

## Building a Better Practice

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I am sure many of you have heard the common saying, "A chain is only as strong as its weakest link." This saying is applicable to many aspects of your life in which there are others around you, and together you all are working together for a common goal.

Have you ever thought of using this saying to help build a better practice? Instead of simply going through your day-to-day life thinking solely of you and yours, why don't you go through life thinking of how you can strengthen your links to help the greater chain of Oriental medicine? I would like to suggest three things you as a practitioner can do to not only build a better practice for yourself, but also build a stronger reputation for the Oriental medicine community as a whole.

My first suggestion to you is to keep learning. You are no longer spending your daily hours in a classroom, but rather using the knowledge you acquired in that classroom to help in the healing of others. However, learning still is a vital part of your role as a healer. Keep learning about your profession and stay up to date on current events that are happening in the profession.

Learn from your staff and from your patients. Many people will walk through your doors, and each one of them brings in the possibility of learning something new. Look at the lives of others and see what you can adapt in your life to make it brighter. By doing so, you will not only have a more full life, but also a practice that is of a much better quality. A quality practice and strong foundation are only going to make our chain stronger.

Along with continuing the learning process, I urge you to invest in what you are learning and to invest in your future. To learn something and then not incorporate it into your life is a waste of precious energy, time and money. You already have invested so much into the practice you currently have, so never make it a waste. By continuing to put everything you have into your practice, you will continue to gain every possible benefit.

However, in order to maintain that better life and, in turn, that better practice, your investments must go beyond the four walls of your office. Invest in the relationships you form with the people with whom you have chosen to surround yourself. By what you put into these relationships, you will only receive more in return. And by becoming a trustworthy and caring individual, you will be able to become a better healer and truly have a positive impact on the lives you help to strengthen in your daily practice.

Invest in your future. Find the time to invest now in the things you want in the future. If you want a more broad practice, find the things you can be doing now to create what you want for the future. By investing all you can in the practice you have, you will become the strongest practitioner you possibly can, and your link to the chain will not be the one lagging behind.

My final word of advice in strengthening your practice is to get involved. There is a world around you that does not know enough about this profession and your art of healing. We are trying to bring an ancient method of healing into a modern world. It has not been easy, and I am sure the

bumps in the road are not over. However, if we are prepared now, nothing will be able to break this profession.

Become involved in your community. I teach my students that simply by volunteering for community projects or sitting on a community board, their name will begin to circulate. This is how you build a practice and strengthen the practice you already have built.

In so doing, you are building a stronger practice for yourself, the Oriental medicine community and the citizens of this country. This cannot be a project of which you are the primary focus. You will obtain the strongest practice by thinking of those around you and how you can reach out to them.

Always remember to learn, invest and get involved.

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