



Practice Focus

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Series 5 Personal Growth and Practice Development

Session 1 Master Yourself To Maximize Your Time

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Welcome back, everyone. I'm really excited about beginning our next Practice Focus Series. We're going to stick with this theme for a few months now, and I've been waiting to do a really deep dive on this topic for a very long time. As promised, we're shifting gears completely and it's going to be a lot of fun. The thing is, it's very hard to call this a topic because it's so much more than that. It is, in fact, omnipresent in your life. It is all-consuming. It is the very thing that defines and makes up our existence. Of course, I'm talking about time. Yes, you know it. With everything we do, every breath we take, every goal, action, relationship, days of our lives, we have but one common factor through it all, and that is the passage of time that everything happens within. There really isn't anything more important and valuable to make a concerted effort to not only make the most of, but strive to master the way you experience, think about, live through, and, of course, utilize time.

So, that we can jump right into your Practice Focus today, let me hammer home the brief premise and set the tone for you. **First, the fallacy is that time can be managed, and instead, I like to say that the actions inside of the time are what is managed.** Time is time. You aren't going to slow it down or speed it up. The only way to do more with it or manage it is to get more out of the intervals of time you have. Now, I want to emphasize that this is not just about productivity, especially not this month's Practice Focus anyhow. It's not about doing everything faster and more efficiently, because that is not always the point. Sometimes the best thing you can do is nothing, as you well know. You might want to take a nap or need a break or enjoy a good book, or get up off your ass and not be lazy and procrastinate. It's all of these things. Time is all things.

So it's not just about doing more or being busier. **It is about three different thought processes and commitments that I feel make your time more valuable to you. First is your awareness over it and over the priorities of it.** Awareness means you aren't squandering or wasting it. It's purposeful.

Second is the organization and preparation of the things that you do with your time and figuring out more ways to be effective efficiently or efficiently effective, but it requires both of these, not just one. There's always a balance between them. Organization means everything has a place and a purpose and a time. Preparation, of course, means that we are prepared in advance to execute. It's the old sharpen the saw or the ax before chopping at the tree, therefore, we have a more effective and efficient execution of the task.

Third, committing to increasing the value of your time and the outcomes, which brings us ultimately to the overall point of where we'll invest most of our time in your Practice Focuses. Notice the word invest. Invest time, because that is what you're doing. In fact, it's the only thing that you can't get more of ever once it is gone, and so you are exchanging your minutes for the experience and the outcomes of whatever you invest your time in. It really is about that. So as they say, "Careful how you use it because you're about to lose it." Now, we don't want to look back on time as a loss. We don't want to look back on it as frantic or hasty or any of these things. We want it to be well-purposed, meaningful, significant results in exchange for the time that it was given. So let's just dive immediately into dentistry.

Before I say that, over the coming months, we're going to go into more specific things, because **I do want to emphasize that one of the biggest issues with people's time is that they're trying to do everything all the time. Instead of having it organized and prepared, if everything on the list is supposed to happen right now, well, then nothing on the list ever**

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gets done. The other thing is that we let low-value, time-consuming things take up the more important time or area or prime time you could call it, the sweet spot of your time, and we never get down into the most important matters. This is why the three levels of awareness, organization, and value are so very important. So let's talking about dentistry, and then we're going to shift gears back really to you. Do you understand this? Because this is really where we all began so many years ago, believing that we can get more out of the time that you have.

You have made decisions, implemented systems, internalized verbiage, and many other principles and philosophies that have allowed and resulted in you making your time in your practice worth more to all of you. That's amazing! Great work. It is something you should be proud of and is also something you should rinse and repeat, because that is always the game that we are playing in the challenge at hand. Then you add into that one thing to do it without working harder and instead finding leverage and being smart about how you see growth. The biggest part of time utilization is working backwards with these three things. What is the outcome that we want and the value we want to create? Then, what is the best way to organize and prepare to make the time to deliver that? Then based on our awareness of this, and therefore, what should our priorities be?

Now, case in point, you could consider the following examples: rushing through a phone call, a hygiene visit, a new patient exam, a treatment plan, an insurance claim, or cleaning a room, or reviewing a chart, or preparing a tray, rushing because you're trying to save time. So you move faster to "get more done." Now, of course, the very nature of the way I just set that up, you understand that I said it from the perspective that we started with the wrong objective. It's not a time-based objective. It's an outcome-based objective. And therein lies the entire point. The question and perspective is not how long did it take, but what did the actions inside of the time give us as a result? This takes us all the way back to value-based scheduling, where it is not about filling the time and space of the schedule, and instead about what is the value of the day as result of what goes into the schedule in the first place?

This is basic for you at this point. But for most, in the very beginning, it is a dramatic and complete 180 degree reversal of how we view success of the same amount of time. This is time management being brought to life, but not managing time at all, instead what goes into time itself.

Okay, so you get the idea. The same thing can apply to sitting down and reading a book to yourself, or a book to your child. The same thing can apply to you making a beautiful meal that's an experience of cooking, or expediting it getting done so you can eat the food and move on. Everything backs up into understanding what we really want to get out of the experience. We are going to do a deep dive over how you use and invest your time based on the outcomes you want, and then determine what things you can do, learn, implement, try, adjust, change, elevate in order to make your time and results more valuable.

Today and this month, we're going to actually start where we usually finish, and that is with you first, personally. Then as we move forward into next month's Practice Focus, I will be breaking down specific practice components and compartments of time for all of you to assess your three layers of time accountability. Remember those words: three layers of time accountability. And you will be amazed, I promise you, at the incredible breakthroughs you will have and the incredible leverage, progress, and dollar-for-dollar results you will get because of this.

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These should be your most valuable Practice Focuses to date, because this is the ultimate and the biggest and the most limiting factor of them all: time. And how we breakthrough this now, at your level, makes all the difference.

Okay, let's go! First question: how would you describe your own relationship with time in your life? How about the relationship with time at the practice inside of your own roles and responsibilities? I actually want you to describe what comes to mind, for everybody. Go around, personally. Then within the practice. Be vulnerable, transparent, raw, and real with your own assessments of your awareness about your relationship with time.

Now, most importantly, the action. In what ways could you elevate and be more conscious and deliberate with your own personal awareness over time? Very important. And then the same question goes to this: in what ways could you elevate and be more conscious, deliberate, intentional with your own personal awareness over how you prioritize what goes into your time personally and professionally? In all seriousness, how well are you doing at prioritizing? That means importance. That means relevance. You understand? Prioritize... what goes in your time personally and professionally?

Now, make some commitments, and just from talking through it for yourself and listening to others, identify ways in which you can improve and the things you can do to be more intentional. Less stress without haste or chaos or being frantic or lethargic, two opposite ends of the spectrum, with your time and your priorities. I want you to make some commitments right now just by what comes to mind through this process of conversation of awareness and prioritization.

Next up, if you had to be a little bit extra-critical, not negative, but constructive, I want you to assess how well you organize your time and what you could do to be more organized and purposeful with it, as well as how you could better prepare to make yourself more successful and productive. Now, this is specific. Do this for your personal life and for your role inside the practice. One more time: assess how well you organize your time and what you could do to be more organized and purposeful with it, as well as what you could do to better prepare to make yourself more successful and productive.

Now, after you've done all these things, done all these things, I finally want you to answer these three questions, and I want you to consider these your overall commitments, takeaways, and action steps. Very simply, you ready?

Number one: what should your top three priorities and outcomes be for your day? You could do both personal and practice.

Number two: what takes up most of your time in your day? Okay, personal and practice. And here's the thing, is it aligned with number one? Is that answer aligned with your top three priorities?

And then number three, most important of all, what can you do to increase, what will you do, what are you going to do, to increase the value of your time and your results? Answer this question personally and professionally. Let's keep the theme in parallel all the way through.

And now I want you to make a plan to make it happen. Let's go. Let's make a plan.

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Once you've done all of this, combine everyone's takeaways and time value commitments and work together to help set each other up for success, including with a weekly review of accountability and awareness over your own behavior and discipline with your time. You might even make a chart or a list or put it up on the board.

Now, listen, that's a wrap. It's a wrap. This is a very big Practice Focus actually. Tight on the topic, but big on the holistic approach we're taking. We're going to bring it back into view on the core components and pillars of time within your practice next month with some very evolved and advanced looks inside your next breakthroughs. We're creating more dentistry and controlling the schedule and using our theme here to engineer and make more valuable the time you invest every day in helping your patients while hitting and raising your goals.

Remember this, your relationship with time and the quality control over it is what makes your relationships with everyone else, including yourself, worth more to you. And there is no other way to increase the value of your life, or yourself for that matter, that doesn't first begin by increasing the value of your time, the least of which is quantitative and always first qualitative in nature. It's a very deep and important paragraph, my friends.

Please enjoy this, because being in balance and harmony with your time allows you to be present in the moment and make the most of your life and every opportunity that time provides you with.