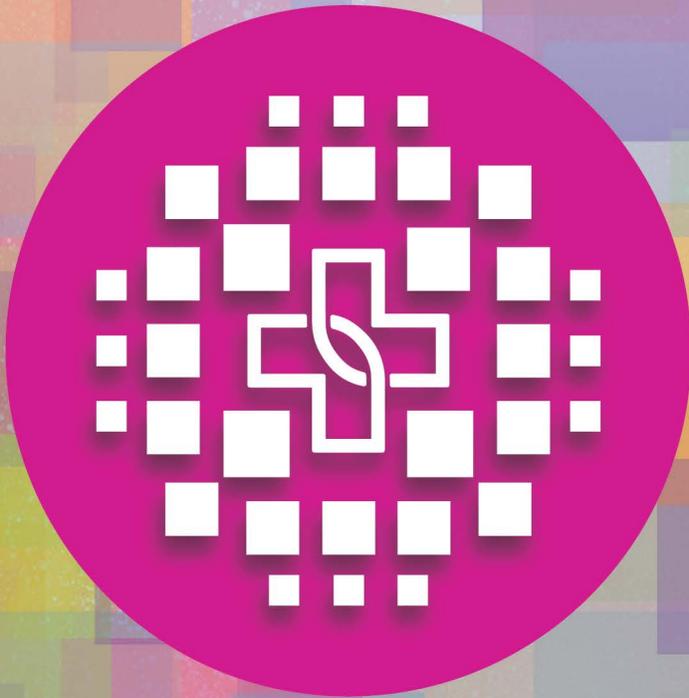


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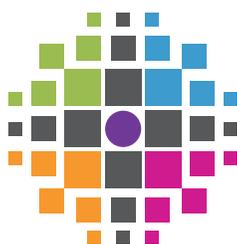


**THE INSPIRING STORIES OF
PHARMACY ENTREPRENEURS**

DR. KIMBER BOOTHE, PHARM D, MHA

PHARMFLUENCERS™

THE INSPIRING STORIES OF PHARMACY ENTREPRENEURS



Dr. Kimber Boothe, PharmD, MHA

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I would like to dedicate this book...

***TO MY PARENTS,
for encouraging me to dream big and be myself;***

***TO MY HUSBAND & CHILDREN,
for making life fun and supporting my career passions;***

***AND TO ALL PHARMFLUENCERS,
for your desire to influence and impact pharmacy
through entrepreneurship.***



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INTRODUCTION

I have always been incredibly inspired by hearing individuals share their stories. There is something empowering about taking hold of one's life and sharing that narrative with the world. When I first began my entrepreneurial journey, it was the stories of other entrepreneurs that motivated me to get to work and make my own career goals a reality. This is what always drew me to attending conferences and reading business anthologies, the opportunity to hear how others built joyful careers for themselves.

I know far too many pharmacists who are experiencing burnout from working within the healthcare industry, who find themselves unable to achieve the level of financial freedom they want, who believe they can do more than what they are allowed within the confines of their job. I want you to know it doesn't have to be this way. You deserve a career that is engaging and joyful, that allows you to grow and challenge yourself, that gives you financial freedom and invigorates rather than exhausts you. This book is specifically designed to inspire you to make that career a reality, to not only advance the pharmacy practice but to become your own business owner.

I am at a place in my life where I love the work that I do. Helping other pharmacists find meaningful careers to advance pharmacy entrepreneurship, and intrapreneurship is my passion. Therefore, it was important to me to create a platform in which I could pass along the inspiration by sharing my story and in which other pharmacy entrepreneurs could share theirs.

My goal for the "Pharmfluencer Summit: Influence, Monetize, Impact Pharmacy Through Entrepreneurship" was to assemble a group of Pharmfluencers, including myself, to share their entrepreneurial journey. My definition of a Pharmfluencer is a pharmacy influencer, someone who is impacting pharmacy through entrepreneurship. They are monetizing their knowledge and influencing the field. The event had 450 registrations and proved to be such a success. I decided my next task would be to write a book accumulating all the knowledge, advice, and personal experiences that were shared during the summit.

The Pharmfluencer contributors have all been incredible partners whose values align with mine and who are working to advance pharmacy through their businesses.

Each contributor's chapter is divided into subsections that address:

- Their entrepreneurial journey
- Methods in which they are monetizing their knowledge
- A specific topic on which each contributor has elected to share their knowledge
- Their advice for aspiring entrepreneurs.

The goal was to help inspire and inform people who are interested in entrepreneurship and looking to have a larger impact on the pharmacy profession. I wanted to gather all the Pharmfluencers out there and make their stories accessible to you! I wanted to provide a blueprint and business model as to how aspiring Pharmfluencers can monetize their knowledge.

What is an influencer? About seven years ago, I participated in a program called Experts Academy with Brendon Burchard. The terminology we used then was "expert" or "thought leader," but since then, that concept has developed to be encompassed by the umbrella term of "influencer." The defining characteristic of an influencer is both to be an expert in your field but also to monetize that knowledge in order to develop your business and have an impact.

Monetizing your knowledge could look like offering an online course, live course, or hosting webinars or webcasts that people pay for. You could host a conference or seminar both in-person or virtual. You could offer an ongoing membership where people pay a monthly or annual fee to access the information you are providing. You could write a book and sell it, offering both hard copies and ebooks. You could speak at events, provide coaching, or work as a clinical patient consultant. You could work as a business consultant; the opportunities are truly limitless.

If you're feeling a little overwhelmed by the possibilities, no worries. A trick I use is to identify my zone of genius. This is to say, identifying the areas in your field that make you happy and how you can zero in on those areas to develop your business. What do I enjoy doing? What do I want to learn more about? What do people naturally come to me for? Answering those questions is how you start to identify your zone of genius. This book will not answer those questions for you, but it will offer you a variety of perspectives you can use for reference so that by the time you finish, you can begin to identify it for yourself.



SETTING INTENTION: WHY YOU ARE HERE

There are a multitude of reasons why this information may be of use to you. But I have identified a few key reasons people in pharmacy seek entrepreneurship.

- Experiencing Healthcare Burnout: Seeking opportunities to influence change
- Desire for Financial Freedom: Want additional income and security
- Made for More: You feel this and believe you could have more impact
- Craving a Joyful and Engaging Career Through Entrepreneurship.

Whatever your reasons, learning how to become a Pharmfluencer can meet all of these needs and give you a new outlook on your career.

I met with somebody recently who was working in pharmacy but wanted to develop an entrepreneurial career outside the field. And while that is perfectly fine, I was surprised by how many people don't realize how ripe pharmacy is for entrepreneurship. The two are in no way mutually exclusive. The key is, once you know how to monetize your knowledge, you can apply that to any field, healthcare or otherwise. This book, however, is going to focus on pharmacy because I believe entrepreneurship can actually help advance pharmacy practice. My goal has always been to create more positions in the pharmacy practice. There are a whole host of unmet needs that can be met through your entrepreneurial practice.

The themes of this book are to:

- Influence
- Monetize
- Impact



INFLUENCE

Why explore entrepreneurship and the influencer model



MONETIZE

Learn the many methods to monetize your knowledge



IMPACT

Understand the business foundation and opportunities in pharmacy practice

We will be exploring: what is the influencer model, how you can have influence through entrepreneurship, how you can monetize your knowledge, and impact pharmacy practice by sharing your gifts with the world. By the end of this book, you will understand the steps to build an entrepreneurial business and how to develop a strong foundation for that business. Whether you are starting as a side hustle and moving toward a full-time entrepreneur, or you already have an entrepreneurial business and are looking to expand, this book will help you impact your industry in ways you may never have imagined.

Although taking this leap can often be frightening, it is also extremely rewarding. I'm also a wife and mother. I've been married for 13 years and have three kids; I know how high the stakes are when you are trying to make this leap while supporting a family. And while it is not all roses, and it may not be perfect for everybody, I truly believe the impact you can have in entrepreneurship is much greater than continuing to work in a job that is not satisfying you. Use this book as an opportunity to entertain your hopes and ambitions. Truly think about what your mission is, whom you want to support, and what your life would look like if you could have the kind of impact you have been dreaming of.

I have been a full-time entrepreneur for two years, and I cannot express strongly enough how great it feels to be in control of my career. My motto is that pharmacy can do more with more. I started my business to focus on helping advance pharmacy through intrapreneurship, innovative practice within organizations and health systems and supporting people in the profession who are looking to make an impact as an entrepreneur. By helping people through both avenues, I have been able to help advance the profession as a whole. Before becoming an entrepreneur, I have worked in varying capacities, mostly in hospitals and health systems. It was through these experiences that I realized the potential the industry held for entrepreneurs. I began my journey as an entrepreneur seven years ago and have never looked back.

I know there may be people reading this who are not even sure if they want to be an entrepreneur, but I cannot emphasize enough how wonderful a career choice it is. I'd like to tell a brief story about my first entrepreneurship venture, which I started when I was in college. I've always loved doing nails; as a student, I would do my friend's nails. I would go all out; I would even put fake nails on people and do designs with crystals. Well, I got to thinking about it and thought, "Why not? Why don't I make this into a real business?" I posted an ad in the college newspaper and ended up getting a nice letter from the university saying, "If you don't stop running this business out of your dorm room, you will be expelled."

That admittedly cut my entrepreneurial journey short. But I've had this entrepreneurial bug for a long time, and I've considered it within many different avenues. Early on, right after I finished my residency, I was doing consulting with pharma companies in which I was the cardiology specialist. It was from that position that I recognized the value of having a business because I had to deduct my business expenses. Even way back then, I had lots of different ideas about what it meant to run a business.

Seven years ago, I came across this entrepreneurial expert thought leader model; some people call it a knowledge expert or knowledge entrepreneur model. It was very appealing to me because one thing it emphasized was that you didn't need a physical space in order to be an entrepreneur. That really opened my eyes in terms of what it would mean to create a startup.

There is so much wisdom that can be gained from this book. You will hear entrepreneurs discuss taking the leap to follow your dreams, the value podcasting can bring to your business, the power of storytelling, and how medical writing can be a great role for pharmacists to play as a gig job or even a full-time career. Our Pharmfluencers will teach you how to use your strengths and stay true to yourself in business, how to take risks and make educated choices, how to seek valuable mentorship, and that is only the tip of the iceberg.

A recurring thread you will see throughout this book is the power of mindset. Mindset is incredibly important; I emphasize that in both my courses and the teaching that I do. You have to have a mindset of action; sometimes, that can be a messy action, but it is worthwhile.

William Jennings Bryan once said, "Destiny is no matter of chance. It is a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for; it is a thing to be achieved."

I truly believe this. Whatever your reasons for picking up this book, you have made a choice to be here and to explore entrepreneurship as an opportunity. I'm so happy you're here.

—Kimber Boothe



Use this QR code to access the Pharmfluencers Workbook. Alternatively, you can find it online at www.PharmafluencersBook.com!



THE PHARMFLUENCER BUSINESS MODEL

OVERVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to provide you with new concepts to support your foundational knowledge while hearing the inspiring stories of pharmacy entrepreneurs. The contributions you will hear throughout this book are designed to inspire you and plant the seeds of action so you can begin or continue to expand your business. In this chapter, however, I want to address some of the key areas you will encounter and want to be prepared for throughout your entrepreneurial journey.

I include key points from my Pharmfluencer Business Course, which is composed of seven modules, and while I cannot go in-depth into each one, I do include a summary of each and what it contains. My hope is that this provides you with a general framework you can use to inform the development of your business. The seven modules are:

- Welcome & Overview
- Entrepreneurship & Business Models
- Methods to Monetize Your Knowledge
- Pharmfluencer Business Foundation
- Pharmacy Profession Strategies
- Acceleration & Growth
- Celebration

There are a number of reasons why people have sought out The Pharmfluencer Business Course, but I have identified three key factors that have led people to seek out new and valuable opportunities in entrepreneurship.

Influence. People who joined the course are seeking ways to further influence the industry than their current positions allow. They are passionate about building community. They are exploring having a part-time side hustle or how to be a full-time entrepreneur serving in their zone of genius.

Monetize. As much as we may wish to offer our knowledge and

services for free, there is a saying that says, ‘no margin, no mission.’ Many people understand they have a sought-after body of knowledge, or they can provide meaningful services to the people around them, but they don’t know how to monetize their knowledge. Finding creative and innovative ways to monetize your knowledge is what distinguishes a hobbyist from an entrepreneur. And while you may feel like your knowledge is too niche to attract an audience, you will be surprised at how willing people are to pay for a service when you offer it in a comprehensive and effective way.

Impact. The Pharmfluencer Business Course teaches you the foundational steps to building a career in entrepreneurship and how to impact pharmacy practice. By following these steps, you ensure your business is sustainable and can create value and impact for years to come.

There are some questions I want you to think about as you read. You don’t need to have definitive answers for them, but I have found that keeping them in mind can be very helpful in developing your vision for your business:

- **Influence:** What is your zone of genius? What topic would you choose to be your focus?
- **Monetize:** What methods to monetize your knowledge do you like the most? What is your target annual income to feel financial freedom?
- **Impact:** What is the impact and level of influence you want to have? What would your life look like if you had the freedom to run an entrepreneurial business? What areas of pharmacy practice do you want to advance?

As Walt Disney once said, “All our dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them.” Whatever your motivation is, I fully support you. While this chapter is only a brief and abridged look at what is covered in The Pharmfluencer Business Course, if it proves helpful to you, I highly recommend looking into taking the course in full. The course also includes access to tools and templates to support your journey. All information is available on my website at kimberbooth.com.



ENTREPRENEURSHIP & BUSINESS MODELS

When thinking about where my clients are on their entrepreneurial journey, I can usually sort them into five different places along a spectrum:

- Have not considered entrepreneurship
- Have some ideas
- Actively planning
- Current side hustle/part-time entrepreneur
- Full-time entrepreneur

Think about where you might be along this spectrum; this should inform the actions you take moving forward.

Before we get into the types of business models, I'd like to cover some basic statistics. The Small Business Administration (SBA) Office of Advocacy defines small businesses as those with fewer than 500 employees.¹ By this definition, over 99% of businesses in the United States are small businesses. Startups are firms that are under a year old; nine out of ten startups are very small, with only one to four employees. A side hustle, on the other hand, is a business that is not the primary source of income but is done in addition to the full-time job.

I want to cover these basic statistics so you can understand that our ideas about small businesses are often actually misconceptions. Rather than a dying industry, small businesses make up the overwhelming bulk of the American economy and carry tremendous weight. Not only that, but the majority of small businesses continue to thrive and survive. If you want to be an entrepreneur but imagine it to be a hostile climate or too difficult to accomplish, think again!

Before you can become a successful entrepreneur, you must have a successful business model. Focus on the basics, which include matters such as:

- Your 'why'
- Entrepreneur vs. Intrapreneur
- Business Models
- Your Topic
- Ideal Customer Avatar

Firstly, what is entrepreneurship, and what are the potential business models you can use to guide your practice? It is important to understand the frameworks you will inevitably be operating within. Many of us are not trained in entrepreneurship, this is not covered in our pharmacy school curriculum, so it is a critical place to start. This will also

¹ Accessed February 23, 2022. Survival Rates and Firm Age [Infographic]. (n.d.). SBA Office of Advocacy. SBA Office of Advocacy. https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/SurvivalRatesAndFirmAge_ADA_0.pdf

help answer your ‘why’ and ground you in your purpose. I like to use the term *Ikigai*, which is a Japanese word referring to the topic that aligns with your ideal customers. This is the process of harnessing all of the different ideas in your head and bringing them together. You have to be strategic about what you are going to focus on, especially if this is your first business or the first service you are providing. It doesn’t mean you can’t do other things in the future, but you need to harness these ideas and narrow them down to what is the best fit for you. This is not just any business; it is your starting business.

After you choose your topic, you will go deeper on identifying the traits of who you serve by defining your ideal customer avatar (ICA).

There are many types of Business Models, but they can be boiled down to selling a product or service. The Influencer/Expert Business Model is a viable and flexible model that I am personally fond of. All the contributors in this book use the influencer business model as their main model.



METHODS TO MONETIZE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Within the context of the Pharmfluencer Course, Methods to Monetize Your Knowledge makes up the bulk of Module 3. It is a key model in the program designed to teach clients the methods available to them for monetizing their knowledge. There are 14 lessons, one for each of the most common methods. It is important to emphasize that this is your method to monetize your knowledge. These are the products and services that you will provide for your ideal customer avatar (ICA). The goal in providing these services is to help them solve their problems and achieve their ideal goal and transformation.

I wanted to provide an abridged version to readers that could inform them in making these critical decisions. When considering how best to monetize your knowledge, there are a number of things to keep in mind.

This is an opportune moment to reflect on your *Ikigai*. What product or service exists at the intersection of your personal interests while also meeting the needs of your clients? Consider: What is the method most likely to get my ICA their desired outcome and transformation?

Another question to consider, simply enough, is, what do I like? You are going to want to select a method that you enjoy and prefer. Keep this in mind as you begin to design your product.

The 14 most common methods to monetize your knowledge can be seen in the graphic below:



Methods to Monetize Your Knowledge

It is not all-inclusive, but hopefully, it will inspire you to find the method that is most effective for you. There are many ways you can share your knowledge and be paid for it. It is important to understand that these options are out there so you can prioritize your preferences and be aware of the choices you are making. For example, I have known for years that I wanted to write a book about pharmacy and entrepreneurship, but I knew that a book was not the best product to begin my journey with. Instead, I started by offering courses and coaching and worked my way up to writing the book. You should select your method in accordance with what is the best fit for you, both in terms of your personal preferences and how you want to share your knowledge, but also what is most impactful for your customers.

It may be helpful to reflect on a time you purchased one of these products or services for yourself. What was your experience with this product? What did you like or dislike about it? If there were things you disliked, was it a concern with the actual method, or just how that person implemented it. If the latter, what can you do better if utilizing this method?

I like to have my clients select their top three methods and then decide on which one they want to move forward with. As I stated earlier, you can always select more than one method down the road, but initially, it is best to start with one specific product or service. Throughout the model, students receive the following relevant information to each of the specific methods of monetizing knowledge.

- Description
- Characteristics
- Details
- Examples

You will be inspired by the multiple methods that our Pharmfluencers are utilizing to monetize their knowledge. I refer you to the summary table at the end of the book to identify which contributors are using the methods you are most interested in.



PHARMFLUENCER BUSINESS FOUNDATION

Once you have planned your business model, it is important to get to the basics of the business. It is in places like this where I recommend utilizing the Small Business Association and really focusing on the basics. This module covers content such as:

- Administration/Business
- Branding/Website
- Marketing/Launching
- Networking/Collaborating
- Social/Blog/Podcast
- Insurance/Healthcare
- Mindset

These are all really important elements to consider, and I recommend all my clients spend time planning each component to ensure their entrepreneurial project has a strong foundation. Think of them as a checklist of parts of your business you will want to establish and plan for. While you may not have to do all of them from the beginning, like a blog or podcast, they are a core part of a successful business.

Another element I would like to emphasize is mindset. It is important to be conscious of your mindset, especially when starting a business. Let's face it, most of the time, we are our own worst enemies. By taking the time to surround yourself with like-minded people, you are ensuring you have a support network in place that will keep you going through the tough times and remind you of your strength in moments of doubt. I can say without a doubt that I would not have had the degree of success I have experienced were it not for surrounding myself with peers who were both current and aspiring entrepreneurs.

Having the mindset of an entrepreneur is very important. The moment

where I truly felt like an entrepreneur was when I began the marketing for my first course, Pharmovation. To see it listed on my website with “For Sale” next to it made me feel like a real business owner. Up to that point, I had been coaching people and had started projects, but always as a side hustle. I had been running my business against other competing priorities: moving, a new job, etc. It wasn’t until that moment that I thought of myself as a real entrepreneur. I remember when the first sale came in when the first person bought that course, it really was a big moment for me.

Taking the time to understand these topics will ensure that you have the right foundation set up for your business.



PHARMACY PROFESSION STRATEGIES

I cannot overemphasize how important the pharmacy community has been to me on my journey. For me, the joy in this work has always been the community of other pharmacists. If I had seen other pharmacists becoming entrepreneurs when I was on my journey, it would have motivated me to move faster. I followed many entrepreneurs, but all of them were in other industries. That is why having this community now is important to me and why I want to share it with you.

If I had access to a book about pharmacists who were entrepreneurs, I would have wasted no time in reaching out and networking with them; I would have sought out the peer support that I needed. And as grateful as I am for the entrepreneurs who gave me support, their being in other industries made their journeys seem less daunting than my own. Marketing to marketers is a very different beast than marketing to pharmacists. These stories would have been incredibly inspiring to me; they would have been a peer group in which I could network. And although they have become that for me over time, I want to establish that network for you to be able to walk into without having to build it from scratch the way I had to.

Module 5 of the course is made up of all things pharmacy and hopefully is designed to familiarize you with all of the pharmacy professions opportunities available to you. This module covers:

- Pharmacy Landscapes
- Pharmacy Entrepreneurs & Innovative Leaders
- Pharmacist Marketing Strategies
- Pharmacy Stages

Obviously, this section is very unique to pharmacy; you won't see it discussed in other books on entrepreneurship. But as this book is geared towards entrepreneurs that are advancing pharmacy and healthcare, I think it is important that we understand the landscape we are working in and the needs we should be addressing. As I stated earlier, this community is everything. I want you to know about the movers and shakers who are entrepreneurs or innovative intrapreneurial thinkers, as well as some of the specific stages and organizations within pharmacy that you can rely on.

It was attending the Medipreneurs Summit that enabled me to niche down my business and begin catering to pharmacists. To have been asked back to speak on their stages is such a meaningful opportunity, as well as to be able to return the favor and promote their conference to people in my world. It is such a win-win when that happens.

I am a firm believer that all boats rise together. We should be collaborating and supporting one another to meet the needs of our industry. I have seen so much success happen when pharmacists come together to support and promote one another.



ACCELERATION & GROWTH

This module includes support systems that you will want to have in place whether you are just getting started or in the process of growing and developing your business. Having these networks in place is important to the success of your business because it allows you to enable an entrepreneurial mindset. In addition, having people around you who you trust and feel are on your team. Having people in your corner also eases the transition from being a solopreneur to hiring and filling positions, whether they are full-time or contracted work.

- Peer Group/Mentor/Coach
- Team/Hiring/Virtual Assistant
- Efficiencies
- Success Path

For me, this was my biggest learning curve. In retrospect, I should have hired a full-time virtual assistant much sooner than I did. Trying to run the entire business myself, both when it was a side hustle and full time, really slowed my growth. In the same way I tell pharmacists how to practice at the top of their licenses, it is important as entrepreneurs you practice at the top of your abilities and that you are utilizing technology

and hiring out in areas that are not your zone of genius. That way, you can excel faster and focus your energy on what is most important.

This, more than anything, was a mindset shift. Even once I had hired a virtual assistant, I was not giving them enough work, even though there was work to be done. I had to get rid of the attitude that it would be easier to do everything myself. Once I understood that I am the CEO of my business, and there are things I am uniquely qualified to do, I was able to free myself up to actually do those things.

This concludes the Pharmfluencer Business Course Summary. If you are interested in taking the course, you can learn more on my website at kimberbooth.com.

Now for some inspiration from our fantastic contributors!



PHARMFLUENCERS



GREGORY ALSTON



Biography



Greg Alston is the only pharmacist in the country who has the unique experience of serving in a senior-level position in three different market segments in the pharmacy industry. He spent 15 years in corporate drug store management for three different chains. He owned and operated an independent high-volume drug store for an additional 15 years. And then, he served as a Professor and Dean at two colleges of pharmacy for 13 years. Greg is a serial entrepreneur who has owned and operated drugstores, DME companies, a chain of Halloween shops, an internet publishing business, a real estate investment business, and a vacation rental business. He's penned four best-selling books on Amazon and written multiple peer-reviewed articles and chapters on pharmaceuticals and business skills. He has trained thousands of new pharmacists on how to monetize their professional skills, and he is currently the CEO of RXVIP Concierge, a pharmacist-based clinical services company.



Entrepreneurial Journey

I received my K-12 teaching credentials before I started my career as a pharmacist at Sav-on Drugs in Southern California. I was working as a pharmacy manager when my regional manager came to me and

said, “Hey, we need somebody in the corporate office to be a training manager. Can you do that?” Because he knew I had a teaching background. Within three years of getting out of school, I’m running all the training for a drug chain on the west coast. A few months later, their marketing guy quit. My boss says, “We need somebody to do marketing. Can you do marketing?” I did that for a year. And then Sav-on Drugs got purchased by the Jewel Company. My new boss at Jewel said, “Hey, we’re looking to put pharmacists in general management. We want to train you to be a vice president. On Monday, we’d like you to be a buyer.”

I said, “Okay.” But I know nothing about buying.

I’m a pharmacist on Friday, and on Monday, I’m buying patio furniture, ice chests, barbecues, and everything the company needs to supply the stores. I’m running around trying to figure out how to do this. And it took about two years, but I finally got really good at it. I was a rising star in the company.

Then the Jewel company got purchased, and everyone I had worked hard to impress got fired. New management came in and changed everything. Then they changed ownership three times in four years. The company was finally integrated into Osco Drugs of Chicago. The new management wanted me to move to Chicago. I did not want to move my family; I left the company and purchased a drugstore.

I really enjoyed owning my own drugstore. It was a huge store. I worked my tail off, but the business was great. This was right around the time when Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) were created. The HMOs came through Southern California and took all of our customers. There were no “any willing provider laws” yet; they killed a lot of retail pharmacies by taking all their customers.

Undaunted, I went back to work as a pharmacy director for two different chains. At that time, I had several hundred direct reports. I left Thrifty Drug because they got bought out by a utility company that had no clue how to run drug stores. I took over as the California director of pharmacy for Smith’s Food and Drug in Southern California. I helped them grow to forty stores. But they ended up selling the Southern California Division, and the new owners wanted to move me out to Salt Lake City. I had no interest in living in Utah.

I’ve learned over the years you can’t trust that your interests and those of your employer are aligned. You can’t trust employers to act in your best interest. My wife and I decided to take all our knowledge and open a one thousand-square-foot pharmacy in Sun City,

California. We built it into a \$10 million business by early 2006. It was doing really well. We're helping people. I love treating senior citizens. And then the state of California decided they wanted to do many stupid things and make it very difficult to operate a business in their state. I sold the retail operations and moved to North Carolina to become a professor and assistant dean at Wingate University School of Pharmacy. I wanted to teach pharmacy students the business skills needed to monetize their degree and provide value to patients.

Through this journey, I realized that you can't let other people define your value. If you let other people determine what you're worth, you end up having to live with their choices. Corporate executives don't give a damn about how their decisions affect you. That may sound harsh, but I have 45 years of experience that support my opinion.

I wrote a book a few years ago called *Own Your Value: The Future of Pharmacy Practice*. It talked about how we need to get our ambulatory care clinicians out of hospital systems and get them into the community. That's where they belong. That's where people need our help. Well, I took flack in academia for saying things like that. But I really believe the patients need the care where they live. That's where the care should be provided. I stand by that even more since the COVID Pandemic. Today we have people who are afraid to leave their homes which means that their chronic conditions are not being treated.

If you became a pharmacist to make a difference, then you should be serving patients directly. The best way to serve them directly is now Telehealth. At my new company RXVIP Concierge, we exist to provide for the chronic care needs of our patients. They need our care more than they ever have. Essentially, I believe that if you don't stand for something good, then you stand for nothing at all. At RXVIP, we are building a TelePractice Toolkit that allows any pharmacist with the passion for serving the platform to excel. We are constantly upgrading the technology to improve the ability of individual pharmacists to launch their own clinical practice.



Methods to Monetize Your Knowledge

There are only three ways that you make money in a clinical consultant business. You can do some kind of insurance billing, which currently means partnering with a physician to do incident to billing. That requires meeting a physician that is willing to work with you. And then you do the billing on their behalf and share the revenue with

them. There is a whole legal process to do this correctly.

Another way you can go about it is by offering service directly to patients. There are a lot of patients out there who want to problem solve and will pay for your service.

The third avenue is probably the least well-known; we do have some clients who do it, though. There is a lot of money dedicated to health disparities and rural health deficits. There is a lot of grant money dedicated to solving those issues. You can apply for those grants and use the funds to serve people that can't afford to pay or don't have insurance. My service offers the tools to guide you in any of those three methods.



How to Create Your Own New Revenue Streams by Capitalizing on Changes Due to COVID

I am always thrilled to meet new young people in the pharmacy industry, and while you may not think of yourself as young, I have been in this field for 45 years. I graduated in 1977, y'all, probably before some people reading this were even born. But I don't disregard the younger generation because they have so much enthusiasm, a lot of great ideas, and energy. Often, when I meet these inspiring young people, I think to myself, what can I add to this conversation?

And the reality is I have watched the major decisions and changes that have altered the path of the profession. I am a big believer that life is about the decisions you make. Well, I am here to tell you that we as a profession have made some pretty stupid decisions over the years. I see students come in with a certain set of assumptions: they plan their career and expect to make X a year, and that paycheck will get higher and higher. Every year new students come in and see their future as a rising line, going straight up. And I have to tell them that is not how the world works.

As a young person, I believed—and I see my students believe this too—that if I work hard and do my job well, no one will ever get rid of me. But that's just not true. It's happened to me five times, including at pharmacy schools. I was doing my job, running the self-study, and getting all the faculty accredited. The next day they fired me.

The only real job security you have is the security you create for

yourself. You keep moving forward. And I had realized by working with students that you don't learn by studying. You don't learn by reading textbooks and taking courses. You learn by having first-hand experience. I started offering virtual Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experiences (APPEs) and supervised over 400 students in our program at RXVIP. And I realized that school hadn't taught them how to engage with humans. They can memorize guidelines, but that doesn't translate into patient care. Realistically, a patient doesn't want to work with an intelligent pharmacist; they want to work with someone who helps them reach their health goals. My clinical faculty didn't like me saying that, but it's true.

Many students don't know how to listen to patients. They end up not even treating the patients but rather treating an algorithm guideline that is inaccurate by design. The guideline doesn't work for everyone. Students have only been trained to implement guidelines; they are unable to meet patient needs. I realized that we needed to reeducate young pharmacists on how to create value for people. That is what we started delivering at RXVIP. Care, compassion, and empathy are the currency of clinical excellence.

I learned all of this through trial and error. It's an expensive way to learn because you make mistakes along the way. Taking courses is helpful because the course content gives you the meat of the material. But you also need to have that human interaction with a patient to help you interpret the information and apply it to each scenario.

When I wanted to launch a brand-new line of business at the drug-store in long-term care, I went to a friend of mine's pharmacy that was already doing it, and I spent a week with him learning how he did it. The practical nature of the field is just as, if not more important. It isn't just about the material. We offer courses that cover a bunch of material, but the interaction with patients and other experts in the field is crucial because that gives you clarity; you get your misconceptions corrected.

There are plenty of avenues for you to pursue, plenty of unmet needs. The COVID-19 pandemic has done several things. It has put people at a lot of risk health-wise; it's locked them in their homes, it has shut them away from other humans. People haven't been treated for chronic conditions because they can't go to hospitals. People are afraid, and they're depressed; they're not getting their medication refilled. You have a situation where doctors are losing money because patients are scared to go in. And the healthcare system has handled chronic care terribly forever, but in the last year, they haven't handled it at all.

We're looking at a huge explosion in emergency room visits and hospitalizations. This year, people are dropping dead because they're not getting care. We need to fix that. I got tired of it. We put together a pathway where physicians can use software tools to remotely monitor people's diabetes, hypertension, and weight. Those are the three big things that cause people to die too soon. We rent out this software for \$15 per month per patient, which is less than a lunch at Applebees. This way, doctors can have that tool in their hands and start treating patients again.

But keeping in mind what I said earlier, you actually have to interact with people too. How do you do that if people aren't leaving their homes? Well, the virtual care system sets appointments, sets reminders, lets you check insurance eligibility. And it allows you to bring other caregivers on the call within the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliant format.

Let's say you have an older patient and may have trouble taking care of themselves. You recommend the son or daughter take care of mom and refill her pill pack every day. Well, the daughter lives in Ohio, and mom lives in Florida. Guess what? You can bring them on the same call using telemedicine. You can bring them together so the child can be active in mom's care. And it's only a few dollars a month. You can treat a thousand patients with it if that is what you want.

We also embedded a tool in our remote patient monitoring platform that allows you to do genomic testing because you can't do med reconciliation without genomic review. It's a matter of the standard of care. If you don't do it, that's considered malpractice. Now you have a tool where you can put all the medication in, and the system will review it and say, none of these drugs is a risk. Or it will say, these four drugs need to be changed.

What can you do with that? You can go to doctors and say, "I can help your patients get better outcomes. I can do this in a way where there are no out-of-pocket costs to you, doc. And when you get paid by Medicare, you pay me what my fair share is." Or you can take it directly to the patient. People will pay to have their parents or loved ones monitored by the system and have visibility for their results. It's amazing.

I wonder why we don't use this all the time. This is what we assembled. And if people don't have the tech brain to do all this, we have tools in place that are very simple to use. If you want to know more about that, you can check out my free course, and the details are all in there. The system is called Remote Patient Monitoring; it allows you to connect through either a cellular or Bluetooth device. We can connect blood

glucose meters, weight scales, and blood pressure cuffs.

We designed this because although similar systems exist, they're not designed for the pharmacist. Ours has artificial intelligence built into it. Let's say you're looking at a patient, and after lunch, their glucose levels are always low. The system will recommend lowering their morning insulin, and it will bring up the clinical guidelines to explain why. You can look at it and say, "Oh wow, we've got to do this," and go ahead and make a change in the care plan. If you're going through a doctor, forward it to the doctor, and they can sign off on it. The typical diabetic patient goes to the doctor maybe once every 90 days; how can you manage that disease in the interim?

The answer is you can't, but we've found in working directly with the doctor's offices that 40% of the information on the doctor's chart about what the patient is taking is wrong. They've got drugs in there that they're not taking. They've got drugs in there that they think they're taking, but the patient can't afford. The American medical system is a mess; it's the most unorganized system on the planet. Doctors are guessing what patients are taking; they're guessing at the treatment. They say, "Let's try this for 90 days."

That didn't sit right with me. What we offer is a system where you can go to the doctor and say, "Look, we're going to monitor the patient, and we'll give you the data so you can make a real informed decision based on that data." We've even had patients who take the initiative, who take it to their doctor because they know they need better care.

We've had four calls with physicians in the last two weeks, and when we tell them about it, they're all like, "Why aren't we doing this already?" And if other pharmacists are still reluctant, we have a training package for \$97 with all the information on how to use it. But the important part is you get direct access to it. We have found that even with the knowledge of what this system does, some people are still reluctant. And it's not about the system itself as much as their hesitancy to start something new. So, realistically, life is about the choices you make.

The choice that you have to make now is either, "Hey, this is not interesting. I don't want to do it. I'm going to trust my employer's going to take care of me. Good luck." Or you can decide, "I'm not quite sure. Let me go do the free mini-course and see what it's all about." That's fine. Or you can identify a practice that you think might be interesting. We'll even make the sales pitch for you because that is a big fear for many people. How do I talk to the doctor? Or you can start by getting the tool and trying it for 60 days with a couple of family members and take your time in understanding how to use it.

We're really trying to remove all the barriers. We don't want to keep this for ourselves. We could do it. I could add two practices a month. And at the end of the year, we'd have 24 practices. But I believe if we put this tool in the hands of everyone, we could have a thousand practices by next year. The reality is patients need us now more than ever. We can't wait for permission; we have to act, start delivering care. That is what we're all about, putting the tools in the hands of pharmacists.

Many people tend to think that if they run everything themselves, it'll be better, but there aren't enough hours in the day, you can't do everything. By selecting great partners and working with them, you can expand your capabilities. Why would I want to build something that already exists? What we do instead is we buy master licenses, it costs a lot of money, but then I can rent out sub-licenses at affordable prices. That way, you don't have to pay \$15,000 or \$20,000 for a license. We're doing it for you so you can get started. This is our belief that by doing this, we can expand the capabilities of pharmacists faster.

The field is ripe for entrepreneurship. It's just a matter of getting started. But if you want to start a business solely to make money, you're going to fail. If you want to start a business so you can solve problems for people, you're going to find yourself making money. As a grey-haired older person, I grew up in a family with eight kids; six boys, two girls. My whole life, I was able to say I came from a big family, and sadly I can't say that anymore.

Three years ago, my oldest brother died of a massive heart attack at age 73. He was in the military; he went to the doctor every year for checkups for active duty. And I can't figure it out. What the hell did they miss? Just last week, my 64-year-old baby brother died of a massive heart attack as well. He had a heart valve problem. I spoke to him a month ago when he got diagnosed, and I told him, "You need to get this taken care of."

Well, guess what happened? The insurance company got involved, and he had to go through all this rigamarole to get approval on the treatment he needed. They scheduled the surgery six weeks from now, and he passed before he could get it. I believe the insurance company took their time on purpose because they saw how severe the problem with his valve was. Is that true? I don't know. But I don't trust that the insurance company had my brother's best interest at heart. We need to advocate for our patients. We need to help people get the care they need.

What often happens in the United States is to get the care you need,

you have to demand it. Too often, patients don't know enough to demand it. That is where we come in; that is our responsibility.

All of this is explained on my website RXVIPconcierge.com. Use it as a method for monetizing your knowledge to provide direct patient care. Or, if that's not part of your plan, share this knowledge with others.



Advice for Aspiring Entrepreneurs

What I would tell you as entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs is to learn how to simplify. Stop overthinking and cut your method down to what is really important. Can you identify a problem that needs to be solved? Can you build a solution to that problem? And can you offer it to people and adjust it until it works? Because guess what, no matter how well you plan, your method likely will not work on the first people you try. You have to improvise, adjust, and accommodate.

The reality is, if you're not solving a problem, you're never going to get paid. I teach young pharmacists three things: you need to know how to be a good pharmacist, you need to know your method will make things better for patients, and if you simplify your process, you can be a lot more helpful to people.

You have to let the patient decide their path and help guide them through their journey. People want simplicity. They're overwhelmed; they're confused. There's so much misinformation. Just simplify it for them. That's what we do. We're trying to simplify the business offers for pharmacists as well. Teach them how to get started in their own business.



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ANNE ARVIZU



Biography

Anne Arvizu, PharmD, FASCP, PCC, is a pharmacist, transformational coach, philanthropist, entrepreneur, and former fortune 500 global biotech executive. As a published author, podcaster, professional speaker, and coach trainer, Anne's core mission is to bridge the gap between healthcare and healing. In 2022, as an advocate for women's health, disease awareness, and patient education, Anne is spearheading the creation of the world's first and only non-profit



foundation for women with endometrial cancer and their caregivers. Dr. Arvizu and her team work with patient-centric healthcare leaders, healing professionals, and leading organizations delivering coach training programs, retainer consulting, content creation, and inspiring keynotes. Past advisory engagements include Pfizer, Shire, Merck, Teva, Alnylam, Ipsen, Servier, IQVIA, Kindred Health, the YMCA, the DIA, Pepsi, Wells Fargo, and others. Anne is the honored recipient of the prestigious Healthcare Businesswomen's Association (HBA) 2020 Luminary Award.

Professional work in the pharmaceutical industry includes service in key senior executive roles such as the Global Head of Medical Information/Knowledge Management at Baxter, Baxalta, and Shire Pharmaceuticals, as well as Regional Head, Latin America for Medical Communications/Medical Information at GlaxoSmithKline.

Philanthropic leadership roles include Chair Emerita of the Board of

Directors of the South Florida YMCA; past Officer of the American Medical Writers Association, Regional Board of Directors; past Meeting Chair and Program Advisor for the Accreditation Council of Medical Affairs (ACMA), Dynamic Global Events (DGE) and the Drug Information Association (DIA).

Anne holds degrees from The University of Florida (PharmD), The University of Sciences in Philadelphia (BSPHarm), Villanova University (BA), and Erickson College International (PCC).



Entrepreneurial Journey

I will never forget the breathtaking scene: I opened the blinds and stepped on the balcony with my coffee to gaze out at the ocean at sunrise. I was regional director of Medical Information at GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) on a business trip to train my new-hire PharmD when the ‘download’ came. I rushed back into the hotel room, grabbed a pen and journal, and scribbled out twenty-two pages of notes. On the next page, I gave the baby a name (RxER Communications). Finally, I sketched out the logo and wrote the tagline: *The right drug, for the right patient, at the right time*®. When I returned home to Miami, I vetted my new business model with someone at a top 5 consulting firm and learned that it was rock solid. The vision was so crystal clear that I knew I was meant to create this company. Over the next eighteen months, it percolated on the backburner. I loved my international corporate job, my lifestyle, and my status at this multi-billion-dollar global icon. I had risen through the ranks of clinical research and development roles to become regional director of various medical affairs functions. My leadership role jetted me all over Latin America, to our headquarters in London and to speaking engagements, congresses, and investigator meetings, domestically and internationally. I was in my mid 30’s, full of energy, and still enamored with the fast pace of corporate life. I quickly climbed the ladder to be one of approximately 200 top women leaders in a post-mega-merger 150,000-person global entity. I could have easily stayed at GSK for the duration of my career.

One day after a working lunch, my colleague headed back up to our office. I sat for a few more moments, savoring a Cuban coffee at an outdoor café in Coral Gables, FL. I remember watching the breeze rustling the palm fronds, set against vivid blue skies. I was grateful. I loved my job, my dream boss, and my corner office. I even loved the green carpet we had. Then, that moment turned strangely surreal,

and inaudibly I heard the words, “Everything is about to change.”

In the Spring of 2003, Dream Boss got promoted to Senior VP, and in walked He-who-shall-not-be-named. Over the next year, our office staff was pitted against each other by manipulative power plays. Our voices were silenced to upper management, and the office was repainted and recarpeted to make it as austere as possible. We were made to office swap, and I lost my beautiful corner space for a smaller one...closer to Nightmare VP. Then, as the storm clouds of a South Florida summer rolled in, the weather in our office also grew dark.

Suffice to say, as the pressure at work mounted, the possibility to leave and finally start my own business surfaced. I prayed for the right timing to leave and the resources to cover start-up expenses.

Then, I made the leap from corporate to freedom.

I started my first company, RxER Communications, officially in late 2004 and had instant success. In our first year, we grossed \$386,000 in patient-centric contracts—a number I will never forget and am proud of to this day. Here’s a part of that story I never usually tell. I had a hand-cut paper’ business card’ and a white 3-ring binder that I filled with images of patient-centric medical affairs programs that I could create. In other words, I did what I could with what I had, cast vision, and struck while the iron was hot. If you do your best and believe that it’s enough, it will pay off.

I got that first contract, hired other pharmacists, and set up a medical information contact center. I also created two (clinical and MSL) preceptorship programs for Shenandoah University pharmacy students interested to fast-track into the pharmaceutical industry. Also, during those first few years, I learned all I could about entrepreneurship, business, and life coaching. I became a certified professional coach, NLP practitioner, Ericksonian hypnotherapist, and coach trainer. It was a great time of growth and flow.

Eventually, beginner’s luck wore off, as it always does in entrepreneurship, and I had my first major entrepreneurial test. 2008, much like our 2020 pandemic, was a harsh time for business. The pharmaceutical industry landscape in FL was made up of small companies like Ivax and Kos. And, as one client after another sold out to Big Pharma, our fully staffed contracts were cut short, our company savings dwindled, and all our business development attempts were thwarted. I stopped my own pay to take care of my team and help them find new jobs.

Simultaneously, my husband (a pharma physician) lost his job. His company was purchased and closed, and he was made redundant. So, for many months, I was the incumbent breadwinner. My husband finally found a new job with Wyeth, but it required a relocation to Pennsylvania in the middle of winter. We also lost my mother-in-law, our schnauzer, then my beloved cat, all in the same year.

Externally, the economic bubble burst, the housing market crashed, and my business flatlined right before our move. My family seemingly lost everything that year, our house, our car, our condo, retirement savings, and our 401K. It seemed unfair after a decade of hard work.

Just when I thought it couldn't get worse, I went through a significant personal health crisis and began the irreversible process of early menopause/premature ovarian failure and eventual infertility.

It was 2009. I was grieving, exhausted, and physically depleted when I found myself in a supermarket grabbing a cheap bottle of face lotion. The label on the bottle says, "for dull, tired skin," and I chuckled to myself, thinking, "I need to pour this all over myself." I never really shared my internal struggles with anyone; I just kept going and restarted my company and my life. I coached myself using many of the personal development materials I'd acquired during seminars I'd done all over the globe between 2004-2007.

During those early profitable years, I had steeped myself in motivational events and extreme challenges. I walked on fire, raced cars, jumped off trapezes, bungee jumped, and went cliff diving—loads of what I call "Mountain Dew Moments." The purpose was to become the CEO I was meant to be in the face of adversity. I had also earned multiple professional certifications, including a degree in coaching, coach training, and multiple certifications in consulting, speaking, business management, and leadership. I became an avid 'life-long learner' in the personal development space, consuming all the transformative methodology. As a scientist, I loved that it was anchored in cognitive functional neuroscience and psychoneuroimmunology, which was the basis of not just professional coach training but positive psychology and cognitive therapy. And I met, was mentored by, and learned directly from the best in the field: Tony Robbins, Dr. Deepak Chopra, Gabrielle Bernstein, Ali Brown, Sage Lavine, Marci Shimoff, Lisa Garr, Dr. Sue Morter, John Maxwell, Jeff Walker, and others.

But, as I poured over the many various 'work-life balance' models left-over from my start-up years, I realized none of them really showed you how to get back up when you're down. Every coaching life-balance model had the same philosophical flaws, in my humble opinion.

They could show me where the gaps in life were, but none told you how to fix those gaps and recalibrate freedom. Nor could they show you how to lead from your strengths because that theory also fell short and didn't work in many scenarios.

They *did* tell me how to rate the areas of my life on a 1-10 type scale—mental, financial, vocational, physical, social, etc. Ever the optimist, I was giving almost every area of my life a 2 or 3 at the time, except spirituality. It was my only saving grace, and I ranked it an 8. I pondered all this, and I remember the day I distinctly made the choice to let it go and “make my own sunshine.” I got my first small contract and was back in business. Then larger ones trickled in. Not too long after that decision of the heart came an extraordinary, unexpected moment.

I was at my desk pecking away at a spreadsheet for a corporate biotech client, and then—BOOM—it came to me. A massive, instantaneous ‘download’ that went beyond words. An interruption I could not ignore.

Before I could comprehend the full extent of the idea, I could feel that it would redirect the course of my life as an entrepreneur—and show me how to rise, recover, and stay strong no matter what. I stood up in obedience to this incoming idea, walked across my 1100 square foot basement office to my whiteboard, and I drew it out.

It took about 10-15 minutes to perfect and extract all that I was seeing. It was the first C-O-R-E WHEEL, a solution for balancing your life, rebounding when you're down, and attaining victory over the more difficult situations in life. I sat down at the conference table right next to the whiteboard, and I looked up and said, “Wow, Thank you, God.”

I stared at it in awe, thinking, ‘I know this idea is divine because I could not have thought of this simple solution on my own.’ When my husband came home from work, I showed it to him and explained the foundation of this new methodology. I said, “I know I will teach this, in one form or another, for the rest of my life.”

Since that destined day, thirteen years ago, I've continued to teach, publish, test, and expand my C-O-R-E theory and framework, evaluating it in my own life every day. I became its ‘client zero’ and have benefited from it ever since. Just a few years after working with my wheel, I reached 7-figure revenues in only four months based on the business-specific version of this model. But the most rewarding part has been witnessing the transformative effect it has had in the lives of my individual and corporate clients that I've had the honor of teaching it to. When I coach my clients to the center of my wheel, that's when

the truth comes out, and the tears flow.

2021 brought with it a profound shift for me. A diagnosis of endometrial cancer sucker-punched me two days before the weekend of the first Pharmfluencer Summit. Todd Eury, a trustworthy friend and advocate spoke in my stead thanks to Kimber's support. I endured two major surgeries, including a total hysterectomy in the summer of 2021. I won't go into details now because that is still news in the making, as we form our not-for-profit entity, which will fill an enormous gap for this patient population. My new *why* is crystal clear. And for me, a major reframe I did was to ask myself this, "What if cancer didn't happen to me? What if it happened for me?" With research, I realized this type of foundation doesn't exist, is needed, and given my pharma background and contacts I can leverage, I seem to be the perfect person for the job. After a little firsthand experiential understanding of the disease, my whole life's work seems to be diverging for my legacy play. As it's been said, it's in moments of decision that your destiny is shaped. I can tell you this for sure; my C-O-R-E life coaching method became my best friend again this year. It is the lens through which I find the way to true healing, mind-body-spirit wholeness, and well-being, and the method I use to teach others to unleash their core power. I am more convinced than ever of its value, worth, and place in teaching it to other healthcare leaders and healing professionals. Recently, I ordered an endometrial cancer survivor tee shirt on Amazon. It said this, "The devil whispered in my ear, 'You're not strong enough for this storm.' I whispered back into the devil's ear and said, 'I AM THE STORM.'"



Methods to Monetize Your Knowledge

Just because you can do something or teach something doesn't mean you have to. Sometimes, the more experienced and knowledgeable, the more confused you can become. I see so many people self-sabotage or never even get started because they overthink everything. In this analytical scientific crowd, that is almost a guarantee. Choose something you love to do, and feel called to do, and do it well. Once you master that, other avenues can branch off from there. A great majority of the information on how-to-do entrepreneurship that you will find online is over-rated and confusing.

I built a 7-figure sustainable business and have been featured on a prime-time TV show, the news, and across the media and have been corporately and publicly awarded. I have enjoyed some of these

unsolicited accomplishments with using minimal social media and by always focusing on my clients and the solution my team could create for them as their business consultant and content provider. Their success was my goal, and therefore my team and I were compensated. It was easy for me to pitch realistic contracts and get us paid. With time and connections, word-of-mouth referrals took over as my primary business development source. I don't burn bridges; I keep relationships going and don't let things bother me. And all of this is a learned skill set. So much of this kind of real 'social proof' is relational and trust-based, and the ultimate key is mindset. Learn to master your mindset, and the relationships you build will become your supporters because they believe in your passion. Therefore, if you want to monetize your expertise and you believe in yourself, then others will believe in you. In that sense, almost any method or form becomes viable. Don't get stuck in the word 'how.' Stick with your *why*, and you can make any *how* happen. The key to making money really is that simple.



What is the Best Business Model?

I love this question in light of the fact that I teach business modeling and consult on the best model to choose when working with my clients. After vetting over 50 global business models personally, I have landed on about 20 that work, but it depends on your intention, offering, and scale plan. I believe entrepreneurship is a calling, and it's important to say that because you shouldn't dive into business without that calling. I also believe that a vision for healing and well-being always comes first. So, using myself as an example, after I already had an established business (with a consulting firm B-2-B model), I created the Corepreneur brand and a podcast, and a learning platform with multiple courses (D-2-C model). Then I had to choose how to execute that model.

Let's look under the hood at one of my brand evolutions: I developed Corepreneur University as a transformational business incubator, guiding an elite group of healthcare entrepreneurs using the business and life coaching framework I created in 2009 to promote mission-centric productivity, personal life-balance, and coach training and certification to core-value driven entrepreneurs, or Corepreneurs®. This 16-week course for leaders, mostly women, who want to leave their corporate jobs and craft their 7-figure business plan using their expertise through coaching & consulting.

Because I know my clients, the schedules they keep, the kind of flexibility they need, and the pricing models from spending years in the space, I chose my model based on market knowledge and International Coach Federation guidelines. Then I beta-tested the first version of it with both a small group and a large group in 2010 to see which was more sustainable. Small groups were far more successful, and, for me, preferable, we tweaked it each year until 2015 when a global commitment took precedence for me, and I set it aside for my full-time company for a while. I don't throw courses together and slap a price on them. Once I know my customer and my market space, I create a training program for them and deliver it in a way that I enjoy and am gifted to do. If you are video-shy, don't use a video course just because someone else is. Execute in a way that will be sustainable long term for you.



Advice for Aspiring Entrepreneurs

First, focus on one or at most two main offerings. Just because you can do something, or create something, or teach something, doesn't mean you have to or should. My friend Carrie, who was one of my guests on the *Corepreneur Podcast*, is an amazing speaker grossing over a million a year in paid engagements. But she doesn't have a course or teach speaking just because she's mastered the art. What lights her up, besides her family, is inspiring women through speaking. Period. She's a great example of the old saying, 'do what you love, and the money will follow.'

Second, shift as needed, leaders lead, and sometimes when life circumstances help you change your mind, then do so without too much worry about what people will think. Change course when it feels right. TV shows do this all the time. It's the season and series finale, your favorite show is canceled, and you now just have to imagine the happily ever after. This year after a cancer diagnosis and treatment, I decided to consolidate two businesses back down to one, change the name, choose from our key offerings and focus only on that so that I have the time to create our non-profit. I'm a boat owner, and I can tell you that we've been caught in some pretty unexpected scary storms out at sea. Captains know when to turn their vessels or when to navigate through the dark storm clouds. Turn back or away when your boat is in true jeopardy, not just because you are weary and not achieving projected quarterly revenues just yet. In my book, *Affluent Minds: Core Expressions for a Rich and Wonderful Life*, I

talk about the power of persistence, and that is what I am illustrating here. There is a great acronym, HALT, that I have used as a guide for many years. It represents not making decisions when you are *hungry, angry, lonely, or tired*. Something you learn over time is that your platform should grow and evolve as you do.

In almost 25 years of coaching businesses, I've met very few true business investors or 'serial' entrepreneurs. The definition of which is someone who builds a profitable business then removes themselves from leadership so it can sustain with minimal guidance. Then they invest in starting or funding another company. Most of the time, when I coach excited new entrepreneurs that want to start multiple endeavors too fast, what I hear between the lines is: "I'm a brilliant dabbler, with a lot of fabulous ideas but not enough focus, time, or resources to bring them to fruition." Once you have created a sustainable 7-figure success model, then free up your time by raising a successor, if that's your goal, and then creating another one.

I landed the first podcast on the topic of entrepreneurship on the Pharmacy Podcast Network because that space did not yet exist. I had hoped to share the vantage point of non-pharmacy or pharmaceutical businesses to showcase what is working in other industries, so we apply some of these pearls of wisdom to our own businesses. Key number three is anytime you create a new product or service, write out one to three key outcomes for your consumer and communicate that, and it will gain acceptance.

We all learn by example; I created the Corepreneur based on my C-O-R-E coaching method so that you could listen in to me and my guests share not just success stories but the stories of rising strong through adversity. That's the C-O-R-E in Corepreneur. It stands for being centered, open, resilient, and energized. Secondly, I wanted to pioneer the first podcast on entrepreneurship on the Pharmacy Podcast Network because that space did not yet exist. Lastly, I wanted to share the vantage point of non-pharmacy or pharmaceutical businesses to showcase what is working in other industries, so we apply some of these pearls of wisdom to our businesses. The pearl here is that anytime you create a new product or service, write out your two or three key outcomes for your consumer and communicate that, and it will be a sure hit.

In just 15 episodes, the *Corepreneur Podcast* hit over 35,000 downloads and was awarded one of the Top 20 Systematic Podcasts of 2021. And although positive metrics and unsolicited kudos are nice, the show's success was the by-product of delivering excellent content and stories that matter. A lot of my guests are friends and colleagues that I've met along my entrepreneurial journey, and we have bonded

over business because business is challenging. Season 2 is kicking off in 2022 with a Corepreneur that created a wellness brand to the tune of \$74 million dollars in annual revenue. We'll also have on a few pharmacists that have built noteworthy platforms, a prime-time television CEO, and a top business mentor who sold her business for a billion-dollar valuation. They share their ups and downs because if we are truthful, real life is messy and hard, no matter how easy some high achievers make it look. Finally, there is no time for jealousy, copying, or comparison, and I say that because sadly, that's a thing that I've encountered from others not being happy for my success. We all have doubters and downers around us, but we can choose a mindset of abundance and celebrate each other's success. If you find yourself comparing yourself to others, or worse, jealous or envious, you are still operating at much lower-level energy and from wrong core values, and it will eventually weigh you down. That's a universal truth. You can't fake it spiritually. As an entrepreneur, you are a leader; just lead. Don't compare yourself to others. Be happy for and supportive of the accomplishments of others, and success will happen for you. Get your heart and motives right. I just stay in my swim lane and create excellent content that my ideal audience needs. That's it. You can do that too, and we can make the world a better place in the process.

Remember that shift I talked about? As my soul is led toward building a national non-profit organization, I will be following my own advice that I gave previously. As healthcare professionals, your wellness and happiness come first. I shared a personal story of a major health challenge that I went through. Any major crisis, such as illness, death of a loved one, divorce, caregiving, etc., will have a significant impact on your business. When life's circumstances come knocking, make sure your health comes first and give yourself the grace of not needing to be all things to all people, and change course as needed. Even though I used my brand above to illustrate some keys for business, I am currently in the process of deprioritizing one brand and repurposing and rebranding other content based on market research as my new initiative scales. That's evolution in business. A river flows effortlessly around all the rocks it encounters. Put your health and happiness first, align with your core values, and your business will keep flowing also.

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ALEX BARKER



Biography

For a time, he was a burned-out clinical pharmacy specialist; Alex Barker is now the head coach at The Happy PharmD© and helps pharmacists create fulfilling lives and careers. Alongside his team, he creates classes to help over 750 pharmacists find and create new career paths. He recently published the book, *Indispensable: The Prescription for a Fulfilling Pharmacy Career*. His goal is to help 500 pharmacists transition to new jobs by January 1st, 2022.



When he's not working with pharmacists, he spends time with his wife Megan and two lovely girls: Izzy and Addie.



Entrepreneurial Journey

I started my pharmacy career in 2012. After graduating, I did a residency and began my practice. But as soon as I began practicing, I noticed something felt a little off for me. I began reflecting, read a lot of self-development books, took some classes, and realized that I wanted to do something more than just pharmacy. I began dipping into entrepreneurship on the side.

If I could reach it, I would grab it. I sold stickers on Amazon and Etsy; I sold baby strollers; I did podcasting for a while. I got into a franchise.

I created content for websites. I did a lot of different things and eventually landed on coaching. I had hired coaches myself to guide me through this process, and a few of them suggested I try coaching for myself. I was ambivalent, but I gave it a shot. I took some classes and helped a few people. And I discovered that helping other people achieve their dreams was what made me feel the most fulfilled.

I started the Happy PharmD in 2017, really out of shame, honestly. After trying for four years in different businesses, I felt like a failure. I was frustrated that I was not seeing the progress I wanted. From there, the business really took off. Over the past four years, we have grown exponentially. We now have a staff of 20 people, and I have been full-time since 2018.

It's been wild; as any entrepreneur can tell you, the experience is a rollercoaster. You have highs and lows. That has been my journey to entrepreneurship.



Methods to Monetize Your Knowledge

Specifically, in the last year, we have done a deep dive into labor economics as a business. I know that sounds super sexy and exciting—it's not. What it means is as a business, we are jumping into the job market, understanding trends, trying to predict what markets will see growth and what markets will not. And while we don't specifically sell this knowledge, we use it as a value-added service to our current clients. Everything else we do is centered around courses.

This strategy is actually one of the easiest ways you can monetize your knowledge. It's something I've done multiple times in past courses, create study guides, those kinds of materials. It's very easy to make these things as long as there is a market and demand for them. You can market to your audience and sell your knowledge and information that way.

I offer both individual and group coaching sessions. And I don't want to make a generalization, I don't want to say all pharmacists are private people, but you find it's very personal when discussing your career and the things going on in your life. Not everyone is willing to share that kind of information in a group setting. However, once pharmacists make the transition to entrepreneurship, I have found that they become more open and more willing to share.

I have my own mastermind group, we meet every Tuesday, and I share my soul with them. Sometimes it's ugly, sometimes great, but it gives you a space to share your wins, which I think is important too. It creates a community.



How to Choose & Scale Your Business Model

If you're reading this book, I am going to assume you are either considering starting over in terms of your career or currently are in the process of starting over. Some of you may be balancing entrepreneurship with other careers, some of you may be doing it full time. No matter where you are on your journey, the most critical component to your success is choosing the right business model.

Nobody wants to jump headlong into something. Nobody wants to try various things and just hope they work. That's what I did for four years. For four years, I tried different things, hoping the next one would be my big break. Only one really made me any money; the rest were learning lessons at best. Most of the things I tried were based on what other people told me. I'd be listening to a podcast and think, "Oh, I need to try that because this guru told me to. This seems like a great idea."

I often talk about the concept of Ikigai. I discuss this more in my book *Indispensable*, but to put it briefly, Ikigai is a Japanese word meaning a reason for being. Ikigai is what wakes you up in the morning, it's what makes you excited, it's what gives you success, and it's what the world needs.

There are four main components of Ikigai: What the world needs, what you're great at, what you're curious about, and what you can get paid to do. This is also the essential step that I've seen many pharmacists fail to recognize when choosing the right business. We have to come to terms with who we are as a profession. We are a product-based business. We are not tied to services yet. I know that's changing; we're trying our best to provide services. But the truth is pharmacists are viewed by the public and within healthcare as being tied to a deliverable. When I see pharmacists trying to create a service-based business, that is a particular problem because they don't get it.

You need to be able to answer, why should I pay you as a pharmacist to do this? The role pharmacists play in communities is one of

accessibility. You can just walk in and speak to them. So, of course, people are unwilling to pay a pharmacist for things they could get for free. It connects back to the third component of Ikigai: what you can get paid to do.

The business model you choose has to be based on what people are willing to pay for, and you can sneak in pharmacy along the way. Something that is very popular right now, pharmacists love helping with health—helping with healthcare, getting rid of medicines, getting rid of polypharmacy, things like that. And one way to do that as a pharmacist is to tell people, “This is what I’m going to do for you. I am going to be your health consultant.”

People are willing to pay for health coaching, health information, anything about health. We all know the health industry is a multi-trillion-dollar business. We can work as experts on either disease, drugs, or whatever you feel you are knowledgeable in and curious about. Find what you’re naturally good at, what you think the world needs more of, and most importantly, what people are willing to pay for.

As pharmacists, we are perfectionists. But you have the knowledge; you can get people to pay you for these services and form your business as you go. My motto with our team is Progress Before Perfection. Nobody will ever reach perfection anyway, but you can convince someone to pay you \$50 and help them lose five pounds. It is being done all over the country.

I believe that the best way to find your business model is to get paid first. I cannot emphasize that enough. You don’t have to wait until every element of your business is concrete before you start working with clients. I see so many people just waiting for the perfect thing to happen, waiting for the right opportunity, waiting for the money to come. And the thing is, business is messy, and you have to get messy too. You have to push away your pharmacist tendency, push away the thought that you can’t make any mistakes.

Business is messy; it gets ugly sometimes. You have to be willing to sit in that ugliness to figure it out and move forward. You have to be willing to accept money to help someone. When you find Ikigai, money will come. I tried finding it for years only to realize I was running away from the thing I knew how to do best, which was coaching and helping pharmacists. That was my journey.

How do you scale your business? Let’s say you have been hustling with your side business, and you want to make it your full-time job. Perhaps it’s been your full-time job, and you’re finally ready to hire

someone to help you and start delegating. Whatever stage of the process you are at, there are two four main systems when it comes to business: marketing, sales, fulfillment, and operations.

Marketing is getting in front of people. And I think a lot of business owners assume marketing will solve their problems. They think, “I just need to get in front of enough people.” “I just need more leads” “I just need enough people to think that I’m awesome and I’m going to make so much money!” But the truth is, it usually doesn’t work that way.

Next is sales. Someone has to purchase something. They have to go to a website. They have to believe that whatever they are purchasing will help them solve their problems. Then they give you their credit card, and that’s where we transition to fulfillment. Fulfillment means delivering on that promise. This is the most important thing; the way to scale is fulfillment.

These are all of the things that go on in the background: what you do as a founder, what your team does to help you deliver. The way to scale that is by doubling down on fulfillment and doing an amazing job at it. When you help one person, that first customer that you go above and beyond expectations with, you start down a path to making more money. When you exceed your customers’ expectations, you make more profit; you make more sales, etc. The way to scale is to figure out what problems the consumer might be facing and how you can deliver on remedying those problems.

Once you have done that, it becomes much easier to sell them on the next thing. If you decide you want to become a health consultant, think about the most important problem clients face. Maybe it’s that they want to lose five pounds. Great, buy this \$5 toolkit. It’s going to give you things that you can do to lose five pounds.

They buy it. Maybe now, instead of just giving the client information, you give them a complimentary phone call. “How did you like this product?” “What worked?” “What didn’t work?” “What else is going on? What other problems are you having?” And that allows you to sell them on the next thing. Maybe it’s a three-month-long contract; maybe it’s more information. Maybe it’s how to lose 15 more pounds.

Whatever it is, it gives you an opportunity to fulfill the service you have promised. And fulfillment is typically what pharmacists are really, really good at. We’re not great at sales and marketing, but we thrive at fulfillment. By doubling down on fulfillment, I promise you can make more sales.

Whenever we have a business coaching client, we always look at how much they make a month. Okay, you made \$5,000 this month. That's great. And what they typically want to do is get into this business cycle where they start thinking, "I have to get more sales." "I have to get more leads."

And I will tell them, "No, wait. Let's look at what your past customers are doing." Let's catch up with them. Research shows that when a business tries to sell to their current clientele, they are 85% more likely to make a sale than the 35% who make a sale with someone brand new. My point is to double down on fulfillment, particularly with your current client. Do a great job. That is how you scale.

Operations is another thing I am eager to talk about. It's hard to come to terms with this, but if you're working as an entrepreneur on the side, you can't do everything. I know you want to. And I know many people have trust issues when it comes to giving up power and control. Nobody wants to give someone else the thing you've been doing so well.

This was a real struggle for me when I hired my first pharmacist coach, Jackie Boyle. She is now our lead coach. She's amazing. And in truth, I was scared. I hired someone before Jackie, and she totally screwed me over. She took all of my information and ran and started her own coaching business. Getting screwed happens in business, and there are certain steps you should take to protect yourself. I didn't have an NDA, which I absolutely should have.

But the way to scale is by doubling down on fulfillment and hiring other people to help you along the way. What this does is it frees up your time to use your brain to focus more on the strategy, vision, and operations.

The transition to being an entrepreneur full-time is actually fairly straightforward. The key is to replicate your expenses. Now I know pharmacists, and I know we like to make a lot of money, and this comes down to a lifestyle decision. If you go to thehappypharmd.com, we have a budget sheet where you can insert your income. And if you put your expenses into this Excel spreadsheet, and then you put in your business revenue and some other parameters around your business, you'll be able to calculate how much income you need to quit your job.

In 2017, at the beginning of the year, I launched Happy PharmD and made a very hard goal, which is what I'd recommend everyone do. Now, if you really want to move into your business full-time, establish a goal. Say, "I want to be at least able to pay myself a salary

within 18 months. And if I were able to pay myself \$6,000 a month for three months in a row, then I'll have the confidence to transition to my full-time job."

That's essentially what I did, not \$6,000, but in October of 2017, I was able to pay myself a salary to pay off my living expenses. And I took my day job income that I was making, and I pretended it didn't exist. I saved it. I think I was paying off the last parts of my debt at that time. And I did this month after month after month. And I remember telling my wife, "This is real. This is happening. I'm able to do this. I don't need my day job because we're paying our bills with my business."

Shortly after that, in March of 2018, I made my intentions known. I was going to quit. I stayed for another five months because my partner at the time had a baby. And I just didn't feel right leaving at the time. But in August of 2018, I was able to quit. The best way for you to transition safely and securely is to grow your business. Scale it to the point where you can pay yourself consistently, use that money and pretend your day job doesn't exist. Save that money, put it in the stock market, use it to pay off debt, but don't use it to pay your bills because you need to prove that you can take care of your daily costs with the money from your business.

If you're married, you also need to have a challenging conversation about making that transition. My wife doesn't work; we didn't have medical insurance outside of my job. You need to be really aware of what you're walking into. The best way to do that is to make the transition slowly over time.



Advice for Aspiring Entrepreneurs

If you want your business to be successful, you have to go at it full time. Plan it out and give yourself that time limit and use that limit to be bold. Because if you don't say, "In 18 months, I'm going to quit my job and do this full time," then you don't have the motivation to give it your everything. You have to say with certainty that you really tried. And even if you fail, you will know that you gave everything you had, and you can learn from it and move on to the next business idea.

That happened to me time and time again for four years. I tried, I failed, I didn't move forward. And now we've got this business with an amazing, world-class team of pharmacists. My hope for you reading

this book is that you feel motivated to start your business, and you go on to hire other pharmacists because that's how we fix this job crisis.



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HILLARY BLACKBURN



Biography

Hillary Blackburn is the voice of women in leadership when it comes to pharmacy topics. She is a clinically business-trained pharmacist who has been practicing for almost a decade in a variety of healthcare settings. She has experience in health-care strategy, business development, formulary development, and management consulting. She has established a number of successful medication access programs. In her current role, she serves as the Director for



Pharmaceutical Services at the Dispensary of Hope, a national non-profit medication distributor hosted by Ascension. There she leads their pharmacy team and oversees their reviews formulary, leads-based research initiatives, and manages their network of volunteer pharmacist strategic advisors. She was elected to serve in a national leadership position for the American Pharmacist Association Academy of Pharmacy Practice and Management (APHA-APPM) committee. She has also served as the co-chair of the advocacy committee for the APhA Care of the Underserved Special Interest Group. She precepts at Belmont University and serves on the Dean's external advisory committee. She's a graduate of the University of Mississippi School of Pharmacy and postgraduate year one (PGY1) pharmacy residency at the University of Mississippi. She is passionate about promoting the pharmacy profession and delivering expert patient care. She hosts the *Talk to Your Pharmacist Podcast*, with over 200 episodes, and is the author of a book on women in leadership, *How Pharmacists Lead*.



Entrepreneurial Journey

I grew up in a small town in Mississippi where my high school's motto was, "Excel with all your heart." That's something I've tried to follow to this day. Growing up in a small town, I was able to try many different things staying busy with multiple sports, academics, and volunteer activities, which helped make me a really well-rounded person. During my childhood, I always knew that I wanted to follow in my parents' footsteps and find a profession where I could serve others - a career in pharmacy has helped me to reach that goal. My mother was a teacher, and my dad worked for the government. While my mother encouraged my academics, my dad helped coach me in sports (soccer, basketball, etc.) They also instilled in me the importance of being involved in our community. I think they led a very fine example and helped me to pursue my goals.

Upon graduation from high school, I attended the University of Mississippi School of Pharmacy as an Early Entry pharmacy student and even represented the School of Pharmacy and Associated Student Body. I then interned in Washington, DC, on the Hill, which really helped shape my life and further my interest in policy and advocacy. While I was in pharmacy school, I chose a variety of rotations to get a broad experience and even served as an intern during two summers with the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) 's Office of Pharmacy Affairs in Washington, DC. During one of these summers, I even attended APHA's Summer Leadership Institute. The OPA oversees the 340B program, a program to support the hospitals and clinics across the country serving the safety net. This HRSA internship was a unique experience to explore public health and how to operationalize a national program and ultimately provided me insight into the importance of caring for the safety net or underserved population. As we all have heard many times, pharmacy is a small world, and I was able to intern at Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) with the Office of Pharmacy Affairs (OPA), since a University of Mississippi alum was the director.

After graduation from pharmacy school, I completed a PGY1 residency at the University of Mississippi Medical Center and really loved clinical care. I loved being in the ER and in the ICU, rounding with the internal medicine team, even being in the ambulatory setting, and just really loved all of the preceptors there. But when I moved to Nashville, there were not as many hospital jobs open - it is a competitive market as a highly desired place to live with three pharmacy schools! So I

changed my path a little bit and have had some experiences in the independent pharmacy setting working for a family friend, working for a health plan and specialty mail-order pharmacy, and where I am now, which has been just a wonderful fit is at the Dispensary of Hope.

Since 2015, I've served as the Director of Pharmaceutical Services at Dispensary of Hope which is a charitable medication distributor. The Dispensary of Hope (www.dispensaryofhope.org) is the nation's leading charitable medication distributor. Since 2012, Dispensary of Hope has assembled a collaborative of most of the largest drug manufacturers in the generic pharmaceutical space and most of the largest health systems serving the uninsured. The work of the Dispensary of Hope is to acquire donated medication in large volume and then, in turn, ship that to communities across the US. This donated inventory is stocked in free clinics, FQHCs, charity pharmacies, and health system outpatient pharmacies, where it is provided in a consistent fashion to the safety net population. Dispensary of Hope has seen significant national growth over the past few years, counting large health systems as partners – many of which are utilizing Dispensary of Hope as a component in their population health strategies. The Dispensary of Hope serves over 200 medication access dispensing sites across the United States, supplying a consistent inventory of essential medications to serve the low-income population. Dispensary of Hope provides this service in partnership with 26 pharmaceutical manufacturers. Over the next ten years, Dispensary of Hope will grow to serve all 50 states and 1.3 million of our nation's most vulnerable uninsured patients.

As the Director of Pharmaceutical Services, I am responsible for providing clinical pharmacist expertise to support the organization as well as its network of pharmacies and charitable clinics. I consult with pharmacy leaders across the country, sharing expertise on affordable medication access for low-income patients. My work with health systems includes strategy development for identifying and implementing programs to address gaps in pharmaceutical care through the inclusion of the Dispensary of Hope program. In addition, I lead our research and formulary development and create tools for successful program utilization by the pharmacies and charitable clinics in Dispensary of Hope network. I have helped develop and maintain strategic partnerships with several external organizations, including The Advisory Board Company and Belmont and Lipscomb Colleges of Pharmacy.

This was a role that did not exist before I started in this position, which is why the importance of volunteering can sometimes lead to unique opportunities. Prior to joining Dispensary of Hope in this capacity, I served in a volunteer capacity to develop the Dispensary

of Hope's formulary before joining full-time in November of 2015. And so, although I did not find the non-profit, I've had a chance to build it and to help create my own position. Starting out, I worked primarily as a consultant pharmacist and was on sales calls. Now, I lead the pharmacy department and wear a lot of different hats. Because my role has shifted away from direct patient care responsibilities and more into management, I went back to school to get my MBA through Western Governors University in 2019.

Beyond my "nine to five day job," I still try to be really engaged and involved with the community. I live in Nashville, and although it's not my alma mater, I've kind of adopted Belmont as my school here, although I work closely with some of the other schools as well. I serve on the Dean's External Advisory Council and serve as a preceptor with Belmont. This is one way I've chosen to spend my time and give back to the profession through investing in future students.

I believe it's very important to be involved in your state association, not only being a member but signing up for committees. I serve on the Tennessee Pharmacists Association's legislative and policy committee and then nationally with APhA. I've been a committee member for the Care for the Underserved Special Interest Group, which ties in nicely with The Dispensary of Hope, and serve on the APPM Executive Committee.

I truly believe as pharmacists, we are also community leaders. So it's important to be engaged and give back to your community. There are many different ways that my husband and I choose to do that. My husband, Chad, and I are very involved in the Nashville community through volunteering with the Nashville Ballet and Junior League. We also enjoy our church and spending time with friends and family. Being a volunteer, as I mentioned earlier, helped lead to my current role at Dispensary of Hope. As pharmacists, we are seen as leaders in the community and should be committed to being involved and serving others around us in and out of the pharmacy.



Methods to Monetize Your Knowledge

A few ways that I've been able to monetize my knowledge has been through obtaining sponsors for the *Talk to Your Pharmacist Podcast*, writing a book on women in leadership called *How Pharmacists Lead*, and speaking to groups about the topic of leadership.

Podcasting was my first entree into entrepreneurship. *The Talk to Your Pharmacist Podcast* celebrated four years in August 2021. It was a bit of a learning curve; the first episode was not perfect. But I believe it's important to get version 1.0 out there and learn as you go. It was scary because you're putting yourself out there, but it's been wonderful to get to connect with pharmacy leaders from across the country and share the story of over 200 pharmacy leaders. After reading many books and listening to podcasts myself, it lit my passion for leadership, particularly helping women get into leadership. I decided to write a book on that topic and share some of the stories of women leaders who were my role models. I wanted to share the stories of powerful women that other people could see themselves in.

Having those conversations and learning about these topics has really helped me become more knowledgeable about the industry. Hopefully, it has been able to help share with others what options are out there besides traditional pharmacy. Many times, if you ask a room full of people what a pharmacist does, they'll say, "Oh, a pharmacist fills my prescription." But the truth is there are so many things that pharmacists can do. These are just a few hot topics, but essential oils, opioid management, building your business model as a consulting pharmacist, podcasting, pharmacogenomics, gene therapies. There are lots of different things.

We've even made money through serving as hosts on Airbnb for our primary home. We love to travel, and we used our Airbnb to fund our travel. If we were traveling for the weekend or even on a trip to Cuba, Greece, or Thailand, we could open our home for rent and essentially fund our vacation. So there are lots of little entrepreneurial things you can do to make sure you have the life you want, pharmacy-related or not.



Advancing Women Leadership in Pharmacy

Women make up 80% of the healthcare workforce, but only 3% hold the title of CEO. Despite this, females now make up the majority of graduates and the health professions, including pharmacy. So even in the 2017, 2018 American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP) statistics, 60% of pharmacy degrees that were conferred went to females. With so many women in the healthcare industry, we really need female role models to inspire us and to represent us in leadership. That's the state of pharmacy leadership and why we need more female leadership.

What are some of the factors that contribute to a lack of female leadership? Many are personal factors such as mindset; there is still a mindset of the 1950s single-family earner where women stayed at home. And although much of that has shifted, women still tend to bear the brunt of housekeeping responsibility and the responsibilities of motherhood. I can really empathize with that, especially with the COVID-19 pandemic. A light was shone on how many responsibilities women have to balance. I do think that organizations are starting to notice that, which is great. But there are other barriers too. Many women often feel they don't have the qualifications to pursue a career, or they need to put their family over their career, and that's okay. Being a mother, I know there have been times in my life where I want to set my career aside and really focus on my family, and there have been times where I really want to come back to it and achieve my goals.

There are also organizational factors; I believe there are higher standards for women in leadership. The rigor is more intense; all of this contributes to a lack of female leadership. Even interpersonally, many women cannot visualize what it would be like for them to be in a leadership position. They may not have female mentors, or they may have been exposed to negative stereotypes. When you think of the C-suite, who do you think of? It's likely a man in a suit. Women, when applying for jobs, will read a job description and think, "I'm not qualified for that!" But I say, go ahead, put your name down, raise your hand, take charge. What's the worst that can happen? They won't call you back for that interview, okay, so what? No harm comes from raising your hand and putting yourself out there. Fortunately, a lot of these biases are being shattered, and we are starting to see more women in leadership roles. There are also a lot of benefits to female leadership. There have been numerous studies that highlight the importance of women in leadership. They have revealed that women can outperform men on several competencies. These competencies have been motivating others, fostering communities, producing high-quality work, listening, and building relationships.

In spring 2021, I interviewed four different female leaders, focusing on the hospital or health system perspective and how they led their teams during the COVID pandemic. It was really interesting to hear from them and how they lead their teams. It echoed a Harvard Business Review article and a Zenger Folkman study that came out. They said that having a diverse sense of leadership and having women on the board helps eliminate the homogenous point of view that often comes with an all-male board. Women tend to think differently and approach situations differently than men. McKinsey even produced an article showing that companies with more women do better financially and have higher corporate social responsibility standards.

So with the majority of the workforce being female, it helps to have leadership that can relate to that workforce. It's exciting to see more and more chief pharmacy officer positions being created and given to women. We actually have more females taking on those positions in two of the biggest health systems: Hospital Corporation of America (HCA) is one of them, which is located here in Nashville. Karla Miller is a female Chief Pharmacy Officer at HCA, the largest for-profit health system in the country. Ascension as well, which is one of the largest non-profit health systems, and Lynn Eschenbacher is the Chief Pharmacy Officer there. So it's exhilarating to see women stepping up into those types of positions.

When I interviewed Mary Alice Bennet for the podcast, she shared a quote that I love. She said, "Grab all that you can while you can." I think about that a lot. Through different seasons of my life, my priorities have changed. I focused on my career for the first ten years that I was in the workforce, and then we decided to have a baby. For those first years, my husband and I wanted to make sure we could travel and focus on our career, get that out of our system before we decided to have a family.

It's important to think about what kind of assets you have and what you are willing to give up. So grab all you can while you can. Now, my husband and I are in a different season of life with a baby, but that doesn't mean you have to give up on your leadership skills. Maybe you're not the CEO, but you're a staff pharmacist, or you can serve as chair for your junior league; there are many different things you can do.



Advice for Aspiring Entrepreneurs

What I would give as advice to younger pharmacists is to let go of your plan. I know we are very big into planning, but sometimes you need to allow yourself to follow where your career will take you. I didn't know that I would be at the Dispensary of Hope, and now I have been for the last six years. So sometimes, letting go of your plan leads you to other things that you had no idea you would find—allowing yourself to be educated, whether it's going back to business school or just learning from books. I would say that reading and listening to podcasts has been instrumental in changing my mindset and allowing for a growth mindset to flourish.

I would also recommend you think outside the box. A lot of people are

hesitant to claim leadership skills as something they possess. They think, “Gosh, that’s not in my title,” or, “I’m not a CEO, I’m not in the C-suite. I don’t even have a forum to talk to the senior leaders at my organization.” But there are so many ways people lead even when they are not in charge. What are your spheres of influence? What do you take responsibility for? Claiming those things can allow others to see you and appreciate you for all that you do.

Finally, finding ways to make your life more efficient so you can focus on building your career and leadership skills is possible, even if it’s something as small as hiring someone to clean your home, or ordering your groceries online so you don’t have to go to the grocery store.

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ASHA BOHANNON



Biography

Dr. Asha Bohannon is the founder and owner of Patient Advocacy Initiative Wellness Group, LLC or PAI Wellness Group©. She is based in Raleigh, North Carolina, and is a holistic pharmacist, best-selling author, speaker, and business consultant. After starting her own wellness practice in 2017, she and her husband Eric partnered to create and launch a business consulting program to help other pharmacists do exactly what she's done. Dr. Asha's passion is helping pharmacists like herself get out of their traditional pharmacy jobs and fulfill their life dreams of running their own businesses and successful wellness practices. Dr. Asha helps pharmacists learn how to get out of their own ways, the right steps to starting a wellness practice, and mistakes to avoid.



Entrepreneurial Journey

My name is Dr. Asha Pai Bohannon, and I want to share some of my journey with you. After I graduated from pharmacy school, I completed a community/ primary care pharmacy residency. After that, I went into independent retail pharmacy. I worked full-time in that setting for seven years. I worked my way up to store manager, thinking this was exactly where I should be. But that entire time, I actually

felt unhappy with what I was doing in my career.

My desire was to be more patient-centric and clinical, and I just wasn't feeling fulfilled. To be completely honest, I felt like I was feeding people's illnesses rather than helping them get and stay well. That was really difficult. I felt shackled to what I call the golden handcuffs. There was a degree of comfort that came with the job, and I knew I needed to stay there because Eric and I wanted to start a family. I stayed stuck. I don't know how else to put it.

After I had my first child, the waterworks really started coming. I was feeling miserable all the time, every single day. I wanted flexibility and less stress, especially considering amidst all of this, my health had begun to decline as well. I was like, "Where do I go? What should I do?" I had no idea. Finally, I began moving forward and looking at different entrepreneurship opportunities that came my way. That was when I realized that the first thing which needed to happen was a change of mindset. Believe me, I have gotten in my own way quite a few times and continue to do so today. We all do it.

I began learning about sales, which I had never formally done in the past. I was just throwing spaghetti at the wall and seeing what would stick. I came up with ideas and began thinking about different things. I went out and tried all of these different things, but nothing was sticking. I was frustrated, but I also knew that I wasn't approaching my career in the most efficient way. Finally, after lots of trial and error, I decided I really wanted to start a wellness practice.

I spoke to Eric, and it quickly became clear that even with my clinical mindset and the sales knowledge I was bringing to the table, I was only getting so far. Now Eric's job is helping create and launch million-dollar services to large fortune 50 companies. I realized that he might have the knowledge to help me out, we partnered together to start my wellness practice.



Methods to Monetize Your Knowledge

I am a certified diabetes care and education specialist, and I really wanted to focus my holistic wellness practice on diabetes education and management and medication management. These are the things I am passionate about. I am off on my own; I'm not billing with any insurance companies or anything like that. Everything I do is a fee-for-service, but I wanted to put that holistic element into it. I have an

East meets West kind of philosophy. That is how I choose to work with my clients.

As I was building my business, I encountered more and more pharmacists who were in the very same situation I had been in. They were trying to get out of a miserable situation. They were looking for answers and trying to break free of the golden handcuffs.

A few years ago, Eric and I went to Medipreneurs together. He's a great support system, and I'm really grateful for that. We got together, and people were asking me about all the different ways I had been monetizing my knowledge. At this point, I had started my wellness practice and written a book called *To Medicate or Not?: That is the Question!* I was being asked these questions more from a business perspective, and as pharmacists, we are not taught the MBA side of the work. It is hard to understand that stuff. Eric and I came together and realized there was something missing in the way pharmacists create their businesses. We had this great value in clinical knowledge, which we are able to give as pharmacists, but we don't have the business sense as much.

We needed to combine these two areas of expertise together and create an end-to-end solution that walks pharmacists through the step-by-step process of how to create a business. This is how I understood being able to make an impact on the lives of pharmacists and, by extension, impact the lives of their patients as well. We wanted to help people live a life of passion, purpose, and enjoy the profession that they are in.

Another way I monetize my knowledge is a book we wrote called *Impact Pharmacist* on Amazon, and it is a very thorough guide to our course. We also work one-on-one with clients who want a little bit more hand-holding through the process. As recently as earlier this year, we also created an online program to make it more cost-effective and efficient. It's a self-paced program that people can take while still having our support along the way. And this is really designed to allow us to walk alongside our clients as they go along this journey. We provide a facilitated program in which clients can get the level of support they need.



Breaking Free from the Golden Handcuffs: Three Secrets to Starting a Successful Wellness Practice

I love talking about the golden handcuffs because I know as pharmacists, we are not the only people who feel this way. For those of us who have been in the same job for a number of years, it becomes a big thing. We begin to feel trapped and stuck. I want to help people understand they can achieve the life of their dreams; they can create a greater impact and build a legacy for themselves. That is what I struggled to figure out for many years. I went through trial and error and made mistakes, so I want to help people not to make those same mistakes.

For many years I was truly defined by these golden handcuffs. The handcuffs can be inflicted by your employer; they can be based on how long you have been here, what your pay is, and the bottom line. But what this is really about is self-infliction. I totally inflicted the golden handcuffs on myself, and it was because of comfort. Knowing what to do, having a steady paycheck, all of these things allow you to stay within your comfort zone. It is so hard to let go of your comfort zone, and I know a lot of my colleagues in the professional pharmacy arena can attest to this. You feel stressed and overwhelmed, but you stay where you are anyway.

The reason why I wanted to be a pharmacist to begin with was to help people. But it became the thing that stressed me out the most because I felt like I was never truly helping anyone. Trying to find the balance between helping patients and competing with the bottom line becomes really overwhelming. It started causing me more health issues and stress within my family. It threw me off balance: my health, my mindset, my family life. Everything was thrown completely off-balance, and I found myself struggling.

I did a couple of certifications and kept going back and forth, trying to find my way. I know there are a lot of people out there who are in that same space. You're probably thinking, "What certifications do I need to get? What do I need to do? How do I do this?" But I realized all of those extra things I was adding in order to find my direction just added to the confusion. It wasn't helping me understand what my strengths and interests were. It wasn't telling me what I was passionate about. It just became another certification to get, another piece of spaghetti to throw at the wall.

I did this for two to three years. I want to help you to not do the same thing. Because what I didn't realize was that I wasn't truly looking for another job. I was looking for freedom. When I say freedom, I mean all kinds of freedom, financial freedom, and freedom to fulfill my passion and my purpose. I think most people can attest to this, too. I wanted to be able to leave a legacy and have an impact on patients' lives, pharmacists' lives, and my family's lives. I wanted to be able to impact the people I encounter every day.

I was trying to understand how to put together the pieces of the puzzle. That was the moment when I enlisted Eric's help. I could go out and talk clinical all day long, I could talk about diabetes all day long, but that doesn't bring patients in, and it doesn't bring money in. It didn't have the impact that I wanted. It was when we combined our areas of expertise, my clinical and his business strategy, that I realized I could break free of the golden handcuffs. That was how I could find freedom and get to the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. That is what we decided to do.

We partnered together to create the Impact Pharmacists Online Program—this is an incredibly valuable tool we really want people to have access to. One of the things this program teaches is what we call the top three secrets to start your own successful wellness practice.

Number one, getting out of your own way. Getting out of your own way is all about your mindset. You must have the right mindset to get into entrepreneurship and leave the comfort of what you know behind. Like I said earlier, it's easy to stay comfortable, but we need to be able to leave all that behind.

Number two, after getting out of your own way, is something called analysis paralysis. Analysis paralysis means overthinking a situation past the point of action. It means you are stuck in a loop of analyzing to the point where you are paralyzed. I have gotten stuck in this loop so many times. As pharmacists, I know for a fact that we all sometimes suffer from analysis paralysis because when we feel uncertain or like we don't know the answer, we overthink. We might be creating a pros and cons list; we might be listing out all of the research we need to do or certifications we might need. And while this may seem productive at the moment, it is actually stopping you from moving forward. I am not saying that all of the tasks you are listing are completely unnecessary, but the act of writing them out and analyzing your strategy is often used to procrastinate actually getting them done.

Instead of accomplishing what you set out to, now you are paralyzed. You're stuck in a loop of analyzing everything to death. But I think it is

also important to say that this is not a fault of your own. This is how we were trained! We were trained to be jacks and janes of all trades, not to be specifically focused on one thing. As pharmacists, we tend to know a little about a lot, but not a lot about a little. It makes it really difficult to think outside of the box when you're stuck in a spinning hamster wheel.

When it comes to starting our business, we tend to think we don't know enough. We're not taught a lot about running a business; even with an MBA, it is still a difficult task. We get stuck again. We think, "I need another thing, another thing, another thing." It creates paralysis. It is a kind of fear of missing out when it comes to certification. We want to accumulate all this knowledge that we think will help prepare us, but we don't actually look for answers on how to start a business. You don't look for the tools that would actually benefit you.

I am here right now, telling you that you have everything you need to start a wellness practice. There is nothing extra that you need to go off and do clinically speaking (until you figure out what niche you want to target). You are a clinical practitioner as you stand, and you will always be able to go out and discover what you want to do with that. Once you find out what you want to do, nothing will teach you better than actually doing it. It will save you time; it will save you money and a whole lot of emotions. You just have to get out of your own way. Then you can learn the steps it takes to create your business in the right way, without putting the cart in front of the horse.

The third secret I teach is the four pitfalls that we see most startup entrepreneurs fall into. This is the secret to thriving rather than simply surviving. When thinking about starting your business, you need to think about it kind of like a puzzle, and you need to identify the pieces you need. Eric is always saying that "entrepreneurs are risk-avoiders, not risk-takers." If you can identify these four pitfalls and focus on them, so you know how to avoid them, you will succeed.

The first pitfall we often see is that when people think they have a great idea for a product or service, they will assume that everyone wants it. What they find from talking to consumers is that only a few actually like it or are willing to buy it. And in truth, that's not bad. You still have got a couple of people, but you haven't quite met the customer's needs. They discover in the end that after putting in all of this time and energy, they have designed the wrong service.

They go out and talk to tons and tons of people, but now they don't have a target customer. This is the second pitfall; they keep experiencing these moments of failure. Their target market is not the people

they are talking to; they haven't found the right customer.

The third pitfall occurs when they actually do have the right product, and they may be talking to the right people. Customers are hearing about the product and buying into it. But two things can happen that allow it to go wrong. Either they are overpricing the product because they keep getting such positive feedback yet only a few buyers, or they are underpricing it because they are talking to tons of people and it is being bought, but they do not see any profit or return. It becomes a matter of the right pricing model. I have seen many people fall into the trap of not having the right pricing model.

Finally, the fourth pitfall is having the right messaging. The entrepreneur might have identified the right service, the right target market, they've got the correct pricing structure, and they're talking to the ideal customer. They have all these things going for them; what else is left? Somehow they fail to articulate what the customer will get out of the product or service; they can't tell the customer what is in it for them. And when this happens, it usually means their marketing is off too. No matter how good their product is, they are not going to sell if they can't explain *why* it is a good fit for the client.

Once you address these four pitfalls, you have the target market, the right product, the pricing structure, and your messaging; you will be successful in starting your business. These are the four things that you really need to be thinking about when starting your entrepreneurial journey or creating a wellness practice within the pharmaceutical world.

Once you have addressed these, the next question is, "How do I thrive in this?" You have addressed the four pitfalls. You have a service in hand. You know what you're doing, and clinically you are ready to go. That's great, but what comes next? I like to think of it as having a handful of ingredients that guarantee your business will have the secret sauce.

I'm going to share a little secret. And in truth, it's not really a secret; having bypassed all of the four pitfalls is amazing, but what you really need is harmony between them. What do you need to guarantee harmony? The first thing is passion. You have to be passionate about what you are doing. Finding out what you want to do, being passionate about it, and not sticking yourself into the hole of what you think you should be doing.

Number two, you need money. It takes money to make money. I think about that a lot. You have to put the time and energy into building a new business. A lot of people think if they just create the business, it

will be wanted; people will come to me. And if that happens, it's great, but you have to put in the time. You have to talk to the right people and learn how to market yourself. You have to put the commitment in. When I began this process several years ago, I was heavily committed to it and to being consistent with it. You can't just do a little bit here and a little bit there. It takes a consistent daily grind to build the legacy you want for yourself.

Last but certainly not least is the sales and growth mindset. You have to really get yourself into the sales mindset. You have to be constantly thinking about how you can grow. Without that constant growth, it is really easy to get paralyzed again.

Once again, harmony is tying together all of those four pitfalls. That harmony is what is going to allow you to thrive in your business. Now there are a lot of objections out there. I can hear them already. You'll say, "I don't have time," "I don't have the right knowledge," "I don't have the money," "I don't know where to start." I hear these over and over again. But the truth is, time is the thing we want the most and use the worst. We all have the same amount of time allotted to us every single day, but we don't always use it well.

We waste precious time looking for the perfect moment to start a business, but there is never going to be a perfect moment. All we have is right now. That is my favorite thing to say. Now is the perfect time, don't let anything stop you, don't make those excuses. There is always going to be an excuse to stop you from doing what you want and being who you want to be. But now is the time to forge past that. Now is the time to take action. You need to take action so you can understand what it is you really want and how best to move forward with that. There is no better opportunity than right now.

I like to use analogies to illustrate my points, so I'm going to give you one now. This was something that came to me when we were starting our Impact Pharmacist Program. Imagine building a house. Would you start with creating a blueprint, building a solid cement foundation, and then putting up the beams and the walls? Or would you start with the wooden beams and then go back afterward to decide if you want to lay a cement foundation?

Personally, I have done both. My personal opinion would be to actually do the latter; sometimes, it's better to get started without the knowledge and comfort of getting where you want to go. I really want you to think about demolishing those objections, figure out your next steps and think about how you can move forward and take action today.

I want you to take a minute and think about what parts of your life you are sacrificing at this very moment. Are you sacrificing your health? Are you sacrificing time spent with your family? Are you sacrificing your own personal fulfillment? I have done all of these. I am right there with you. But I also want you to think about the flip side. Are you ready to grab life by the reins? Are you ready to help people get what they want and deserve? Are you ready to get what you want and deserve? Ask yourself, are you ready? These are really important questions to ask as you begin your journey because you could be stalled right now and not even realize it. I have been exactly where you are. I have had butterflies in my stomach. I understand the nervous excitement that you are feeling because it is nerve-wracking, but it is also super exciting.

This is a very disruptive time in our profession, which is why it is also the perfect opportunity to be a trailblazer. It is a really exciting time, and I am excited to be part of it with you. Eric and I have spent the last two-and-a-half years working with other pharmacists trying to help them get to where they want to be. I think it is the best time to learn the processes the ways to go about starting a business to ensure success. We have a really great opportunity to make this work.

I am going to take a few moments to share with you about our Impact Pharmacists Online Program. We have worked to develop a cost-effective way to help you through this process. It is a self-paced online program divided into six sections and 14 modules, along with a bonus module about sales. Each section is designed to take about two weeks if you go straight through; it is about a three-month program. It contains video and audio content so that you can listen wherever you are, worksheets, templates, and everything you need. We really wanted to give you everything.

The material covers mindset, business development, marketing strategy, and all the tools and knowledge you would need to move forward in your entrepreneurial journey. We're excited to be walking alongside you on this path. We've had several people who have done the program give us some great testimonials, and I'd like to read one out loud. This is one from Plano, Texas: "Dr. Asha Pai Bohannon and Eric Bohannon have been a godsend. They have helped me dig deeper for my target audience than I had previously working with another coach. I was impressed with how specific you can go in clarifying your niche. I am more prepared to move forward with clarity and get paid what I am worth for my wellness practice."

That, folks, is the bottom line. Pharmacists are worth so much. We have so much knowledge and value. We are worth more than we give ourselves credit for or that anyone else is going to give us credit

for. We have to go out and make it for ourselves. I am excited to see where this journey leads you.

The best way to reach me is through my website: ashapaibohannon.com. You can also connect with me on Facebook, Instagram, or LinkedIn at Dr. Asha Pai Bohannon.



Advice for Aspiring Entrepreneurs

My advice for aspiring entrepreneurs is twofold. Firstly, figure out the right way for you. Secondly, don't wait. This is the biggest piece of advice I can give you. The time you have right now is your opportunity to be a trailblazer, it is there for the taking. Don't wait!



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KIMBER BOOTHE



Biography

Dr. Kimber Boothe, PharmD, MHA, is a pharmacist, healthcare leader, and entrepreneur with decades of experience in health systems and the pharmaceutical industry. She is known as the 'Strategy Pharmacist' and Chief Connector & Pharmovator. Kimber is the founder and CEO of the Kimber Boothe Group, where she provides coaching, consulting, courses, and speaking on: Leadership & Career Development, Pharmacy Strategy & Innovation/Intrapreneurship, & Pharmacy



Entrepreneurship. She is a graduate of the University of Connecticut and Medical University of South Carolina, the University of Phoenix Masters in Health Administration, and completed residencies at Virginia Commonwealth University. Kimber previously led the pharmacy services for a four-hospital community health system, where she drove innovative strategy for the pharmacy enterprise as System Director of Pharmacy. She was also the Director of Clinical Pharmacy Services at Yale-New Haven Health. She is passionate about spending time on the right things to develop others and deliver strategic, focused results by living her values of Lead, Inspire, Value, and Excel. Her motto is Pharmacy Can do More with More, and her goal is to support the addition of 100 new health system pharmacy positions annually. She is the recipient of the Connecticut Society of Health-System Pharmacists Meritorious Achievement Award, and her prior organization has been recognized with the Kentucky Society of Health-System Pharmacists Innovative Health-System Pharmacy Practice Award.



Entrepreneurial Journey

I help pharmacists strategically advocate for roles and resources to advance practice and have joyful engaging careers. This is my simplified ‘why’ statement like you will write for your business. My services extend to both what I like to call intrapreneurs, people working within organizations, and entrepreneurs following an influencer model to impact pharmacy.

A few fun facts about me: I moved from clinical practice into leadership early in my career. I did community pharmacy when I was in school and during my doctorate and residency, and then I worked at Yale-New Haven Hospital in different roles. I went into the pharmaceutical industry for ten years in various roles, including medical affairs, and then went back to health systems as a Director of Clinical Pharmacy Services. It was then that I became drawn to this influencer model and how I could shift my work. At the end of 2014, I formed my LLC and officially started my business, but I still wasn’t ready to do it full-time, so I worked as an entrepreneur in a limited capacity.

My family relocated to Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky, and I got a wonderful position as a Chief Pharmacy Officer while working on my business as a side hustle. I was doing coaching training, working as a consultant and public speaker all part-time, and I had a multi-year plan to transition to focus 100% on my business.

When I do coaching, I try to emphasize to my clients that their careers are not the only important element of their lives. I am also a wife, a mother, and a daughter. My dad lives down in Florida, where I, too, lived for some years. I have family in Brooklyn and a brother in Connecticut. I want my clients to understand they have these vast networks outside of just their careers. I like to think of my life as a Venn diagram of four circles, each representing a different aspect of my life—Self, Family/Friends, Career, Community. I do this so that my clients and myself alike can understand that there is a need for balance and integration. It’s important that we dedicate time to other parts of our lives besides our careers.

One of your circles is also your community. I am a big believer in supporting your community, whether through pharmacy organizations or volunteer organizations. I’m a big roller blader too, and one of the ways I volunteer is helping maintain multi-use trails in my area. I love spending time with my family, traveling, and making memories

together. We love to go diving; we went to Jamaica when I was pregnant with twins and explored caves there. We love to go on cruises.

My entrepreneurial journey followed my intrapreneurial journey working within organizations. I was very interested in innovation within the safety of an organization. And so, as I was working within these organizations, I would justify my position and the work I was doing. In one organization, I wrote a business plan. I was working in cardiology and taking care of about 150 patients. And I needed another pharmacist so I could expand my services and not be stretched too thin. This was the year after my residency, and I wrote my first business plan. I created an organization for pharmacists at Bayer called Pharmacists at Pharmacist (PhAB).

When I moved from pharmacy to health systems, I worked as the director of clinical services at Yale-New Haven Health, and I was asked to focus on the pharmacy Practice Advancement Initiative (PAI). I began developing business plans in that capacity. In early 2015 when I formed the Kimber Boothe Group, I created a model for thought leaders and a course called Connector 101. I began coaching the following year and created 50 new positions through business plans to advance acute care services. I then went on to create another course called the Connector Academy, which was designed to be a deeper dive into leadership. In 2017 I was able to create 20 new positions and was just trying to be very bold about advancing the practice.

In 2018 I continued down this intrapreneur path to focus on innovating practice within existing organizations. Now living in Ohio, I was able to replicate the success I had previously and create 50 new positions within my new health system. Later that year, I attended a conference for entrepreneurs that really helped solidify what I wanted to do. I was having so much success in pharmacy strategy that I decided pharmacists would be my target customer.

When I had been doing coaching before, my reach was a lot broader. My first client was a soccer mom who also performed opera. I helped her get back into jobs on stage by strategically planning her career moves. But opera singers aren't really my passion; attending this conference helped me realize that pharmacists were who I wanted to cater to.

The following year, I created another business plan to expand ambulatory services, and I also created my course, Pharmovation. I launched them both at the same time, at the Medipreneurs conference. I used this as an accountability deadline for myself. I said to myself, "I cannot attend this meeting without being able to share that I launched my course." I launched the course and had about three students my first

year. It wasn't huge, but it validated a lot of the work I had been doing.

At the end of 2019, I resigned from my position and became a full-time entrepreneur. I began working right before the pandemic with an expanded list of health system Pharmovation Consulting clients. I was making a lot of big decisions during this period, and the questions I asked myself to guide my journey were: *Where do you want to have an influence? What are your passions?* And I knew if I could find the intersection of my passions and where I wanted to have an impact, I would find the work I was meant to be doing.



Methods to Monetize Your Knowledge

Something I teach in the Pharmfluencer Business Course and that I find very helpful when you are getting started is interviewing people in your target audience. Asking them questions about what their needs are and identifying the most important things. When I held the Pharmfluencer summit, I had all the registrants fill out a survey upon registering. This helped me understand what their needs were, what they were hoping to get out of that experience. That way, I could tailor my materials to answer their questions and provide them with the information they need.

Realize that people will pay for your services, and if they won't, they're probably not your ideal customer anyway. And as you are transitioning into this process, you can offer discounts or scholarships for people who really cannot afford to pay because you do want to reach as many people as possible.

As we have covered, there are many methods to monetize your knowledge. To mention a fun one—I am currently helping my son launch a membership box service. These are incredibly popular right now, a monthly subscription where you receive a box of some kind in the mail. You may pay a monthly or quarterly amount to get a product shipped to you. He definitely inherited the entrepreneurial spirit. And I've realized that my training in pharmacy has allowed me to think very strategically. I am always thinking of ways to innovate and monetize. I am very proud that he has picked up on that from me.

When I began my consulting, I was very strategic with how I grew my client base and developed my business. I wanted to grow my business online, so I could reach more people with the services I provided. One of my goals is to help create a hundred new pharmacy

positions every year. That is difficult to accomplish if I am only doing one-on-one consulting. I need to reach more pharmacists who create their own impact within their organizations or supporting entrepreneurs who are also supporting bold practice advancement.

I organize the methods I use to monetize my knowledge into a product matrix of topic areas and low to high tier offerings. The three topic areas I have grown into are leadership, intrapreneurship, and entrepreneurship. I began with one-on-one coaching and created my first course in my zone of genius: pharmacy strategy and innovation (intrapreneurship): Pharmovation® Course. I then added the high-tier consulting service. It was very validating because I now had contracts where I'm paid for the value I bring. I also wrote my first book, *Pharmovation*, which is considered my low tier. I also created virtual live events and summits to help educate and get my message out. All of which is part of my long-term strategy to continue building my business. In the topic area of entrepreneurship, I created a product line for Pharmfluencer™ with the summit, on demand course, this book, and a mastermind membership. In the 3rd topic area for leadership, my Connector brand, I serve through coaching and the Connector Leadership Circle™ membership.



Connecting Your Why to Your Impact Through the Pharmfluencer Business Model

I wore a specific necklace today. I wore it because it has a path going through the back, and it says, “Trust Your Journey.” I wanted to start with that because, in many ways, it is the first step, trusting your own journey, trusting your heart. What this means to me is not letting fear take over. One of the biggest things that allowed me to transition into being an entrepreneur was trusting in my journey and not letting fear take over.

Although I haven't always been an entrepreneur, I have had entrepreneurial ideas for many years. When I was in college, I began doing nails out of my dorm room. I even advertised my business. Unfortunately, this was actually against university policy. I got a nice letter from the university saying I had to stop or I would risk being kicked out of school. Although I wouldn't qualify that venture as being successful, it began a pattern of entrepreneurial ideas I had.

Another idea I had when I was working in the pharmaceutical industry was to create a database for hospitals. I was working as a medical

science liaison, and something I found was that the hospitals were always asking for proof of vaccinations. I thought there must be a way to create a database for this information. I put the idea in a folder and never got around to acting on it. And sure enough, now there are two major companies that make millions of dollars doing exactly that.

My reason for sharing this is that hopefully, it will motivate you to not just keep your big ideas in a drawer somewhere. If you're reading this book, I assume you have the entrepreneurial spirit, and you just may not know how to tap into it. The key is identifying your passions and where you want to have an impact. Who do you want to serve? What are the problems you are drawn towards solving? I'm a big fan of *StoryBrand* by Donald Miller. It's a great book. And the idea in that book is that the people you want to serve are the heroes; you are the guide. You have the competency, skill, knowledge, and belief to teach them how to be successful.

Everyone has a passion for something, and it can be incredibly niche. Some people are huge war buffs. They have an interest in military history, strategy, or weaponry. Whatever it may be, they don't realize they can monetize their knowledge. For me, it was pharmacy and helping people become leaders. I was doing those innovative things. I was speaking, and I was getting paid for it.

The critical decision in making all of this happen was creating a limited liability corporation to protect myself. When I was transitioning from being an entrepreneur part-time to full-time, I also developed a phased timeline that would ensure I had enough business on the side so that I was comfortable enough leaving. I would always recommend that, just to ensure you are covered financially as you make that transition. It was important to me during that process that I remain independent and flexible. During that time, several pharmacy consulting firms reached out to me, asking me to join them as a partner or consultant. I declined those offers preferring to work with those organizations as a subcontractor rather than an employee.

Identifying who I wanted to serve who my clients were going to be, gave me the impetus and direction to begin working as an entrepreneur full-time. Once I had that realization, I knew I had made the right decision because it felt natural for me to focus on helping pharmacists.

I think this model of entrepreneurship is especially appealing because there are very few barriers to entry. You don't have to acquire a physical space; you are not selling physical products, there is no question of multilevel marketing. You can begin working out of your home. When I began, I had no website; I had nothing. My clients were people

who lived in my town, and they paid me because I had the expertise. It's not as hard as you might think it is. If you have the knowledge and a sphere of influence, you are already there. The hardest part was charging people for my services, and I didn't charge a lot of my clients early on. This can be strategic; you may want to give your services away for free to a few people to gain testimonials. But pretty quickly, you need to begin charging people and realize that your services are worth money. People will pay for it.



Advice for Aspiring Entrepreneurs

There are key learnings that I want to share with you from my journey.

1. Inner Circle/ Network is Vital. One reason I am so passionate about conferences and summits is that it allows you to create this inner circle of like-minded people that you may not get the opportunity to meet otherwise. These networks are important when transitioning into running your own business. You never know who in the room might be your next client or could give you your next client.
2. Continuous Development in new entrepreneurship topics while continuing to develop your zone of genius is important. I would highly recommend becoming familiar with membership and marketing. I took a number of courses on that when I was making the transition. I had the knowledge to know how to run a successful business and was not just going in blind.
3. Start with one thing—product or service. I know I mentioned my product matrix, but it all started with one and was built over time.
4. If I could do one thing differently, I would have hired help earlier. A lot of people are hesitant to hire help when they are building their business, which is understandable. A lot of people believe you can't hire help until your business is booming. But I've found that the longer you wait, the harder it becomes to delegate those tasks and outsource some of the responsibility. I think if I had hired someone earlier, it would have allowed me to scale and grow more quickly while having more balance. It's a hard lesson to learn, but you really don't need to be practicing at the top of your capacity 24/7. It's okay to get some support. I've only done that in the last year-and-a-half.

When I was still working full-time, I had a cleaning service and some childcare support. I also had virtual assistants to do some of the

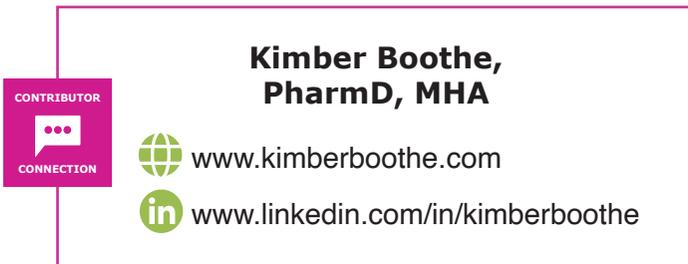
administrative tasks. I thought when I transitioned; I would no longer need that support. But having a graphic designer, copywriter, and someone to help with marketing and social media is absolutely critical. If I could do it again, I would hire all of those people earlier. I look at my work and personal time to ensure I am “practicing at the top of my license” and focused on what I am uniquely qualified to do.

That is my story and how I developed my business. I hope this book gives you the motivation to pursue starting your own business. And if you are looking for more guidance in identifying your topic, your ideal customer, and how to build a path to success, I highly recommend my Pharmfluencer Business Course. It also goes deeper into what is being covered in this book: how to monetize your knowledge, building a business foundation, forming an LLC, branding and website decisions, and even what it means to launch a product.

When you’re not working for somebody, there are important decisions and a specific mindset that are critical to the business foundation. I also go into pharmacy profession strategies. We looked specifically at the pharmacy landscape and where there are opportunities for business. I offer different options for the level of involvement as well as a student price. If this interests you, please explore the options at my website at Kimberbooth.com

The final thing I want to address before leaving you with the wisdom of my many fantastic contributors is how to find a coach, and more specifically, the right coach if you haven’t honed your niche yet. There are many coaches out there who offer services similar to mine but more focused on general strategy. Don’t think you need to wait until you have identified your niche in order to seek guidance. Having a coach can actually help you make those decisions that will lead to you identifying what your area is and who your ideal clients will be. Starting my business was one of the best decisions I have ever made, and I hope this book empowers you to develop a joyful and impactful career.

Final words of advice—Just do it!



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DEREK BORKOWSKI



Biography

Derek Borkowski, PharmD, is a pharmacist, software engineer, and the founder and CEO of Cosmas Health[®]. His background includes experience in community pharmacy, digital health, and the pharmaceutical industry. He is the creator and software engineer of Pyrls.com, a drug information website and mobile application for clinicians and student-clinicians. Additionally, he continues to practice community pharmacy. Derek is a 2018 Doctor of Pharmacy graduate from the University of Minnesota.



Entrepreneurial Journey

After forming my LLC, Cosmas Health, I actually only used it for freelance web development work. And it became apparent that having some knowledge of pharmacy and having some knowledge of web development was incredibly synergistic. I wasn't the best web developer in the world, and there are plenty of pharmacists who know more than me but having a combination of the two allowed me to do something unique.

Through freelance work, I was able to meet my first few clients. One was in medical practice, and they needed their website rebuilt. And

because I was a pharmacist, I was able to relate to them on a personal level, as a colleague in the healthcare field, and I could also get the website development done. It was that combination that landed me my first client. Having that domain expertise, but also being able to provide a service.

Eric Christianson, who runs MedEd 101, is a friend and mentor of mine. I met him at a conference when I was still a student. We collaborated and built RxGrad.com, a NAPLEX preparation website. Eric provided the content, and I had the software engineering and design skills to build the website out as well as help review content. I can't stress enough how important it was for me to have these skills in addition to the knowledge of the pharmacy industry.

I then went on to start Pyrls.com, a medical information reference tool. I would compare it to a digital version of the top 300 drug study cards. It's for people who are learning about different medications and people in the outpatient setting. And every so often, I will have people ask me, "How are you going to compete with UpToDate or Lexicomp? They're going to crush you." I tell them what I'll tell you. A core tenet of my business model is that I have very little operating expenses because I am both the domain expert and the one who is taking the time to build these skills.

For a time, I was working two full-time jobs, and I know many people trying to start their own business are in this exact same position. We're all obsessed with building and doing interesting things. But because I wear multiple hats in the running of my company, I don't need to make \$700 million a year in revenue to support all of the operating expenses that a major publishing house has. My costs for maintaining my website are low as well because I custom-coded the HTML and everything myself.



Methods to Monetize Your Knowledge

Creating apps and developing tools on the internet is definitely a way you can monetize your knowledge. I often get asked about Pyrls, what is it and what is Cosmas. Cosmas Health is my company where I work with others to build medical information products for clinicians.

The most popular feature of Pyrls, and what was a big inspiration for me in creating it, is wanting a better resource for counseling points. Users always praise the counseling points because it is such a

valuable resource. I've learned when building a product to scope it as specifically as possible. If I were to start Pyrls over, I would probably have started with only diabetes drug reference because that's what people care most about. Pyrls is divided into four big sections, but right now, it seems that diabetes medication information is what most people care about. Focusing your scope is really important; the more specific, the better.



Two is Better than One: Build Your Product or Service

I knew after graduating that in the years that followed, I wanted to start my own company. The opportunity actually came sooner than expected, and that would not have been able to happen without something I want to talk about today: embracing technological skills, which melded perfectly with my pharmacy knowledge.

And the truth is, when it comes to being a pharmacist, I'm a 5/10. As a software engineer, I'm a 5/10. As a marketer or as a designer, I'm a 5/10. But by having knowledge of multiple fields, without being an expert in any singular field, I am able to do what I do now. Someone who is 10/10 when it comes to being a pharmacist but a 0/10 engineer could not do what I do, and vice versa. Embracing the variety of knowledge I have has been critical to my success.

Why is that? I'm a builder at heart. I'm sure many people reading this can resonate with that because those are the kind of people who will be attracted to a book like this. That's why you're trying to learn how to turn your passion into a business. What I mean when I say I'm a builder is that if I had been dropped in a different century, I would probably be a sculptor; I would be creative.

And creativity can be uncommon in our industry; we have to discover innovative ways to express our creativity. Website development is a passion of mine, and I got really deeply involved in it. And part of why I was so drawn to it was because of how fast the iteration cycle is. Anyone who has ever worked on their own website, no matter how you've done it, knows this. You're making changes to the page right in front of you. By embracing that technology, you can see your vision come to life right away. It's a positive feedback cycle.

That is an example of how I love to build. And I love to think of it as sculpting; you're creating a vision out of a block of stone. I love that.

Part of why I wanted to be an entrepreneur was so that I could tap into that creative side.

I really want to encourage pharmacists to embrace technological skills wherever they can. I would highly encourage you to do it yourself. There is nothing wrong with doing it yourself. There is nothing holding you back from getting out there and starting to build what you have been working on.

The traditional thinking is that you need a partner who knows how to do programming, or you need to hire a consulting agency to do it for you. We think of technology as a foreign skill. But no one bats an eye when they see a PharmD/MBA or a PharmD/JD or a PharmD/MPH or a PharmD/Ph.D. That's considered normal, whereas learning about programming is still thought to be impossible. But as pharmacists, many of us did dual degrees; technology is just another domain in which you can build your expertise.

Finding the best starting point for building technological skills depends on what you do. I own a website called Pharmacist.dev, and I wrote a blog post a little while ago that directly answers this question if you are interested in learning more. But the first thing is knowing what you want to do. Broadly speaking, there are three paths: website development, data analytics, or something else. You want to tailor what skills you learn to align with what it is you actually want to do.

For myself, I started learning website development, even though as a pharmacist, if you're trying to get a job in technology, data analytics is probably the best skill to learn. There are more careers in that area and people hiring for that specific skill set, whether it be pharmacy benefit managers, health systems, informatics. If you're trying to find a career in pharmacy, learning data analytics is likely the most helpful. But the same way there are subcommunities in pharmacy: community pharmacy or hospital pharmacy, there are subcategories in technology. But I knew from the get-go that I wanted to work in website development, so that is what I pursued. There were websites that I wanted to build, so I began learning the necessary skills.

I would say that if you're interested in learning, you should be honest about if you actually enjoy it. Don't spend all of your time coding if you don't find it fun. One really problematic thing for me in running my business is I can't stand keeping books; that is something I personally outsource, the financial side of things. So, by all means, pursue the things you enjoy but don't force yourself to do something you don't like when you can hire someone else to do it. Yes, develop the skills you need to do things yourself, but play to your strengths.



Advice for Aspiring Entrepreneurs

In terms of building your technological skills, there are a couple of ways I would think about it. There are different skills you can learn, all of which are really helpful—identifying what you want to learn more about, whether it's website or app development or data analytics. Even becoming really well-versed in a commonly used software program is a valuable skill. Being a Microsoft Excel wiz is really powerful. Truthfully, data analysts spend most of their time in Microsoft Excel or on a similar high-level program. Familiarizing yourself with these programs can be incredibly helpful.

My advice is to learn the skills to help you accomplish what you're trying to build, but it's equally important to feel like you're being productive with your time and learning things that you find interesting. You only have one life to live.

Even that can provide other challenges, too, however, especially when it comes to growing your business. I know for myself that I enjoy coding so much that I'm very hesitant to let it go. Learning how to be a manager is a challenge for everyone. I hired a few interns a few months ago, and I apologized in advance. I said, "You're going to help teach me how to be a manager and how to delegate responsibilities."

Everything comes with new and unique challenges, but whatever it is you want to do, launch it. There's a phrase in startups, "launch before you have your password reset page done." And the point of this expression is you should not build your password reset page until you're getting so many emails from people needing to reset their password that it's worth your time. There are so many more important things to be dealing with in creating a website; you don't have to wait until every little detail is perfected for you to launch.



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DELON CANTERBURY



Biography



Dr. DeLon Canterbury is a Board Certified Geriatric Pharmacist. He founded GeriatRx, which is a telehealth-based Medication Deprescribing and Senior Care consulting company focused on advocating for older patients. GeriatRx combines pharmacogenomic testing, comprehensive medication management, drug cost savings to address social determinants of health, such as food, shelter, financial stability, and health literacy. He helps patients who are struggling to achieve their healthcare goals and improve their quality of life by reducing high-risk medication use and polypharmacy in seniors. GeriatRx not only provides 1:1 patient-centered concierge pharmacist services but teaches other senior care providers, clinicians, home health agencies, nursing homes, retirement living communities, and caregiver advocacy groups how to leverage their pharmacist and provide value-based care through his Deprescribing Accelerator program. He is an Executive Board member of the African-American COVID task force (AACT+) in Durham, North Carolina, a formulary committee member for Senior PharmAssist in Durham, and served as the Community Health Coalition telehealth director, serving low-income senior African-American patients with health, wellness, and reassurance checkups during COVID.



Entrepreneurial Journey

My story really began with my two parents, Stanley and Sandra Canterbury, who emigrated to the US from Guyana, South America, in the early 1980s. My Caribbean background sparked my initial interest in understanding natural medicine and herbal products extensively used in Guyana for healing a number of illnesses in my childhood.

Unfortunately, my entrepreneurial journey began with a point of pain and frustration with the direction of retail pharmacy. Working as a Walgreens Pharmacy Manager, I felt completely unfulfilled and depressed with my role at a high-volume store. I believed I wasn't helping patients the way our pharmacist license had meant for us to fully do. I wanted to have a lasting impact and instead grew tired, frustrated, and angry with our healthcare system, especially when it came to health barriers for Black, Latino, and senior populations. I never felt so hopeless within my entire career, and it was even more frustrating hearing what patients had to go through before getting to the pharmacy counter.

It was this feeling that pushed me to start GeriatRx, focusing on providing comprehensive care while emphasizing cost savings and medication deprescribing for overmedicated seniors. I constantly remain active within the Durham community by guest speaking and conducting a webinar series called "Drugs with Dr. DeLon," focusing on Medication Management and COVID updates for church panels, town halls, caregiver support groups, and senior care organizations locally and nationally while Helping seniors suffering in isolation.

This led to me becoming a paid guest speaker and being featured on international podcasts. I have had multiple news media features, and GeriatRx is becoming known as a caregiver advocate and supporter. I had no idea this journey would take me here. Pharmacists are so valuable, and we should be portrayed just as ubiquitously within the media. This could really impact care. I've met people who have contacted me through WhatsApp or GroupMe because of things I would post just to inform the public. You have to use your voice to serve; that is our secret power as pharmacists. Everything I do on a day-to-day basis is informed by servant leadership.



Methods to Monetize Your Knowledge

I monetize my knowledge in my business by offering coaching packages. This is an all-encompassing package; customers will have me on retainer for 90 days. It begins with an initial comprehensive medication review. From there, we incorporate genetic testing. It's also important to develop a rapport in regard to what the patient knows at baseline to assess gaps in their social determinants of health. We need to identify what they do and do not know. We start with patient education; we do a social determinants of health assessment. With that, we are looking to see; are there any financial barriers to this person's care? Are there any transportation issues? Are there health literacy issues? Do their caregivers have support? We really try to make it a holistic package.

The next steps are to communicate any areas that need improvement to the doctor and come up with a plan that is personalized for the patient's needs. It usually tends to take three months to get these things, and the patient can choose to continue our service after three months. My goal is to build a relationship with the providers so that they are all in accordance and can provide the team-based care that I feel healthcare is lacking. Every patient receives a customized retainer package that is based on their individual needs.



Why I Stepped Down from My 6-Figure Salary

I was working as a retail pharmacy manager, but what I really enjoyed was serving people, and I felt this was something I was lacking in my job. For example, I served at several career and health fairs at a local middle school in Henderson, NC., and helped to volunteer with local HIV Awareness community-based organizations. These were the events that really brought me joy. But day-to-day work was just not for me. I did not feel like I was doing what I was intended to do. I felt like I was a passenger in my own life.

I'm sure everyone at some point in their life has had that feeling of waking up Monday morning and not wanting to face the day. That was me every day, standing for hours with no break and no end in sight at the corner of depression and insanity. I was so disenchanted with

our healthcare system. It just became incredibly apparent that we were operating as a part of an expensive and unsustainable health care model that has worse outcomes significantly for Black, Latino, and senior patients, and we pretend that medical racism and ageism doesn't exist within health care. Patients need pharmacists as they can't manage their own meds their side effects, all while trying to navigate this system.

It was this frustrating feeling that pushed me to launch GeriatRx. I truly believe that in our current healthcare system, we are overmedicated. I feel that costs are going up, and pharmacists have a valuable opportunity to be a liaison for patients and push health care to unfathomable heights when we work at the top of our pharmacist license! GeriatRx helps patients get off unnecessary medications focusing on reducing health care costs, preventing harm with medication deprescribing, and improving patient quality of life.

By the grace of God, we've been featured on ABC, Spectrum, PBS "Black Issues Forum," and WRAL NBC. A lot of that came from simply serving my community. I then began with my work on the African-American COVID task force (AACT+). About nine of us here in Durham, North Carolina, saw there was a need for easily accessible COVID testing and vaccinations in Black and Latino communities. Our reach expanded across neighboring counties helping to leverage our connections with Duke Hospital, University of North Carolina Health System, local non-profits, and interfaith communities to dispel COVID misinformation and conduct food drives along with health screenings. Unexpectedly, working in this space has opened up so many doors for GeriatRx and my network of strategic partners, who I am grateful for to this day!

What do we actually do at GeriatRx? We provide comprehensive medication reviews, and this doesn't mean a short MTM. We're talking about identifying social barriers to care. Does the patient have the health and, of course, financial literacy to access and manage their medications? We use pharmacogenomics at the forefront of our deprescribing methodologies along with deprescribing for senior patients. We also provide caregiver support. Caregivers are, unfortunately, some of the most unpaid health workers in our system. They are exhausted and don't have many who advocate for them. With our Deprescribing Accelerator, we look to improve the impact.

If I can leave you with anything, it would be the understanding that our healthcare system is broken. This may be an unpopular opinion, but I believe it is fundamentally true. I want to tell you about my grandmother, Mildred. Nearly 275,000 people die from medication

mismanagement each year. And Mildred was very nearly one of them. We spend so much money on our health system that we waste half a trillion dollars due to mismanaged meds and suboptimal treatments.

When Mildred was sick, my parents struggled to figure out what was wrong. It turns out a nursing home prescriber had actually written an inappropriate prescription for behavior management. Unfortunately, the medication was intended for chemical sedation, and her initial mild cognitive impairment was exacerbated to totally severe. Once she was given that medication, she was inevitably kicked out of the very same nursing home that had written it, forcing my parents to take her in from Brooklyn to Atlanta, Ga. They were overwhelmed, completely stressed out, and didn't have anyone to advocate for them. All it took to fix the situation was one pharmacist in a community setting to advocate and fight back against this unnecessary prescription.

Thankfully, Mildred lived to see 90, that prescription was stopped, and her symptoms were resolved. Her trials are exactly what inspired me to start my company GeriatRx. Focusing on precision medicine, deprescribing, and most importantly, identifying social barriers to care has led to my success today with GeriatRx and servant leadership.

What is the point of being a pharmacist if you're not serving your community, your people, your patients? And I don't mean fake serving; I mean providing lasting impact. What is Pharmacy for, if not that? One of our hallmark cases was a patient who was struggling with being overprescribed. She was on 36 medications. We were able to get her down to 8 medications while also keeping her from being involuntarily committed to a nursing home. Not only that, but in doing so, we saved her well over \$150,000 and helped her get her life back, just like my grandmother Mildred did.

I can't lie; I've done a lot of things wrong personally and in business. I thought for a long time that being a pharmacy manager, being a poison control pharmacist, getting my BCGP would be the end all be all. But I ultimately knew I wasn't putting myself first. I thought that achieving these career goals would equate to happiness in life, but it never did because, in truth, I wasn't living for myself. I was super depressed, super anxious, and worst yet, I hated myself. I wasn't doing something I loved. I started focusing on how I could serve my community.

Now, I do teaching and educational events with nursing homes, caregiver groups, dementia, and support groups across the triangle. A part of my toolbox that has made me successful in this area, which I would never have anticipated, is using the media, particularly when it comes to positioning yourself as an authority. Being fluent at mastering my

own story, being bold, and not being afraid to share the work that I'm doing has served me best. When you're serving people from the heart, people know that you're not just clout chasing. I've learned how to brand myself and how to leverage my knowledge.

I've been featured on some amazing podcasts; I've worked with folks from The Happy PharmD. I actually just finished wrapping up an appearance on PBS. This is the second time I've been on PBS talking about COVID; learning how to leverage television as well has been helpful. What it really comes down to is building relationships. I can easily call the producer for the PBS show and say, "Hey, I've got someone for you." or "I can talk to your audience about this." They've actually agreed to have me on to discuss overprescribing in the near future, which is going to be great for building GeriatRx's brand.

I've also learned how to leverage health blog sites and got GeriatRx highlighted on several sites to discuss precision medicine, deprescribing, and caregiver advocacy. I've been on radio stations in NC and Chicago. This has been pivotal in working to dispel covid vaccine barriers and reaching marginalized communities. I always use these opportunities to tell my story, share my passion and inspire those by what happened to my grandmother, and unveil how there are still so many people dealing with this who don't know where to turn or who to ask.

I've written health blogs, posts, and news articles for known insurance companies. I've learned how to use my Alma Mater to become a highlighted alumnus. These are little steps I've learned along the way about how to maneuver the media. The most important thing I want to convey is that servant leadership has led to growing and building long-lasting relationships with amazing people along the way. The primary goal has always been to be a community advocate and a resource for those who may have questions, and that just so happened to be good for business.

GeriatRx has been featured at community health fairs, Lions Clubs, rotary clubs, church panels. It's about providing a service. When you lead with service, you are able to truly build a lasting impact, and to be completely honest, doors just open for you. That's something I never thought I would experience. I don't want any patient to fall victim to overprescribing as my grandmother did. I don't want anyone to feel the pain that my parents felt for four months when they didn't know where to turn. My grandmother passed away a month after her 90th birthday, after my last day of 4th-year pharmacy rotations, but she would not have lived that long had it not been for the pharmacist who advocated for her five years prior.

When I give talks, I tell people, “Not all medications are safe. You may have a family member, you may have someone you know who is dealing with this, and if you want an objective, unbiased opinion, you need to foster a relationship with your pharmacist. I’ll be more than happy to take or make a referral to help any of your loved ones.” More importantly, joining the Deprescribing Accelerator is one for others to excel in their deprescribing skills within senior populations.



Advice for Aspiring Entrepreneurs

Never be afraid to use your voice or your story when you’re advocating for others. Pharmacists are simply brilliant, and we need to tap into our gift beyond just pharmacy but in healthcare as a whole. We often get stuck in our own little bubble listening to that little voice in our head, or we become camera shy, but we all have the power to leverage our voice and grow our profession. I want people to get comfortable using all types of platforms to leverage themselves; this is how you reach more people and build your business.

I would not be where I am today if it wasn’t for the servant leadership mentality I’ve embraced as a part of my business model. My advice is simply to serve from your heart when working with your patients or clients. Serve your community, serve others, and when you become selfless, everything else just falls into place.



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KELLEY C. CARLSTROM



Biography

Kelley Carlstrom received her doctorate in pharmacy from the University of Colorado and completed her postgraduate residency training at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center and the Dana Farber Cancer Institute in Boston. She's a board-certified oncology pharmacist that has worked in a variety of traditional and non-traditional settings. This includes a large academic medical center, where she specialized in blood and marrow transplantation, a small community hospital, and as a consultant for a large electronic medical record implementation. Most recently, she has worked in the health-care technology industry, helping build technology products for oncology clinicians and patients. Kelley is passionate about oncology and sees a growing need for more pharmacists to be trained in this specialty. She supports these pharmacists through unique oncology training opportunities because she believes every pharmacist deserves access to specialty training that can transform their career.



Entrepreneurial Journey

My pharmacy entrepreneurial journey started in 2018, but looking back, I realize I have had entrepreneurial experiences that I hadn't thought about since committing to pharmacy as a profession. After

making a leap into a nontraditional role, I started recognizing there were oncology pharmacists that needed support in learning this complicated specialty. I had a lot of ideas but didn't know what to do with them or what my next steps were. Thankfully, I stumbled upon the Medipreneurs Summit and found a group of like-minded people. I didn't know what to expect when I showed up there, but as I talked to other passionate people, I started piecing together my ideas into something I could take action on. The journey to becoming an entrepreneur has been absolutely fascinating!

The big 'Why' of my business is about supporting pharmacists in oncology. There is elitism in our profession that tells us only residency-trained pharmacists can, and should, work in oncology. But that's complete hogwash because there are tons of pharmacists working in oncology without residency training, and I strongly believe any pharmacist can learn oncology with the right support—we are a profession of self-learners! Supporting these pharmacists on their oncology journey is why I created KelleyCPharmD.



Methods to Monetize Your Knowledge

I monetize my knowledge through oncology training programs. Pharmacists hire me to help them develop their baseline oncology knowledge to be more confident at work, to take better care of their patients, and to pass the BCOP exam.

I currently work with pharmacists in two ways that both include access to a robust eight-month online training program. My clients can elect a self-paced program where they have lifetime access to go through all the materials, including practice questions, or a support program where they get access to myself and other experienced oncology pharmacists to guide them on their journey. We have a community to interact with others in the program and regular office hours calls to answer questions on the course materials. Building a community of oncology pharmacists that is engaging and supportive is my north star.



Career Risk: Terrifying or Motivating?

Talking about career risk is important to me because although I've taken many risks in my career, I never thought that I would, and I wish

I had started sooner!

I have always been risk-averse, rightly so for patient care reasons. But in truth, being risk-averse in our career path is not a great quality to have in our field. Let's actually talk about what constitutes risk. Risk is defined as "a situation involving exposure to danger, or the process of exposing somebody or something to danger, harm, or loss." Now, this sounds pretty terrible. No wonder nobody wants to take risks! Well, I'd like to present a new definition of risk that better fits the context of this conversation. Risk is an action that makes you feel uncomfortable but exposes you to something new and potentially valuable. What this means is that risk is not universal; what may be risky to me is not necessarily risky to you.

For example, after graduating from pharmacy school in Colorado, I moved to Boston to do residency training. Some people might think moving halfway across the country and living on a resident's salary with a mountain of student loan debt was risky, but it didn't feel risky to me. I then moved from Boston to Cleveland for my first post-residency job. Even my dentist in Boston thought that was risky. I got a lot of, "You're moving to Cleveland? What's wrong with you?" That didn't feel risky to me either.

The first thing I encountered in my career that felt like a big risk was when I was recruited into a consulting role for an electronic medical record (EMR) implementation. It felt risky for a couple of reasons. First, I was leaving direct patient care and essentially giving up on the goal I had worked towards for ten-plus years. The second reason it felt risky was that it was pretty unstable. It was a job with few benefits, and it was project-based. Essentially, when I did good work and finished the project, I put myself out of a job. It was very different from the work an oncology pharmacist typically does.

One great thing that came out of me taking that risk was that I realized I had a love for oncology and technology that I never knew was there before. I didn't get to flex those skills enough in my patient care role, so when I was looking for a new full-time role, I specifically looked for that industry that would lead me to the world of startups, another risky sector!

In truth, I think I'm becoming a little bit addicted to career risk because I have found that there are so many good things that come out of it. This is what I really wanted to talk about. It is well known that the pharmacy profession is not the same now as it has been in the past. As a profession, it's fundamentally changed. We all need to find our own ways to adapt to this. I think there are a couple of things that

pharmacists who have been successful in adapting have been willing to do. Now, I say “willing” here as a caveat. Willing does not mean that you’re convinced of these things or even that you’re at all confident, but it means you do them anyway.

You change and adapt. Those are common ones but important. Nobody wants to be the pharmacist who is white-knuckled, hanging on for dear life. You want to learn new skills, whether that’s clinical skills, functional medicine, pharmacogenomics, oncology, or operational skills. Whatever it is, you want to learn new things that will bring value to your patients, to the clients you serve, and to the profession at large. And this involves taking risks. What I never realized before was that stepping off a cliff not knowing what is beneath you opens your eyes to doors you never saw before; you need that jolt of perspective to see a different reality.

You will not have all the answers, but nobody has all the answers. You need to start thinking of your career as a journey rather than a destination. You’ll constantly be learning during every step you take. I want you to consider your situation. Are you risk-tolerant or risk-averse? Think about the context of your career but also your day-to-day life. Some people may be more risk-averse when it comes to work than they are to life. You may skip preventive visits to the doctor. You may occasionally text while driving. To some people, karaoke might be risky.

When it comes to making risky career moves, there are always reasons why you may not want to do it. Maybe your family situation makes it difficult, or you have limited location mobility, maybe you have limited free time. You could be caring for children or parents. What about your financial situation? Is it conducive to taking risks? Maybe there is no wiggle room for emergencies. Your ego can also get in the way of taking a risk.

I know a lot of pharmacists who refuse to change along with the industry. They think, “That won’t happen to me,” or “I don’t need to change,” or “I can wait it out until retirement.” Or it could be the opposite; people doubt themselves and their ability to take those chances. “Who am I to do this thing?”, “Who am I to start this business?”, “Who am I to support XYZ?” The fear of the unknown is incredibly powerful if you let it be.

I encourage you to look at your current job situation and evaluate how happy or miserable you are. What are your career goals? Do you have a plan? Many people have one distant career goal they’ve held on to for so long that it makes it very difficult to pivot. What about expectations? Where are you supposed to be? What responsibilities do you have? That can come from family or colleagues.

I did my residency training, I got the job I was supposed to get, and I was supposed to be happy with it. But when I wasn't, I felt guilty. What about leaving behind coworkers or unfinished projects? I know a colleague who just left direct patient care in the middle of an EMR implementation. Leaving people hanging is not a great feeling, even if you are doing it for the right reasons. I want you to think about risk. If you took that risky move that you've been thinking about, or maybe that's been roaming around in your subconscious, what is the worst thing that could happen?

When I began thinking about my consulting role, the worst thing that I could think of was that I would get there, they would realize I had none of the skills they wanted, and I would get fired. And that outcome seemed plausible because the hospital I worked at had Epic, and I was hired to do a Cerner Implementation- I knew nothing about Cerner.

But in being able to identify that as the worst possible outcome, I could then ask myself what I would do if that happened. I would look for another job since I'm not independently wealthy. I could go back to my previous job, or I could find another job. I was able to talk through that and verbalize it. Yes, you may lose money, you may feel like a failure for a little while, there may be financial instability or embarrassment. But being able to name the risk stops it from being all-consuming and terrifying and allows you room to make a contingency plan.

We all have biases when it comes to making big decisions. A bias many of us have is assuming we can't fix the situation. We assume it's a one-way door, and once we make that decision, there is no going back. And that's just not true. The vast majority of the doors we walk through are two-way doors. We don't usually regret the things we did because even if we make a mistake, we can fix it. I could get another job in patient care. It's the things we don't do that we regret. These are the doors we truly can't go back through.

How can you get around these feelings of risk? You really have to think about what is going to make you feel more confident. We're each individual people, and walking off a risky ledge is challenging. One thing that can help is cleaning up your financial house. Having a strong sense of your finances and a plan for what to do with them can make an otherwise uncertain journey much easier.

Talk about your plans and ideas out loud. Oftentimes, if you leave the thought in your head, you can convince yourself it is ridiculous when it's not. I remember explaining my oncology training program idea, and someone responded, "It's like a virtual residency."

I said, “Yes. That’s exactly what it is.” Saying thoughts out loud can be really helpful.

In the pharmacy profession, we tend to run away from things we fear. I often get messages on LinkedIn from pharmacists who say, “I just want to do anything except what I’m doing right now.” And the truth is, that is running away out of fear. That is not running towards something you want. In order to move forward, you need to shift the way you look at things.

I read an interesting article that talked about keeping your world small because it is so easy to get lost in the day-to-day of what needs to be done. For example, I have an upcoming launch of the next iteration of my program. I have 200 things I need to get done. And it’s overwhelming to think even weeks into the future. Instead, I try to work in terms of day-to-day tasks. If even that is too much, I break it down into very tiny chunks. What is your most important next step? What can you get done today? What can you do in the next six hours to make your workload feel less overwhelming?

It’s easy to get stuck in the planning and idea phases because when it comes to actually putting something out into the world, it’s really scary. But you have got to do it, and you learn so much by doing it. Successful people have an inclination towards action.

I had a lot of ideas about how I wanted to support pharmacists in oncology. And because I myself am trained in oncology and knowledgeable about the field, I thought I would do it all myself. I developed this big course and worked on it by myself. And one day, months into the process, I realized, “Why would I do this all by myself?” Just because I can doesn’t mean I should. That gave me the idea to reach out to other pharmacists in oncology who are looking for extra income. That made me realize that I’m not just supporting pharmacists wanting to learn about oncology but also supporting pharmacists in oncology by paying them to help me create content and deliver value to the pharmacists in my program.

You’re not going to be good at everything, and you’re not going to want to do everything. Figure out the things that you’re not good at, or you don’t enjoy and have other people do them for you. Follow your curiosity because the truth is there are so many amazing things that happen when you allow yourself to take risks, whether that is going into an entrepreneur business pathway or stepping into a new role. There are so many avenues you can take, and those will show themselves when you pursue your curiosities. You would be surprised at what asking, “I wonder what that’s about,” can lead you to. And of

course, if one of your interests is oncology, I would love to support you in taking that leap.



Advice for Aspiring Entrepreneurs

I want to encourage all pharmacists to assess their risk tolerance and what they would need to feel comfortable taking on more risk. Perhaps it's having a bigger emergency fund or living close to family for additional support if needed.

I can see clearly now that the pivotal moment in my career was when I finally took a consulting role after three months of dragging my feet. It felt scary as hell. But I talked it through, and in all honesty, the benefits barely outweighed the risks. I could tell that this was one of those opportunities where I had no idea how many doors were going to open because of it; I saw potential.

The potential that role had was showing me how to solve problems from a business perspective. As a full-time employee, I took care of patients all day. I had never really considered my role in the broader issues of healthcare. It was taking that job that taught me how to think about value propositions. What value do I bring? It wasn't directly linked to my hourly wage. The value I brought in that role was getting their multimillion-dollar project completed faster. The amount of money I saved them was way beyond my salary.

What value can you bring to the world? Pharmacists are highly skilled professionals, and I can assure you there is something valuable hanging out inside your head. Whether that turns into a business idea or pushes you towards a new position that lights you up doesn't matter. It's a disservice to the profession not to let that value out. Let it shine!



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LAUREN CASTLE



Biography



Lauren Castle is a pharmacist and founder of the Functional Medicine Pharmacist Alliance© (www.fmpha.org). She received her Doctorate in Pharmacy from Ohio Northern University in 2013 and her Master of Science in Human Nutrition and Functional Medicine from the University of Western States in 2018. Lauren has also completed training through the Institute for Functional Medicine, the School of Applied Functional Medicine, and Functional Medicine University.



Entrepreneurial Journey

As far as being an entrepreneur, it's something I have always been fairly close to throughout my career in pharmacy. When I was 16 years old, I worked for an independent pharmacy, and my dream was to own my own pharmacy one day. After that, I decided to go to pharmacy school. As fate would have it, it was in pharmacy school that I met my husband. We ended up moving, and I had to get a job outside of the independent pharmacy I had worked at for all of those years. In doing that, I thought I would try something that was the complete opposite, just to gain experience.

That was how I ended up with a summer internship at Walmart,

thinking I would probably hate it and go back to my dream of owning a pharmacy. But ten years later, I am still pursuing my entrepreneurial dreams. I know Pharmfluencers talk a lot about being an entrepreneur and an intrapreneur, and I can thoroughly say that I am both.

I think it is actually a very important point to remember if you are trying to look for a career in entrepreneurship or intrapreneurship: you don't have to pick a side. You can definitely do both. There is truly a spectrum of opportunities available in pharmacy and in the field of functional medicine. So for me, working as a pharmacist at Walmart was actually how I got started in functional medicine. I was working in the middle of the Flint Water Crisis and seeing patients come in with lead toxicity. I had no idea how to treat that as a pharmacist; lead toxicity wasn't a topic covered in school.

That is really what sparked my journey into functional medicine: learning about these new concepts and pursuing the education that I did not get in pharmacy school.



Methods to Monetize Your Knowledge

After discovering functional medicine and learning about it, I was trying to connect with other pharmacists who were in this space because it was so new. I didn't know anyone else who was interested in it, or doing it, or trying to figure out how to apply that knowledge as a pharmacist. Through the Ohio Pharmacists Association, I gave a CE presentation at their annual convention in 2017. Afterward, I had tons of pharmacists coming up to me and saying, "We're super interested in this." or "We'd love to learn more. Where can we learn more and stay connected?"

And that is how Functional Medicine Pharmacists started out: as just a Facebook group with maybe 30 of us in it. We were just trying to stay connected and talk about functional medicine and how we were using it. From there, it continued to grow as more and more pharmacists discovered functional medicine, many of them through their own personal health journeys or through patients who were asking about it.

Four years after I originally launched the Facebook group, we have over 2,600 pharmacists in it. Last year during the pandemic, I officially launched The Functional Medicine Pharmacist Alliance as a business. For three years, my work of building that community was not monetized at all. Hindsight really is 20/20 because looking back;

I realize what holds so many people back is taking that first step—taking that first initial action.

For me, that was a big piece of it. I thought, “Oh, I don’t need to make this into a business” or “People aren’t going to pay money to join another pharmacy organization.” People have so many complaints about them as is; they don’t want to pay more dues or go through membership steps. I had all of these limiting beliefs about why I couldn’t start a pharmacy organization. I think, in many ways, the pandemic really put that fear behind me. Suddenly it became clear how needed it was.

For so many pharmacists, what holds them back is not knowing how they should take action to fulfill their dreams. For me, that was it; I saw this group had the potential to grow. I realized that if I am limiting myself, I am also limiting other pharmacists from being able to discover functional medicine. When you think about scaling, that is what ends up being a big motivator. You realize the impact and reach you can have, is only going to happen when you start taking those steps to actually expand the dream. With that comes the entrepreneurial piece of it.

It is often said, “no margin, no mission” When you charge someone for something, you make that resource into a gift; it becomes something valuable. You’re sharing your insights, and people want and need that. I clearly identified an area of need and interest, and it was something I was passionate about.



Functional Medicine: Disrupting the “Pill for an Ill” Model

For pharmacists getting into functional medicine, one question that always comes up is how these things can coexist. And when I first started this journey and was actually trying to figure out how I could make this work as a retail pharmacist, I was still working at Walmart, and I would have lots of patients come up to me and say, “I don’t want to be taking medicine.”

I really used that as my jumping-off point. The pill for an ill model doesn’t truly serve patients. Patients rarely ever come up and say, “I’m so happy to be coming to the pharmacy and picking up my medication today.” We experience that every day as pharmacists. We know our patients are struggling with the pill burden, so deprescribing is a really powerful tool to be used in pharmacies today. That is

the first step I recommend to pharmacists who say, “How can I get involved in functional medicine?” Although most pharmacists are not ready to take the leap and become an entrepreneur and try to build a private practice, whether it’s a brick-and-mortar practice or online, it all starts with mindset.

You can talk to your patients about how the pill for an ill model is not going to help them get better. There is so much more to their health that they haven’t been told. Thyroid Disease is a really common example. So many patients think that they are just going to have to keep taking thyroid medication forever. It’s not that we are saying drugs are bad or that you shouldn’t use them. Modern medicine is truly a miracle and is life-sustaining for so many different conditions. But there is also so much power in food as medicine and in lifestyle as medicine. As pharmacists, we are perfectly equipped to be able to take those little moments and instill that hope into our patients.

Ask patients, “Has your doctor ever talked to you about lifestyle changes?” or “might there be other causes for your conditions?” Whether it’s diabetes, heart disease, or thyroid, all of these different health troubles have lifestyle components. Using a functional medicine approach simply means getting to the root cause of that particular patient’s condition. The next step is how you dig into that. If you have a patient who understands and doesn’t want to simply rely on a pill anymore, then they have that buy-in to create a therapeutic partnership with their pharmacist and physician. How can you all work together to unravel the story of that patient’s illness? That is really what the functional medicine approach is.

A lot of people will ask, “Do I have to get certified in some way?” “Do I have to go through training?” Or even “Do I have to change my career altogether?” The answer is no. Really, functional medicine is just a lens or process that you can apply to your pharmacy practice. When you are looking at really assessing the patient and identifying what is going on there, the next step is to develop a treatment plan instead of simply dispensing a pill. It is taking that clinical knowledge and putting the puzzle pieces together to be able to create a plan for your patient. I find that really exciting.

For many pharmacists, you’re looking at adding all of these additional revenue streams; clinical services PGX testing; all of these can serve as a piece of the puzzle for patients who aren’t getting better from a single pill. Testing is another area; more and more, we see tests becoming open to consumers themselves. We may think that we are limited as pharmacists in that arena, but that is changing. Knowledge is power. Whenever we can understand what is actually happening

inside the human body through testing, we get a better picture of what the patient needs.

You can partner with a physician to create a collaborative practice and order labs, or you can actually sign up directly with certain companies and order labs for patients as well. These are all pieces of the puzzle; it's just a matter of making yourself aware of them and incorporating them into your practice.

Another element where I see a lot of pharmacists struggle is that they feel overwhelmed as they are going through this process of change management themselves. They're realizing, "Okay, I have this new way I can practice, but how do I actually take action?" How can you get past the feeling of being overwhelmed? That's really why I believe in the Functional Medicine Pharmacist Alliance, to help you plug in and connect with pharmacists who are facing the same challenges are also starting their journey in using functional medicine and can help you along the way. Whether it is connecting with people in your individual state or people in your particular pharmacy practice setting, there are a multitude of different ways you can utilize this resource.

I mentioned earlier; my background is in retail, so oftentimes, that is what I will speak to. But, we also have pharmacists who practice in physician's offices through collaborative practices. We have pharmacists practicing online through virtual practices. We have pharmacists who have independent pharmacies and have a brick-and-mortar establishment. Even within hospitals, there are ways to apply a functional medicine approach. There are so many different ways; it's just a matter of choosing what really lights you up. What do you get excited about?

Another thing I have noticed is that when pharmacists do start to feel overwhelmed, it is because the field is so general. Dr. Hyman refers to it as "super generalist." You really do need to have a knowledge of how everything is interconnected. And sometimes, that can feel overwhelming. But, I also think most pharmacists will have a few smaller areas that they are particularly passionate about. For some people, it might be metabolic health, hormones, or environmental illness. There are many different areas, and you can take that passion and hone it.

When you do that, you're actually identifying your own target market, your ideal clients, or patients. From there, it's just a matter of taking that next step and putting yourself out there. Actually saying, "Yes, I'm going to do this." Again, that can be really scary, but we all have this amazing knowledge, and it's just a matter of putting it into application. There are so many patients out there who are searching for this

knowledge and this information, who are searching for someone like you to help them along their journey.

That was what I really wanted to establish in my business; a community so everyone can benefit because there is so much you can learn from others. How can we learn from one another? How can we build each other up and find that connection so we can advance the profession as a whole? There are so many different entrepreneurial models out there that are going to shake up our profession. How we see healthcare as a whole does need to undergo a transformation.

That is a big passion of mine: how we can change the medical model itself and begin to integrate these different lifestyle practices into the mainstream. It is part of my mission, integrating pharmacy and functional medicine, knowing that even within the functional medicine world, pharmacists are highly underrepresented. The first few conferences I went to for functional medicine, I was the only pharmacist in the room. There were all types of practitioners there; doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners, PAs, acupuncturists, chiropractors, nutritionists, and all these different professions. We were all coming together with the same goal of transforming healthcare because we knew that the model was sick. It's perpetuating a baseline level of functioning, and it's not actually helping people achieve the true outcomes of optimal health.

We need pharmacists to be able to be part of this movement because we have accessibility, and we have touchpoints with patients much more frequently than many other healthcare providers. We also are at this really unique turning point in our own profession, so if we can all come together and combine these different momentums, I believe that it has the power to really transform and change our profession as well.

That is a big part of why and how we can transform our own profession and set ourselves up as experts of medication, but also as functional medicine experts.



Advice for Aspiring Entrepreneurs

Obviously, I am a little bit biased, but the Functional Medicine Pharmacists Alliance was really created for the purpose of giving aspiring entrepreneurs and established entrepreneurs a landing

page of where to start their journey with functional medicine. In our membership, we have two different options. One is our regular membership, where you get access to our members-only website. We're constantly adding new information. I have about 12 hours' worth of free video content on the website, along with previous lectures I have given on functional medicine. There are also links to free training through some of the different organizations that we've partnered with.

We also have a membership option with the Institute for Functional Medicine. It actually took creating FMPHA to get functional medicine pioneers to pay attention and realize that they need to bring pharmacists into the fold. They now realize that they need pharmacists as part of their functional medicine teams. Members can also get a 20% discount on their foundational training program called AFMCP, which is Applying Functional Medicine in Clinical Practice. That is actually the biggest discount you will find anywhere, and they are offering it, especially for our group. If you want to take the leap and get into a clinical learning path, AFMCP is what I would recommend. AFMCP was one of the first courses I took as part of my master's program, and it really gave me a solid overview and allowed me to access that clinical knowledge.

One of the biggest barriers we see is getting patients to engage in these conversations in a retail setting, where time with the patient is so limited. One thing we have done is partnered with another organization, which is Functional Medicine CE, run by Melody Hartzler, a fellow pharmacist. We did a training specifically on this topic last summer, and FMPHA members get a 20% discount on those trainings as well. These are fantastic resources to use.

Really what it comes down to, though, is opening up that dialogue and understanding the patient's desire to change. One question I like to ask is, "What is your understanding of how your food, sleep, and lifestyle can impact your health?" I use these open-ended questions and motivational styles of interviewing to get the patient to open up. From there, you can give them little bits of advice. I like to say, "When you come back next month, let's talk about how you can change your sleep patterns or reduce your stress levels to help make you feel better." It starts with taking baby steps along the way.

I also have a free downloadable resource at www.fmph.org/newsletter, which contains a checklist of six tools you can use to help patients take charge of their health using functional medicine in your pharmacy setting. Whether you're new to functional medicine or you've been practicing for years, this checklist will give you tools to enhance your practice and help your patients. My hope is that every pharmacist can

discover functional medicine and the impact that it can have on them both personally and professionally. Functional medicine is truly the future of medicine, and the future is here now.



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