Little (you know, 'The sky is falling!')"? Or Zig Ziglar like ("You can get anything in life you want, if you just help enough other people get what they want!").

The people you associate with, what your coaches teach you, what you watch on the tube, listen to and read, what has this done for you lately? You get my point.

The fact is changes, yes especially economic are natural, and cyclic. Sometimes they hit really hard. This might just be one of the toughest cycles in recent memory, after the boom of the last 20-25 years.

Big problems I see ahead in private healthcare are more likely with doctors who have never had to manage a profitable practice in tougher economic climates. Or have not yet established simple mechanisms for patients to *want* to pay you out of pocket.

Doctor, the truth is your patients want only you. They want your knowledge, decision-making skills and expertise. They want a compassionate human being, not a stuffed shirt.

Doctor, the real truth is your patients want the *benefits* of your care. They are not going to pay for "office visits". They will however, pay you for an experience.

And so here it is with private healthcare practices today. We can ill afford to be about office visits, anymore than Starbucks is, or will ever be just about coffee.

Your patients need, and want way more from your office, now more than ever. Especially when care opportunities and choices abound for them. You only need to look at the explosive growth of massage clinics, medi-clinics at Wal-Mart and CVS, and now even franchised al-

ternative healthcare chains, spas of all types and economics, and even cosmetic dentistry and surgery centers to figure this out.

Patients need and are looking for an office environment, which helps them escape all the crap in the rest of their lives. A receptionist that is warm and welcoming, and caters to them. An office that looks and feels clean, calming, more spa like than clinical. The right colors and feel. Product sales that support and enhance the experience. Support Staff that is friendly, helpful and upbeat.

And your patients really want true health and fitness, well into their later years. Now they expect and will seek out ways to ensure less physical pain, more energy, less stress, weight and blood lipid (cholesterol) control. They want not to be diabetic due to poor fitness, suffer with fibromyalgia, or be chronically stressed out or depressed and anxious.

They want no undesired side effects from treatment. They want financial clarity. And today's patients expect complete technological literacy with an incredible human touch behind it.

Do this right, and you will really have a fantastic practice. Raving fans, tons of referrals, and yes, most especially patients who pay you handsomely for their experience which is unlike anything else in their neighborhood. You will be THE go-to doctor.

But, you will not pull this off without an effective strategy and market study. Do your homework. Study our guidance on practice makeovers. Make rock solid your staffing systems. Set it up fully compliant, and with the best legal and tax structure.

Lastly, come to "Future Shock". Really learn this right. Let our experiences with practices from around the country help to plan your practices fine tuning, or if need be a makeover, the right way, the first time.

“THE DISTURBING FACT...

...is that the vast majority of people, including educated and otherwise sophisticated people, find the idea of change so threatening that they attempt to deny its existence. Even many people who understand intellectually that change is accelerating, have not internalized that knowledge, do not take this critical social fact into account in planning their own personal lives”

Alvin Toffler, in “Future Shock” 1970

Change. Even the word alone makes some, even doctors uncomfortable. Yet others embrace and enjoy the entire creative process needed to adapt to it.

As a consultant, I have observed numerous times over my career, right next to one another, practices, which are booming, and then at precisely the same time and local there are those doctors unhappy, stressed out, struggling to pay the bills. They suffer from future shock, an emotional and physical shutdown that occurs when confronted by cumulative or overwhelming change.

After careful analysis, time after time, those doctors and their team members who continue to prosper, even in today’s world, have learned and fully developed the skills necessary to deal with change, to be “Commanders of Change”™.

Changes now occur so rapidly, that even our students encounter a new world upon graduation. The sheer volume of practice information, clinical, procedural and social changes can be dizzying. And it gets more complicated and faster every day! In fact, more change now occurs in a single week, than many of us older than fifty used to encounter in an entire year.

It’s in processing, sorting, scanning and ultimately applying pertinent information, not only in our personal but professional lives that is perhaps the biggest life challenge we face today.

In healthcare practices, the systems that we used to employ for this are no longer adequate. First of all, the volume of information is too much to be handled by antiquated systems. Secondly, sorting applicable ideas and data into readily usable bits (and now bytes) is critical in today’s world.

Despite this fact, much of practice growth, development and management information as well as their delivery systems remain unchanged. Traditional consulting programs are also extraordinarily time intensive, and expensive to acquire, both of which are now totally unnecessary.

The good news is, *there are now* specific tools and systems that make *implementing* and adapting to change much easier, far less costly and much more time effective. And it's upon this premise that a perfect, highly profitable practice can now be built, maintained and then expanded with far less cost and time investment than ever before.

Ultimately of course, it's up to each of us to decide what's best for us, and congruent with our major objectives. But more and more are taking a hard look at our way. Why?

I can tell you that just as Toffler noted almost 40 years ago, it's my observation that those doctors who do the best in today's world are "richer, better educated, and are more mobile". Indeed they actually "live faster" than most of the population with regard to processing and then applying change to their personal and professional lives.

They are unfazed by the sheer volume of things that need to be done, and continually upgrade their systems for doing so. They rarely complain, and get an extraordinarily amount of things done. They run highly profitable practices save more money and have far more freedom. They practice on their own terms.

And they know this is precisely what we teach, with all the modern materials, tools, live teleconferencing and support and delivery systems that are unlike anything else out there. All at a fraction of what other consultants cost.

These doctors are indeed the Commanders of Change™ in their communities. The bottom line is these doctors know that these are learned skills. Systems that are teachable, procedures that are simple to use, powerfully effective, once you know how.

Failure to thrive is correctable, no matter where you practice, or how long you have been at it. Learning to make better choices and decisions goes a long way. Of course, some find it easier than others. But to really live the life you have imagined as a student and now a doc-

tor, decide to *finally acquire* the information that can help you learn, prosper and grow.

If you think you have what it takes to be a Commander of Change™, why not join us?

As Jim Rohn once said, “Discipline weighs ounces, regret weighs tons”.

It’s all up to you.

MIXED MESSAGES?

Are your patients getting mixed messages, and you don’t even know it? Most especially, might there may be an incongruence or two with regard to office policies which might not only be slowing you down, but could be like driving your car with the brakes on?

Well, if you have more than one staff person, the answer might be yes.

Even in my practice, I discovered this quite by accident last week. The problem began with a newer staff person getting into encounters for the first time by herself.

It seems like everything has broken in my office in the last 3 months. Computers, phones, credit card swipe machines, and even an ultrasound unit. Stay in practice long enough and stuff just happens to fail eventually.

Anyway, last week it was the card swipe machine. With the volume of cash sales we do, this can really hurt the income for a day or two. Now my staff is very bright, and they know our policies on collections. So why did the failure of one simple device cause chaos at the front desk?

It was because, unbeknownst to me, while I was taking care of patients in the back, instead of calmly taking card numbers and running

the charges in batches when the unit was fixed, there was total disagreement among the staff on how to handle this. Something so very simple. When I observed this firsthand later in the day, I was absolutely flabbergasted. And next my staff saw a side of me I usually try never to display. The correct thing to do in this situation should have been so obvious!

How could this happen in the consultant's office? The same way an undefeated championship football team gets their butt kicked in the biggest game of the year! Poor communications, failure of execution, and lack of applied discipline.

It was only because the new staff person was being given directives based upon fleeting thoughts from the others, rather than them thinking just a little more about what the office policies on collections actually are. I was nonetheless, absolutely livid.

Later that night, when I finally cooled off, I made a list of 7 or so vital areas in practice to review in great detail with the entire staff. And we did so, as a team the very first thing before patients the next day.

Of course, the theme of this meeting was "Mixed Messages to Patients".

In practice, mixed message to your patients can spell absolute disaster. If everybody is not precisely on the same page with crucial practice issues, especially collections, billings and patient compliance, chaos and poor production and the accompanying frustration that results will really drag you down. And let's face it; practice is difficult enough without all these items not running on autopilot.

So, what's the bottom line in your office policies on appointments, insurances, and time of service plans, over the counter collections, noncompliance with home care, etc? What about the all important staff policies on attendance, vacations, etc? Every single staff person must know and execute these in a similar cohesive manor.

Whatever policies you ultimately adopt, these need to be spelled out in great detail, and regularly reviewed and reiterated. And when something unforeseen, when something as simple as what happened in my office occurs, you must take steps to fix them immediately.

Not having firm, detailed policies on all these items creates great stress and profound underachievement in private practice.

This does not have to be an elaborate process either. Simply having a word document on your desktop that you can add to, or even just text messaging on your cell phone can go along way towards fine-tuning your policies. They need not be elaborate, but only clear.

If there are unique circumstances in your practice or community, make sure you spell these out too! For example, what happens during snowstorms? What about religious observances and your office hours?

The bottom line is, the more of these things you can think of in advance, the better off you will be.

And this is one of those seemingly little things that can propel you to enormous success in private practice.

THE REAL REASONS TO LIVE AND PRACTICE BY DESIGN™

As some of you know, it's been a very unique stretch of days. My latest of many recent life adventures began with a cross-country flight to Seattle, and the start of an incredible voyage. Here's how this one all got started.

My father in law who is now 84 has been raving about Alaska since I met him 35 years ago, while dating my wife Patti. He spent some considerable time here while in the Navy, and was even here during the great earthquake of '64. That entire experience stayed with him for life. I can't tell you how many times he has told us we have to go to Alaska. Now, this is from someone who has worked and traveled the globe extensively.

In 2007, you may remember, my brothers and I took my dad back to Ireland. That was a phenomenal journey in which we rented a home on a 130-acre farm, and traveled all over about one third of the coun-

try. Right after that trip, we vowed to take Patti's dad to back to Alaska. So here I am!

Our first night on board, the sun set just before 10, and last light was about 11. Patti and I watched this from the 17th deck of the Star Princess, in Skywalkers Lounge.

We hit our stateroom just after last light, and the ocean swells rocked us right out to sleep. First light came all too soon. I think it was around 3 A.M or so I first noticed the morning orange sky peeking through the curtains. About 4:30 A.M, I felt just the gentle splash of calm waters along the hull of the Star Princess, instead of the exaggerated rolling while at sea the previous 2 days.

So, I ran for the coffee pot, and I was totally unprepared as we opened the curtains on our balcony. The vista was incredible. No, it was surreal.

Absolutely a magnificently beautiful early morning cruise along the Inside Passage in Tracy's Endicott Arm. Stay with me here.

We awoke to snow capped mountain ranges in the distance, waterfalls down partially frozen cliffs, progressively larger icebergs with occasional sea lions on them, the cry of bald eagles overhead and the dimming masthead lights on the Pilot Boat ahead. After about three hours into Endicott Arm with a magnificent glacier in clear sight, the Captain turned this 951-foot vessel on its axis inside the 1200-foot wide canal. Unbelievable.

And that was just the start of one day. I spent that afternoon on a 50-mile road trip on a Harley all over Ketchikan, then capped the day off back on board with drinks on the top deck, as we sailed for Juneau and Skagway.

So doctor, what's my point?

The planning, and execution of all of these life-changing experiences are by *design*.

The *scheduled* time off is one of six vacations we have planned in a twelvemonth stretch. All of these are supported by office systems we continuously improve to run well, even in my absence.

Patti *designed* every piece of the Alaska trip after about 90 days of research, reading and meetings with travel agents. Right now, we continue to plan and design vacations, the good lord willing, and right through the next several years.

But mostly, none of this would be possible if it weren't for 27 great years in the practice, and now two plus years working with all of you.

Again, this only happened for me because of *progressively redesigning* my personal goals around my life vision, and how I want to live, not the other way around.

Really, I am living the American dream. Started with nothing, like most all of us do, and continuously redesigned a plan to reach changing but progressive goals.

Being in private practice, an enormous piece of this plan is a practice *big enough at each stage of your life* to fully support the life *you* want.

Fully understand you cannot be living this type of life without the support and encouragement of those that love, and believe in us. This includes most especially your patients and staff.

And by the grace of God, be grateful more each passing day for the gift of living and *working hard*, but *smarter* each New Year.

When you Practice by Design™ like this, you'll have patients who bring you gifts before you leave on your journeys, and cant wait to see you with the pictures and stories when you return back home again. Staff that misses you while you are not there, because despite all the 'stuff' in the office, one of our major ground rules is to *always be having fun* in practice.

And the cool thing is, *you* can do all of this too.

I know because many of our upper level clients are working on this design process with us daily.

So can you. These are learnable skills. Not its not always easy, but the results are so worth it.

If you *really want* a great life, execute a plan and design, for a richer personal life. Then, each passing year a fabulous practice *will* support your dreams.

Understand it's not the other way around!

Lots of docs work incessantly,
accumulate “stuff”, but as they too
often tell me, have ‘no life’. Doctor,
its possible to have both. But only if
you Practice by Design™. - In any
event, I hope you find the life
lessons here, and I will have much
more to share from these journeys.
Doctor, Live with Purpose and
Passion, by design!

PS If you don't already own our “Practice by Design”™ System, its on sale in Products and Enrollment, or by calling Jes. It's also bonus gift included with each Gold and above Membership.

PERSONAL POWER, PROFIT, AND INFLUENCE

Without these, in your own life and practice, you are unlikely to learn from the past, deal with the present and plan as accurately as possible for the future. But just why are these so important?

One of my fascinations as a consultant comes from dealing the vast differences in how people view the world, as well as their own professions. Even more fascinating, is how they respond to the wide variety of situations we are all presented with every day. Now this is

something I've written on extensively, during the last three years, and continue to research on almost daily basis.

Of course, there are many reasons for these vast differences, even amongst similar groups of people (like DCs MDS, DMDs JDs etc.). No doubt, some are biologic and likely even genetic responses. Some are cultural. Some are environmental. And lets not forget education and professional training.

No doubt, the largest factor accounting for all these differences is personal beliefs about the world we live in and then how we should act upon incoming information and react or not to the situations we are faced with on almost a moment-to-moment basis.

Our personal beliefs are what comprise our self-image. Many years ago, Dr. Maxwell Maltz, a plastic surgeon observed this in his patients, and then went on to write about it extensively in his landmark work, "Psychocybernetics".

Dr. Matltz's observations at the time were, and still are landmark, in dealing with human behavior and achievement. Matlz observed that humans have the unique capacity to set courses like a missile, and hit targets with precision. He also astutely observed that these missile courses are never over a straight line, and indeed the *vast majority of travel time is off course*.

Q. So what causes a missile, or you or I to hit our targets?

A. It's actually *continual course correction*.

Q. And which is the faster course?

A. It's always a straight line.

Q. Which combination of characteristics produces a straighter line in professional practice development?

A. It's Personal Power, Profit and Influence.

Success, happiness and fulfillment in practice and in life are always a combination of accurate assessment and response, over and over again. (This is also why the mechanisms we teach to run and grow a professional practice *actually work*.)

As keen as Maltz's observations were, it really wasn't until 1970 when Alvin Toffler wrote "Future Shock" did we come to understand

again, some of the reasons why we have vast differences not only in human behavior, but society as a whole.

Toffler's work also clearly demonstrates how ignorance of these factors can lead entire groups and organizations to become ineffective, powerless and unprofitable.

Not unlike healthcare professionals ("providers"). Not because they (we) changed, but rather the world changed. Seemingly very quickly.

So how can we not only survive, but also prosper and grow as individuals and professionals? How can we stand for solid principles and render the excellence in human services we have been trained to do?

It will be *only* through Personal Power, Profit, and Influence.

Personal Power comes from building all aspects of our lives on a firm foundation. Personal power in this day and age fully develops only with an eye clearly on the future. Ignorance of either the speed of change or the magnitude of change will lead to failure. Without firm foundations, principles and beliefs, we are like trees without roots.

With a firm foundation however we can weather hurricanes, tornadoes and tsunamis.

And profit. You, and you alone will determine your financial future. Without profit and savings, a strong financial future is impossibility. Without a strong financial position, personally and collectively we actually end up powerless, in so many ways.

Lastly, let's talk about influence. Many of us ignore the impact of our influence on our patients, our staff, and most especially our communities. Those doctors, who maintain a high degree of influence not only in their offices, but also in their communities, will undoubtedly be those who master personal power and profit.

Lets together as a finally unified profession as, fully explore the role all these have not only in our personal and professional lives, but the significant impact our collective efforts have in producing meaningful results and a bright future, not just for a very unique profession, but for our healthcare system. And, most especially our patients.

Please, lets finally join together to preserve patient choice, the affordable access to private healthcare, and the highest quality of care possible.

ANNIE

If you are a long-term subscriber to my newsletter and blog, you might remember My patient Annie. You can still read about her on my blog from late October 2007.

Anyways, Annie had presented with a constellation of symptoms which I ultimately referred her for an ENT emergency visit.

I was her last doctor stop before her husband wanted her admitted for a workup.

In short, she had been having headaches, neck stiffness and pain, and when I queried, she divulged fatigue, otalgia, and Sinusitis like Sx, attributed to “allergies” lassitude and on and off respiratory Sx for many months. She also had about three rounds of antibiotics, with no lasting changes.

She had previously seen 3 PAs, an RN, and her PCP, (5 office visits) and when I put the otoscope in my hand she said none of had looked in her ears or checked her sinuses. I was dumbfounded by that.

When I examined her, in addition to her spinal findings she had an acute otitis media, but when I looked at her sinuses with the otoscope, she had acutely swollen turbinates with nearly complete nasal obstruction on the side of the OM. Certainly the nastiest I had ever seen.

After I adjusted her and got her more comfortable, I immediately sent her to MGH, Mass Eye and Ear.

A CT confirmed nearly complete nasal sinus blockage and acute infection. Long story short, she had subsequent surgery for multiple polyps with obstruction.

I saw Annie again for the first time in months yesterday.

Now fully recovered, happy, incredibly thankful, talked about how long she suffered before getting relief, now comes in with her six year old daughter for evaluation of foot and leg pain. Keep in mind, almost 20 years ago, I cared for her two then young sons, with similar issues.

Callie is a cute, funny eight year old. Unfortunately, she has significant valgus alignment and pronation, which is asymmetric, thus affecting her pelvis and back.

Anyways, she ended up her visit to us with temporary orthotics and a DPM consult, and will be back Tuesday for spinal/pelvic adjustments and exercise instruction).

Doctors, this is the stuff of which long term careers, and life long referrals are made. It can be this simple.

I have tons of these examples after 27 years, and you probably do too.

Like everything in a powerful practice, these are systems.

Simply excellent care, totally focused history, clear communications, tangible benefits and staff that can direct your movements during your day, collect your fee and schedule patients.

Referrals that flow like a river.

With the right systems, it is this easy.

Without, the office can be a chaotic nightmare.

DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A “COMMANDER OF CHANGE”?

I will personally show you how our top producing doctors:

1. Rediscover the hidden wealth in their practices.
2. Dramatically increase referrals from other professionals and MDs.
3. Practice with dignity while escaping the bondage of garbage insurers.
4. Got more patients to Yes, I want care!
5. Regularly walk by the front desk while patients are writing checks for hundreds of dollars on the spot.
6. Pay me a fraction of what other consultants are charging and put many thousands back in *their own* pockets every year!...And much, much more. No B.S.

Too Good to be True? Our top doctors master all these skills. Find out if you have what it takes, to be part of this extraordinary group. (Not everyone qualifies).

APPENDIX A

HOW TO DEVELOP A THRIVING PRACTICE WITHOUT GIVING UP WEEKENDS AND WITHOUT SPENDING A FORTUNE ON SEMINARS...GUARANTEED.

“Having consulted with Dr. Hayes at least once a week for the past five plus years, I can tell you that his procedures and ideas can help you create the practice and the life that you seek. I am proof that his consulting is powerful. Utilizing many of the approaches that he will share with you, *I was able to achieve financial independence and retire from practice at age fifty four! The last five years that I was in practice I only worked 22 hours a week, taking Fridays off, and I enjoyed six weeks a year of vacation...*”

Dear Doctor,

It's no secret. Being in private practice is more challenging than ever before. Declining reimbursements, rising overhead, staffing and regulatory compliance, to name just a few of the items you juggle in every practice day. *A day doesn't go by where I don't have at least several calls from doctors about some new procedural, reimbursement or regulatory headaches, demanding records requests, nasty insurance reps, billing disputes, not to mention the extreme pressure to maintain, let alone build a practice, and patients who just don't understand.*

Unless you are very careful, this mountain of "stuff" will consume your energy and staff, depriving you of the real joy and satisfaction in practice helping sick patients get well. After all, that is your purpose. So why has it become so difficult for so many offices?

The answer lies in not having **tested systems**. Sure, you can go to week-end seminars, spend a small fortune, and end up a month later never implementing anything of help. Most offices who try a coaching program spend into oblivion and end up just like that. But not our practices. Our program works, and I invite you to see for yourself.

Why should you listen to me?

I worked smart for over 25 years to have a thriving practice. And I still do. Now, with more fun and profit than ever. *I always wanted better ways of dealing effectively with challenges, without sacrificing a rich private life.* Like you, the last thing I want is more week-ends away from my family and fun. That's why I spent the last five years developing and testing...

The Perfect Practice Platform.

Finally, here is a turnkey system of practice management and expansion with expert telephone consulting, bimonthly teleseminars, and an extensive body of print, audio and regularly updated web-based material, all tested and ***guaranteed to produce results*** in your office, too.

**But just don't take my word for it.
Here's what your colleagues are saying:**

☒ “...Having consulted with Dr. Hayes at least once a week for the past five plus years, I can tell you that his procedures and ideas can help you create the practice and the life that you seek. I am proof that his consulting is powerful. Utilizing many of the approaches that he will share with you, I was able to achieve financial independence and retire from practice at age fifty four! The last five years that I was in practice I only worked 22 hours a week, taking Fridays off, and I enjoyed six weeks a year of vacation.

If you are tired of having your practice run your life and want to get back in control, then he has a ton of practical tools and knowledge that will put your life and practice back on track. He has an amazing grasp on ways to simplify the complexities of practice. His effective use of technology alone is worth the price of admission. His unique methods of staffing his office will save you money, time, and frustration.

He has a strong desire to help other chiropractors decrease their stress and increase their happiness. He has assembled a team of experts to help you create the practice of your dreams. Best of all, his ethics are impeccable and you can use any and all of his information and techniques without compromising yourself. I highly recommend that you take one of his teleseminars so that you can regain control of your practice and your life.” Dr. Jim Carroll

☒ “I have had the pleasure of knowing Dr. John Hayes for many years. Over that time I have been consistently amazed at not just the clinical acumen he developed, but at the super efficient and easy office management systems he has developed.

He practices, as do I, in a comprehensive family practice which draws many types of patients and corresponding payment plans. His use of note systems coupled with the office flow really makes even the more complicated practices easy to manage. Dr. Hayes has been able to take more time off, with more balance in his life, while running a highly successful practice, (emotionally satisfying and profitable) than anyone I have known in 25 years.

He is innovative and highly practical in solving office management and system problems. He has a very strong focus on getting results. In my consultations with him, I have experienced quantum leaps, not just in performance, but in the busi-

ness applications that have propelled me into a truly profitable and less stress-filled practice.” -Michael H. Rogers, D.C.

Our Clients experience faster practice growth, experience greater peace of mind and work fewer days with reduced stress and overhead. They also are ultimately financially independent and develop rich personal lives. With my platform tools at your fingertips, this can be your testimonial, too!

The Perfect Practice Platform is a continuum of Teleseminar and web-based Core and “Breakthrough” sessions, CDs and all support, and personalized consulting programs, continually updated and supported, using tested systems and technology that will enable you to have the practice you have always wanted.

In the first module, we help you decide exactly what you want from practice. Most programs never go here. Yet this is crucial to our clients’ success. Then in modules 2 and 3 we give you all the tools you need to hire affordable, effective staff. Our system is unlike anything you have seen before, in many cases cutting your payroll hundreds of dollars a month. We next show you how to master the technology and data management issues once and for all. The Perfect Practice Platform also includes extensive marketing and referral generating tools, in both the core and breakthrough sessions. But perhaps most importantly, when you adopt our program, your office will run smoother and more profitably than ever before. Forget what the pundits say, this is still a great time to be in private practice and we show you why.

So what does a complete program that’s this comprehensive cost? Far less than comparable and especially traditional practice management programs!

We begin with 6 Separate Teleseminar Core Modules, valued at \$2539. These Core Modules are also repeated on a regular basis so you can truly master the concepts. The Platform Manual which is provided to all members, for easy hardcopy reference by you and your staff contains all the CDs and transcripts of the Core Modules. The value of The Perfect Practice manual is \$599.

An Initial Practice Evaluation by my team, mutually structured to best suit your individual needs is also part of the platform package. Here, our staff helps you put this program to use immediately. (Of course, one-on-one phone consult time is also available at very rea-

sonable rates!) You will then receive a personal list of recommendations after my initial evaluation, to help you make the best use of the Platform, and all its components.

You will also have complete, immediate access to the *Executive Summaries* which help you refine the concepts from each module in a clear, concise manner. Our online *Module Notes* includes *dozens of pages of sample documents* including hiring and training, setting up an office and compliance manual, and theme-based internal marketing. We add to these whenever appropriate.

You will also have a direct unlimited email access link (a \$3500/year value) to Perfect Practice Web consultants from your desktop.

This is the Ask Dr Hayes section, in which you and your staff are encouraged to submit any questions 24/7. You will also have direct, unlimited access to our *Perfect Partners* Section, an extraordinary compilation of supportive experts, many with special services unique to our clients! We then follow this up with monthly “Breakthrough telecoaching” for all Clients. Special Guest instructors who represent the best of contemporary minds from all over the country are periodically brought to you by phone and web. You can participate in these, from the comfort of your own home, or wherever you want.

The Value of this exclusive teleweb coaching and personal development package is well in excess of \$11,000.

*No Hassle Money Back Guarantee**

If you have not completely recovered your initial investment costs in the first 60 days, just send me proof of your implementation strategies and your use of advice and systems and return all your materials in like new condition for a complete refund. I Challenge any other Practice Management firm to do that!

Recently one of our clients said it best...

Why would you pay another consultant thousands of dollars, plus travel expenses, for you and your staff, lose income being out of your office or quality time with your family (weekends, vacations, etc)

when you can have all the Practice Building information through Perfect Practice Web at an affordable rate and no hidden expenses with all the support to create the life and practice of your dreams now!"

-Rick Danubio, D.C., Peabody, MA

Perfect Practice Web has revolutionized practice management, and can do the same for your practice, and your life! That's why clients around the US and many other countries utilize our products and services every day!

So now, the rest is up to you. Our record speaks for itself. If you can find a better consulting program anywhere, buy it!

But, if you are not where you know you should be, or need a guide like most doctors do, let us help you grow too.

*I look forward to helping you achieve the practice of your dreams, **without the travel hassles and without the sales hustle.***

Sincerely, John P Hayes, Jr., DC, DABCO, President, Perfect Practice Web

John P. Hayes JR, DC, MS, DABCO

President, Perfect Practice Web

With 27 years in Private Practice specializing in successful multidisciplinary Healthcare with a focus on integrated case management, Dr Hayes has an extensive clinically balanced background, and still works actively with many MDs, DMDs, DPMs PTs DCs PAs RNs, and others whose sole purpose is to deliver excellence in patient care. **Dr. Hayes takes the time to really understand the problems and lifestyle of the patients we serve, and expects the same clinical excellence of his clients...**

He is the founder of the Health Solutions Group, and still treats patients actively, using the staffing solutions and platforms we advocate.

Our clients know that Life Long health rests on a balance of regular care, proper nutrition, fitness programs, stress management, as well

as mental health, with an emphasis on preventive healthcare. As Practitioners, the challenge is to deliver this care in a manner that provides for our own well being as well as the time and energy to enjoy our lives. Third party payers and regulatory bodies have made this evermore challenging.

Our Purpose is to provide fellow healthcare practitioners with the systems, platforms, tools and executive skills needed in today's very complex arena, without unneeded stress.