THE CHANGE Rx

READERS SUMMARY:

- **WHAT GETS US TO CHANGE?**
- **WHY DO WE FAIL AT CHANGE SO OFTEN?**
- **HOW DO WE EMBRACE FAILURE TO GET CHANGE?**
- **WHAT ARE THE 5 STEPS INVOLVED IN ILLUMINATING THE ROAD TO OPTIMAL?**
- **HOW DO I BUILD MY OWN "HEALTH TRUST" FOR MY LIFE?**

Leverage Your Competitive Advantage in your own Health

Career health planning should leverage your current assets, set course for you and your family in direction of your aspirations, and account for the realities that modern life brings us. We can not control all the fake food created, artificial light, and genetic alterations of our naturally occurring foods. The problem is for us these three puzzle pieces are always changing, and are often their real biologic effects are not fully known today.

The best we can do to "protect our house" is articulate educated hypotheses about each subject using our best data. We need to craft a document for our health like we do in estate planning, to navigate these risks to our future. A personal "health trust" to keep us healthy, if you will. In asset protection, we seek to protect our gains using legal constructs to keep the state from taking our money so we can leave it to our family and friends of our choosing.

All of our "personal health estate plans" should contain and lay out behaviors to avoid the sorts of assumptions that may subjugate out health and our families health. Good "personal health estate planning" documents make them explicit so that

you can track them over time and make adjustments based upon your outcomes and how the data may evolve our beliefs. Essentially, you want to make explicit the things that need to be true today, for your plan to work for your lifespan. These hypotheses should lead you to specific actions and behaviors to make this reality happen as you had planned.

Corporations often have broad missions like maximizing shareholder value, but many a CEO has also realized that, maximizing shareholder value "is not a strategy that tells you what to do when you come to work every day." Similarly, you may have broad aspirations for your health, like many others do in our country: for instance, we want to "help interesting people do interesting things" or "design human ecosystems to keep others healthy from themselves." But real health planning means plotting the specific steps it will take to make those aspirations happen.

Make Learning a Priority in your Plan

Many people defer the long term gratification of collecting a big salary by spending decades of time obtaining formal education in school. Many believe formal education is needed to get the highest paying jobs. This is no longer true. A high school dropout can make more money in the short run than the guy stuck studying geology. For example just look at Bill Gates or Steve Jobs as what is possible with outside the box ideas. One thing is clear, in the long run, logic dictates, people with a foundation of health knowledge and skills will collect more health assets and most often live a more healthy life.

What is true in the world of computing is also true in health. You do not have to go to school for 25 years like I did, to learn how to stay healthy and avoid disease today. Today that information is awaiting those of you make learning about your

health a priority today. Most of what I learned in my training can be found on the web these days. The hard part is collecting it all in one spot for people to learn from.

That is why I now blog.

I look at it as the first evolutionary medicine on-line living textbook for people to access for free. It is not designed to be static, it is dynamic, because health learning always changes as science evolves.

Science never stands still, only our thinking about it does. This concept is true in modern business today too. We need to adapt it in our own healthcare estate plan. For example there's a similar belief in IPO's today. Most modern technology companies focus on learning over profitability in their early years to maximize revenue in the later years. Just look at the history of Microsoft, Intel, Apple, and most recently Google. This is contrary to how modern healthcare works. We spend more the last year of life than we do at any other point of our lifespan. That is pure lunacy to me, but I will let you decide that for you. Maybe, if we begin to "health plan" smarter when we are younger we can avoid that trap of thought?

Unfortunately, for far too many of us, focused on learning end points at our college or professional school graduations. We read about stocks and bonds or randomized controlled clinical trials in medicine instead of books that improve our health or our minds. We compare our health and our salary to those of our friends and family members, instead of comparing life lessons learned by all to remain well. We allowed bad thinking to infect our neural networks over the last hundred years. It is as if we invested in the stock market first and totally neglected investing in ourselves. **What good is becoming a billionaire in life and dying at 40?** We were taught to focus, in the short term, on hard assets instead of soft assets of life. This is a primordial mistake in modern humans.

I’m not suggesting you remain a starving, gruffy grad-student forever; you do need to earn money and build economic and HEALTH assets. But what I am suggesting is begin to prioritize your health estate plan now that offer the best chance at learning about yourself, your species, and the world you have to exist in now. If you do this now, not only will you remain well, in the long run, but your life journey will be more fulfilling. Start, by beginning to ask yourself, “Which health estate plan will grow my soft assets the fastest?” Even simpler: “Which plan offers the most learning potential for wellness for me now?” Once you make the choice follow it with zeal.

See one teach one do one

When I was resident in neurosurgery this was our mantra. We observed for a short period of time and then we jumped right in. Today, things in neurosurgery are not that way. I think this is big error. We learn best by doing. Learning requires action. If we are to learn from our health estate plan we must build action into it.

Researchers and entrepreneurs penetrate the “fog of the unknown” by testing their hypotheses through trial and error. Why do not we apply the same principles to our health? This is the core reason I am a bio hacker of myself. Any expert on cognition and learning will report that practical knowledge is best developed by doing, not just thinking or planning. In the early days of my transformation, the plan was to use the tools I learned in medical school to improve my former self. I would cut calories and exercise. It did not work. Instead of getting mad I got smarter by thinking better. I went back to my neurosurgical training dictum, ***learn by doing***.

The results spoke for themselves in 11 months. I realized it turned out the best way to enable viral spread was actually to share my ideas on how I did on a blog instead of in my clinic.

I realized people did not care how much I knew, until they realized how much I cared about there well being.

The blog became a labor of love that shared my ideas of how I learned to stay well by doing some things differently. Sometimes, from unconventional thoughts come extraordinary gains. When practice this method of learning you begin to adapt quickly and your health often improves.

For our health, you don't really have to know what the "best plan" is. All you have to first do is try something different than what was not working for you before. For example, I wouldn't have known that dentistry wasn't the career path for me, if I hadn't enrolled in a dental school and got my degree. From this failure, I learned what I should not do. This action was helpful because it steered me in the direction I need to explore further. When I moved to the world of brain and spine surgery, I mistakenly thought my "real competitive advantage" was being able to perform complex surgeries and rebuild humans with bone and titanium. Only when I started *working in neurosurgery for over a decade,* I discovered my real advantage in my health care space was the ability to think differently about health and wellness from a

cellular perspective at massive scale that might change a health care paradigm.

I believe your “health estate plan” must incorporate a “learn by doing” framework. If you want to improve your former self , spend six months volunteering in a hospital making connections with doctors and healthcare workers and see what you learn about their industry. You might find out that few people actually get better despite the actions of many to help them do just that. Hopefully this will make you curious whether as to what you might consider doing to improve your own health than what you are currently doing. You are the only one who has your best interests at heart. If you are not good enough for your time, who are you really good for?

Whatever your health situation is today, *actions*, not plans, will generate the lessons that help you test your hypotheses against reality of your health. Actions always help you discover where you want to go in wellness, and how to get there quickly.

Make small reversible bets on you consistently.

We all need to take risks to move ahead. This is built into life and to evolution. If we never leave our house how can we move forward in anything we do? The same is true in managing our own health. If you continue to do the same things over and over again, while expecting a different result than you have now, this is the definition of insanity. I am sad to say this happens all too often in healthcare today. Do not be afraid to trial and fail at something new. Occasional missteps are to be expected when you take an experimental approach to health estate planning. Before I got well, I made plenty of mistakes in trying to get better.

I went vegan, used vegetables, cut calories, used sauna’s and

diet pills, as some examples of my actions. I did not wilt because I failed, instead I learned and adapted. It's the "error" part of trial and error that we need to focus on more. Sadly, we are taught early in life to avoid failure. This is big mistake. Success does not fuel success, but failure lights the path to success. The great thing about mistakes, is that these errors needn't be permanent in our estate health plan if we manage it.

Good Plan A's can be stopped or reversed or morphed into a Plan B, C, or D. A Standard American Diet can become a vegetarian diet and then it can encompass the HCG diet for some time and it can move forward to a good paleo template and further improve with a move to a template steeped in brain specific nutrients found in the Epi-paleo Rx. A good Plan A, minimizes the cost of failure, so don't bet the farm when you first begin to act. Iterate bit by bit, learn experience by experience and watch your inner masterpiece slowly appear from the rubble of today. Start with a trial period for your health, Keep your healthy habits as you learn what works best for your biology.

> ***Ideation, without execution only leads to deletion.***

Do, act, change, learn, become something new, maybe even find your inner masterpiece.

Think multiple steps ahead of yourself

As a brain surgeon the most important lesson I learned in residency is to think ahead to avoid disaster. We are taught from day one that prevention of thought saves mounds of complications. In brain and spine surgery, there are no do overs. One of my mentors told me the best neurosurgeons think 6 steps ahead of the step he is currently completing. I have

never forgotten that lesson. It has served me well. We need to think about our own health in the same fashion.

Planning and adapting means thinking carefully about your future health. Lunging at the latest paleo blog idea may offer immediate gratification from your mind or your friends, but it won't get you any closer to building Optimal health. **A goal that can be achieved in a single step is probably not very meaningful – or ambitious**. There is no magic bullets in anything in life. There is not a pill for every ill, nor is there a a food /supplement for every ill either. At the Harvard Business School, Clayton Christensen, a professor famously said, "If you study the root causes of business disasters, over and over you'll find a predisposition toward endeavors that offer immediate gratification." Simarily, your "health trust" must be long term, consistent and persistent and should including testing your beliefs and hypothesis constantly. This way you will never get drunk on dogma from any group or thoughts that permeate your consciousness.

Moreover, at the same time, though, don't fall prey to the opposing thought paradigms and begin to think ahead too far in your health future. If you do this, you might over analyze things as things change. Let your current environment sculpt your biology slowly as you develop a deft hand. **Focus on making smaller reversible changes to it to teach you daily lessons about your biology.** Always remember with time, you will change, as the world you live in changes, and the sum of these two competing variables will change your biology. Be mindful of the good and bad in those changes and adjust your actions to live a life of wellness as you age.

The best thing to do is to think and plan two steps ahead to reengineer your health. If you'd like to be promoted from mildly sick to well, it may mean a first step of building a new relationship with a key health partner, like a nurse practitioner, a chiropractor, a physician's assstant, or a forward thinking nurse or doctor. Maybe, you read a lot of

different blogs who think differently than you do now or consider taking a night course at a massive on line open course called a MOOC for short (Coursera, Udacity and edX are 3 to look at) and pick up advanced health management skills before taking that step of marching into the doctor's office and asking for that Rx of wellness. That is how I view my blog, today. It is an Epi-paleo MOOC! I hope that you can use this MOOC to open your own eyes and those of your healthcare providers to see that maybe what we have believed for so long about health and wellness may not be congruent with how our biology is built by Mother Nature.

Sometimes the first step toward a goal is rather simple. A question people sometimes ask me is, "What's the best way to get to get to Optimal health?" In my opinion, there are various ways to attain the goal, but the first step is this you must move in the direction of health with your thinking! You must act to want those changes and divorce yourself from the current reality you find yourself in now. Will that be hard to do? Yes, but anything worth your effort is hard to do.

If you're unsure what your first, or even your second step should be to regain Optimal, pick a first step with high health option value.What does this mean? It means ***making*** that first move now that could lead to a broad range of options. Maybe make time to visit a NP, PA, a chiropractor or do an educational consult with a person like Lane Sebring, Chris Kresser, Dan Kalish, or myself for that matter to move you to action that is directionally accurate for your biology. Look for your solution not someone else's. Afterall, none of these people totally agree with one another, but all of them are interested in teaching you how the road to Optimal is built brick by brick with more good thoughts than bad ones. Their agreement is not needed when you are planning and going to test ideas they may bring to your perception right now.

They may get you to think and act differently than you are

right now to get you to a place you never thought might be possible. If you think this does not work consider what business does when they struggle. **Management consulting is a classic example of a how an external expert teaches a business to maximize "optionality" because the skills and experiences of consulting can be helpful in and applied toward many other next steps, even if you're not sure what those steps are yet**. In other word's and expert may help you see something you don't and can't.

Talent can hit a target everyone sees, but genius can hit a target no one else can see. Always remember a good Plan A is one that offers flexibility to "pivot" to a range of possible Plan B's, C's, and D's One of these steps maybe where you're road to Optimal begins. If you do nothing, look in the mirror at yourself immediately after you finish this blog. That is what you will continue to get decade by decade. Never forget that a good first step in any endeavor generates the largest number of possible follow-ups on second steps. This is true for a NFL running back, a golfer, a lover, and a surgeon. It is a universal truth in all apsects of life many of us have forgotten. Optimal health is found by maximizing your choices at step one.

SUMMARY:

You are your own boss. What lessons has my actions taught me in building my own "health estate trust plan"?

I own my health. I own me. You do not and can not own me, or my labor, or the fruits of my labor in this endeavor. Therefore, I should decide how I spend my money on health, who I associate with, and I should be able to contract for the services of others as I deem suitable for myself to maintain my Health. This is "My-care". I reject the version of healthcare that is current and soon to morph into a controlled platform of "health behaviors" according to someone else's

idea of wellness. It may have been tested on others, but I have not tested it's theories upon me. I own me and you should own you too. Today, consider that and maybe adapt your thoughts. Go ahead and begin to write your health estate plan before the end of the year. This is an action that can move you to your new health resolutions for 2013 right now.

> *A problem is not "THE" problem. The real problem is your attitude about the problem. Understand?" – Anonymous*

No matter what "they" try to do to our health, we control it if we own it 100%. Your plan is critical to winning that battle for your health.

CITES:

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2.http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Massive_open_online_course

3.http://www.thestartupofyou.com/