

CC: Do you struggle with creating healthy boundaries when it comes to patients? Well, my guest today is my really good friend and TCM little brother, Kenton Sefcik. And we are going to talk about how we can create healthy boundaries, how we can communicate with patients, how we can help patients understand when they need to come back, all the nitty gritty That we have a hard time with because we were not taught this in school.

And Kenton is such a great teacher when it comes to this. So you're going to love this episode. Let's go.

Welcome to AcuPro, a show dedicated to making Chinese medicine and acupuncture easy to grasp and fun to learn. Hi, I'm your host Clara Cohen. I support practitioners and students like you in changing the world one patient at a time. My goal is to share my passion for TCM and empower you to achieve superior patient care.

I love to showcase the amazing benefits of acupuncture because after all, acupuncture rocks!

My little TCM brother is here. So welcome Mr. Kenton Sefcik to the Acupro Show.

KS: Thank you for having me.

CC: I just wanted to say, Kenton and I have never met, but I feel like he's my little TCM brother.

Cause he's younger than me. Your mind is so similar to mine. You're really there to help people, to promote TCM to really help students and practitioners in the best of your ability. You're a great teacher. And the way we met is we met online on social media, like a lot of us do.

And I found you on YouTube and on Instagram with TCM graduate TV, where you really A lot of great pearls of wisdom from your years of practice.

You've been doing Kung Fu for many years, since you were a teenager. So tell me how you got into that and if that led you to TCM and The Connection.

KS: It definitely did. I was 14 years old. Growing up in my parents household as a teenager, and I was watching late night television, it was probably two in the morning, and this Kung Fu commercial came on the TV, and it was this elderly white haired gentleman, and he successfully defended himself against these ninjas on a bridge. He had a quote, it was something along the lines of the person who can master their body can master their mind.

It was just very profound. It just really spoke to me.

Woke up the next morning and I begged my mom, I said, you have to take me to this Kung Fu school because again, it really spoke to my heart and she said, there's no way we're doing this.

And she said, you quit soccer. You don't play piano anymore. Like anything you start, you typically quit. I'm an only child and I'm adopted. And so, I can really get the hooks in sometimes with the parents. So I ended up working on my mom for a little while. She ended up talking to my dad.

And to this day, they will admit that's probably one of the best things they could have done for me because here I am a 14 years old. Now I'm 44 30 years later. I'm still practicing martial arts and it's a still big part of my life. Then as we got into the 90s, as I'm a teenager, Kung Fu movies were being dubbed and translated into English. So this is a really big thing. And so I was able to watch these movies and a couple things were happening in the movies. So often the protagonist, they would learn or know acupuncture, so I would see a lot of acupuncture and Chinese herbs happening inside these movies.

The other thing that was happening inside these movies was not only would a protagonist have to defend their family or their honor or defeat a bully, but they would often have to get that knowledge from perhaps a recluse. They would not only be taught Kung Fu, they would also be taught a sense of morality.

And this was often done through Taoist and Buddhist

And so I started studying. These Taoist and Buddhist texts at a young age. At the age of 14 I can remember making friends with this gentleman by the name of Dave Rose and we're still friends to this day 30 years later. At one point during a friendship, and he says, I want to go to acupuncture and Chinese medicine school.

Fast forward a couple years later, and I wasn't too sure what I wanted to do with my life. I had a bad skateboarding accident where I smashed my foot and the only thing that got it better was a final year student that Dave had recommended for me to go see.

So, of course, I thought acupuncture was good for pain. I'd been hobbling around for eight or nine months. Two treatments later, I was better. But I didn't realize the power of acupuncture., So, Dave Rose, introduced me to the Dean, and of course, I learned that acupuncture and Chinese medicine does way more than pain.

And I was completely sold signed up, and the rest is history, as they say.

CC: I love it. Now, do you think that your knowledge of Kung Fu, the discipline and practice, and you searching for something more meaningful, including going to read old texts and Daoism, Do you think that helped you in understanding TCM faster than someone that did not?

KS: I think, overall, I just had such a passion and reverence for Chinese culture. I would always take the time to go wander Calgary, Chinatown.

I would go into all the herb shops and all that kind of stuff. I was so self immersed in Daoism, Buddhism, and Chinese culture. One of the foundational texts was Foundations of Chinese Medicine by Maciocca and, I actually read that the entire summer before school started.

So when we started having these discussions about heart blood deficiency, we had somebody in the back put their hand up and go, does that mean that you have someone more susceptible to heart attacks? But I already understood through the Chinese culture and the martial arts and then already reading that book. So I think that gave me the advantage.

CC: I love that because I know you like to go back to foundation, teach the basics. So you're absolutely right. I love to do that too. Let's start with the basic. Let's teach everything in a way that you have a strong foundation And then eventually if you want to go deeper and build on it, because like you said, it's such a vast medicine that you can keep learning for 30, 40 years.

But if you don't get the beginning and my TCM foundation teacher, Dr. Jha would always say, if you don't understand something anytime, go back to foundation, go back to foundation. And I always say that because it's so true.

You've been teaching for a long time and you are a passionate teacher, so why did you want to teach?

KS: When I graduated from Chinese Medicine College, I moved 5,000 kilometers away. I moved from Alberta to Nova Scotia and I thought, okay, here we go. I'm going to hang a shingle and I'm going to sit in my clinic and patients are going to come and all that kind of stuff. I went to school at a time where two other acupuncture schools opened up in Calgary, and we used to have like 30 students in the class all the time.

So the year I start, there's these two other schools opened up and they promised their students the sun, the moon, the stars. And so I have five classmates, two people are part time. By the time I get to second year we're even smaller. By the time I get to practicum time, we have five rooms in this clinic. In my 700 hour practicum, I gave over 600 patient visits, and they said, never in the history has this happened, and this will never happen again. I had two clinical supervisors to bounce stuff off of for those over, 600 and some patient visits. Some, I had to do observation, of course.

So I guess what I'm trying to do is I'm trying to paint you this picture where I had the education, I had the clinical experience, and then I had the mentorship. just a little bit by chance, I had the wonderful Jillian Marsalia come to Nova Scotia and open up an acupuncture program.

And she had heard about me through a few other people, and she gave me a job teaching. And I got feedback that I was very easy to follow. I had spoken for naturopathic doctor conferences, both in Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan. At the end of the day, why do I teach so many people poured into me and I realized that I could just take their stuff and it's just going to come right out of me and I can help others.

CC: You wanted to pay it forward and you were so fortunate that this happened because in my school it was the opposite. There was not enough supervisors for a massive group of people and we were always running trying to ask the supervisor, hey, can you help our group? And this person was like, Running around like a chicken without their head because they had to manage so many people and it's impossible.

I love teaching and I was teaching, at the TCM college for a while. And then they said, Hey, do you want to do supervision at the clinic? And I said, sure. I did one semester and I said, I don't want to do this because I'm not serving the patients.

I'm not serving the students. I'm not serving anybody because I have to manage so many people that they don't get anything from me at all. And so nobody's benefits. benefiting. And so I walked away and I said, I can teach in class, but I can't do that. It's way too many people and you're not giving to anybody and everybody loses.

So I didn't want to be part of that. So I totally get what you're saying with having this opportunity to have, Hey, I'm here. You guys can help me and mentor me. And you don't have to mentor 20 people at once. That's fantastic.

KS: I remember I saw a patient and went through health history, they were probably coming in for knee pain or back pain, but they said, Hey, I got a cold sore. Is there anything you can do for this cold sore? And I walked out of the clinic room and I had one clinical survey, Colt over here, and I had Alexandra over here.

Like stereo sound and I said, Hey, cold sore and both at the exact same time they said, stomach 44 things like that happened and so I'm just so grateful for those opportunities.

CC: That's awesome. Obviously, you went to school in Calgary and then you moved to Nova Scotia and that's where you practice. So Kenton is Canadian. Like I am. I think a lot of students and new practitioners are listening and there's so much wisdom in the way you explain this. How do you create healthy boundaries in your clinic?

Because I get a lot of people asking me that and I know you would explain that very well.

KS: I think what we have to do 1st is understand that a lot of us that are coming into this industry and coming into this field are trying to do a juxtaposition from Western medicine.

And. There are definitely pockets of western medicine that are doing things better, but in general, and not to totally crap on western medicine, but I'm just going to use an example. Western medicine is phenomenal for me. It's saved my butt a few times, and family members, etc. I think it's a phenomenal medicine.

It's great emergency medicine. So, western medicine can be cold. When we go see a practitioner, we often talk about how poor their bedside manner is. And so I think what we're trying to do as practitioners, oftentimes we're trying to compensate for that. And we're very empathetic. This is why we get into this industry and this field.

However, we have to be careful not to go too far to the other side. And oftentimes when people are running into problems, it's, for example, patients are not showing on them. And so they reach out and say, Hey, I'm having patients not show on me. Okay. Do you have a policy in place? No. Well, it's your clinic.

It's your practice. You have to create your own policy. What do you think is fair? Now, for me, Kenton, I think a charge of 45 is fair. And I've learned this over the years, is that, so if I charge 125 an hour, and somebody no shows, And so, and I hit them with 125, no show fee for me and where I am in my industry and in my province, they're not coming back. I might've angered them. They might pay it. They might not, et cetera. But if I hit them with a little fee. That they have to pay out of pocket, but also within that boundary, within that policy that I've created, I have what I call a get out of jail free card. I also have, you signed off on this on the intake form. So picture this, patient comes in, they fill an intake form, whether it's online or not, and they check a little box that says, I understand that my time's important, your time's important, let's respect each other's time, et cetera. And if you. Miss an appointment without giving 24 hour notice, blah, blah, blah.

I'm going to whack you with a 45 fee. Now, most people, they fill out the intake form. They don't even read the signed consent. They check off the boxes, whatever it is, and that's it. So that's my opportunity to remind them. That's an opportunity to enact some boundaries. I've got a policy in place. Then the next time it happens, I charge the 45. And so not only do we have to create. The boundaries and the policies we actually have to follow and a lot of people will tell me they'll say, I feel that fair, but how awful are you feeling that you just had three patients this week walk all over you just no show.

So, where I'm going with this and we can talk about just things in general, we're going to bring up the liver here, if you ever feel resentment, if you ever feel anger, if you ever feel irritability surrounding your practice. For me, that's a light bulb going on.

That's a red flag. That's something trying to get your attention. And so take a step back and say, okay, so why is this happening? Is there something that I can be doing to make it so that these things aren't happening?

I'm talking to female practitioners often. And they are getting from male patients that are inappropriate. And they're saying, I don't know how to deal with this. So I often paint a picture and I say, let's just imagine that you're a waitress and somebody smacks you on the bum. How are you going to deal with that? Right. In a boundary situation. As a father, and a husband, I viscerally get angry and I think if I was in that position, I'd be spinning around and saying, don't you ever do that again, or you're out of here. And so it's really unfortunate and sad that female

practitioners are still having to put up with crap in the clinic from patients, but they need to nip stuff in the bud. As soon as it happens, that's not appropriate will not be tolerated.

So, again, what's making you feel uncomfortable taking a step back and looking at, what what can be done about that? For example, I was palpating a woman's abdomen and probably, I would imagine like 15 to 20 years older than me. And she said to me, my husband's never even seen my abdomen and he doesn't touch my abdomen like that. And so, your spidey senses are tingling and immediately I said, well, you need to talk to your husband about that. So, again, boom, boundaries just go straight up. Now, are all these boundaries going to be sorted out as soon as you graduate? No. I just want to reiterate when your spidey senses are tingling, when you've got resentment, anger, irritability building up, when you're feeling a little prickly, a little uncomfortable, Then, that's time to look at your, you look at your boundary situation.

I really think about the entire treatment. I really think about the whole thing from the beginning to the end. Before I go get a patient, I may be sitting here eating an apple. I might get a really stressful text from my wife. Something might be going on that's good, that's bad, and different, but when I walk out of this room to go get the patient in the waiting room. I often think about Cesar Millan. I love the Dog Whisperer. I love him so much. he's up there on the upper echelons of like, Kenton's priorities in life. Like, Cesar Millan is up there. And I'm going to tell you why. So, if you're not familiar with Cesar Millan, maybe you aren't, but,

CC: Oh, I love him. I love him. It's awesome.

KS: So, is it ever the dog's fault?

CC: Never.

KS: Calm and assertive. That's his M. O. His modus operandi, calm and assertive. So before I go out there to go get my patient, I think about how do I want my patient to perceive myself. And if you're in student clinic, I would love for you to work on this right now, so that you nail this right now.

How do you want your patient to see you when you go out there? I take a nice deep breath, and out. I roll my shoulders back. I pull my head up, calm and assertive. How's my tone of voice going to be? When I go out there, hey John, great to see you again. Please come with me. I'm going to lead the treatment I'm not going to be a dictator, but I'm going to lead the treatment.

The patient is going to sit down in the chair I'm going to sit down. I'm gonna mirror them. Okay, I'm gonna mirror some postural stuff. I'm gonna I'm gonna mirror tone of voice I'm gonna be very careful. How you doing today? My dog died fantastic. No, right So we have to match some things right?

And so I'm going to Ask, how may I help you today? I'm going to summarize what they're telling me. I'm actually going to tell them what my treatment plan is. Alright, so it sounds to me like your low back is killing you and it's running, of course, down your right leg along the pants seam. So what I'd like to do is I'd like to start working on your low back and then I'm going to work into your buttock.

Work down the leg and then I want to get you flipped over for the last 15 minutes and I want to work in your iliopsoas just off your hip joint. How does that sound? So, again, direction. And this is what's known as ongoing consent, right? And so we're explaining what things are happening.

And so then obviously the treatment happens. And then, treatment's over. I always throw up my trash. Like I think about the way dentists operate. I don't, I've never gotten up from the dentist and have all the crap that's been inside my mouth, just laying around.

It actually have, they actually have bylaws against this, but anyways, you get the idea. So get rid of all my trash and leave a clean space just in case somebody bumps something and knocks needles on the floor and say, okay, just give me a second to throw my trash.

All right. Treatment's over. Take your time getting up and I'll meet you outside. And then again, thinking about how do I want to. address them after they come out. They may have a blood sugar thing that's going on due to acupuncture or whatever, just even just getting up off the table.

There's so many things, but as a patient, wouldn't I like to be greeted again, checked on immediately after the treatment. So again, thinking about the whole treatment from start to finish at the end, I'm outside the door. How are you feeling? How is that? Oh, I'm feeling very relaxed, feeling good.

I'm a little dizzy. Oh, you're a little dizzy. So we can deal with all these issues. I walk them, right, whether it's a small clinic where you're walking them through things. You get an opportunity to walk them and say goodbye to them. And check in and all those kind of things.

So not only is it like a boundary thing, Clara, it's a build your treatment by design. The whole thing from front to back.

Ad: A lot of people know that I have three books. However, many don't that I also offer continuing education online courses. This is actually how I started Acupro Academy to support new practitioners. You can choose from TCM treatment for common mental disorders, fertility, pregnancy, thyroid disorders, but also specific ones like scalp acupuncture or cosmetic acupuncture.

Acupuncture online course. All these are pre recorded so you can watch them on your own time and since you have access to them forever, you can revisit the information anytime you need. You will receive a certificate with your name on it after you pass a multiple choice quiz. And if

you're truly not satisfied, With any of my online courses, I offer a seven day money back guarantee as I stand behind my products and truly, truly want you to benefit from them.

So go check them out on my website, acuproacademy.com and click the TCM course tab on the menu bar, or check out the link in the show notes below.

CC: This is why you, my little TCM brother, because I'm listening to you and I'm like yes. So, I'm packing what you said. The first thing is that no show thing, right? So mine is a little bit different than yours, but it's basically when you said a free card out of jail English expression, sometimes I never know what they are, but basically.

KS: It's from the game Monopoly, of course.

CC: Right. Exactly. Exactly. So basically for me, it's like if you're calling and you say, I'm sorry, I'm supposed to be here in 10 minutes, but my child just got hurt in school and I have to go to hospital. I'm not going to charge you a hundred percent emergencies, work. You're sick. No.

that's your free stuff. However, if you are not showing up and then we don't hear from you and then we call , you're very honest and you say, Oh, my God, I completely forgot. Right. And that happens. So I always say, I totally understand.

I'm sorry. You missed the appointment. However, I had six people on my waiting list that if. I had known I would have had time to call and those people can't get in because it was last minute and so I'm gonna have to charge you and people understand that because, like, Oh, not only I didn't go, but somebody else could have taken it.

Like, if you give me six hours ahead, I'll say, Listen, I have some people I can call. No worries, right? But if you don't show I can't, it's too late, right? That way people understand from my perspective is like, Oh, right. I cut somebody else on the waiting list, right?

Because they couldn't get in because I had an appointment. Now I don't show and that person couldn't get in.

KS: And I just want to say, like, if you're a new practitioner and you don't have six people on the waiting list, you don't need to lie about it, for example, but you, I just tell them. I just tell them, you were booked in at this time, and then I hand the mic over to them, right? Tell me what's going on.

I totally forgot, and they say, okay, you get one. By the way, do you remember on your intake form that you checked off this box that I charged a 45 fee? I just want to remind you today's on me, but next time I'm going to have to charge you and you really have to enact those boundaries.

yeah, and you can say it in a nice way. They know they're expected to pay if they miss a dentist appointment. They get charged, right? That's just the way it is. So we're the same kind of thing. So that was the first thing that I really liked that you shared. The second thing is, I love that you talk about mirroring because if I have a patient that comes in and their voice is very low and they're very deficient, I'm not going to go, how are you?

I'm going to be very calm. I'm like, how are you today? Like, matching that energy. You're absolutely right. It's so cool. easy because then the patients connect with you so much better. So I love that. So that was the second thing that I love that you shared. And then the third thing is Absolutely taking care of the patient, communicating to them what we are doing.

That way they know and it's like, Oh, this is what I'm going to do. Are you okay? I'm going to put some needles on your face. You're that consent that continues before I jump with my needle in the internal on the face. I'm going to ask and say, so now I'm going to go between your eyebrows in there.

Is that okay? And they'll say yes. Right. But. At least you're asking them and you're involving them in the treatment and you are explaining everything to them. And so because that was really, I love how you said the flow until the person leaves the clinic. My massage therapists in my clinic are the opposite.

They are literally standing with a glass of water right by the door waiting. So I have to say mine are very good. But that leads me. to you explaining and giving a little bit of a mini teaching moment on how do you communicate to your patient expectations of treatment and success of treatment, because that's hard for students as well.

And we're not taught this in TCM school, unfortunately, right?

We have to explain how acupuncture works in a very simple way to our patients. Okay. We have to explain how they are likely to heal with acupuncture. And then the third thing that I try to get across is how can I help you to communicate better with me, that I can give you a better treatment. The first two are built into the first treatment. The third one is maybe over these treatments that I'm going to describe. So within the first treatment, I've already given you an idea of, some of the things that I'm starting out with when the treatment begins.

Oftentimes, like what you talked about, putting a needle in somebody's face can be quite disconcerting. However, if you explain why you're doing something, then oftentimes it totally makes sense and you can get consent. So during that first treatment, either the patient's going to ask me how acupuncture works or I'm going to tell them if they don't ask me. This is just my opinion, everybody's got to do their thing. I personally, and professionally, we'll just mix all those in together, I personally shy away from the whole chi, liver qi stagnation, spleen, qi deficiency and the reason why is because 99 percent of my clientele, went to a Western biology course.

So when I say liver qi stagnation, the only word they heard was liver. The only word there and then they're grabbing their side and they're saying something's wrong with my liver. I just state the facts. So acupuncture warms the tissue. It improves blood circulation. It decreases inflammation and it has a calming incident. And so we also know that people only retain a very small percentage of anything that you tell them. So they're gonna hear Oh, decreases inflammation, decreases pain. It's that you're warm, softens the tissue, whatever. Awesome. So that's the how acupuncture works in the first treatment.

The other side of that coin about how acupuncture works is that acupuncture works like a course of antibiotics. Each treatment builds on the last one. So what I would like you to do is I'd like you to come see me once a week for three weeks in a row because I need to do two things. I need to get a baseline in terms of the treatment, but I also need to get to know you. And one of the most wonderful things about what we do is because we get to see a patient multiple times, we get to ask the same questions and we get to hear different responses. On treatment number two, when they do come in, let's say a week later, I warn them. I say, hey, I got to warn you about something.

I'm going to ask you the exact same questions that I asked you on treatment one, but I don't want you to think that I didn't chart, and I don't want you to think that I'm not listening to you. It's just that you're going to explain it differently in this moment. When I ask you, where does your back hurt?

When I ask you to describe, how you're feeling with that chest pressure, whatever it is, they're going to put hands on themselves. They're going to explain things differently and things are just going to light up like a Christmas. This is where people can get into trouble thinking that they might feel like they're a little bit a greasy salesman. Part of that walking the patient out or cashing them out is that I repeat myself. Now remember in the treatment room, I said, I would really love to see you once a week for about three to five weeks in a row.

We likely can nip this in the bud I'd like to book you in for next week. How does that sound? That sort of thing. And they, well, I'm on holidays next week, okay, no problem. When are you back? I'm back the week after. Okay, that's okay. So, I would have preferred to see you next week, but let's get a couple of treatments booked in after you get back.

Whether you want to say you're asking for the stale or not, we all know that if somebody takes their herbs on a regular basis, they're going to get better. And so if somebody comes in for acupuncture for a few weeks in a row, they're going to get better. So that's part of it.

And then over time, I start teaching patients how to communicate with me. And so, because Chinese medicine is very somatic, somebody comes in, I'll say, I'm feeling depressed. And so I say, I respect that. But here's the problem. Chinese medicine doesn't use that kind of language to describe health phenomenon.

So I'm going to take that diagnosis, whether it was a self diagnosis or whether it was an MD diagnosis of depression. I'm just going to put it over here for just a second. Can you tell me how you feel inside your shell? If we're sitting next to each other on a park bench and you say, I'm anxious right now.

What does that look like? I'm feeling depressed. What does that feel like thing? And so then they start to describe sensations that they're getting in their body. And again, they're going to, they're going to touch themselves. They're going to show me where they're feeling things. And then I'm going to use.

Heavy hitting acupuncture points ones that do the most and spleen 6, over a spleen 3, for example, but that's where that stuff is going to light up. That's where that relationship is happening in the clinic. I need them to use the proper language, but I can't put it in their mouths for them because then I've gone too far

Yeah, and I love that because I always say that, as a story I've told many times, but maybe like you it's the first time for some people, but my first patient wrote down the reason for her visit was Hashimoto's. I had never heard of Hashimoto's at the time. I didn't learn anything about Hashimoto's in school.

We, we talked about thyroid, but we never talked about this specific word I never heard. Right. And I'm sitting there going, Oh my gosh, I don't know what that is. Right. Right. But that's the beauty. And that's exactly what you were saying about Chinese medicine is, I said, Okay, how long you've been diagnosed?

And then I go, How does it manifest with you? And when she's starting describing, I'm like, Oh, it's a spleen qi deficiency. I can see that she's fatigued. Then I can go look it up and found out that, it is a thyroid hypothyroidism issue. But that's the beauty of TCM is like, okay, I'm depressed.

Like you said, I'm anxious. Okay. How does that manifest in you? What you feel, where do you feel it? It's in your lower back. Is it in your chest? Is it like big difficulty in breathing? What does it look like? And for us, like it's just clues.

CC: So I love that you shared that. And the second thing too, that I really appreciate you sharing is.

That salesman thing have had so many practitioners saying, Oh, I don't want to tell people to come back next week. Right. And I always say like you in, in, in my own way, but I always say, well, if they don't have the information, they think that one session is enough, then they're going to go, Oh, acupuncture didn't work for me.

But you have to explain that's the expectation to that. Like you said, it builds on itself. So if you explain to patients, well, I'd like to see you on a regular basis. You give them the information.

They have absolutely the right to not come if they don't want to that, but without the information, it's like, if I go to the garage and the guy doesn't tell me I need an oil change and my car breaks down because he didn't tell me like, I don't know, but if he tells me I need an oil change, I can decide if I want him to do somebody else to do it.

Or if I want to wait 2000 miles until I do it, that's my problem, right? My car can break down, but at least I have the information. So I love that you share that for that, in that beautiful way of I accompany them and I say, Hey, I really want to see you next week, right? Because you want to really make sure that patients have the information, then they can do whatever they want with it.

But without information, they can't. So thank you for sharing that. I really appreciate that.

KS: If you don't have over your years of practice, let's say your 3, 4, 5 years of practice, what you're trying to do is build.

What is your base doing? It's keeping the lights on in the clinic so you can keep treating those new patients. It's paying your mortgage, it's feeding your family, it's doing all the things that you need it to do. And so these are actually really important things. If we don't have a base where we have a large body of patients coming in every four to six weeks on a maintenance rotation, you don't get to keep doing what you're doing that you love to do so much. And so exactly what you said, Claire. So all I, all you got to do is ask. We know that if a patient comes in once a week for, let's say, five weeks. We're going to nip a lot of stuff in the bud. They're going to feel so much better. Now that you're feeling better, I want to stretch you to two weeks. That makes sense.

So they stretch to two weeks. They stretch to three weeks. And now I want to stretch into anywhere from like four to six weeks. I worked with a naturopathic doctor for six years in a multidisciplinary clinic. You know what the craziest thing was? I heard her book a patient six months out. That blew my mind. So that patient was doing really well, they were taking their supplements, they had changed their diet, their lifestyle, and they'd had some treatment from the naturopath, and so the naturopath wanted to see that patient. They knew that they needed, maintenance somewhere. Booked six months out, blew my mind.

So that really opened up the door for me and I was like, well, I could book a patient two months out. I could book a patient seasonally. Why not? Because I know that I need maintenance. I go for acupuncture and massage, et cetera. So I need maintenance. And so if I need maintenance and I'm a human being, other people need maintenance.

And so we're going to build that base so that we can support the acute and the sub acute people and keep the lights on and keep helping as many people possible.

CC: Not everybody, but a lot of patients are tuned to what they need also. And I had a patient that came to see me for over 12 years. Every last Friday of every month, once a month. It's that

Friday, cause she likes to have a nice weekend. So it's perfect. Always the last patient on the Friday and You're thinking, wow, it was her decision after she got better and we spread them, like you said, from weekly to longer, she said, you know what, I'm going to come once a month to keep things happy.

And I'm like, wow. If you feel that, and if at one point there's a lot more stress of things happen, , you can come a couple of times in a row to rebalance. So that way you don't get out of balance as much. You're staying really balanced because you're getting your maintenance.

So yeah, it's the same with dentists. It's the same for everybody. They'll tell you, Hey, we need to book. Your teeth cleaning in, that time, right? So it's the same. Yeah. It's maintenance. So I love that you share that. So, we could go on and on and talk about so many things, but I really appreciate you coming and sharing this.

Cause I relate so much to everything you have to say. And. How you teach any final thoughts for people that are listening and final wisdom from Monsieur Kenton, my TCM brother.

KS: One of the things that I've been harping on for a really long time that I'd like to share with you and your listeners is that we go to school to become acupuncturist, herbalist, Chinese medicine practitioner, and we graduate and we're entrepreneurs just by accident. We're small business owners we're contractors and all this kind of stuff.

As an entrepreneur, for many of us, we're mothers and fathers and caregivers and Family members and all that kind of stuff. And, maybe we own nine cats, too. So, we have responsibilities. I just want to remind everyone that when you first start out, from somebody who's been practicing for 17 years, when you first start out, it's okay to get a part time gig to support your full time gig. There's nothing wrong with this. I'll use this analogy. If I've got A 70, 000 a year paying job and I'm working in a call center and I've been there for a long time and I said, Clara, I got this crazy idea. Those socks with funny sayings on them, I'm going to start making those. I bought the machine to make those and you go home and you're my good coworker friend.

You're like, I love it. I can't wait to get your first pair of socks. Can you make ones with pugs on them? And I'm like, I can, let's do this. And then I say, I'm quitting my job tomorrow to go make socks. And you'd say. No, Ken. Don't do that. Don't do that. I said, what do you mean? Listen, so what you need to do is calm down, Ken.

You need to make a little, make some socks on the side. And then you need to get your socks into a few different local stores. And then start selling some socks. And then you need to get online presence. And then eventually you can go from working full time to part time at the call center because stocks are doing really well.

And then all of a sudden you're making a hundred grand a year selling stocks and you can quit your job. And this might take five or six years, but that's how your, your new full time gig starts

off part time and goes full time. It's no different. And again, I had such great people to model after and mentor after.

So Colt Oswald worked at Starbucks for years. Well, he got his practice up and going before it became full time. And so oftentimes I'll tell people, Hey, it's okay to get a part time gig to support your full time gig. You're soon to be full time gig. And they say, well, what would I do? Like, in the acupuncture and Chinese medicine field, I'm like no.

Go get a fun job. Go work at Michael's set up like Christmas trees and like little villages. I don't know, but go do something fun. That is no stress while you're working on your practice. And. I will tell you another little secret I've moved a practice before I had to rebuild. I had to get a part time job again, .

Where I'm at in small, ruralish Nova Scotia might be different than where somebody's at, like, New York, Toronto, Calgary, wherever, Dubai. You might be in some big place, right, where you don't need to do that. But when things get tough,, does that mean that I'm unsuccessful?

Does that mean that I'm a failure? We start getting these things in our mind. But after you've had to get a part time job a few times to support your full time job until things boot back up. I worked at a clinic for six years. Closed, just closed, got an email, 9 p.m. on a Thursday, in this past summer, closed.

Okay, guess what I have to do? Took me three weeks, we're not a dime a dozen anymore in Nova Scotia, took me three weeks to find a place where I found somebody reputable, respected, and I had nine clinic offers right away. There are definitely times where things will be lean, where you have to switch, change, move, rebuild. And I just want to let anybody and everybody know that if you're ever in that boat, and you have to get a part time gig to pay the bills to feed the family.

You are not a failure. You're just having to like reboot and restart again. This is a reality, we were talking before we started recording, Clara. I just love talking about the stuff that nobody wants to talk about, and I because people have told me is that when we talk about this stuff you hear, Oh, wow, I'm not alone. When somebody tells you, I'm not feeling good, And you say, okay, tell me about that. actually I don't feel good all the time. I suffer with depression at times too. Oh, really? And it's not a one upmanship. It's actually just a heart to heart and like, wow, that person suffers with this too.

And they're able to keep going and they're able to keep fighting. And so, that's why I share some of the stuff that I share is because I don't want people to feel like they're alone and people can reach out to me at any time. Take care. You can email me, you can find me on Instagram, first years of acupuncture.

So you can reach out to me and say, I'm going through a thing. That's the big thing I want to leave you with is that it's okay to have a part time gig to support your full time gig.

CC: When I went back to school for five years to learn TCM, I kept a part time job because I was like, how am I going to support myself? I got to pay rent.

I got to pay everything. And, I got to work. So I work part time in fitness because I was in the fitness industry prior full time. So I went part time. And when I opened my practice, I continued to work part time in the fitness industry until I was able to let it go because my practice, was enough for me.

And I could just let that go. And it was actually hard to let go because like you said, if you enjoy it, I loved it. It was fun. And then I When I finally said, you know what, I'm going to keep one hour a week. I'm going to teach aerobics. I'm going to teach hip hop one hour a week. And eventually I was like, that's ridiculous.

I'm just doing it, but I don't need it. And I need to focus completely on my practice. So I did it through school and I did it after. So I totally understand that. I'd rather we do this than, go full on. And then a year later, give up. And all this knowledge is not helping anybody. You're not helping any patients, you're not helping anybody and you have all this beautiful knowledge inside you and you're not able to help because you thought, well, I can't just have another job to support this.

It's like, well, yes, you can. Right. So thank you for sharing that. We'll have all the links to reach you in the show notes. I hope that it's not the last time when you come on the show, cause I have so many more questions for you and we can do three more episodes, so thank you Kenton for coming.

KS: Thank you. And I look forward to three more whole episodes.

CC: You're so awesome.

Thank you so much for spending your time with me today. I truly hope you benefited from this episode, and I would love for you to share it with a friend that may benefit from it as well, follow the show, leave a review, and if you want more. Go to my website, acuproacademy.com. I have tons of resources there with treatment protocols, case studies, free courses, and so much more, and connect with me on all social media at [acuproacademy](http://acuproacademy.com).

I'm on YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, X, Pinterest, and LinkedIn and TikTok. And no matter what. Keep rocking it, using DCM. Please listen to the disclaimer. Because the Acupro Show podcast and material shared through Acupro Academy, which is a subdivision of Natural Health Sense Incorporated, are designed solely for educational and entertainment purposes.

The utilization of information from this podcast or any associated material is at the user's discretion. and risk. This content is not meant to replace the guidance of an acupuncturist,

Chinese medicine doctor, medical doctor, physician, or any qualified professional, nor is it a substitute for proper diagnosis or treatment.

Users are strongly advised not to ignore or postpone seeking medical advice for any existing medical condition with their healthcare professional regarding any health concerns.