

## It's Time to Wake Up

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It is time for this profession to wake up and tell someone about the healing benefits of acupuncture. This is the time for Asian Medicine. Its popularity, growth and unusual acceptance is nothing short of amazing. The Affordable Healthcare Act has the focus of Function, Outcomes, Wellness, and Prevention. Acupuncture fits this paradigm of medicine.

The practitioners in the acupuncture profession serve about 5% to 8% of the citizens of the U.S. This means that 92% to 95% of the population do not know about the healing benefits of Asian Medicine. What do we, and/or you have to do to achieve something great? Would it be great to spread the word about acupuncture to the public? There is a slogan in Real Estate: "Location - Location - Location!" Let's create a slogan for acupuncture: "Education - Education - Education!"

All acupuncture providers want, possibly dream of, is an all referral practice. But what does it take to create a successful all referral practice? How do we educate patients? When does the education process begin? What do you do to educate each of your patients? Start inside your office. Begin by listening to each patient to help them understand that it is a healing process acupuncture helps facilitate in your body to heal itself.

You then share your previous experience. This builds credibility and trust in the mind of the patient. Be confident. Focus on the patient. Talk about the patient's ailment. Talk about where they are in their health/disease process. Talk about you and the patient working as a team. Focus on their health. Help them identify their own health goals. You must use an explanation the patient understands. This is the essence of the Report of Findings.

When presenting the Report of Findings, the practitioner must assume a confident position:

1. Tell the patient what you have found - their diagnosis.
2. Share the diagnosis in western terms and easy to understand metaphors.
3. Explain and show the medical equipment that you are going to use during their treatment.
4. Recommend/prescribe a specific treatment plan.
5. Schedule appointments close together because acupuncture is cumulative and builds on the process everyday. Patients want to feel better faster.

Pain is what brings a patient into your office. This is just the beginning. Education keeps them coming back. Knowledge helps them to be able to refer. Yes, it is time to wake up and begin educating each patient. When they are educated, patients can help educate others. Next is the education about acupuncture to people outside the office. The majority of people outside your practice do not know anything about acupuncture or herbs. You must ask yourself, "What have I done this past week to educate someone?"

Start with business cards. How many have you given out within the last week or even month? Do you have business cards? Is the print big enough? Can someone read the name and telephone number easily? Try handing out at least one card per day and increase it on a regular basis until you pass out 10 cards a day.

To get more of this important healthcare message out you will want to book some speaking engagements. Are you part of the town or city where you have a practice? Are you a member of your local Chamber of Commerce? If not, please consider joining and attending the regular mixer events. You will meet and network with other members - business owners, members of hospital staffs, bankers, restaurant owners, hotel managers, and many others. All of these people and others just like them who work with them need your information.

Not sharing the healthcare knowledge that you possess could keep someone from reaching their own health goals. Information is power. Knowledge is strength. Education gives the ability to take action. Sharing helps build your knowledge and confidence. One of the best ways to share with your peers is to join your state association. Meet the others in practice around you and in the other parts of your state.

If you watched the NBA finals, you probably saw the slogan on the yellow t-shirts worn by the Golden State Warrior fans. It read: "Strength in Numbers." What did this mean? Then watching the last two games of the series, it became clear. The individual members worked together and created a team. Then they took the shots many and often. If we take the slogan "Strength in Numbers" and work with the other acupuncturists in the individual states, there will be a new strength within the profession. Legislation could be passed, information could be shared, and power would be developed because the costs would be shared by all.

And lastly, the World Health Organization has asked that the acupuncture schools in the U.S. help with peer review and the field trials of the International Classification of TM-11 Disease Codes. This is very exciting for the acupuncture professionals in the U.S. This project is in its final steps. This part usually takes a big push to complete. This is no exception. WHO needs more money. So, I am asking you again to help in this project. We did it once before. Thank you for your continued support. These codes are for acupuncture medicine and the health of the citizens of the world.

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