

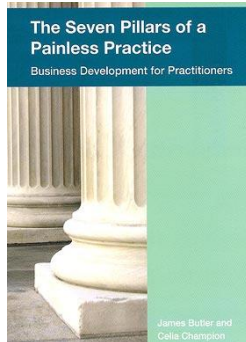
# Painless Practice Newsletter

Bare Bones of Success

Issue 86

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After over seven years of this newsletter, we wonder whether we are entitled to be self indulgent and talk about ourselves a little. We are quite excited at the moment because, after months of work and years of procrastination, our latest book hits the bookshops this week. With such a momentous event happening in our world, we thought we would take the liberty of sharing the core idea within the book.



## *The Seven Pillars of a Painless Practice*

The title of the book is *The Seven Pillars of a Painless Practice* and the central idea is something we have been formulating for a while now – that a successful practice is built upon a number of strong foundations – the Seven Pillars.

**Personal** – it is our belief and experience that successful clinics are the ones where the goals and aspirations of the practice are aligned with and serve the goals and aspirations of the owner. If you are the owner, you need to know and understand what you want from life, the role your practice plays within it, and how your practice will take you where you want to go.

*What do you want from life, and from your practice?*

**Purpose** – knowing your own goals and aspirations isn't usually enough though. You need to understand **why** your clinic exists. What is it there to do? This is especially true when other people work for you – they are unlikely to be motivated by paying off your mortgage or giving you long holidays. They are more likely to be motivated by changing the world, improving the wellbeing of your community, or being the best at what you do.

*Why do you go to work each day? What are you trying to achieve with your practice?*

**Pipeline** – a key foundation of a painless practice is to have a well-defined, well-understood and well-managed pipeline of new potential patients to treat. Understanding who your perfect patients are, what they are looking for and how you can attract them is vital for success.

*Who are your perfect patients? How do you attract them?*

**Patient** – The core of your successful practice will be the relationship with your patients, and the experience you provide them with. You will need to understand the key moments in that experience, and how you can wow patients in that moment – turning them into raving fans for your clinic. Of course, you will also need to ensure a high level of clinical outcome for your patients – they will need to get better! Then your practice grows by referral, a powerful engine for a successful clinic.

*What experience do your patients want, and how will you ensure you consistently supply them with that experience, turning them into raving fans?*

**People** – the thing that we find fascinating about the majority of practices is that whatever

you write on paper, enter in a spreadsheet or put in a Powerpoint presentation, at some point you need people to make it happen. That includes you, but often includes a team of others – staff, associates and suppliers. Managing the people that make a practice successful is often avoided or handled badly – we may avoid confrontation, fear upsetting people or just not know what to do. Recruiting, retaining rewarding, motivating and possibly firing people will be a key element in your success.

*If you were your own manager, what would you tell yourself to improve? How do you get the best out of everyone who works in and around your practice?*

**Profit** – this is the output of most successful organisations. Even not-for-profits may look to have a “surplus” at year end – not to do so could soon spell trouble (ask a Greek financier). Watching your numbers (and knowing what numbers to watch) is good discipline for a successful practice. This means having a budget, knowing your profit margins, possibly calculating your break-even point (especially if you rent rooms) and certainly monitoring your cash position.

*What numbers do you need to watch to ensure you make the right level of profit (and go back to the Personal Pillar to define for yourself what the right level is)?*

**Plan** – you probably saw this one coming! We make no secret of the fact that the successful practices we encounter tend to have worked to a well-structured plan or strategy. They know where they are heading, when they want to get there, how they will make it happen and why they are doing it. Encapsulating it in a written plan, which need not be long or complicated, provides certainty, solidity and ease of dissemination.

*When did you last write a business plan? When did you last read it? How does your practice know what to do when?*

These are the Seven Pillars that we believe hold up a successful practice. If any one of them is weak, then success can be compromised. The order in which we have set them out is not an accident – we believe you should design the practice around what you want, should end up considering the profit the practice will produce (and how), and you should encapsulate it all in a written commitment of your strategy.

The questions above should be enough to get you started. The book will provide you with more ideas with greater explanation and worksheets and exercises to help you apply the ideas specifically to your practice. By the end of the book, you should find you have painlessly put together your own plan for a painless practice.

## *Painless Practice News*

Have we mentioned we have a new book just out? This is by far the largest news from Painless Towers. It is already available to order from the Resources area of our website (<http://www.painlesspractice.com/resources/book/>) and sales have started coming in. We hope the book will be of interest to you, but if you know anyone else who would benefit from it, please do send them in our direction.

If this newsletter has given you food for thought and you would like a live, interactive workshop to help you work through the Seven Pillars then our workshop in London on 7 March will be ideal for you. Full details can be found on the [website](#). You are guaranteed to leave with a number of actions to implement in your practice. Discounted copies of the book will also be available to those attending.

With one month of the year gone already, the diary is filling nicely with a range of training courses, in-house facilitation events for practice teams and of course client sessions. Whilst we have grown nicely in the last few years (thank you), we have kept adding

capacity, so we're always looking for new opportunities.

Celia has worked hard to put together a packed programme of CPD events throughout the year – see the website for details. If you are unsure which course would most suit you, email [support@painlesspractice.com](mailto:support@painlesspractice.com) and Celia will talk through what you are looking for and what would suit you best.

James thoroughly enjoyed meeting nearly 50 people at the Northern Counties Society of Osteopaths this month, where we explored Creating a Referral Culture. It was nice for us to get out of the Thames Valley, so if you have a regional CPD group that might enjoy a lively and entertaining practice-building talk or workshop, please recommend us. We won't plug the book too heavily!

## Book Review

Oh come on, what did you think was going to go in here?! *The Seven Pillars of a Painless Practice* is the best business book we have read this year. More inspirational than *War Horse* and more ideas on managing servants than *Downton Abbey*, it is unmissable. OK, we may have fibbed about the *War Horse* and *Downton Abbey* thing, but you get the picture.

This month saw the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday of Professor Stephen Hawking, possibly the greatest mind in the field of physics since Einstein. His *A Brief History of Time* brought complex theoretical concepts to a phenomenal wider audience. Alongside this amazing achievement, he has dealt with Motor Neurone Disease for almost 50 years, inspiring generations of people with his refusal to concede to the effects of his illness. At his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations, he gave the following address:

*Look up at the stars and not down at your feet.*

*Be curious.*

*However difficult life may seem, there is always something you can do and succeed at.*

*It matters that you don't just give up.*

Inspiring indeed. In one of his other quotes, this great mind of 20<sup>th</sup> Century physics said "*Women. They are a complete mystery*".

## Painless Puns

We thought the following quotes would also be of interest:

*Everyone knows what needs to be done, not everyone chooses to do it.*

Buddhist saying

Sensing we need some hubris with our book being published, we noticed this:

*From the moment I picked up your book until I laid it down, I was convulsed with laughter. Someday I intend reading it.*

Groucho Marx

To provide the counter argument to our feelings in the Profit and Plan Pillars:

*A good decision is based on knowledge, not on numbers.*

Plato

*Martin Luther King gave the "I have a dream" speech, not the "I have a plan" speech.*

Simon Sinek

We were wondering recently what you would call a woman who was perfect for hauling up tonnes of fish from the sea. Yes, that's right, Annette.

At Painless Towers we have a new cleaner. Like many migrant workers from Eastern Europe she is very thorough, but we have found she just takes too long to clean the carpets. That's when we realised she was a Slovak.

At a networking event recently we got collared by two women who asked what bread we ate. When we said white they gave us a lecture on the benefits of brown bread for 30 minutes. Turns out they were Hovis Witnesses.

### *Final Words*

Obviously we want to tell everyone about the book we have just published – but not just to boost sales. We actually really believe in the message of the Seven Pillars and we hope you will find a way to apply the ideas to your practice.

Our purpose is to see every therapist enjoying their work and achieving their vision – and we think this is more likely if business owners apply the Seven Pillars to their clinic. If we can help you do just that, please email or call.

Warmest regards

James Butler, Celia Champion and the Painless Team

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Painless Practice helps therapists build the practice they want. Through improving your strategic outlook and guiding you on sales, marketing and personal development we can provide renewed motivation and momentum in building your practice.

Careful assessment of your needs ensures that the most appropriate intervention is supplied – whether one to one ongoing coaching, strategic reviews, training events or facilitated group exercises within a team.

To discuss how you can painlessly build the practice you want, call us today for a no-obligation discussion of your situation.