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Recognizing What a Victory Is Not

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Kevin: Welcome, everybody, to the latest edition of the Dental Success Today Practice Profit Accelerator podcast. As always, welcome to the show my friend, Scott.

Scott: Kevin, thank you, sir. We got good stuff here. We're headed towards the closeout of the year and you got a powerful continuation, so let's do it.

Kevin: Yeah, I love it. Well, as a reminder for those who were able to listen in to the last episode, for those who didn't, I would highly encourage you to go back, listen to the replay. We spent time discussing how to clearly define and know that we have a say in our future victories, and so we were able to establish some foundational principles of past reflection, present awareness, and what I love to call active participation in the future while defining what a victory actually is, so we have a vision of it, we have something to set our eyes to and know that we're headed in the right way. So Scott, I'd love to, by the way, if you had any additional thoughts from the last show that we did, if you wanted to add anything on, please feel free to do that.

What I'd like to eventually get to today is what a victory is not, and then if there's any time, we have some additional topics though too, because understanding what something is not is equally as important as knowing what it is. So if you don't mind my friend, let's pick up on this powerful conversation by diving into this continued conversation of victory.

Scott: Kevin, thanks for bringing up a beautiful topic. And it is, my grandfather used to say, "There is heads, there is tails, there is no standing on edge." And when you take a coin, it is life, it embodies life. And I won't go into all the spirituality or the psychology of this, but to us, there is either a victory or a not victory, and there is not a gray area in between. And the reason is because people get stuck in the gray area and it's really just an excuse. And so to shift their mindsets around this, we have to understand that sometimes defining a victory is easier, as a matter of fact, sometimes, to say what is not a victory.

So I would just challenge everybody here that when you think about a state of ideal, you can also think about what is not acceptable or what is the "sabatorial behavior" to use one of Kevin's terms from his teaching and training. What is that behavior that goes against your victory? So I know that you're going to elaborate a lot, and I promise not to keep this conceptual the whole time, but I would say that what's really important to grasp, I would do three things.

The first one is that in the game of life until you're dead, which is a sad moment, but it's fact, and we've all dealt with loss, okay? It isn't over. You can't push pause. There's no, "Hold on a minute while I figure it out." It is really, it's real time all the time. And so you can't see success or a victory as something that you arrive at. Now you can achieve, but then we have sustainability, then we have the next level, then we have, right? So even with the patient achieving health goals, completing their pathway to health, we can then say, okay, great. Now what is their responsibility, our responsibility in

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Scott: taking care of this in honor, respect, maintaining, sustaining, right? So you cannot look at we're done, because that's not a good deal.

The second piece is that it's really important that you embrace the fact that achieving something, becoming something, okay, winning something, and I'll give you an example. In the martial arts, we used to tell our black belt to say, you're only a black belt as long as you are. Like even if you, let's say stop training, as soon as you stop embodying the principles, the lessons, the behavior, the attitude, you are no longer, it doesn't matter that you have one, it doesn't matter even that you can wear one, it matters that are you living one.

And so I think this is a key thing, because, Kevin, we have people that say, well, we hit our goal today or we had a bad day, or whatever. The result and outcome doesn't define you. It is the mission. It is the battle, the fight, it is the way of life, in this case, dentistry, that is really the victory is in the being and the becoming. And so you can't get complacent, lazy, entitled, to think that just because you did, you will again or you should again without effort. And so that leads me to the third one. The third one is to learn a victory is not, okay? You must learn to enjoy the process. That's why we say practice on your own terms, life, okay? Be a happy person, decide in the morning it's going to be a great day. You have to find the joy as, probably this is a Kevin line, in the journey. And that's the way to avoid the trap. Okay? So that's the opposite.

That is the heads to the tail of arriving at a destination and thinking you're done, achieving a victory and being okay. All right? Anyway, there you have it. So I'll stop there. And again, I know that's super conceptual and I know you'll make it a little bit more meaningful here.

Kevin: Well, I love how you bring in the bigger vision. I believe it's one of your superpowers because it allows people the ability to digest it and allow it to become very personal for them without having a tremendous amount of direction, let's call it. There are certain times when direction is great, there are certain times when laying out the pathway very clearly is super helpful. And there are many other moments in life though, where just being the catalyst for thought is what I believe creates the space for magic to truly happen. And it's interesting because as you were talking about the first of the three concepts, and I'm using my own label, let's call it, from what your concept was, you had talked about, "real time all the time."

There is no pause. And what was so interesting about that, Scott, is I'm just even thinking back to the two days that we just spent together with a room full of extraordinary people who want to, "better their best," as we love to say. Is there was a portion of time where we had focused on the power of momentum. And it's not always this whole concept of every month's going to be a home run. Nobody can sustain that. Nobody in business has ever hit a home run every month. The key is to be trending in the right way, which is sometimes there's going to be just an incremental bump. Sometimes maybe you replicate the month before. The key though, is we don't want to lose momentum, because when we take steps back based upon the fact that we

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Kevin:

had momentum going forward, we actually have to take multiple of the steps we lost to get back to where we were and even farther.

Because when you go back to, as an example, old habits, the reason why we tend to go back to old habits is because we lose focus, we lose energy, we lose our purpose. Why is it we put time, energy, and attention to wanting to do something different in a better, more positive way? And it takes practice and repetition in order for that to become what it is that you are used to. And so it's important, to take what you said there, it's important to pause when you feel yourself wound up, especially in days where, first patient out of the gate you're late and now the rest of the day is going to be a total train wreck. Well, it doesn't mean that we go backwards, okay? We got to make sure we're keeping the train moving forward. And sometimes we have to do that by resetting ourselves so that we don't replicate something that's not a victory, okay?

It's not a victory to get farther and farther and farther and farther behind just because of one's circumstance. So we never want to find ourselves in retraction is what I would say. And then on the second point that you made there, Scott, about, "being and becoming," where we don't want to be lazy, we don't want to be complacent, we don't want to be entitled. I would just say this to you: don't let circumstances dictate your energy, your effort, your drive to perform at a level of excellence like none other, to make sure that you're giving your best that's completely available to you today.

Just don't let a circumstance get in the way. And again, we can give using that example of one patient behind, who cares? It happens. It's our opportunity to shift that momentum back in our way because we don't want that to dictate how we are involved in the process and evolution of these victories that we're trying to create, not only for ourselves, but for others because we're there in service. And then of course the last one, Scott, I love it: enjoy the process. I mean, man, if we can't find something good and positive and enjoyable about trying to do things bigger, better, more amazing than anybody else on the planet, I'm not sure what else is going to get you excited!

That to me is exciting because the majority of people would never choose that. And so enjoy the process of asking a couple of different questions when people are coming through and we're screening them on the phone to try to create a new level of engagement, to try to set the expectations better for them so that they're more guaranteed to have a wonderful experience with us. Be comfortable in having one different way of responding to an objection so that we feel like we have more than one way to be able to respond to a patient as an example, so that we show them kindness and grace and the amount of effort that we put in to try to meet them where they are at.

Because when they're making a decision, whether they're making a decision on a \$500 treatment plan or a hundred thousand dollar treatment plan, for most people, they're not ready for the number regardless of how little or big it is. And so we always have to keep that in mind and we want to meet them in the right place so that we can more clearly move forward towards what's a

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Kevin: victory for all. And so that's what would say in support of what you just said there, Scott. I mean we could end right here, man, and this is amazing.

Scott: Well, yeah, Kevin, thank you for again making it much more tangible and building it around into something people can embrace, okay, and contemplate. And it does boil down to every area of your life you could assess victory, right? And this conversation came from respecting the past, honoring the past, looking at things, assessing the present state of reality, authentic truth teller, right? And then really re-imagining the future, looking out ahead and saying, okay, we can be inspired, motivated, like Kevin said, momentum from what happened, what's happening. But we do get to choose and be in control over what is going to happen, what we create or decide, or we sometimes say design.

So with your health, with your relationship, with your family, with your team members, obviously with your patient engagement, but truly with yourself, it's vitally important. And I think that was a word Kevin used at the retreat. So the other thing that a victory is not, and really to me, this is the whole point, a victory is not someone else's responsibility. A person's victory cannot be situational or circumstantial. Now it can be customized. One of my favorite terms, I think I said this last time, is you maximize your ability to help people. That's with the treatment plan, that's with education. But then you customize. When you customize a plan, a treatment plan, you therefore can maximize your impact, but you don't water it down.

You don't prejudge, you don't shortcut, you don't give the patient less than they deserve, but you do customize, okay? So your victory has to be something that you can put in your hands and take ownership over. And otherwise, human nature creeps in making excuses. Example: patient objections. Well, they're all excuses. If we believe our victory is to help the patient get healthy, well, we're not going to stop at excuses. We're going to stay committed to the patient, committed to the outcome, committed to our victory. If we say, well, it's a victory only when it's easy.

Now, Kevin mentioned my restatement about pause. Now by the way, we teach the idea of pause, of silence, Kevin does a lot of things on this, about control the pace. So what I'm talking about is that you can't actually hit the pause of life, stop everything, but you can be present, super focused, in the moment, every time, take a deep breath, pause, yourself, so that you can have greater perspective. And once you have that, I go back to one of the famous quotes that very often, there's lots of them, "Very often the way we see the problem is the problem." Another way that, I think even same person said this, is that, "The same level of thinking that created the problem cannot be used to solve the problem." Now, what does all that have to do with what's not a victory? The point is you have to elevate.

You cannot get stuck in past mindset. You cannot get stuck in present obstacle, challenge, difficulty. You have to see it through. And that includes looking out and defining what success looks like, what a victory would be. We use that term all the time. Very often, as I joke, you don't motivate a patient to

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Scott:

do a crown. You motivate a patient to avoid a root canal. So the “not a victory” is lose your teeth, “not a victory” is root canal, “not a victory” is waste your time here and do nothing. Victory is the opposite. So the more you can dial this in, and again, I would rather talk about life all day long than dentistry, but the more you can dial this in, it’s very important. I’m going to give you another example. For our new patient experiences, let’s call it a traditional modality of practice.

I always say, some people take it the wrong way, they say I say, “Patients should not see a hygienist.” No, I never said that. I said that, “New patients should never be promised a cleaning.” If the hygienist sees the new patient, it should be about education and developing a long-term plan for their overall health. A victory for a new patient experience is a committed relationship, a trusting patient, an elevated, educated patient now about with a long-term plan for their overall health. Not a victory is the greatest cleaning on earth, or any cleaning for that matter, unless the patient warrants it. Customize to maximize, right? And I gave you the same deal with an emergency, the victory of a emergency is not getting them out of pain. It is helping to empower them to understand why they’re in pain in the first place. And then to develop the ability to move that patient forward, at least get them started down the pathway to health.

I just said at the Champion’s Experience, “The point of every phone call is not an appointment.” No one in the world will say this to you! The victory of a phone call is strong engagement, emotional connection, better understanding so that we can then screen effectively, schedule properly and welcome the appropriate patients into the practice. Now, I just gave you a few specific examples. Many of our TMD and sleep practices, I say, on the phone we can ask specific questions. Sometimes even the referral source can help us to take that caller who maybe is just looking for information. The point of their phone call is not to give the patient information. The point of the phone call is to help the patient see that the only way to make a great decision is to come into the practice. That’s the victory. For our specialists, the point, the victory, is not getting random referrals from other practices. The point is to develop a strong understanding, a victory, in that the referral and you collaborate together on a healthcare partnership for the patients they send.

So you see how every one of these things is specific, but just switching, understanding heads and tails, what is or isn’t a victory, how that then leads you to implementation actions, how it leads you to better and more effective verbiage; all begins with the end in mind. It’s all about the desired outcome, crystal ball, victory. But what it is, is not enough—too much gray area—what it isn’t is vital, because then and only then can you really focus in and you can go deep and you can have much better opportunity to control, create, design, determine and achieve the outcome you want, the victory that you’re after. All right, Kevin, I better shut up for the rest of the time.

Kevin:

Listen man, I love it. I took so many notes with ideas that came to mind, and I want to begin with one where you ended. So as you were describing our specialists who get referrals from other doctors, and of course all of us can,

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Kevin:

depends on whether that's an area of focus for you or not. I believe it's a powerful area of focus if you're willing to put time and attention into it. But I'm going to do this in two steps here just to create a little emphasis. If I said to you that I would go out today and I would help you get 100 referrals from 100 doctors in your area, would you view that as a success? Would you view that as a victory? And I would venture to say, one, most people would say, Kevin, you wouldn't be able to do it. Which that would put me up to the task to make it happen!

But I would say that most people would say that would be amazing, a hundred referrals from a hundred doctors. And again, put in whatever number you want, 500, whatever the number you tell me. Point being is this: I would say, man, that is not a victory. I did not do a good enough job. I'm grateful I was able to create that amount of interest. You know what a victory is? A hundred referrals from 10 doctors who send us highly qualified, highly educated, completely prepared patients, so that they're willing to say yes before we even ask. That's a victory. And so what I'm saying to everybody here, is question your definition of a victory. Not that my first example wasn't great, because if that was a starting point, sure. Just put some pressure on yourself to get so clear and get some detail to what does an actual victory mean?

And I have that example when I built my mortgage practice, I literally fired an entire office of real estate agents, which most people who did mortgages would beg to have an entire office of real estate agents send business to them. And the reason I did it was they sent me so many referrals that led to nothing, and they ate up all of my time that I couldn't create space and opportunity for higher quality people who actually benefited from and appreciated what it is that I provided.

Very similar to all of you. You can't just muck up the schedule with anybody and everybody who wants to get in because that to us is a victory. A full schedule isn't victory enough, I would say. And so that's a second example there, is also being very clear of what a victory is in scheduling because it definitely isn't full schedule, people waiting. I guarantee if you've got people waiting, there's people coming to see you who probably aren't your ideal patient. And that's a wonderful moment to be able to say, "Let's more clearly define what a victory would be for having patients in our schedule. What does that look like? Who are these people? What are their commitments to us? When do we say you're not a fit?"

We talk about this stuff to this degree with all of you because, one, you're prepared for it, you're ready for it. And whether you'll admit it or not, you expect it, okay? And we expect it out of you because you guys are amazing and you're like the champions of all of them. And that's why we get so, so excited to be able to talk about things in a deeper and more advanced way, because most people would just stop at this and say, "that's good enough." Hey, it's a step. How can we make it better? Bettering our best, Scott!

So, for the sake of time, I do want to give you a chance here just to pop back in, the last note that I'd like to make before you make your final comment

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Kevin: there, Scott, is this: always remember that there is a trajectory, a pathway that people take in order to get to their victory, okay? And I'm speaking specifically about patients.

When a patient is just adamant about telling you, "no," based upon whatever objection that they just seem to be stuck on, the first victory for you, isn't getting them to "yes." The first victory for you is getting the patient to doubt their process of decision-making, specifically about their health. That's the first step if you ever truly want to get to a victory. So again, lots of different ways that we can take so many different components within the experience and the efforts that you put into for your patients, where we could more clearly define victory so that we can actually get there more efficiently and celebrate even more. And let's face it, who doesn't want to celebrate more?

Scott: That's right, that's right. It's all about let's celebrate more. Kevin, I'm going to default some beautiful year-end victory questions to what happens to be the Practice Profit Report coming out this week that we're doing this beautiful, amazing, powerful podcast. So, I'm going to save that and not divulge, so people can have to go on a little scavenger hunt if they'd like. But it's two in particular conversation or question assessments, analysis of your personal and professional practice and life of this idea of victory. So, I guess just to point out your comments that you alluded to that I'm going to steal from your notes and outlines, but when you think about, "victories," or "not victories," is really just to understand the more clarity you have, the more apt you are to achieve it.

I love Kevin's analogy about getting to the victory. So I leave you with, everybody knows the analogy of the airplane takeoff, or the reality airplane take off, airplane land, in the air, it is not always exact path. Start from a point, they're going to end at a point. Now remember, it's not destination either, but the key is be committed to your vision. But sometimes you have to be flexible in approach. And in doing that, again, stealing from Kevin here, you give yourself some grace, but you never give into self-doubt. You also never resent what it takes to realize something that you felt was worth it.

And one of my very favorite quotes is, "I'm not telling you it's going to be easy, but I'm promising you it's going to be worth it." And the cool part about that is you get to decide, you totally decide on your victories being worth it.

That's it Kevin, I've got nothing else, we'll let them go to work on this stuff. I think we gave them a lot of tangible things for themselves, for their team, for their patients, for their practice, and there's a whole lot of things to do there. And I always say I'm done and I'm not. So the other thing is, as a team though, you do have to be crystal clear on this: you know the terms clinical philosophy, you know the terms pillar of health, you know the terms diagnostic protocol, you know that when we teach screening we talk about outcome of each visit. So I would just say from every person's position, you should be able to articulate your stated victories.

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Scott: You have the priorities that are can't-miss, surefire, never fail. And you all together should be able to work in as a team in conjunction with a common goal, common purpose, common victory. And remember, it is as important to define what isn't acceptable, what we won't tolerate. Because the more disciplined you are about those things, the more it will automatically help to facilitate, serve as catalyst, to manifest and realize, hit the victories that you want. Thanks so much, Kevin. I know we're over time. I'll jump. Sorry about that. Take care everybody. Have a happy Thanksgiving.

Kevin: Well said, Scott. And I'm just going to leave it right there, because I do believe it's all worth it. The effort is worth it. The focus is worth it. The time spent in becoming clear is worth it. And I'll tell you, you all are worth it. I love the opportunity to be able to serve all of you and to be able to come in and help you on this journey, especially in such customized ways as we do and the conversations we have and all that. And so that's my way of just saying thanks. I'm thankful for all of you who have come along into the DST universe here, and we've accomplished some really incredible things together. And for that, I'm grateful.

So everybody have a wonderful upcoming Thanksgiving. Look forward to our final podcast of the year coming next month, and until then, let's go get 'em everybody! So thanks for listening in to the latest edition of the Dental Success Today Practice Profit Accelerator podcast. Have an amazing month, everybody. We will talk to you soon.