



RLD

Restoring Life Dispatch

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The Restoring Life Dispatch is a monthly resource for orthopedics and leadership. My hope is to provide a single hub with timely news and credible sources that are beneficial to both work and life. Additionally, I'll share what lessons I am learning from my own experiences in leading a small orthopedic business. Be on the lookout at the end of every month for The RLD and please share with others! Thank you for your commitment to restoring life in the orthopedic community by daily serving patients who have lost a critical part of their life and desire to get back to living!



Clay Steves

HHS Price Transparency Ruling and Responses

Clay Steves

Following an [Executive Order by the President](#), in November of 2019 the Department of Health and Human Services [announced](#) that [CMS](#) will require hospitals and insurance companies to publicly disclose, via a real-time website, their negotiated in-network and out-of-network pricing agreements for all healthcare items and services. This announcement was met with [immediate opposition](#). Within hours of the HHS announcement, the AHA and other insurance and hospital organizations announced a lawsuit opposing the ruling.

The foundational question at hand is this: **Should patients have clear, real-time cost information available to them prior to choosing a healthcare provider?**

My belief is unequivocally yes. In a free market and capitalistic system, it is better if patients have accurate and timely information to make the best healthcare decision for themselves and their family. Of course, there are copious logistical challenges to executing such a system. This is much of the hospital and insurance companies [argument against the proposal](#). They passionately state that the release of this type of pricing data would be more confusing and detrimental to the patient. But I believe if we shifted the focus and [immense resources](#) of these health care systems and insurance companies from keeping this type of price information secret to empowering patients in the process, these logistical challenges would be solved in short order.

Part of my passion and why I land where I do on this debate is I have been this patient. In the summer of 2015, my childhood best friend died in his battle against alcoholism. As someone who has battled substance abuse himself, you can imagine how hard his passing hit me. That summer was HOT and in grieving his loss, I ran over and over again in that heat to process his passing away. One day at the office I began experiencing horrid pain in my lower side and was taken to an ER in my hometown. I had a CT and numerous other tests but unfortunately, they weren't able to find my root issue. They hopped me up on morphine, hydrated me and sent me on my way. The following day I nearly collapsed again in pain. Through some personal connections I went to another facility in town this time. I had another CT performed and bloodwork run this time. Thankfully they determined I likely had bilateral kidney infections and my kidneys were failing from the overwork and stress I had put them under. I was treated with antibiotics and I physically recovered quickly from the whole ordeal. Then I received the two bills months later. You guessed it. The same CT procedure at the first facility was TWICE the cost of the CT at the second facility. Identical CT, twice the cost.

I have no doubt this experience shaped me and my beliefs around this subject. As an [orthopedic device distributor](#), I am challenged to look in the mirror and see how Habakkuk can play a part in the transparency of implant pricing to empower patients to make the best value decision in their healthcare journey. And just as there are challenges of execution for many within the healthcare system following this ruling, Habakkuk too will face challenges to make this type of pricing data available for patients. But isn't doing the right thing for the patient, even when it is hard, the very thing we are called to do?

Clear Message, Can't Lose

Quincy Taylor

In the next few paragraphs, I am not only going to save you money, but help MAKE you money. And it's as simple as one word - CLARITY.

Time and time again, I see marketing campaigns that are an [enormous waste of money](#). Whether it's a billboard, waiting room pamphlets, or Facebook ads, marketing campaigns can be expensive and often times have just once chance to stick with our audience. What are you trying to tell your customers through that 14' x 48' ad on the side of the highway? If you're not sure, then I can guarantee your customer isn't sure either.

Here's the kicker. People don't buy the best products or services. You heard that right. It doesn't matter how many years of school, hours of research, or amount of money you've poured out, in the end the consumer will buy the product that is the easiest for them to understand. We're in a race to get people to understand why they need our products and services.

And if [Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs](#) taught us anything, it's that consumers are looking to do two things:

- 1) Survive
- 2) Thrive

Now we're lucky that within the orthopedic community, these needs can be tangibly met. The before and after for your patient when they use your "product", aka surgery, is physical. However, the downfall is that every orthopedic service has this same advantage. So what makes yours stand apart?

Maybe you offer the best implants in the metro. Perhaps you utilize robotics. Or maybe you guarantee a painless process...if this is you, please call me because I'd love to know your secret.

But the goal is CLEAR - If you clarify your message, customers WILL listen. Help your patients understand why your specific methods of surgery improve their survival and ability to survive. And ditch the jargon to avoid the [curse of knowledge](#)! Patient's don't need to know every aspect of how the surgery will be performed – that's why you're there! Patients just want to know you can meet the need they have in the best way possible.

And remember - the clearest communicator will always win.

Forwarded this newsletter? Don't miss out on next month's ortho and leadership review.

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Turning Pro

Clay Steves

“It is one thing to study war and another to live the warrior’s life.” - Telamon of Arcadia, mercenary of the fifth century B.C.

I have been writing a book for the last 5 years. Well, better said, I have been *attempting* to write a book for the past 5 years. It is inside of me, I have started with great conviction numerous times and subsequently stopped shortly after every time I start. I have given numerous excuses, mostly to myself, every time I go through this dance. I am too busy. I am not a writer. Who will even read it? The story has already been told by others who are more qualified and equipped than me to share. My list of excuses went on and on. Until January of this year.

After a [powerful message](#) from Pastor Craig Groeschel from the series “Warrior”, I was sharing my very clear answer to the question of what I would regret in my life if it ended today with a fantastic leader from my church. I would regret that I never finished my book. As a former member of the U.S. Army who served multiple deployments in active war zones, this leader knew all about the battlefield of the mind and a warrior’s mindset. In our conversation, he recommended I read [The War of Art](#) by Steven Pressfield for tactical ways to overcome my previous behavioral patterns while writing. [Gates of Fire](#) by the same author (and recommended to me by my little brother who is active in the U.S. Army now) was a fantastic read so I jumped

at the recommendation. My main takeaway from the book was this: to complete my book, or any other artistic undertaking, I needed to stop thinking like an amateur and turn pro.

“The amateur plays for fun. The professional plays for keeps.”

“To the amateur, the game is his avocation. To the pro it’s his vocation.”

“The amateur is a weekend warrior. The professional is there seven days a week.”

Again, this is a mindset, not a literal occupation. So that was it. In January of 2020 I turned pro as a writer. It was my mindset that was holding me back. And nearly every weekday since, I have gotten up 30 minutes earlier than in 2019 and have written for that 30 minutes. Early on there were many days I wanted to roll over, and I literally had to say to myself, out loud, “Nope, not today. I turned pro. Get out of bed and get to writing.” Have I missed mornings? Of course. But I don’t respond like an amateur anymore. Amateurs miss one day and lose the habit. Pros miss one day and get back on the horse. And less than 2 months into the year I am 18% through version 1 of my story. I have already written more than the previous 5 years combined. Why? Because I turned pro. And pros play for keeps.

So what is your project that you’ve always wanted to do and haven’t prioritized? Another way to challenge yourself is to ask the following question: If your life ended today, what would you regret not having done? Now go do it. Stop making excuses and turn pro. [Get after it.](#)

Miss out on last month's RLD? No stress! Click [here](#) for every issue ever!

Real Life Iron Man?

Clay Steves

The globalization of our world and instant access to a deluge of perpetual “Breaking News” updates has made us almost numb to what is in fact, history in the making. The rise of the internet and our smart phones have allowed incessant noise to take the same input space in our brains as truly significant moments. That’s why I love when I do come across a legitimate story of the power of the human will. And when that will is able to rally others around it, leverage whatever resources necessary and overcome any obstacle in its way to achieve something never accomplished before, I love to admire and learn from their endeavor.

I recently came across [this story](#) about the first autonomous jet pack vertical take-off and was blown away at the courage and audacity those involved had to pull it off (Notice the patch on his uniform: Human Drive Knows No Limits). It reminded me of when Felix Baumgartner [broke](#) Joe Kittinger's [freefall record](#) by riding a space ship up to 128,000 feet and jumping out in 2012. I wasn't alive when the great Space Race took place or when we first landed on the moon, but moments like this remind me that we haven't conquered everything and history can still be made. We just have to sift through all the noise to find it.

