

Blog Post / Podcast January 19, 2018

As our podcast is shifting and we have listeners who also are investors, I want to make a few things clear about P5 Health Ventures, P5 Protocols and our objectives and strategies here. Our mission is to materially increase affordability and access to high quality healthcare - for all, now! In other words, to democratize high quality care. On a functional basis, our main strategy is to ask the best questions until we get the answers we need. We ask questions of interviewees for the podcast, of entrepreneurs, of industry executives. Evidently, it is through experience, our disciplined process and analysis that we develop actionable conclusions. But notice these are conclusions, not facts. We always reserve the right to change our mind, something we wish more in the medical profession did with greater alacrity. As Keynes once wrote in a book in 1940, "When my information changes, I alter my conclusions. What do you do, sir?"

With medicine, each person's facts are different and therefore, to optimize outcomes, personalized strategies, tactics and conclusions should be drawn and acted on. In this next generation of medicine, it already is more frequently occurring. It is known as integrative or functional medicine. This is into what we are investing part of our time, attention, energy and money. For your health or your patients' health, we think that too should be integral to you.

In this podcast and in business, we are expanding and leading our ecosystem toward viable solutions primarily for chronic diseases including autoimmune, diabetes, respiratory and cardiac as well as cancer and other serious ailments. At the risk of sounding redundant, our intention is to focus on the here and now - the healthcare problems that are solvable or at least can be dramatically improved without seemingly eternal research and development - i.e. avoid those binary outcome situations that have solutions that always seem to be just around the corner.

The irony of our historical one podcast per week posting is that it is too slow. Information is mounting at such a rapid pace that we feel P5 Protocols we can best serve our community with selected comments that include concurring and differing perspectives and solutions to similar problems. Indeed, one size does not fit all. By example, if we want to look at breast cancer, we may look at everything from the role of genetics to metabolism to stress to ferret out what statistics are accurate and more importantly what solutions are already helping. Did you see the January 11, 2018 Lancet study results at [http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanonc/article/PIIS1470-2045\(17\)30891-4/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanonc/article/PIIS1470-2045(17)30891-4/fulltext). There was no statistical difference between BRCA positive or negative women in survival rate in under 40 women with breast cancer. Did Angelina Jolie do the right thing for herself? For women of the world?

We also hope that by taking less of your time for the podcast itself, you will more frequently engage in dialog that will help us be better at making you better. So, some of you may listen or read for a few minutes, while others have the option to link out to extensive content. This becomes what we would call a hybrid of unique insights into what we see and think about the business of healthcare, while leaving you with interviews and insights from top practitioners and healthcare leaders that can help improve your own health or practice of healthcare. Again, we will keep our long-form interviews, though they will continue but fade from prominence.

Our two main topics remain: 1. Sharing the protocols or programs for health that have clear results and should be more widespread; and 2. Identifying the companies and institutions that are providing solutions that are leading healthcare to its future. Note that over time, we will increasingly be looking overseas. The U.S. does not have all the answers and many foreign countries are rife with great practitioners and institutions. After all, the 5 in P5 is based on the five elements of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

As I said earlier, the traditional one interview per week feels too slow. We are in multiple crises in this country with mental health out of control, $\frac{2}{3}$ of the population anywhere from obese to Type I diabetic, endless new cancer cases (more than decades ago when Nixon declared the war on cancer) and even the current worst flu in a generation. By example, last week, Sean and I were in San Francisco for what I would call Healthcare Week, historically known as the JP Morgan Healthcare Conference. While hotels were gouging customers at \$1 to \$2,000 per night (we did an AirBnB), Sean and I saw endless homeless people, many who clearly suffer from mental illness that many of the startups want to solve. The dichotomy between the haves and haves-not was bigger than ever - on full display - in the heart of the capital of Silicon Valley - no offense to Palo Alto, Cupertino, San Jose and the like. I don't know if the city and people of San Francisco are doing anything. In fact, they may be doing a lot, which perversely may be luring in many from out of town to take advantage of their services, but the streets felt outright creepy and unsafe; not a tenable situation. And I say this with endless empathy for those afflicted.

So this leads us back to what what we at P5 Health Ventures try to do every day: invest in and build scalable technology-enabled companies that help people now; that have a material impact on society at large and not just those that can afford it out of pocket. So whether it is this podcast, P5 Protocols, our firm, or our foundation that we expect to soon launch, we focus on our society's problems and building or uncovering accessible, easy to use, lower cost solutions. There are enough people and capital chasing the big breakthroughs for which countless of millions today will not benefit. I lost my dad. I lost my sister. I have lost friends or read of countless senseless deaths, many of which were either preventable or could have had better paths. We want to have a positive impact now and believe that perhaps man's seemingly endless quest for complexity is simply a byproduct of not putting in the time, up front, to find the simplest solution.

We will continue on the topics we favor including cancer, chronic diseases of all kinds and population wellness. Underneath all of these, we will be looking to add our questions and insight into comprehensive treatment programs in general and where the most successful programs overlap, including nutrition, mind/body programs, exercise regimens, detoxification systems and other methodologies. This leads us to the platforms that will deliver it. About three years ago, I said to my GI, your problem is you acutely treat a chronic disease instead of chronically treat an acute disease. As Terry Fadem, our advisor, once posited: I'm not sure there is such thing as a chronic disease. Perhaps they are all acute.

For now, there are no reimbursement, facilities nor services at Cornell / New York Hospital for my doctor to treat me with meditation, yoga, acupuncture, qigong, CBD, vitamins and other supplements and even the two biggies: proper nutrition and stress counseling. Thus, we believe one of two things will happen. Either, the new platforms that we are backing will become major independent players (or acquired by incumbents), or they will become integrated into the system, replacing the old ways.

We believe that only technology enabled digital health solutions can bridge the gap between the haves and haves-not in healthcare. We are investing in those solutions. For example, in upcoming podcasts, you will hear about Cohero, one of our portfolio companies focused on enabling higher quality pulmonary care that remotely tracks patient drug use and lung function, thus eliminating numerous doctor visits while creating greater insight to improve care for all. You will hear about a new startup we are behind that mixes socialization and exercise for the elderly, inexpensively providing solutions to the two biggest risk factors for early death; lack of mobility and socialization. You will also hear about Babyscripts, a maternity focused company that is providing solutions for high risk pregnancies both for private pay and medicaid patients. And we have a lot more coming.

As mentioned in our newsletter, John Sarno had a profound impact on my thinking about medicine and we will explore content from a few of his books. Dr. Sarno was the creator of the concept of **Tension Myositis Syndrome, TMS**, another name for **psychosomatic medicine**. At P5 Protocols, we are big believers that the mind has inordinate power over the body but that the energy, chemicals, and feedback go both ways. There is a growing contingent of companies that are going after this space and we will be interviewing and hopefully finding one in which to invest in the near future. Psychosomatic medicine is implicated in the placebo effect, back pain, many diseases and the like. Its roots go back to Ayurvedic and Traditional Chinese Medicine and likely before those systems were even developed.

I wanted to quote several people but I got stuck going from book to book and had endless quotes. Needless to say, in modern medicine, the best books that I have read on the role of the mind in medicine are:

[Mind Over Back Pain](#) and [The Divided Mind](#) by John Sarno - and he has others

[Anatomy of an Illness](#) and [Head First](#) by Norman Cousins - he laughed his way back to health - and did you hear the one about endorphins and what the body can do when the soul is happy!

[When the Body Says No](#) by Gabor Mate, Holocaust survivor and a man with wonderful insight into the role of the mind and how mental patterns can lead to illness

[Molecules of Emotion](#) by Candace Pert, the creator of the field of psychoneuroimmunology

[The Language of Fertility](#) by Niravi Payne. I was her patient in the late 1990's. The book title is a bit hokey but the material pertains to all health issues. She was a Jewish woman who married an African American man and marched behind Martin Luther King, Jr. She was the best! I miss her dearly

[Cure](#) by Jo Marchant on the placebo effect, the elephant in the room for any doctor that doesn't prescribe psychotherapy

Perhaps there is validity to my friend's comment that before you can move to California, you have to read Eckhart Tolle's [The Power of Now](#), which I also recommend you read.

And I will end with a quote. I went to my first integrative medicine conference in 1997 - hosted by Jeffrey Bland. I was talking to Barry Sears, the creator of the 40/30/30 diet. He had just come from a conference that Andy Weil had attended. A woman went up to him and said: I eat vegan, I do yoga every day, I meditate, I do everything right and I got cancer. What should I do? He apparently responded (and I paraphrase): Relax. Have a steak and a glass of wine. Enjoy yourself.

So relax and don't take life too seriously too often!

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Until next time...