

Peer Points: Aimee Raupp Goes From Acupuncture To Books

STORIES OF PRACTICE SUCCESS

Brenda Duran

Editor's note: Welcome to our new bi-monthly column focused on highlighting the success of acupuncturists from around the country who would like to share their tips for making an acupuncture practice work and thrive.

These days, Aimee Raupp is busy. The New York based acupuncturist and herbalist has recently added book author to her growing resume.

Just a few years ago, Raupp was like many recent acupuncture graduates - working to establish a practice as a women's health and fertility expert. Today, she has grown her services to two successful practices in Manhattan and Nyack, NY and made appearances to speak about Traditional Chinese Medicine on ABC Television's "*The View*," Martha Stewart Radio, FOX Television's "*Good Day New York*," and in national magazines such as *Glamour*, *Woman's Day*, *Self* and *Better Nutrition*.

Raupp has also been active promoting her books "*Chill Out & Get Healthy*" and "*Yes, You Can Get Pregnant: The Diet That Will Improve Your Fertility Now & Into Your 40s*" to help women who've struggled with infertility.



Raupp has a Master's of Science degree in Traditional Oriental Medicine from the Pacific College of Oriental Medicine in San Diego, Calif., and a Bachelor's degree in biology from Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey. She holds a license in acupuncture and Chinese herbology in the state of New York and is certified by the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine. Raupp recently spoke to *Acupuncture Today* about her thriving practice and the key to her recent success.

AT: Tell us about going from an acupuncture graduate to being a successful business owner. How were you able to open two practices in New York and make them thrive? What are some of the important steps you took?

AR: I have two practices, one in Manhattan and another in Nyack, New York. I have been working at both practices for almost eight years now, and it's been amazing. I'm not quite sure what brought me from acupuncture student to "successful business owner" other than doing what I love and having perseverance. For sure, the first two years were slow and I barely paid my bills, but I was and still am in love with the medicine I practice and I think that was the "recipe" if you will. I have always been the type of person who has several projects going on at the same time and I kept myself busy learning and making connections that ultimately helped my practice thrive. I feel very lucky.

AT: As a mentor to some of your new employees who have just graduated from acupuncture school, what advice do you give them and how do you guide them?

AR: The most important thing to me is that they love what they do and that they understand that business grows over time. It's not this wave-a-magic-wand type of thing and I think some students fresh out of school just expect to be busy right away. That's often not the case. I am a very hard worker and I expect the same from any associates I take on. My message to any student or new associate I work with is to stay at it and keep focused on what you love about the art of Chinese medicine. This will keep you inspired and keep you helping people...and the more you help people, the more they tell their friends... and business grows from there.

AT: As an acupuncturist, what is the latest trend in your practice that you think is affecting the way acupuncturists do business these days?

AR: The Square. I love my Square. It makes taking credit cards a cinch and it saves my business a good chunk of money each month. Check it out at squareup.com.

AT: You have now written two books, what made you decide to branch out as an author?

AR: Branching out as an author was quite an organic experience. For those of you who know me personally, or went to school with me, you know I've always had an opinion and I certainly liked to voice it. I suppose writing books allowed me to take my message to the masses. I am very passionate about health and about helping people and I also feel that Chinese Medicine can be so misunderstood and perceived as being "new-agey," and I wanted to come across to people in lay terms and let them get to know and understand Chinese medicine. Of course, I approach our tenets and philosophies from a very basic perspective, but I think my message makes my readers more comfortable with Chinese Medicine. And, that's my main goal, as I feel our medicine can make a tremendous difference to so many people.

AT: You specialize in fertility issues, what other health issues are you seeing becoming more concerning to your patient base?

AR: That's right, I do deal with a lot of fertility issues, which inspired my book, the "*Yes, You Can Get Pregnant*" diet. As far as other health issues, I treat a lot of anxiety and depression, which I find often to be a result of spiritual and emotional detachment from self. I also work a lot with gastrointestinal disorders and often help these patients make dietary changes which really make a difference. As well, I have an entire subset of female patients who are dealing with menopausal issues -- anxiety, insomnia, night sweats, weight gain. I find a combination of acupuncture, Chinese herbs and dietary changes makes the biggest difference in all of my patients.

AT: What are some of the Traditional Chinese Medicine principles you personally follow to achieve success?

AR: I suppose the more I practice, the more intuitive I get. I often spend a lot of time feeling pulses to get a real understanding of my patients. I practice pretty much straight TCM -- a lot of spleen-stomach theory. As well, I am always reading and rereading texts. I tend to read a lot of what Bob Flaws puts out and I'm always reading the latest acupuncture and Chinese medicine research. I just finished reading, for the second time, "*Curing Infertility*" by Yaron Seidman, which I found extremely insightful and educational. As I recall being told many, many times when I was a student at PCOM, "You will always be a student of this medicine." I really am. And, I really love it. I don't claim to know any more than any of my peers -- we are all still learning and helping as best we can. This medicine is an art and a skill that I continuously work to get better at.

AT: As an acupuncture business owner what have been some of the mistakes you have learned from?

AR: I undercharged for my services when I first started out -- or I was really quick to discount services. Of course, I always try my best to work with clients, but don't undersell yourself. You studied hard and paid a lot of money for your education -- charge what you're worth.

AT: What do you think is the most important business lesson most acupuncturists need to learn early on?

AR: I think what I said in the previous question is really important. As well, something I remember learning in a business class I took in graduate school -- act as if. Or like I say in my first book, "Fake it 'til you make it." People respond to confidence and they definitely don't want to think they are your only appointment for the day.

AT: What is next for you and your two practices?

AR: Well, with the launch of my second book -- which is a pre-release to the entire *Yes, You Can Get Pregnant* volume on fertility -- I should be pretty busy writing and editing for the next few months. Otherwise, I continue to practice four days a week and grow the practice for my associates under me. I will ramp up my public speaking events and social media engagements. I continue to blog regularly, for my site and a few others. I am toying with a beauty product line. As I said earlier, I always have a lot of projects going on. I do, however, also take my down time very seriously. In 2013, I plan to spend some time studying in China, as well as some time traveling and reading and rejuvenating my spirit. It's tough, but I try to keep it all in balance. I believe first and foremost: We must practice what we preach.

AT: What tips would you give a new acupuncturist trying to build their practice?

AR: I'd like to share with them some words of wisdom from my father, "Keep on Dreamin', Keep on Trying, Keep on Goin' til you find it." Focus on doing what you love and the rest will fall into place. Oh, and keep learning!

For more information, visit www.AimeeRaupp.com.

Would you like to share your story of success in your practice with us? Email Brenda Duran, Senior Associate Editor for *Acupuncture Today* at bduran@mpamedia.com with your story.

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