

Your Patients Want Wellness Solutions

"I wanted to know if people really wanted to get healthy using natural therapies so I hired a marketing firm and asked questions."

Imagine an insurance salesman going door to door, and when someone finally answers the door, he says "You don't want any insurance, do you?" As funny as it sounds that was how one insurance salesman actually approached his clients. My brother was a consultant for a major fortune 500 company and was observing the insurance sales team. He went on sales calls and watched it happen. Obviously, this approach was a disaster. What do you think would happen if he had the same bias but didn't verbalize it out loud? Do you think his sales would be affected?

I remember a very popular movie called "The Secret" years ago. Although, I don't agree with everything in the movie, the predominant theme was that our thoughts and beliefs affect how we experience our world.

Some quantum physics experts assert that we actually change our world based on what we believe.



Now, here is a question for you. Do you believe your patients really want to be healthy or just out of pain? Because your answer to that question affects everything you do in your practice. Hold that thought and let me share with you an unpublished study we funded 20 years ago.

I wanted to know if people really wanted to get healthy using natural therapies, maybe I am just an odd duck. I thought, "Maybe people don't want health". So I hired a marketing firm to go to a local mall in a blue collar com-

munity in the Midwest and ask questions for a few days. Here's the script they used and the questions asked.

"Current research has shown that nutritional (vitamin/mineral) imbalances can be a contributing factor in many patient conditions such as chronic fatigue, hypertension, asthma, blood sugar problems, arthritis, and many others. We have in our office state-of-the-art technology that can analyze your specific blood chemistry for vitamin/mineral imbalances and then identify nutritional

supplements you can take to address the imbalances".

Participants were then asked to check one of three boxes:

Yes, I'm interested in having my blood analyzed for nutritional deficiencies so that I may know which vitamin/minerals I can take as an adjunct to traditional care.

I'd like more information about having my blood chemistry analyzed for nutritional deficiencies before making a decision.

No, I'm not interested. Please treat my condition with traditional care only.

In the community survey, 24% said YES, I'm interested; 31% wanted more information ; 45% said NO, they are not interested. So, 55% said YES or they wanted more information.

Next we went to doctors' offices and while patients sat in the waiting room over 100 patients were asked to fill out a similar questionnaire to find out if they wanted to test for underlying causes of illness. In the doctor's office survey 46% said YES, I'm interested; 30% said I'd like more information; and only 24% said NO, I'm not interested.

It makes sense that in a doctor's office the percentage would be higher since this population is either ill or in pain. However 76% with a yes or I want more information reflects a major unfulfilled need. Also, it was interesting that 45% of the 76% who said they are interested or would like more information also said they would pay out-of-pocket to have their blood analyzed and nutritional deficiencies evaluated.

You can see samples of the data collection instruments below. 20 years ago there was no Dr. Oz on TV, we didn't have genetically

modified foods, and didn't know our bodies were accumulating toxins and poisons the way we do now. Most people hadn't heard the word trans fats or hydrogenated oil. I know if that questionnaire would be repeated, the numbers would be much higher.

The continuing growth of a multibillion dollar nutrition industry testifies to the fact that people want a greater level of wellness and to treat causes of illness rather than symptoms.

Here's my question to you. Are you unconsciously saying to your patients "You really don't want wellness care, do you?" Are you, in effect, unconsciously acting like the insurance salesman we just talked about? Because your underlying assumptions are driving the direction of your practice.

Some doctors are excited about how fearfully and wonderfully we are made. Their excitement and passion for optimal health is contagious. Some doctors are just going through the motions.

Every year, I challenge myself in a new direction. This year I am challenging myself to show my excitement about the amazing opportunities to help people get well.

There are so many areas in wellness that are exploding with new possibilities. Listen to Dr. Vasquez on the microbiome, Dr. Vreeland on how our gut affects our brain or Dr. Qutab on blood chemistry and detox.

WOW, it's an exciting time to be alive. So I want to challenge you as I challenge myself to get more excited and passionate about the possibilities in our profession. We can help people in ways no one else can but we have to let our patients experience our passion.

Happy New Year. Thank you for reading this week's edition of the Tuesday Minute. I'll see you next Tuesday.