



Leadership Emails

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Today...Choose to Be Extraordinary!

April 21 – May 12, 2022

Kevin's Leadership Emails are powerful explorations into personal development, both inside and outside of the practice.

Enjoy reviewing all this transformational, thought-provoking content.

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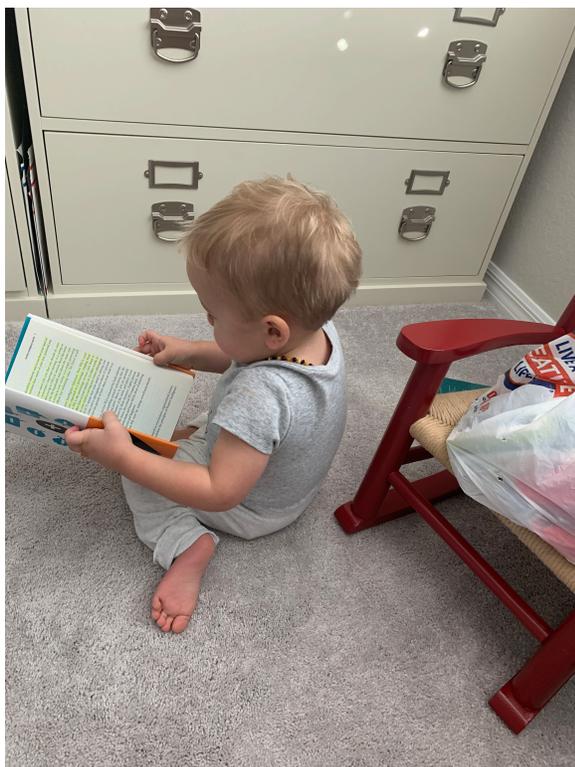
The “Positive Intelligence” Finale

Today, we wrap up our time spent on adopting the principles from the book “Positive Intelligence.” I hope you are motivated to continue down your own pathway of self-discovery with the intent to become happier and more fulfilled with your life’s work.

I recorded a video to culminate the past several weeks, with final words of encouragement I have drawn from Steven Pressfield in his book, “War of Art.” I look forward to continuing the conversation with those of you who have responded throughout this series. I promise you, it will be time well spent, since the focus is on YOU!

I have included a couple of pictures of the youngest member of our group, my son Owen, who has decided to decipher the ways of the Sage while spending time with me in my office. It is never too early to get started and never too late to begin! Regardless of your age and place in life, YOU deserve the attention and focus!

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Dependent or Independent

During my most recent series of messages inspired by the book, “Positive Intelligence,” I was posed with an insightful question from a team member who took the messages seriously and spent time in self-reflection.

“Kevin,

Thank you for taking the time to put together this series of messages for all of us to have an opportunity to understand ourselves better and how our internal voices can take over our lives without even knowing it is happening. I am more aware today than ever before how limiting my mind has been. Although I am a bit anxious about it, I am excited to try and figure myself out so I can be released from the limitations I have been putting on myself.

I have a question for you that would be helpful as I connect the dots between my thoughts and beliefs and my role within our practice. What advice would you have for me that would help me be more confident as I try and get the patient to say ‘yes’ to the treatment we are presenting? It is obvious to me, and the patient, yet I find myself not making the connection well enough. I feel like I am missing something or my approach is not that effective. Any insight would be helpful! Thank you again for all your effort in bringing such important information to us!”

I am always so impressed with how thoughtful people are when they give themselves permission to explore such an important subject: YOU! I scheduled a call with this particular team member in order to gain more clarity and context to her feelings. It was a great call resulting in a significant discovery, which I am sharing with all of you today.

There are two common roadblocks to having your influence accepted by others. First, people are confused about the role they are playing in the patient journey. Second, people tend to be Outcome Dependent, which can skew your ability to be in the moment and fully connect with a patient.

I would like to begin with exploring your role in the practice. I believe if I asked 100 team members, “What’s your role in the practice?” I would receive 100 answers detailing what they do at the office on a day-to-day basis. That’s important of course, because what we do all day long is critical to fulfilling the commitments we make in getting patients healthy. Where I want to shift the focus however is to expanding our view to the beginning point of the role we play every day, which is to first be the patient’s health advocate and guide on their own pathway to health.

In order for each of you to exude your professional brilliance, you must focus on your ability to positively influence your patients to make a commitment to solving their problems and exploring the possibilities they may not even be aware of. Without your influence, it is anyone’s guess as to whether a patient will make a smart decision for their overall health and well-being. This is why focusing on the connection you make with your patients and the experience you create for them is your top priority. Patients want you to guide them and help them make smart decisions.

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You could use the following two questions as a starting point when preparing for your patient interactions each day:

What can I do today to be an advocate for Mrs. Smith?

What can I do today to be an effective guide for Mrs. Smith on her pathway to health?

Now, let's transition to being Outcome Dependent, which likely is creating an anxious disconnect with the patient, rather than feeling a deep connection with the person you are with at any given moment.

When we are Outcome Dependent we overly attach our worth to the outcome we desire for our patients. When you are in this mindset, you can come across as “salesy” and put your patients on defense because you want your defined outcome to happen, rather than helping the patient own the outcome you know to be in their best interest through your influence.

When we are Outcome Independent, we focus on how we can be the best advocate and guide in helping our patients make smart decisions about their health. We create a relaxed and connected atmosphere, which encourages our patients to make smart decisions. There is no pressure. There are no awkward moments. What exists is your pure and genuine intent for the health of your patient. We display empathy, curiosity and interest in our patients while we listen to their responses to our questions and guidance. This creates a comfortable, trustworthy environment where patients believe they can make decisions without second-guessing themselves.

When we over-identify with the outcome, you are more likely to feel anxious, uncertain, and/or uncomfortable, which puts you in a position where you are giving off a negative vibe to the patient. Moments like this are when the “little voice” inside the patient's head starts to take over creating doubt and uncertainty. When an environment exists that fuels this part of your patient's thought process, it will be difficult to get them back to a position where they can think clearly, releasing the heightened emotion that was brought about.

I believe it is important for each of us to keep this concept in mind when we are preparing for our days. While we are making sure all of the structural components are in place for a successful patient experience, let us also prepare by discovering what we can do to be the best advocate and guide for each patient as they walk through the door.

This applies to those who spend a significant amount of time engaged with the patient, as well as those who spend little to no time with the patient. Every team member contributes to creating the most welcoming and comfortable atmosphere in the practice. It is a team effort.

Without any further explanation from me, I would love to know what your initial thoughts are regarding your personal observations around being Outcome Dependent versus Outcome Independent and where you fall on the spectrum.

What adjustments would you make in your approach with patients?

What adjustments would you make in supporting your team members as we work diligently to create a “Connected Patient Experience?”

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Thank you to all who take the time to reflect and engage in these opportunities to strengthen your influence, as it will help you not only in your interactions with your patients and team members, but in your personal relationships too!

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Empowering Others

I'm back home after spending a couple days with another group of extraordinary people who attended our Practice Champions event in Nashville. I was impressed with everyone's focus and commitment to extract as much value out of their time together as possible.

One of my observations revolves around the sense of empowerment I was feeling as I listened to stories being shared about how kind and supportive team members are toward each other and how this supportive atmosphere is leading to meaningful breakthroughs. It reminded me of a couple of messages from the book, "A Year of Positive Thinking," which I want to share with you today.

Empowering Others

Empower others to shine more brightly. Be kind, especially when it's most difficult. Believe in humanity. Show compassion and demonstrate empathy. Forgive others.

Doing these things won't always be easy, but in practicing these acts of humility, you awaken the possibility for others to do the same.

This particular message has an incredible amount of profound wisdom. During my presentation Tuesday morning, I wove in these same exact principles, as many of them are the foundation necessary to create a thriving environment for a team to be connected so they may deliver the most effective experience possible in pursuit of influencing their patients to make smart decisions about their health and well-being.

I encourage you to take a step back, read the author's simple message again, and assess the current environment and culture within your team dynamics. The existence of these nuances will lead to extraordinary results, while their absence will lead to an unhealthy team atmosphere, which is not good for anyone.

- Where are you at as a team?
- What will you do to strengthen your foundation?

I want to leave you with a message from the author, Cyndie Spiegel, who shares her thoughts on being extraordinary, which is my favorite mantra for living life on a daily basis and how I end each of my messages to all of you...Choose to Be Extraordinary!

You Are Extraordinary

You are extraordinary; accept this, in spite of what makes you different and because of what makes you different.

Do not adapt to become who others want you to be.

You will evolve, stretch, and grow, but still, as you are, you are extraordinary. In spite of all else, you are exactly who you are supposed to be: extraordinarily, genuinely you.

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After reading the author's words, I hope you felt an overwhelming sense of relief because she is correct. Just be YOU! The pressure is off if you are willing to embrace who you are today.

Once you are completely comfortable with this fact, you can shift your focus to sharing your gift to a greater degree than ever before.

You can become a brighter light for others to look towards when their path is dark and uncertain.

You can share your essence and energy when others could use encouragement.

You could be the catalyst for a tidal wave of good!

I hope this message lights a flame within you that you can use to continue your pursuit of experiencing joy and fulfillment in life, while also lifting others up as people and circumstances continue their assault on your state of mind.

You are extraordinary, if you choose to be!

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Four Key Principles from an FBI Hostage Negotiator

Yesterday, Maegen and I spent time on the Practice Profit Accelerator call discussing word choice, delivery and the results we receive in our communication efforts. This is such an important subject that I am doubling-down and bringing it to you two days in a row by dedicating today's message to diving even deeper.

For those of you who have been reading my messages or having conversations with me lately, you know that I have been sharing stories where I mentioned studying the art of negotiation as a means of becoming more effective in my own communication and connectedness, while also using it to be more effective in the nature of the coaching I do with others. Knowing that, one of our doctors reminded me of some great authors on the subject matter, including, Chase Hughes, Bob Burg, David Rosen, and specifically of a gentleman I studied a couple years back: Chris Voss, a former FBI hostage negotiator and author of the book "Never Split the Difference." Today, we are going to explore a handful of foundational principles all these individuals have highlighted in their teachings and offered professional advice on in their effort to help people connect and communicate more effectively.

While each of these writers are great resources for us all, for the simplicity of today's message I will be solely quoting Chris Voss, as I was impressed with his ability to discuss psychological principles in a way that can become relatable to people in all situations in life. When it is all said and done, we find ourselves in constant negotiation through every interaction we have in life. We negotiate with patients. We negotiate with our loved ones. We negotiate with kids. The list is endless, which is why it is worthy of your time, attention and effort to communicate with a high level of effectiveness!

Let's dive into some of Voss' key principles.

1. Your word choice and delivery are important, with your delivery being the true differentiator.

"When deliberating on a negotiating strategy or approach, people tend to focus all their energies on what to say or do, but it's how we are (our general demeanor and delivery) that is both the easiest thing to enact and the most immediately effective mode of influence. Our brains don't just process and understand the actions and words of others but their feelings and intentions too, the social meaning of their behavior and their emotions. On a mostly unconscious level, we can understand the minds of others not through any kind of thinking but through quite literally grasping what the other is feeling."

Your vibe, energy and demeanor speak volumes when it comes to the outcome of your conversation. Patients pick up on how you are feeling. Your team members can feel it. Your family can feel it. I can feel it on every call I am part of and can typically predict the outcome within the first 90 seconds of listening to your energy...yes, your energy has a "voice!"

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Checking in with yourself throughout the day is key to giving yourself the opportunity to be effective in all the conversations you find yourself engaged in. This is why we speak so often about awareness and engagement.

When you are feeling off, take a moment to pause, breathe deeply and let it out. The physical release of emotion is powerful and can get you back to center quickly. Ask a team member to alert you so you can recoup and redirect what is going on inside your mind!

2. What temperature are you radiating?

"When we radiate warmth and acceptance, conversations just seem to flow. When we enter a room with a level of comfort and enthusiasm, we attract people toward us. Smile at someone on the street, and as a reflex they'll smile back. Understanding that reflex and putting it into practice is critical to the success of just about every negotiating skill there is to learn."

Most everyone laughs when we suggest the cliché of "smiling when you are on the phone," yet it is so true. I get it, it sounds cheesy. You could role-play this as a team and try to guess who is smiling and who isn't by stimulating conversations. I know for a fact, people can tell when I am "off" mostly when I am not centered and at peace so my physical nature can be congruent with my desired outcome of a conversation.

I encourage you to pay close attention to your "temperature" for one day and assess the successful versus unsuccessful outcomes you achieve in the various conversations you have throughout the day. You may be able to piece together a puzzle that has eluded you until now!

3. The most powerful communication tool is your voice.

"That's why the most powerful tool in any verbal communication is your voice. You can use your voice to intentionally reach into someone's brain and flip an emotional switch. Distrusting to trusting. Nervous to calm. In an instant, the switch will flip just like that with the right delivery."

Most of the time, you should be using the positive/playful voice (the author states there are three voice tones available to negotiators...the late-night DJ voice, the positive-playful voice, and the direct or assertive voice). It's the voice of an easygoing, good-natured person. Your attitude is light and encouraging. The key here is to relax and smile while you're talking. A smile, even while talking on the phone, has an impact tonally that the other person will pick up on.

When I read the author's commentary on this it reminded me of so many people I have come to know over the years who have one of "those" voices. A voice where you feel comfortable and welcome. It feels good to listen and be put at ease, rather than on high alert, which we find ourselves in more than we prefer.

"When people are in a positive frame of mind, they think more quickly, and are more likely to collaborate and problem-solve (instead of fight and resist). It applies to the smile-er as much as the smile-ee: a smile on your face, and in your voice, will increase your own mental agility."

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That last paragraph could be the single greatest motivator to work on your approach to communication if you truly want to be a positive force for good. We want patients to be decisive while engaging with us in the conversation about their health. We want patients to work with us on finding a solution to match their financial situation in life and make the investment in their health a top priority. Well, if the roadmap is being laid out before us that is used in the most stressful situations on the planet, why not give it a try?

4. What you give is what you get back...Mirroring.

"Mirroring, also called isopraxism, is essentially imitation. It's another neurobehavior humans display in which we copy each other to comfort each other. It can be done with speech patterns, body language, vocabulary, tempo, and tone of voice. It's generally an unconscious behavior...we are rarely aware of it when it's happening...but it's a sign that people are bonding, in sync, and establishing the kind of rapport that leads to trust."

Trust!

Without trust we have nothing.

No relationship.

No connection.

No advancement of the mission.

The author goes on to state...

"It's a phenomenon that follows a very basic but profound biological principle: we fear what's different and are drawn to what's similar. As the saying goes, birds of a feather flock together. Mirroring, then, when practiced consciously, is the art of insinuating similarity. 'Trust me,' a mirror signals to another's unconscious, 'You and I...we're alike.'"

What comes to my mind is the mantra, "We are in this together!" This is what people want. Patients want to be guided to making smart decisions about their health. While making smart decisions they want to feel heard, listened to, and empathized with. They want to know they are cared for and not taken advantage of. This is why all the effort in your communication style and word choice is worth it in the end.

As with most of these messages, today's would be a wonderful team-building conversation where each person can be transparent about what they are doing well and identify the areas that could lead to more engaging conversations that will lead to desired outcomes.

Oh, and this can be highly effective in all the conversations you have in your personal life. Quite the bonus, if you ask me!

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