



HOW TO ~~SURVIVE~~ THRIVE IN
YOUR FIRST YEARS OF PRIVATE
PRACTICE

2020

Foreword: by Marty Ayres

Being a private practice clinician is the best job in the world.

Of course that is a biased opinion, as I am a Physiotherapist in Australia, but hear me out.

It's a job where you have a big impact on people's lives.
Yes, as a clinician, you have the ability to help reduce a person's pain.
But it's so much bigger than that...

You see, great clinicians can improve people's overall health and wellness.
We help people get back to doing what they love, prevent future injuries, improve mindset and build their confidence to move.

In your career, you will impact the work your client does, allowing them to get back to helping others.

Your treatment and education will improve your client's relationships, both with their own body and with others.

You could even help prevent future heart attacks by creating opportunities for people to exercise without pain.

Private practice healthcare is a tremendous profession, but it isn't easy, and it's certainly a challenge to reach an accomplished level from your first day on the job.

I've worked with many new graduates over the last 10 years, be it in my role as a senior mentor at our Physiotherapy practice or working with other healthcare clinics and their staff.

The main challenges these new graduates have expressed over that time land in the following 5 categories

1. Compassion fatigue
2. Self-belief
3. Clinical expertise
4. Switching off after work
5. Burn out

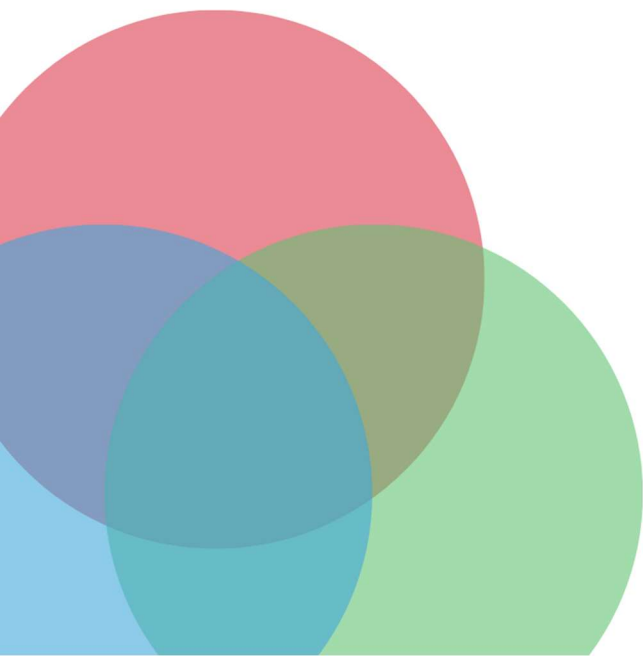
In this E-Book, The Clinical Mentors team will give you solutions to SURVIVE these 5 difficulties, and provide you with the tools to ensure that you THRIVE in your new career in Private Practice.

At the end of this E-Book please take advantage of our FREE SELF ASSESSMENT

Step 1. Fill out our assessment (PDF)

Step 2. Email it to theclinicalmentors@gmail.com

Step 3. Our team will get back to you with specific areas of focus for you



1. Compassion fatigue

"I wish I could have a day where I can just take it easy and not be ON"

"It's difficult to be positive when we're around people who are in pain"

"I'm struggling being energetic all the time and tired of feeling sorry for people"

You are not alone!

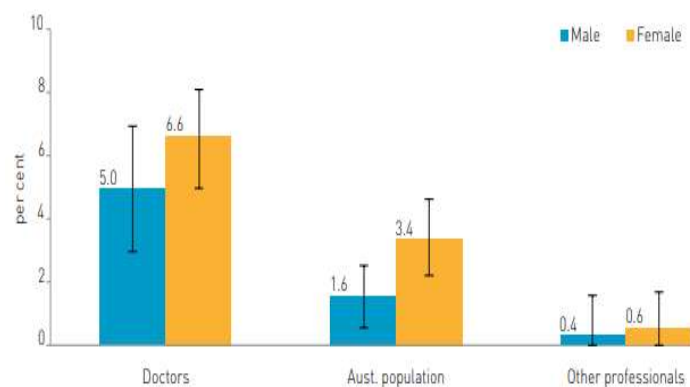
There is a higher incidence of stress and compassion fatigue in ALL medical professionals

Compassion Fatigue = Stress and exhaustion created from caring for people who are suffering or in pain.

Statistics of physiological distress in Australians aged 30 years and below.

Note the increased prevalence in Doctors (and by extrapolation, health professionals) relative to the Australian population

https://www.beyondblue.org.au/docs/default-source/research-project-files/bl1132-report---nmhdms-full-report_web



Putting the client first and being compassionate is what we ALL do as health professionals.

In order to do so we must prepare ourselves to have enough **energy** to provide the same level of care and kindness that we would want to receive.

Therefore, we need a skillset to reduce our stress and fatigue levels **outside of work**, and in the spaces **between treating clients**, to enable us to provide optimal care.

Let's hone in on the skills that are most important for you personally....and yes it's important to actually mark your answers right here, right now!

The New Graduate Checklist

Question	Answer
Do you struggle being ON for your entire work week	YES/NO
Do you ever feel anxious when new patients book in	YES/NO
Do you feel EXCITED to tell people about your day when you get home	YES/NO
Do you feel like you have expert knowledge in all areas of the body for assessment and treatment	YES/NO
Do you have people to learn from to help you become the best clinician you can be	YES/NO
Do you bring home the best version of yourself after your day at work	YES/NO
Does your evening or your sleep ever get disturbed due to your workday	YES/NO
Do you feel like you have a built-up level of stress	YES/NO

We will come back to this checklist and give you some guidance at the end

2. Self-belief

"I am
nervous/anxious
when new
patients book in"

"I feel like I'm
letting my clients
down"

"If I see 10
patients, I dwell
on the 2 bad
ones, not the 8
good ones"

Overcoming low self-belief

Affirmations

Affirmations are positive statements that you tell yourself to help you overcome negative self-talk. When you say them aloud, and repeat them, you start to make positive mindset changes.

Sounds too good to be true? Consider this....

In rehab, we perform repetitive and progressive exercise to improve our physical health.

Affirmations are just the same for our mental health, exercising our mind and outlook.

Repeating these positive affirmations can reprogram our subconscious thinking patterns so that, over time, we begin to think and act differently.

What do you tell yourself when a new client books in?

"I CAN"

or

"I CAN'T"?

"I have the ability to help this person"

or

"I have no idea what I'm going to do"

If you lean to the right of the screen, consider creating and using your own affirmations.

Celebrate your wins

Try this for the next two weeks: When you get home, tell someone two good things about your day. Focus on what positive impacts you made and celebrate those.

Take the focus away from the clients that you struggled with by writing their name in your diary at work (or emailing yourself) to discuss their case with your mentor the next day.

'Set and forget' so you can stop thinking about it!

Marty: "Of course you are not going to have rock solid self-belief yet, you are only new to the profession! If you compared yourself to someone learning Piano, do you think after 4 years they would have mastered the instrument as much as Beethoven??"

The remedy is to manage your expectations and understand what you CAN DO / DO KNOW rather than what you CAN'T DO / DON'T KNOW."



3. Clinical expertise

"I just wish I was as good as the senior team already"

"I don't feel fully prepared for Private Practice"

"I want to have a bigger impact"

Building clinical expertise

You reap what you sew

Consider your career as a veggie garden. I know, it's a bit left of centre but again, bear with me.

The more seeds you sew now, the more vegetables you will reap (and eat!) later.

i.e. The more develop yourself and learn now, the better off you will be in the long term.

There are two ways you can go about this:

1. The Potato method: This requires a lot of hard work planting at the start. Time passes with minimal reward, and then one day BANG...you have 100 delicious potatoes (or in the clinician's case – 100 clients desperate to see you)

2. The Salad method: You do a smaller amount of work, planting multiple salad seeds, knowing that they will be ready to eat sooner and will continue to replenish. In the clinicians case you get smaller but frequent rewards you for the work you put in.

Our advice - do BOTH.

1. Take on bigger professional development (PD) projects. These larger investments may take up more time and energy now, but give you much bigger rewards in the long term.
2. Also tick off some smaller PD that will reward you with instant knowledge and upskilling.

Lean on your peers

Be a sponge! Soak up as much knowledge as you can from your workmates. Take time to observe them treating and note the little things they do to help their clients.

You might feel that you lack experience, but in essence, you are taking the experience from EVERYONE you have learned from into the consult room with you.

So, who are you learning from? Where can you gain more expertise to prepare you for your next client?

Marty: "Every great clinician started where you are today. If they can get there, why can't you? You have a mountain to climb. We can't control the distance you have to climb, but we can accelerate the rate at which you climb it."

With help

Without help



4. Switching off after work

"I feel like I'm always at work mentally"

"I can't switch off after a day of work"

"I'm waking up at night, thinking about work / clients"

Leave work at work

Switching off

There's a great book called "The Third Space" that encourages people to use a formula to transition from a First Space (e.g. Work), to a Second Space (e.g. Home). We utilise the learnings from the book in our program, particularly the 3R's.

1. Reflect – Run back over you day **before** you leave and take stock of what you need to do for tomorrow. Plan to get in early to read about a condition & prepare for your clients.
2. Rest – Then let it go. Take some time to rest from work. Maybe go to the gym or listen to music.
3. Reset – Do whatever it takes to hit the reset button to ensure that when you walk in your front door at home, you aren't dragging your luggage from your workday.

Sleep

As the night quietens, our self-talk gets louder and thoughts of the day start to creep in. To ensure you get some great sleep make sure you:

1. Create an environment that helps you forget your day at work. That could include meditation, breathing exercises, listening to a podcast or an audiobook.
2. Keep a pen and paper next to your bed to write down any burning ideas or reminders that pop into your brain at night so you can let it go and drift back to sleep.

Check out the TedTALK: "Sleep is your superpower" for more great tips to get to sleep.

Marty: "I think every new graduate, including me, has had these issues. Having difficulties leaving work at work. In the LEAP program we workshop with each of you to find out your best way to mentally switch off when you get home. For me, it was getting changed out of my uniform before I left work, and emailing myself anything that came into my mind so that I could deal with it when I got to work the next day (not at home at 3am!)."

What will your strategy be?"

5. Burn out

We know that stress isn't always bad.



Physiology 101 at University
Stress / Performance graph

We **need** moderate levels of stress to perform at our best!

Image: www.forbes.com/sites/travisbradberry/2014/02/06/how-successful-people-stay-calm/#4f2fe50a2f79

However, a **constant or prolonged** feeling of stress is not healthy and can lead us to a 'feeling of burn out'. Looking back at the previous four categories, it's easy to see why new graduates can feel a bit stressed and exhausted. It's due to combination of:

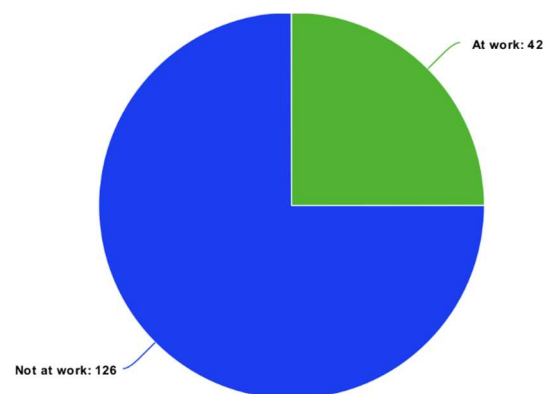
1. Being compassionate to patients in pain and staying switched on.
2. Being too hard on yourself when you don't get things 100% right.
3. Not having the right support and mentorship to fully prepare you for treating clients.
4. Not being able to switch off and rest properly.

So what can we do?

First, let's consider that we spend $\frac{1}{4}$ of our week at work. Less actually, if you only spend 38 hours working – but given 4 hours of preparation time, we land on 42 hours – exactly a quarter of the number of hours in a week (168).

That $\frac{1}{4}$ can no doubt have a huge effect on your stress and fatigue levels.

So you need to be **amazing** in your remaining 126 hours to reduce those stress levels and replenish your energy.



- a) Build your self-belief with affirmations
- b) Celebrate your wins and stop dwelling on the losses
- c) Accelerate your clinical expertise
- d) Acquire a team to lean on
- e) Create a routine to switch off
- f) Get great sleep!

We can teach you **how** to become effective at implementing these strategies and reach new heights that you perhaps thought weren't possible.
All you need to do is take the LEAP INTO PRACTICE.

Where to next?

Good luck with our list of action steps in this book, we really hope that they give you some great starting points for you to thrive in private practice.

If you enjoyed our E-Book, and would like some more information, please send us an email at theclinicalmentors@gmail.com with the subject "I enjoyed the Thrive Guide" and someone will get back to you.

Because you have taken the time to read through to this point it shows me that you are a 'completer', and that you have the required amount of desire to further yourself. In light of that, I want to offer you the chance to have an assessment and planning session with me, where I can help target these recommendations to you and your situation.

But first: Let's re-visit our earlier checklist!

Question			The Clinical Mentors Tips
Do you struggle being ON for your entire work week	NO	YES	Improve your skills to recharge the batteries
Do you ever feel anxious when new patients book in	NO	YES	Affirmations Learn from others
Do you feel EXCITED to tell people about your day when you get home	YES	NO	Third space Celebrate your wins
Do you have the expert knowledge in all areas of the body for assessment and treatment	YES	NO	Invest in yourself with quality PD (Potatoes and Salad)
Do you have people to learn from and make you the best clinician you can be	YES	NO	Ask for help Watch others Contact us
Do you bring home the best version of yourself after your day at work	YES	NO	Third Space Get changed/exercise Music
Does your evening or your sleep ever get disturbed due to your work day	NO	YES	Improve your sleep routine - it's your superpower



You're dominating these early concerns and you are on your way to becoming a GOOD practitioner. To learn more about yourself and how to become a GREAT practitioner, complete our LEAP: INITIAL SELF ASSESSMENT and get some free feedback from our team.	That's ok, hopefully some of our tips can help guide you in the right direction. We are here to help so check out our website www.theclinicalmentors.com and get in contact. To make our tips specific to you, go ahead and complete our LEAP INITIAL SELF ASSESSMENT and get some free feedback from our team
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On the next page is the self-assessment, ready for you to complete.
You can "Fill and Sign" it on your PDF program, or print and scan.

Once you're finished, email it to us theclinicalmentors@gmail.com
and we will get back to you with some feedback!

If you want any further information about our landmark program LEAP INTO PRACTICE then click on this link www.theclinicalmentors.com/leap



LEAP INTO PRACTICE



Initial Self Assessment

Complete, Save as *“Your Name”* and email it to theclinicalmentors@gmail.com

OR IF YOU HAVE DIFFICULTIES EMAIL US WITH ANY QUESTIONS

But before you ask us....YES IT'S FREE

We will provide feedback and get in contact with you to create a plan for you free of charge.

If you want to go one step further and take the LEAP INTO PRACTICE, you or your clinic director can see our course details and fees at www.theclinicalmentors.com/leap



WHY DID YOU BECOME A CLINICIAN?

WHO / WHERE ARE YOU?

CLINIC NAME / EMPLOYER NAME/ SELF EMPLOYED

YEARS PRACTICING/UNI LEVEL

WHAT 3 AREAS OF YOUR WORK WOULD YOU LIKE TO IMPROVE THE MOST?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

WHAT WOULD YOU BE EXCITED TO ACHIEVE IN YOUR CAREER IN 6 MONTHS TIME?

- 1.
- 2.

EXAMPLE KEY TARGETS

Number of clients per week: _____ Tiredness by the end of a work day: _____/10

Confidence with a new patient _____/10 Billings _____

WHAT ARE YOUR BEST QUALITIES AT WORK (CIRCLE/CHOOSE 5):

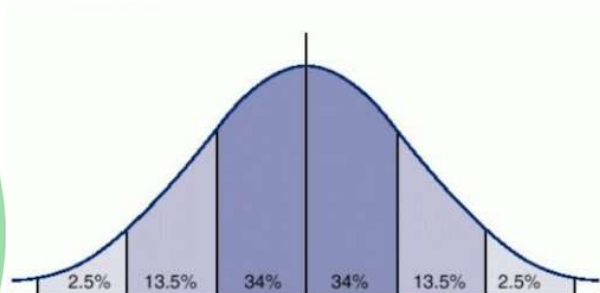
Caring Planned A hard worker Positive Passionate Proactive Selfless Thirsty for knowledge Confident Outgoing Entrepreneurial
Amazing with my hands Accountable Client focused Team focused Relatable Driven Self efficacious (I do things with a good effect)
A networker Consistent Productive A leader An effective teacher Competitive Able to make people feel at ease
A connector (I communicate well and connect with people easily)

IN WHICH QUALITIES DO YOU HAVE THE MOST ROOM FOR GROWTH (CIRCLE/CHOOSE 5)

Caring Planned A hard worker Positive Passionate Proactive Selfless Thirsty for knowledge Confident Outgoing Entrepreneurial
Amazing with my hands Accountable Client focused Team focused Relatable Driven Self efficacious (I do things with a good effect)
A networker Consistent Productive A leader An effective teacher Competitive Able to make people feel at ease
A connector (I communicate well and connect with people easily)

COMPARED TO YOUR COUNTERPARTS (IN YOUR OWN YEAR LEVEL AT UNIVERSITY) WHERE DO YOU FEEL YOU SIT

Put an X in one of the quadrants based on your grades/or your perceived skill levels.



WHEN I DID WELL IN SCHOOL I WAS MORE LIKELY TO SHOW OFF TO MY FRIENDS THAN STUDY HARDER FOR THE NEXT TEST

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

IF PEOPLE ARE RUDE TO ME, I JUST SHRUG IT OFF

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

MY GOALS IN MY CAREER ARE CLEAR

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I CAN WORK PRODUCTIVELY, EVEN WHEN I AM IN A LOUD AND MESSY WORK STATION

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I SEE MYSELF AS AMBITIOUS

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

WHEN LEARNING SOMETHING NEW I PREFER TO BE THROWN STRAIGHT INTO THE DEEP END

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I FEEL INFERIOR TO THE CURRENT CLINICAL TEAM AROUND ME

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I FEEL LESS MOTIVATED AND LESS PRODUCTIVE IN THE WINTER MONTHS

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

IF A CLIENT NEEDS TO SEE ME ON A FRIDAY, BUT I HAVE NO AVAILABILITIES, I WOULD RATHER STAY BACK FRIDAY NIGHT THAN GET THEM TO WAIT UNTIL MONDAY

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I DO TREATMENT PLANNING FOR ALL OF MY PATIENTS REGARDLESS OF THEIR INJURY OR DEMOGRAPHIC

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I PREFER TO REFER PEOPLE TO GYMS AND HOME PROGRAMS AS PHYSIO CLASSES ARE EXPENSIVE

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I WOULD RATHER FIX MY CLIENTS MYSELF THAN TEACH THEM HOW TO HELP THEMSELVES

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

THE BUSINESS I WORK FOR SHOULD PROVIDE ME WITH NEW PATIENTS SO I CAN BECOME SUCCESSFUL

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I FEEL COMFORTABLE SELLING MY CLINICAL ABILITY TO CLIENTS AND POTENTIAL REFERRERS (E.G. GP'S)

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I AM A PLANNED AND ORGANISED PERSON

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What systems do you use? _____

I ENJOY CALLING MY CLIENTS AFTER THEIR FIRST SESSION TO SEE HOW THEY ARE GOING

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I BELIEVE THAT MY JOB IS DONE WHEN I HAVE TREATED THE CLIENT TO THE POINT WHERE THEY HAVE NO PAIN

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

IF A CLIENT IN ACUTE PAIN CANNOT SEE ME TODAY I WOULD PREFER THEM TO WAIT 3 DAYS AND SEE ME, THAN RECOMMEND THEM TO SEE A TEAM MEMBER TODAY

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I AM GOOD AT LETTING GO OF THINGS AFTER THEY HAPPEN (ARGUMENTS, MISTAKES, BAD DAYS)

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I FEEL MY CLIENTS ARE LUCKY THAT THEY GET TO SEE ME AS I AM BETTER THAN A LOT OF CLINICIANS OUT THERE

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

AFTER TREATING 20 PATIENTS, I AM MORE LIKELY TO DWELL ON THE 2 BAD ONES THAN THE 18 GOOD ONES

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I STRUGGLE TO REDUCE MY NEGATIVE STRESS

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What do you do about it? _____

I AM SELF-MOTIVATED AND KNOW WHAT I WANT TO ACHIEVE IN THE NEXT 6 MONTHS OF MY CAREER

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I FEEL MY WORK IS STRESSFUL AND COULD CAUSE ME TO BURN OUT

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I GET 7-9 HOURS OF SLEEP EVERY NIGHT

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

WHEN I AM QUIET AT WORK I WORRY ABOUT NOT SEEING CLIENTS AND FOCUS ON MY NUMBERS

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

WHEN I HAVE A 60-MINUTE ADMIN BREAK I AM PRODUCTIVE FOR THE FULL 60 MINUTES

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I BELIEVE THAT INTELLIGENCE AND TALENT ARE TRAITS THAT PEOPLE ARE BORN WITH AND HAVE NO CONTROL OVER

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I AM THE MOST KNOWLEDGEABLE PERSON IN THE TREATMENT ROOM, SO THE CLIENT SHOULD LISTEN TO WHAT I BELIEVE IS RIGHT

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Elaborate _____

WHEN I TREAT SOMEONE WHO IS OBESE AND UNHEALTHY, I AM UNLIKELY TO TALK ABOUT EXERCISE AND WELLNESS

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

WHEN A CLIENT REQUESTS A RELAXING MASSAGE I GET ANNOYED AS I DIDN'T DO UNI TO BE A MASSEUSE

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

IF I CAN, I WOULD LIKE TO FIX THE PERSONS SYMPTOMS IN TWO SESSIONS AND NOT HAVE TO DO A TREATMENT PLAN

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I BELIEVE FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE LAST HANDOVER
MOMENT AT THE FRONT DESK

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

WHEN A CLIENT SELF-DISCHARGES AFTER I TOLD THEM WHAT THEY NEEDED TO DO I
FEEL LIKE A FAILURE

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I TREAT EVERY NECK INJURY WITH THE SAME TECHNIQUE BECAUSE THAT IS WHAT I AM
GOOD AT

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

IN ORDER TO IMPRESS A CLIENT I FEEL THE NEED TO GO ABOVE AND BEYOND THE
NORMAL CARE REQUIRED

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I WOULD RATHER PRACTICE SOMETHING I DO WELL THAN LEARN A NEW SKILL

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I BELIEVE BEING A TALENTED THERAPIST IS MORE VALUABLE THAN ONE WHO GIVES
MORE EFFORT

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

YOU CAN LEARN NEW THINGS, BUT YOU CAN'T REALLY CHANGE YOUR BASIC
INTELLIGENCE

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I GIVE PATIENTS THE SAME ADVICE NO MATTER WHETHER THEY ARE PAYING OR NOT
PAYING (FAMILY, TAC, WC)

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

IF SOMETHING DIDN'T WORK FOR ME (E.G. MCKENZIE THERAPY) I WOULDN'T
RECOMMEND IT TO MY CLIENTS

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

IT'S NOT FAIR THAT THE CLINICIANS WHO DO MORE MARKETING SEE MORE NP'S AS WE
ARE BOTH GOOD AT OUR JOB

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I FINISH WHATEVER I BEGIN (INCLUDING THIS LONG ASSESSMENT)

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Looking forward to talking to you soon

Marty

