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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

## When Tragedy Strikes

*Clay Steves*

Tragedy rears its painful head in numerous ways. Sometimes it is a slow build that we sense and dwell in as the crescendo builds and overwhelms us. Other times it comes out of nowhere and just slams us in the chest, taking our breath away and knocking us into a daze. Sometimes it is completely out of our control and thrust onto us by unforeseen circumstances. Other times it's completely within our grasp and we own the tragic pain.

No matter how deep it cuts, tragedy always changes us. It leaves behind a wound, and eventually a scar, that we will carry with us forever.

This month our Oklahoma orthopedic community lost one of our own [to a tragedy](#). It doesn't make sense. It hurts. It is confusing, maddening and unnerving. My heart breaks for those close to this painful event. As I prayed and processed through this story, I was constantly reminded of [Psalm 34:18](#),

The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

Oh how we need that reminder when the overwhelming weight of a tragic pain is crushing us, disorienting us. When we don't know where to turn or how to understand, how soothing it is to know we are not alone and God is with us, holding us, in the midst of the pain. He never promises to remove the pain from us, but He does tell us he will be near to us in the midst of it.

While I was not personally close to Dr. Kelly, one of my closest friends is right in the middle of this struggle. I am grieving and hurting with those that I love, as they tread through the wake of struggle his passing leaves behind. I am also reminded to lead with grace and empathy for those we encounter, for I am often blind to the battles that others are facing. We all have our struggles and many of them are fought on the inside, unseen to those around us. And in response to a tragedy, everyone will process their pain and confusion in their own unique way. So I encourage you to lead with grace and patience to those that are mourning, especially when they express and process their response differently than you.

Regarding tough seasons, I heard a great leader once say, "You are almost always just getting out of one, in the midst of one, or about to enter into one." That is the nature of our broken, and tragic, world. If this tragedy affected you personally, you are in our team's prayers and thoughts in the season ahead. If we can serve you, your family or those around you in any way, please do not hesitate to reach out.

'To all who mourn in Israel, he will give a crown of beauty for ashes, a joyous blessing instead of mourning, festive praise instead of despair. In their righteousness, they will be like great oaks that the Lord has planted for his own glory.' [Isaiah 61:3](#)

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## **Black Lives Matter**

*Quincy Taylor*

This sweeping chant, which has now generated a movement, is no longer something we can pass off to more “passionate” or “outspoken” individuals in hopes they will fix the issue. In fact, it’s no longer up to individuals. Companies have begun to speak out and use their platforms to initiate change.

Corporate America has surprised many with their vocal support of the Black Lives Matter movement. Groups like [AAOS](#), [Hospitals](#), and [Orthopedic & Sports Physical Therapy](#) have aligned themselves through rallies, statements and initiatives.

It’s important that companies understand their power and influence in a capitalistic America. Whether your company is 1,000’s strong or 15 strong - your company’s ability to market and hold a platform is powerful. But it’s not just the C-Suite individuals that should be speaking up. It requires the entire hierarchy of a company.

The Harvard Business Review outlines some great points in [their article](#) about how U.S. companies can help combat racism.

So how are promoting equality and fighting for change? How is your company actively marching towards progress? It requires active participation from every department. Marketing, Sterile Processing, HR, scrub techs, PAs and scheduling teams are all included. Is your recruitment team openly seeking diversity? Does your social media market to a diverse audience? Are your employees initiating hard and honest conversations? What can your company begin doing to advocate for progress?

I’ll leave you with this quote from the Harvard Business Review article, “Racism isn’t just Black people’s problem; it’s everyone’s problem because it erodes the fabric of society. Leaders at every level must use their power, platforms, and resources to help employees and communities overcome these challenges and build a better world for us all.”

We have to do better America. And together we can.

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## **"Thank You for Going Rep-Less"**

*Clay Steves*

I began to hear rumblings months before I was able to confirm. There was a surgeon in our town, one of many over the years, who had chosen to go [rep-less](#). He had focused on a specific

procedure where he felt he wasn't getting the value of service for the cost of his implants and he chose instead to purchase implants directly from a manufacturer.

I didn't have a personal relationship with this surgeon at the time, but through a couple of mutual acquaintances, I was able to secure a meeting with him. When we sat down together I went straight to the point.

"I think it is awesome that you went rep-less."

He just stared at me with skepticism. I went on to share that, first, I loved any [disruption to the status quo](#), because all too often in health care, and especially in orthopedics, the status quo of large alliances, [hidden pricing](#) and good old boy relationships cause immense inefficiencies that are wasting hordes of resources. Second, I told him that I loved it because I believed his rep-less experience would, in the end, prove the enduring value of a high level, exceptional sales consultant.

And so it played out. The surgeon's facility began to battle countless supply chain and intra-operative challenges. It got to the point where they were considering bringing on additional employees to alleviate the extra burden the rep-less system was adding to their OR staff. That was when we connected again and I proposed letting our organization step in, relieve their challenges and partnering together. I assured him we could keep the cost for his implants at the price point he needed and we would serve him, his team and his facility with exceptional service.

More than two years later, we continue to have the honor of serving this surgeon and his patients. We have worked on multiple other opportunities together that all provided value to every party involved, most importantly the patients we were serving. Why? Because we were able to coalesce together toward a common goal. We were able to align our objectives of providing patients exceptional outcomes at an economically sustainable price point, have crucial conversations to maintain open communication, and transparently deal with ever evolving challenges as they came up. This should be our standard in the orthopedic community. Surgeons, hospitals, GPO's, distributors, manufacturers, reps, all of us. Our goal should be to find common alignment towards delivering exceptional results to patients in need, delivering true value, no matter the stability of our environment.

In light of the unstable and volatile health care world since the COVID disruption, this collaborative and coalescing posture is more pertinent to our long term success and sustainability than ever. The turbulence has also produced a preponderance of unanswered questions. Will the surge of [telemedicine](#) during the slowdown endure as communities reopen? Will insurance companies and the government incentivize physicians and hospitals, through consistent and clear reimbursement, to continue leveraging technology in patient care? What is the evolving role of device manufacturers in the new normal of orthopedic health care? How do we [redefine](#) the medical device representative to thrive in the future?

As we take action and answer these questions in the near future, I encourage all parties within the orthopedic community to seek to listen and understand before providing their solution. For I know that in collaboration and alignment we will be exceedingly more innovative, effective and efficient in providing sustainable and exceptional care for orthopedic patients for years to come.



**And pray in  
the Spirit on  
all occasions  
with all kinds  
of prayers and  
requests. With  
this in mind,  
be alert and  
always keep  
on praying  
for all the  
Lord's people.**

**EPH 6:18**