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Five Chapter Preview

For Personal Trainer Development Center

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FOREWORD - BY DAX MOY

There aren't many individuals within the personal training profession that I'd write a personal foreword to their book for, yet when Greg asked me to put together an introduction to his latest creation I eagerly jumped at the opportunity. Why?

Quite simply, Greg is one of the most experienced trainers in the world, having clocked up tens of thousands of client contact hours over more than 30 years in-the-trenches as a fitness professional, and during this time has managed to maintain an open mind and an open heart to new ideas, concepts, and practices as they brush up against this adolescent industry of ours.

Better yet, he's managed to remain a thoughtful, humble, and generous individual who's still passionately in love with what he does and those he does it for which, in an industry of increasing cynicism, sets him apart from fully 99% of trainers who often fall more in love with the marketing practices associated with being a trainer than with being a trainer itself.

Lest you think this is some 'old boys network' backslapping going on here, I must admit to only having met Greg face to face for the first time about 6 weeks ago and before then only ever having known him through Facebook and online communities. We've never done the 'my good friend' cross referrals and affiliate-thing so common among strangers these days, and have never gained financially from exposing a single product to our 'lists' either (I always wonder why we call our tribal communities 'lists' and de- personalize them when we are supposed to be about 'personal' training).

Yet despite our personal acquaintance only having been made recently, I feel a deep abiding respect and trust for the man who I've seen share of himself so selflessly and consistently over the past 5 years I've watched him online. (Yes Greg, I've watched you!) :)

That's why I'm really pleased to be part of his latest offerings to help the profession to remember (or to recognize for the first time) the amazingly important and powerful role we play with our clients and how it's often the small things (which really aren't that small) that tend to make the biggest impact on the lives we touch during the course of our working lives.

Greg shares the teachings of literally decades of experience through a series of reflections on conversations that have often occurred during the treadmill warm-up portion of his training sessions, an often overlooked element by junior trainers, and reveals not-so-secret secrets, strategies, skills and the 'special sauce' that has created client retention that averages 20 years and more.

I urge you to read Greg's stories. Not just some, but all, as buried within the lines of each one is a prescription for making both a great living and a great difference in what is arguably the most important profession in the world. Being a trainer is easy these days. A weekend certification and you're well on your way to earning a decent living. Yet being a GREAT trainer is, as my Nan used to say 'a different kettle of fish' (I think Greg may have taught her that when she was a little girl... Just joking Greg!) and is a mix of both art and science.

This may not be a science-based book, but the art that Greg shares will dramatically transform your career... if you apply it.

Truth, joy and love,

Dax Moy - The UK's Leading Personal Training Coach Author Of "The MAGIC Hundred Goal Achievement Program"

1 - YOUR TREADSIDE MANNER IS PART OF YOUR PRODUCT

Do you remember the very first product you ever offered to your prospects and clients? Think back long, long ago when you were first starting out.

Your first product was *time with you*, the trainer who would provide an excellent experience and proven results in record time.

You packaged yourself in how you dressed and carried yourself. You enthusiastically introduced the components of your product one by one, your expertise in exercise progression, your supportive motivational elements, and your guidance needed to reach their goals. You used your environment to help set the stage for this great product, you offered a guarantee with your product, and you priced out your product accordingly.

Prospects became clients when they liked the look and the promise of the product they were buying. And if you, the product, delivered as stated, most of them continued to purchase more time with you, the Trainer.

If, on the other hand, many of them did not renew their time with you, what did you do? Did you go back to the drawing board to recreate your product? Or perhaps you added some 'special features' like discounts, additional assessments, or maybe a free pedometer or nutrition/exercise record log.

Take a look back at your original product, and take a look now, compare them.

Back then were you so determined to help people that your care and concern shone forth ever so brightly in your excellent treadside manner? Back then did you individualize each client so they felt they were your favorite client and they basked in the attention and love they got from you?

Your treadside manner is what sells your product, you, time after time. That treadside manner is what your clients tell others about, it's the reason they love you and stay with you. It's the largest component of the product you offer.

In the way that some patients prefer a doctor who is all business and others prefer a doctor who will hold their hand, so too it goes with Personal Trainers.

Do you have an innate sense of what each person wants or needs to carry on, to commit, to succeed? If not, simply ask them, and then deliver it.

Today, right now, how many of your clients tell other people, "I know I'm one of Greg's favorite clients"? Or favorite groups, or favorite classes? Those are the clients that love your treadside manner and have connected with you through it.

If your treadside manner is adaptable to individual desires, if you mirror them, and give them what they need as individuals, you will renew the majority of your clients, no matter how diverse.

Does your current treadside manner shine forth with individualized attention that balances your client preferences in the relationship and the business of training?

Don't know? Ask some of your favorite clients if they realize they are your favorite client then listen and watch for their response. It just may make your day!

2 - LISTEN WITH A PURPOSE

At any given point during the day or night you can enter your gym and be greeted by familiar sounds of clanging equipment, straining clients, encouraging trainers, the news channel, music and a hubbub of voices mixed in. The familiarity of all these sounds is comforting to your subconscious when you are on track with your goals and want to be there. That same familiarity of sounds is not comforting when you are stressed, not on track, and don't want to be there at that particular time.

We HEAR familiar sounds passively. They just happen and enter our ears. It is our choice if they go further into our conscious level. That choice to let the sounds in is called LISTENING. Listening is active.

Have you ever been in your gym and the familiar sounds have been in the background of your mind without you paying attention when all of a sudden there is a larger, deep thud that you don't normally hear and all the background noise and voices stop instantly so all you hear is the news channel? In that split second the unfamiliarity of sounds raised an alarm in your brain and you got right into action to not only listen, but to see and investigate what happened.

You knew it probably wasn't a good thing.

Sometimes it takes a shift in sounds to get our attention. Sometimes we are so pre-occupied with other things that we are not paying attention to something that we should. Other than our business itself, the most important thing we should be paying attention to is our clients. They pay our bills and give us our livelihood. They help us build our business when we pay attention to them, when we really listen to them. They can tear it down when they feel we aren't listening to them, their needs, their concerns.

Purposeful listening while you have your client on the treadmill can really open your eyes to possibilities and opportunities. It can also help you detect potential problems, build rapport, and create a trusting relationship that is so important to people before they open up and reveal very much about themselves or their lives.

There is also a big difference between listening and purposeful listening. When you listen you can answer a question or return a comment. With purposeful listening you can delve deeper into a topic that will lead to a more productive dialogue, a stronger relationship, and more profit in your business.

Purposeful listening has gotten me leads to many of my clients and many corporate accounts, too. Purposeful listening is how I've been able to keep many of my clients more than 10, 15, and 20 years, helping me grow my business and enrich my life.

Now, go meet with your next client and ask them a purposeful question and really listen. It will lead somewhere good when you listen purposefully.

3 - LISTENING TO YOUR INVESTMENT

"It was like breaking up with a girlfriend." - When one of my trainers came to me with this statement, I heard and saw his frustration with a client who said, "You're a great trainer, but..."

This client/trainer relationship had been a three year 'hearing but not listening' tug of war as the client denied and refused to stop certain lifestyle behaviors outside of the gym that were thwarting the efforts of trainer and client in the gym.

Trust and communication between trainer and client are central to setting and achieving goals and fulfilling the vision. A few minutes at a time, a few days each week, they communicate their very life to you, creating a bond of friendship, trust, and mutual work (or play).

Your client/trainer relationships are investments you make in your business.

Sometimes those relationships stay strong and continue to grow year after year. Sometimes they deteriorate, or never get off the ground from the start. Some are a combination of ups and downs, with a few twists mixed in.

Listen and you can hear what is important to them. Listen between the lines and you'll hear what makes them tick. "Listen" to their facial expressions, their body language, and their choice of words as they respond to their latest measurement or assessment results. That moment is a window of opportunity to grow that relationship investment to new heights.

Listen and watch. You may see and hear joy and a sense of accomplishment, jubilation; one of the moments every personal trainer lives for. This is the client we all want, the one whose accountability produces the work, results, and achievement.

If you see dread in their eyes, hear excuses coming from their mouth, defeat in the sag of their body, they are speaking to you loud and clear. There are some obstacles in their life, in their habits, in their thinking. Some have unsupportive family members, some have deep seeded emotional eating issues, and some are party animals outside the gym. These people who have sabotage in their daily life will not achieve their goals unless they face that obstacle and make some determined and definite change.

This is the point where you, as their trainer, must step up your communication with them. Ask them the difficult questions and don't settle for evasive answers. Acknowledge their struggle and help them find the determination to overcome those obstacles and rise to the next level. Otherwise, you've lost that client even if they continue working out with you.

By filling a time slot and going through the motions, that relationship is no longer built on trust and real goals. If you continue to "train" them, you have "settled" for an unfulfilling trainer/client relationship that can hinder your growth.

Listen well to your investment with your ears, your eyes, and your heart. Don't settle for an unfulfilling trainer/client relationship, because your business will only grow in the direction you grow.

4 - TREADMILL TOPICS TO EMBRACE AND AVOID

Toastmasters offers an impromptu opportunity at their meetings called Table Topics. Saturday Night Live had a segment they called Coffee Talk. I have what I call Treadmill Topics. This is my opportunity to build a strong relationship with my clients. As they warm up on the treadmill we have conversation and I can learn a lot about them, and share some about me. We strengthen our bond as we work toward achieving their goals. I am also finding out how I can serve them better, whom they know that I can get a referral to, and opportunities to keep strengthening that bond.

Here are some Quick Silver Topics (money in your pocket) I use:

Profession/Work Life

- Where they work
- What they do
- What they find most interesting about what they do
- What they find most challenging about what they do
- If they could do anything, would they still do what they are doing?
- How long have they done that?
- How long have they been there?
- Who to contact for a corporate fitness program, if they don't have one
- How their corporate fitness program is going, if they have one - if it's working, why are they with you?
- Their dreams for their future

Summary: If they are looking to grow, get promoted, change occupations, etc. you may know something you can share - a contact, an opportunity, an opening, etc. If you are looking to grow, they may know something they will share with you - a contact, referral, recommendation, working knowledge of a corporate process, etc.

Family/Home Life

- Children
- Spouse
- Pets
- Food they eat, times they eat
- What makes their family special?
- Kids schooling
- Kid's future schooling / military, etc. – Their dreams for their family's future

Summary: A person's family, especially kids, is often a source of joy and pride (yes, headaches and worries, too). Share those joys (and headaches) with them; you will be strengthening your relationship with them.

Social/Activity Life

- Hobbies
- Individual activities
- Group activities
- Church
- Alma mater, alumni?
- Sports
- Personal best/weekend warrior

Summary: These are usually fun and interesting times for your clients. They belong to something larger than themselves, they challenge themselves through these activities, or they just plain enjoy them. Share that joy with them and you may find yourself with another whole group for boot camp.

In the course of doing business, the most important element is the human element. Relationship and communication will help you keep them as clients and make them ready, willing, and able to provide you with other prospects. Don't overlook the opportunities for growth in your own business that your current clients can help provide to you. Use my Treadmill Topics and develop some of your own and watch your prospect list and your business grow.

Here are some Quick Sand Topics I NEVER use (engulfed in controversy):

- Religion
- Sex & Extra Marital Affairs
- Gossip
- Politics
- Other Clients
- Crossing Professional Boundaries
- Any Topic where your client has obvious extreme views one way or another
- Personal issues*

*Double Quick Sand Topic to never, ever use:

- Never bring your hardships, complaints, problems, or any kind of personal issue into the working relationship. It's one thing to share a tidbit of how you overcame something that your client is facing at the current time. It is inappropriate and unprofessional to bring your personal issues before a client. It's also a big turn-off and you risk losing that client as well as any prospects they may have recommended.

Summary: In any business you want to build strong relationships that help promote and nurture the bond that keeps your clients coming back. It's not only the results you give them, it's also your "bedside manner", your personality, your willingness to give them that little extra attention...All relationships have the potential for disaster. If you stay away from these topics and stick with the ones listed in the Quick Silver section, you will be building strong bonds that will help grow your business. You will be able to get more referrals and leads from your clients because they find you caring, trustworthy, and respectful, as well as knowledgeable. Stay away from controversy. Stick with the topics near and dear to their heart, and relevant to their life. It is all about them.

5 - FINE TUNED FOCUS HELPS YOU FIND MORE TIME

Much like you, I run boot camps, do personal and small group training, corporate boot camps and wellness programs, run a number of businesses, speak, write, and still have the endless communications to deal with in addition to staying up on the industry research, trends, and discoveries.

And I have a family and a social life.

One thing I did that helped me in a very big way was to *focus on one thing*. Not wanting any aspect of my business to suffer, I found the common denominator and created the focus from there.

My focus: health & fitness.

My message: Without regular exercise and proper nutrition, the body will begin to deteriorate into a state of disease.

My menu of services: The same as before.

My marketing: All geared toward the benefits of health and fitness. Yes, some products and classes have more marketing copy that is geared specifically to that product or class, yet they all start with health and fitness. That is the bottom line.

So, what I did was clearly identify the focus of my business as creating health and fitness in everyone. That way, no matter who I am talking with (in business), the subject is always health & fitness as I assess their needs and desires, then steer them in the direction of the product/service that suits them best.

What changed?

My brain focus.

My clarity of thinking.

My purpose.

The speed with which my brain is tuned into the conversation or response is fantastic. I can pull in examples from any type of class or session for anyone I am talking to and match the benefits the prospect is looking for.

The reality is that if you chunk down regular exercise and proper nutrition far enough, you wind up with health and fitness. Yes, you get a toned and/or muscular body, you get greater balance, agility, and flexibility, but you also get health benefits, a greater quality of life, and longevity.

Available on Amazon.com - <http://tinyurl.com/9asjv4>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR GREG JUSTICE, MA

“Training veteran Greg Justice didn’t just get in on the leading edge of an emerging industry, he helped create it. Opening the first personal training studio in Kansas City, Justice has, over the years, laid the groundwork for countless others to follow.

Being a trailblazer, however, takes a willingness to plow into the thicket of uncertainty. It means forging ahead with nothing but faith. As one of the true leaders of the personal training industry, Justice now has the benefit of hindsight and the insight of experience, both of which he eagerly offers up to the hundreds of trainers he has mentored.”

– Shelby Murphy, Editor, Personal Fitness Professional magazine Greg Justice, is an international best-selling author, speaker and fitness entrepreneur.

Greg opened **AYC Health & Fitness**, Kansas City’s Original Personal Training Center, in May 1986, and has personally trained more than 47,000 one-on-one sessions. Today, AYC specializes in corporate wellness as well as personal training.

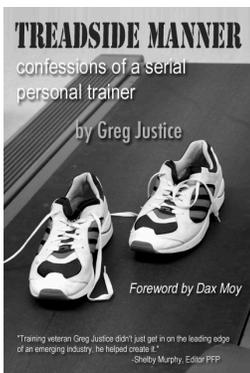
Greg holds a master’s degree in HPER (exercise science) (1986) from Morehead State University, Morehead, KY and a bachelor’s degree in Health & Physical Education (1983) from Morehead State University, Morehead, KY.

He has worked with athletes and non-athletes of all ages and physical abilities and served as a conditioning coach at the collegiate level. He also worked with the Kansas City Chiefs, during the offseason, in the early 1980’s.

He has been actively involved in the fitness industry for more than a quarter of a century as a club manager, owner, personal fitness trainer, and corporate wellness supervisor where he worked with more than 64 corporations. Greg writes articles for many international publications and websites including Exercise & Health, IDEA Fitness Journal, American Fitness Magazine, Protraineronline.com, Fitcommerce.com, is a featured columnist for Corporate Wellness Magazine, and has a monthly column called “Treadmill Talks” in Personal Fitness Professional (PFP) magazine. He has authored books titled “Lies & Myths about Corporate Wellness”, “Treadside Manner – Confessions of a Serial Personal Trainer” and was a contributing author for two other books.

Greg served as an adjunct professor of exercise science at Avila University and currently serves on the advisory board of two personal training schools. He mentors and instructs trainers interested in Personal Training and Corporate Wellness through his Coaching Programs and Corporate Boot Camp System class, which spans nine countries, 45 states and six Canadian Provinces.

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