Profit from Posture: How to Fuse Posture, Neurology, and Patient Care to Build a Profitable Practice Transcript

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Summit Introduction and Speaker Welcome

Welcome to the practice upgrade Summit. I'm doctor Dennis Perman, and I'll be your host for this session. Our next speaker is the founder of the American Posture Institute.

She's the author of the textbook The Posture Principles and a Ted speaker. She's got two doctoral degrees and is leading the charge against postural decline.

She's been featured on Fox News Radio, on Global Women magazine, and at the World Neurology and Posture Congresses. She's lectured to universities and professional organizations worldwide, across four continents and throughout 12 countries.

Please welcome to the Practice Upgrade summit, doctor Krista Burns. Doctor. Krista. Welcome aboard. Oh, thank you so much, doctor Dennis, I appreciate you being here.

And thank you so much, the Master Circle, for putting on such a phenomenal event. It's an honor to be here. You're too kind. So our topic for today, Krista, is posture for profit.

Profit from posture. And this is something that most people wouldn't think about. Before we dive into our subject matter. Would you please tell us a little more about your background and why you became a chiropractor in the first place?

Absolutely. You know, my story starts back when I was three years old and I had this dream of becoming an Olympian, and I wanted to compete on the United States freestyle ski team as an Olympic skier.

So I became obsessed with this dream from a very young age. I started training every day and skiing. I even left my family at home because I didn't come from a ski town.

I moved to another town, lived with another family just to train every single day for skiing. And I was on the trajectory, you know, I was on the path.

I was ranked 12th in the United States and I was just 14 years old. I was featured in Ski Racing magazine as an upcoming Olympic athlete, was feature on ESPN from a young age.

And so my goal was to become an Olympic athlete and my dreams were absolutely crushed. The morning of United States Ski Team, selections, when I fell in, I injured my spine.

And from that moment forward, I took the Olympic that route. Because that was all that I knew at the time. And so here I am, a young athlete who just wants to continue skiing, and I'm following telepathic route, where each week I was getting injections in my spine under anesthesia.

And I was told that this was the conservative route. Right. So here I am, taking the conservative allopathic route. And not only was I unable to ski after these injections, but I could barely walk.

I was in so much pain that even bending forward to put my socks on in the morning, I would yelp out in pain because it would take my breath away because it was so sharp.

Krista Burns' Origin Story and Chiropractic Journey

When I'd wake up after the injections, I felt like somebody had taken a staple gun to my spine and I could barely move. I had visual bruising that lasted on my spine for two years after the injections.

So as this went through, I became obsessed with helping people with back pain, and I knew there had to be a better way. There had to be a natural solution.

Which is what led me to chiropractic school. Wow, that's quite a story. So tell us how that morphed into your interest in a specialty and posture. Yeah. So now fast forward.

After graduating from chiropractic school, I, at 26 years old, I packed my bags. I moved to the country of Italy with a one way ticket, and I started a practice from scratch and the place where I knew nobody.

I didn't speak the language, I had no entrepreneurial experience and I was fresh out of school. So I really took a plunge, if you will. And what I realized when I moved to Italy and I started to practice from scratch, is I was full of passion and I was ready to help people, but I lacked the systems in order to run a successful practice.

And the mistake that I made early on, and then I see a lot of practitioners making, is that we try and help every single person with every single condition, every single day of the week, every single age group.

Instead of just being an expert in one thing. And so I felt the the, you know, the weight of the world trying to solve every single problem. And what I realized by not having these systems in place was I'd get one new patient and those two out the back door.

And so I refer to that first year in practice as really the treadmill effect, the feeling of working so hard and sprinting but sprinting in place, not growing my practice.

And so it was at that moment where I realized I needed help in business. And I was living in Italy, where we didn't have a lot of seminars at the time.

So we dove into great books, right? And I read the book Good to Great by Jim Collins. And in the book Good to Great, he talks about the difference between good companies and great companies.

Good companies mean well, they have good services, but great companies are the ones that really stand the test of time. They leave a legacy. They're the best in the world at what they do.

And the difference between good companies and great companies, I discovered, was that all great companies specialize. They're the best in the world at one single thing.

They're not trying to be the jack of all trades, master of none. They specialize in one single thing. And at that moment, I reflected back on my first year in practice.

I knew a lot didn't work. I was a it was easy to identify all the things that weren't working. But what I realized is, every time I did external communication for marketing on postural correction, I got more patients in the door.

And every time I set up my treatment programs based on posture transformations with posture imaging measured objectively, I kept them longer. So I realized I was really on to something at that point.

And so I thought, well, if good, great tells me I need to specialize in one single thing, what if I go all in on posture? It's the only thing that was working for me.

And so I went all in on posture. I determined my unique expert position is postural correction. And as soon as I did that, I became more referable. Patients knew what results they expected to get when they came in, and it was very clear what transformation I provided.

So from there I went from failing, ready to pack my bags and move back to America, and that I had failed and that I

couldn't do it to. Then growing a great practice, working with professional sports teams, getting in with local corporations to do postural workshops and being on TV writing for a magazine.

You know, all of these opportunities opened up when I was clear in my communication of what I did, how I did it, and and the results that I delivered.

So when it comes to posture, that's where I went from going from up with communication into posture. And also I made myself my own patient. You know, if I'm honest with you, after graduating chiropractic school, I was still in back pain and I was on this 20 year journey of overcoming my own back pain.

And when I went through my own systems, the 12 weeks to better posture, I finally felt like I had healed myself. And so when you become your own patient and you can experience a transformation yourself, then it's not about selling a transformation.

You know that you're offering a really great service. Great story. You use the term I'd like you to explain more fully what's a unique expert position, and how do practitioners position themselves as the go to expert in their community.

Yes. So again referring back to the book good to great. He talks about a hedgehog concept which we refer to as unique expert position. So your unique expert position, if you were all to write now at home, draw three circles on a piece of paper.

And where those three circles collide in the middle is where your unique expert position is born. And the three circle is profit. What can you make money doing? Talent.

What are you good at and passion? What are you passionate about? So if you draw those three circles and you're very honest with yourself and you just do a brain dump of all the things that you're passionate about, what are you passionate about in your life and your career?

And then you look at talent like, what can I be the best at? If I'm really honest with myself, what can I be the best in my community at? What can I be world class at?

And then of course, what can I make money doing? Because if we're good at something and we're passionate about it, but we can't bring it into our business, then it's just a hobby.

And we have to be so passionate about our unique position that we wake up every single day ready to help people and be committed to mastering this one unique position.

So once you once you go through this exercise and you determine your unique expert position, then you want to go all in on uplevel your education within that unique expert position.

So when I look back on when I determine my unique expert position of postural correction, I wasn't the go to posture expert yet.

Finding a Unique Expert Position in Posture

I determined it that day and I said, I'm going to go all in on posture. And then what I did over the course of the next five years was I went to every single posture seminar that I could.

Everything from neurophysiology, posture, dynamic movements. I learned as much as I could. I read all the major textbooks. You know, I tuned into all the research, and I reviewed a thousand research studies, and I collected this information and then my practice became a laboratory.

So I collect all the information, and then I tried different things. I created programs, I got feedback from patients, and then from there I was able to continue to improve those systems.

And then so you you learn this information, you determine your hands or position, and then you uplevel your knowledge to expert education or to expert level.

Because we're talking about up leveling today. Right? We're upgrading our practices. And this is one of the best ways of doing it is to be very clear in your communication, to demonstrate what transformation you offer and then be the true expert where, you know, you can guarantee results.

Another crazy thing I did, which I don't necessarily recommend to people, but a little bit of my story of how I got to where I am today is in the book, integrative talks about guaranteeing results.

And so I used to, each report of findings, I would shake the patient's hand and I would say, listen, we have a 100% guarantee that you will get objective postural correction results on posture imaging.

You know what? I don't have to do a single refund. Why? Because when I put that guarantee in place, I hold myself responsible for truly having the best possible correction systems and knowing for sure that I was offering results.

Clinical results. And so when you hold yourself at that level of expertise and hold yourself accountable, that's when you get truly phenomenal results.

And with posture, it's so easy to communicate and you can show them objectively, pre and post with posture imaging. Well I hope I hope our viewers are taking notes on this.

This is rich. So then, how can our viewers, how can the doctors that are watching use posture as a solution to grow their own practices? Yeah. So if we think about the word posture, what I want you guys to realize is that this is a word that's in our patients vocabulary.

So there's a statistic that went out showing that 85% of patients don't understand their doctors. So we think that we're communicating and we are communicating at a high level.

The problem is, is that oftentimes it's over our patients heads. And so I know what the master circle and you guys do a phenomenal job teaching about the importance of great communication.

You know I've sat through your seminars myself. And every time I walk out with better ways of communicating at a higher level. So I think this really fits in by understanding the 85% of people just plain don't understand us.

And so if we say that, we go, okay, well, I want to position myself in the top 15% of the practitioners who communicate in a way to the product that the patients understand them.

Because what happens is 49% of patients walk out the door and they want to heal, but they're not sure what to do next because it wasn't clear. So if we can overcome that gap and go beyond that boundary of communication, then we understand why postural correction is so important and powerful.

From the time that we were kids, our moms, our grandmas, our teachers told us about straight right. It's a word that's ingrained within our vocabulary.

And every time you say the word posture, in fact, I want you. This is your homework. From today is next time you're out with friends or you're having a zoom call or communicating, just throw in the word posture and watch how people respond instantly when you say the word posture.

They sit up straight and they change their entire physiology. There are very few words in the English language or in any language. When I say in posture or in Italian, they do the same thing.

So there's very few words within our vocabulary where you say one single word without even any intention behind it. And people change their entire physiology around it. Why?

Because it's been ingrained within us that proper posture is associated with better health. It helps us look better, move better, and feel better. Research. Healthcare. Consumer desires.

Look at what wakes patients up and says, I'm going to go into Doctor Christa's office today. I'm going to go into your practice today. I'm going to spend money. I'm going to invest my time.

Patients want to look better. They want to move better and they want to feel better. They may come in and say, hey, my back hurts. But what they really want is they want to overcome their back pain to look better, move better, feel better, posture simultaneously delivers on each one of these health care consumer desires.

The reason this is important is because it's languaging that they understand. They understand what it looks like to have poor posture and they understand what it looks like to have good posture, and it meets their value system of what they're looking for in a transformation.

So partial correction is really important. And you can show it too. So with posture imaging you can take a picture on day one and show their partial distortion patterns.

And then over the course of treatment program you can show them an after picture. So if you think about weight loss as an example doctor dentist, you know, when you engage in a weight loss program, let's say it's going to be a 12 week program at the beginning.

What do you do? You weigh yourself. You take images, and then afterwards, if you've lost 20 pounds, have you lost 10 pounds or you got your result, your goal?

What's the first thing you do? You go on social media and you post the pre and post results, right? Like, look at me, I'm healthier. I look better now.

And you can show that. And the patients proud of it. The same is true with postural correction. It's a natural biologic process where we can show a pre and post transformation.

Patients are investing in transformations. They are not investing in your technique that you do. They are investing in the health transformation that they will get from your services.

Well, it's no surprise that you have the reputation you do as a master communicator because that is crystal clear. And anybody can learn to apply exactly what you just said.

Now let's shift toward talking about profit. How can we profit as chiropractors and practice from posture both online and in the physical practice? Yeah.

So right now you know, a lot of practitioners are saying, how can I do this online? Right.

Using Posture to Communicate Value and Drive Growth

And it's been one of those unprecedented times where we've been all been challenged to look at how we're doing and how can we improve it, which is not a bad thing. Right?

We're continuing to evolve always. So when it comes to posture, what's amazing about it is that you can implement it online with telemedicine as well as in your physical practice.

So whatever your goals are, just know that by implementing posture, you can you can increase profitability for your practice. Now, I mentioned a second ago when it comes to delivering transformations.

So when you're doing a report of findings, what I want you to do is focus on the transformation that you're providing to the patient. And here's one of my best tricks.

On not going to trick, one of my best communication tips to utilize on a report of findings is what you're going to do is you're going to explain the posture, health, connection.

I have posters behind me that are demonstrating this and you explain the posture, health, connection. You're going to tell the patient what proper posture looks like.

And then from there you're going to show them their posture images. And here's what you're going to do. Doctor dentist. You're going to say okay, now you tell me what do you see.

The patient's going to look at their images and what happens. We are incredibly self-critical of our self in a picture. I still now, you know, we take a group photo, for example, at Super Conference, we all take a big photo together.

And when it goes out online, what's the first thing we do? We look at us in that photo right where my eyes open. How do I look? Am I standing up straight?

So we are obsessed with how we live looking for us. This is one of those inherent things that we have. And so when you show a patient an image of themselves and you ask them, how do they look?

And they know that they're being evaluated, they're very self-critical. They go, wow, I had no idea what was that? Or of course, they have headaches like my forward head posture.

This is they're language in their response. Now here's what you say. I can see exactly what you're saying here, Mrs. Jones. You're right. You do have forward head posture.

The good news is, is that we have a solution to your posture problem in this practice. Here's how we're going to deliver your posture transformation. And then you go through the treatment program.

So what just happened with that communication. And why is this so profitable to your practice. What happened with the communication as you educated Mrs.

Jones, you showed her an image of herself. She then gave herself a report of findings. She said she had a problem. You never told her she looked bad. You never told her she had a problem because of what happens.

Then you get defensive. What do you mean? I don't look that bad, right? That's. That's our response. If we change, if we flip that communication versus if we just show and we say, you tell me, what do you see?

Now she's giving herself a report of findings, and all we did was make her right and support her with a solution, because she told us she had a problem.

And then it's a very natural transition into explaining that treatment program. Right. And because it's all about the solution and the transformation.

So always make it about transformation. Just remember that the patient they they need to be educated but educate them in words that they understand because if not, they block out 49% girls.

I have no idea what to do next. I still have a problem, right? Make sure that we're positioning you in the top 15% of practitioners who communicate in a way that the patients understand that.

And also, when it comes to correction. So to constantly be feeding your practice the new patients, I recommend doing postural workshops. And you can take those online and do posture webinars.

And what's amazing is you can do posture correction treatment protocols online as well. So if you're if you're looking at the current situation going, I'd like to have a hybrid practice, maybe some online, some physical or any combination of the two.

You can do this with postural correction and I'll show you in just a minute. We talked about treatment programs, how you can set it up with a three component postural correction system.

Well, yeah, I mean don't leave us hanging. I set up those postural correction treatment plans. I mean, for goodness sake, this is the this is where the rubber meets the road.

This is where people actually get the benefit of your expertise. How do you do that. Yeah. So we just communicated how to how to get that right on the report of findings, how to take them to the point where they're ready to invest in a program.

I always recommend doing programs. One of the greatest mistakes that I made early on in practice is it was always a visit per visit. And when it's a visit per visit and there's lack of objectivity, who is in charge?

The patient and Doctor Dennis, when do they stop coming in? When the patient's in charge and there's lack of objectivity. So is there a pain? Right. As soon as they're out of pain, they go, okay, great.

I'm good. Thanks. And that means that you helped him, right? You got him out of pain, but there was no reason for them to stay. So what we recommend is what's called the pain to posture model.

So the patient comes in and they're in pain on day one. This is very high within their value system to get out of pain look better move better feel better.

If they're in pain feel better is number one. And so let's say they have low back pain. Get them out of pain. Initially this should take about four visits.

And then what we do with our communication from day one, day two and then ongoing throughout is it's the pain to posture model. So we get them out of pain. We get them feeling better.

But what we've done on day one is we've taken posture images. So now we create goals. It's a 12 week program for most patients. Generically speaking, 12 weeks is a really good posture correction treatment protocol. But of course all very patient patient.

So on day one we're going to determine our initial goals. Usually it's to get them out of pain and then on up with that phase. Once we break that 12 weeks down into three phases, there's one.

Get you out of pain and reduce forward head posture 25%. Phase two very specific goal reduce postural hyper kyphosis by 50%. Phase three reduce you know, your head posture by 80%.

And we have an objective analysis as well. So we have a health score that they get. So their functional health score in addition to their posture images, we want to bring them above 80 on the functional health score spectrum.

So on day one we go through the analysis. They get a score which is objective and they get the posture images. And so our goals are to reduce forward head posture by 50%.

Plus bring you from a 32 to a 50. And then in phase two we want to bring you from a 50 to a 65, phase three from a 65 over to over 80 points. So now they have this objective reason to continue working towards those programs, right?

If we lack objectivity, as soon as I feel better, suddenly you get expensive. It's not worth their time. You know, they have no reason why they're investing to come in which we help keeping them looking better, moving better, and feeling better by tracking the results.

So after each phase, we're going to then do a reevaluation. We're going to show them after phase one. These were your initial posture images and your initial functional health score.

Postural Correction Programs and Objective Measurement

Now we've seen an improvement to here. The good news is we're making progress. But we still have more to go. So for phase two our specific goal is this, you know, it's x, y, z.

And, you know, to increase your, your points and to reduce your postural distortion patterns. And then after phase two, we do another reevaluation, same examinations as day one and compare Green Post.

And then at the end of the 12 weeks now we can show them the transformation that took place over time. They are looking better, they are moving better, and they are feeling better.

And why is that important? Because subjectively that is what the patient wants. Why is objectivity important to us? Because we know that we're doing our job, and we can show them the difference to match with their feelings objectively.

So paint a posture model 12 weeks as an average treatment program and do a reevaluation. Break it up into three phases. Do a reevaluation after each phase.

And our three component postural correction system is based on spinal alignment, postural rehabilitation, and posture. Have a medication. So with spinal alignment this is what we do hands on.

So this is you're working directly with the patient now postural rehabilitation. This can be done exclusively outside of the office. So you can't if you have a rehabilitation room.

Excellent. Definitely have them teach them the exercises and have them do it in office. But with that being said, also, if you want to work with that hybrid online model, you can also have you can also send them videos and they can be doing the posture rehabilitation at home and then posture have a reeducation.

So when it comes to posture habits, we've had our posture for many years before today's conversation, right. The thought of changing it overnight just isn't realistic.

So a patient spends, you know, 40 hours a week in their office, whereas maybe they spend one hour per week in hours or one hour per month, even if they're one of care.

And so we have to change their posture habits. So for example, looking down our smartphone, will we bend forward in this position the flexor dominant position.

We're adding up to 60 pounds of pressure on our cervical spine every time we look down. So we have to bring them into proper posture habits with making simple shifts, for example, bringing those devices up to eye level, taking posture breaks for 30s every hour they're on their devices, having active sitting solutions to stimulate the vestibular system, having them work on postural balance.

So we integrate all of this into one very complete treatment protocol. And we're measuring objectively as we go. Yeah. You brushed up against the subjective measurement for the postural correction.

What technology do you use and what systems do you use in order to evaluate objectively? Yeah. So I highly recommend posture imaging. And the reason being is because we can show the transformation.

I know I've mentioned that a couple of times. And the reason being is because this is everything when it comes to, your treatment programs, if you can have that objective result pre and post.

And what's good about posture imaging is it doesn't require X-ray imaging. Certainly you can use X-ray imaging. But I know that for some practitioners, based on where you are in the world, it's not always feasible.

And with telemedicine as an example, then x ray may not be a feasible option. So what's amazing about posture

imaging? If you're using x rays, you can add posture imaging as an additional component to your, your initial evaluation.

And or you can use posture imaging to stay objective. So it's a great way to easily implement. Also you can have patients. So if you're walking distance, you can have patients take images and send them to you.

And you can still do a nice complete thorough posture analysis. Right. So there's all these options. But by staying objective based upon how you have your practice set up.

So it's a great way of showing them this is where you are in day one. We ask them what do they see. They tell us. They show that they have a problem. We give them a solution with a postural correction treatment program.

We sell, if you will, the transformation because patients are buying our services, they're buying the transformation that they will get in the end. And then we have an objective measurement to meet their subjective changes that are taking place.

Fabulous, fabulous. So you have delivered a motherlode of phenomenal information. Covered every base. And I can't help feeling that our viewers are going, well, where do I start?

What do I how do I get this up and running? Where can they begin with the implementation of postural correction? Wonderful. Well, you just started. That's the good news.

You just take the first step forward by being a part of the master circle, by joining us on this amazing summit that the Master Circle has put on for us today.

Now, with that being said, if you want to learn more about postural correction, then recognize the great opportunity that you have of implementing this with your current services.

It doesn't have to replace anything. You're currently doing it the perfect complement for what's already happening in your office. Now at the American Posture Institute, we have, you know, really great postural correction systems and protocols that we'd be happy to help you with.

Everything from structural correction, brain based postural correction, ergonomic postural correction, as well as pediatric postural correction. So we'd be happy to support you in your posture journey of becoming a posture expert.

Now that's step one really is to find your unique expert position going all the way back to the beginning. Because once you have that, you're very clear on where you want to go with your practice.

You're clear on the clinical results that you deliver. Then you can start working by uplevel in your education to make sure that you can guarantee those amazing clinical results are objective, and you can continue to communicate that way and position yourself as the go to expert.

What I would love to see for everybody who joins us. Amazing summit, is that you position yourself as the go to expert with authority in your community.

You know, when it comes to multiple practitioners who are all generalists, then it becomes a question of price. Don't over your price raise your value right.

Become the go to expert in helping patients and one single thing as an example postural correction. And when you do and when you can deliver on those clinical results, then you can really uplevel your practice and you can profit from posture.

We're here to support you on the education aspect. Aspect when it comes to clinical postural correction results. Wow, that is just spectacular. I have one more question for you because, you're a visionary.

Christo. Your perspective on where the profession is headed, how your research fits in.

Future of the Profession and Closing Remarks

I would love to gather your distinctions on where you think our profession is headed for the future. Yeah, I think it's a combination of structural and neurological and those that can find the perfect combination of the two I think will be highly successful.

Now, keep in mind that patients don't come in and say what we say. They come in, they're still going to say, I have back pain, right? That will still be there. Communication.

How we respond to that communication will make a difference of who continues to thrive in the future. So it's a combination of having a structural result and having a neurologic result.

I know you guys certainly communicate this brain based wellness at, at the master circle. That's phenomenal. We do a lot of work with partial neurology, specifically stimulating the brain in ways that are controlling posture.

So we can make it about the brain and we can show them that structural change. Again, bringing it back to weight loss. They want to see a transformation.

It's hard to see a transformation neurologically when we're working with the brain. So that's why going back to posture imaging by having that structural that we can show them and knowing how to work with the brain, with functional virology is really impactful, powerful.

So I think moving forward, it's going to be a combination of structural and neurological. And when you can combine the two and posture is a great way of doing it, then you're going to see these practitioners have amazing offices because patients understand the transformation.

They know what they're investing in and you become more highly referable. I also think looking for work, it'll be all about experts, not the generalists.

Right. So and then what's amazing about that is we can cross refer to. So if you don't love working with pediatric patients you shouldn't have to I mean that's not your obligation.

You are really good at working with sports performance as an example. Meaning if you know a child, a pediatric patient calls your office, you can always cross refer to another chiropractor in town.

So having your unique expertise so that we're not all competing in a generalist market, we're now experts who are elevated in our unique expertise well and well.

Doctor Barnes, you have position yourself as the unique expert, in posture. And obviously this is a critical niche for our profession going forward. I know our viewers will be able to contact you through the summit materials, but would you like to just mention if they want to, get in touch with you, how would they do that?

Absolutely. Please check us out on Facebook at facebook.com, British-American Posture Institute, our website, American Posture institute.com, and on Instagram at American Posture Institute.

Fantastic. Well, I know our viewers are delighted with this marvelous, rich, elegant and masterful presentation. Doctor Krista Burns, you are making a phenomenal contribution to the chiropractic landscape.

We thank you very much for participating in the Practice Upgrade Summit. Thank you very much. Thank you, Doctor Dennis. And again, I just want to pay forward my compliments to the Master circle.

For years, you guys have been providing with practitioners with the best information when it comes to practice growth, when it comes to communication, when it comes to expert positioning.

And so I want to say thank you to you for the amazing service that you're providing, and acknowledge all the participants of the summit and say you're in the right place when it comes to the master circle.