

## 10 Life Lessons That Will Change the Way You Practice

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"*What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail?*" I have posed this question for years to groups I've spoken to across the country and around the world. I want chiropractors, chiropractic assistants and students to think about what they want in life and then work toward that goal. If you feel like you or your office has gotten into a rut, stop what you're doing right now. My first piece of advice is, "Your practice won't change until you change the way you practice."

Success, to me, is doing *exactly* what you want to do in life. It could be your job, your practice, your family or anything that makes you happy. As long as you are doing what you love, then you have achieved the first - and most important - step of being successful.

This is an important lesson that I learned early in life watching my father, [Dr. Monte Greenawalt](#), help his chiropractic patients while starting Foot Levelers. It was easy to see that he loved what he did, which made work not seem like a chore. It was his passion.

I have learned 10 lessons in my life that have helped me and are universal steps to success. If you apply these, you can help your practice grow while serving your patients to the best of your ability.

### 1. Think Big

Pretty much every success story in history has started when someone thought on a grand scale. It's easy to get bogged down in the day-to-day details of your practice. While it's important to be involved on those seemingly mundane decisions, it's also important to take some time to think of the big picture. What would you want to do for your practice if there was no way you could fail? Get rid of the "no" that keeps coming back in your head and brainstorm what you could do if failure was not a possibility.

### 2. Learn From Your Mistakes

Failure is sort of like fertilizer: if you use it, plants generally grow bigger and stronger. If not, then you're just standing in a pile of ... fertilizer. Look at what hasn't worked for you and your practice, and assess why and what you could do differently to get a better outcome. Sometimes you don't need to throw out a huge process or idea because it didn't work; maybe it just needs some small tweaks to make it a success.

### 3. Keep on Pushing

This applies to the law of physics that *an object in motion stays in motion*. So, to make your practice change or continue to grow, you are the person who needs to make that change happen. You have to keep pushing to drive your practice the way you want it to go. If you sit still long enough, even a great practice will become stagnant and stop growing. You have to continuously help your current patients while reaching out to former patients and new patients.

#### 4. Payoff Is Not Immediate

What you do today will affect your life three months or more from now. Not seeing a reward today, tomorrow or even next week can be difficult, but it will happen. You have to keep your eyes on your end goal and realize that sometimes it takes time to get the ball rolling. You will see results based on what you do today, so make each day - and each decision - count.

#### 5. Continue Doing the Things That Have Made You Successful

You've already experienced some success? Great! Don't start from scratch and reinvent the wheel. However you got to this successful place, continue to do it. You have worked hard to find what works best with your patients and staff. If you have found a rhythm that works well for you, then continue to do it.

#### 6. A Little Better Makes a HUGE Difference

My father used to tell me that it doesn't take much to be successful because all you have to be *is a little bit better than average* - and average isn't that high. Just going a little bit above the call can be a huge difference in differentiating you and your practice from the practice / DC down the street.

#### 7. Think Right

You've got to get your mind on your side; so be positive and committed to your goal. *Believe* you can do it. Henry Ford famously said, "If you think you can or you can't, you're right." You will do what you believe you can do - for better or for worse. Think positive and you will achieve more.

#### 8. Write It Down

Try writing down your **top three goals** and then putting them somewhere you will see them every day (maybe on your bathroom mirror or on a closet door). Read them every day and be committed. You can't be committed halfway. You're either committed or you're not. Writing your goals down gives you a clear expectation of what you want to happen. If you're committed, you can make it happen.

#### 9. Treat Every Patient as If They Are Your Only One

One of the biggest lessons I can share with someone new to practice is based on this statistic: 68 percent of patients leave because of a feeling of indifference. Only 14 percent actually leave because they are unhappy. If you make your patients feel appreciated and valued, then they are much more likely to want to come back and tell their friends about "this great chiropractor they should go see." This lesson applies to practice or business. We can't forget about our longtime customers just to try to get new ones. We need to take the time to make each one feel special, because they are!

#### 10. Don't Sell Yourself Short

This is the final lesson and it combines using all of what we've talked about and applying it to you. Whatever you think you can do, you can. So think big, keep on pushing, write it down, and don't get complacent. Apply these 10 lessons to yourself and your practice, and give yourself 90 days. You'll be amazed at what you can accomplish, and your patients and staff will thank you for the positive changes.

