

**Ep #23: Becoming the Leader Your Team Needs with
Dr. Rich Green**



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Allison Watts, DDS

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Welcome to *Practicing with the Masters* for dentists with your host, Dr. Allison Watts. Allison believes that there are four pillars for a successful, fulfilling dental practice: clear leadership, sound business principles, well-developed communication skills, and clinical excellence. Allison enjoys helping dentists and teams excel in all of these areas. Each episode she brings you an inspiring conversation with another leading expert. If you desire to learn and grow and in the process take your practice to the next level, then this is the show for you. Now, here's your host, Dr. Allison Watts.

Allison: Welcome to *Practicing with the Masters* podcast. I'm your host, Allison Watts, and I'm dedicated to bringing you masters in the field of dentistry, leadership, and practice management to help you have a more fulfilling and successful practice and life.

So, Rich, it's just you and I. I'm going to go ahead and formally introduce you even though I think a lot of these people are here to hear you and know you, probably some of them much better than I do.

Rich: Maybe too much.

Allison: [Laughs] It sounds like it. Rich Green received his undergraduate training at North Park University in Chicago, Illinois and his dental degree from Northwestern University Dental School in Chicago, Illinois in 1966. Dr. Green was introduced to L.D. Pankey in 1968 and studied the Pankey-Mann-Schuyler technique of oral rehabilitation and *A Philosophy of the Practice of Dentistry* with Dr. Pankey.

During the years prior to the formation of the Pankey Institute, Rich has been associated with the Pankey Institute pretty much since its inception and obviously even knew Dr. Pankey even before its inception. In 1981, Rich joined Selection Research, an affiliate of The Gallup Organization as an associate earning numerous certificates in the behavioral sciences. His interest in

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management led to his Master's in Business Administration from Keller Graduate School in Chicago, Illinois in 1992.

In 2004, Dr. Green founded Evergreen Consulting Group which is dedicated to the learning and growing professional and serving those who serve others. Through this venue, Rich has continued his commitment to work as coach, confidant, and facilitator of individuals, small personal growth groups, focused on individual development and leadership facilitation as well as technical study groups focused on bite splint therapy as a way of better understanding the dynamics of mandibular movement and its impact on the individualized prescription of a occlusal design for each patient.

Rich has a behavioral focus, which I think everybody knows that that's on here, but it's deeply rooted in the conceptual frameworks and foundations of L.D. Pankey's philosophy of dental practice, which is a central bearing point in his work with individuals and groups. He's published topical articles in numerous dental publications including *Dental Practice*, *Dental Economics*, Continuum Levels I through VI of the Pankey Institute Continuum and the *Pankeygram*.

In his quarterly message in *The Crucible*, he addresses contemporary issues in dentistry and challenges dentists to think about things. He's also a coauthor of the 2000 book titled *A Philosophy of Wealth Accumulation for Dentists*. He resides in Sanibel, Florida with his wife Linda. They have four grown children and enjoy seven grandchildren. Personal coaching, study group mentoring, and facilitation, teaching, writing, biking, walking, swimming, sailing, and singing remain favorite activities.

So Rich, I had to shorten your bio quite a bit. You have an amazing wealth of knowledge and I'm so happy to have you

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here tonight. I've enjoyed the times that I've been with you personally and I'm honored that you're here with us tonight.

Rich: Thank you, Allison. Thank you all for joining us tonight in the conversation. I would like to dedicate this to all my mentors and all the leaders in my life that invested in me. All of us who are present and those who will listen to this recorded conversation, I hope that our participation can create a spark of curiosity in us which leads to new awareness, of simultaneously learning, and in turn informs and influences our actions with and for others as a part of our continued individuation and emerging leadership.

I remember conversations with some leaders in dentistry who would say, "Where are all the leaders?" After a few glasses of wine I would build up enough self-confidence I think to say, "Well maybe the best thing to do since so many of the leaders that you're thinking about are dying, maybe the thing to do is to turnaround and spot those that are behind and are emerging and invest them."

So let me suggest a couple things. Let me suggest that you allow yourself to experience our time together with minimal notetaking. We have the benefit of being recorded. So you can review that. So doodle the words that connect with you and they may begin to develop a road map for you as you think about the kinds of things that you would want to be involved with in your emerging leadership.

Different kinds of words come to mind when I think about leadership. I think about the word discovering. Discovering our own leadership. Dr. Pankey's encouragement to know yourself. And the power of reflection in the development of leadership and awareness and understanding of both talents and strengths and values.

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Then the thing that I'm probably most concerned about is that from time to time I see demonstrated or hesitance to take action. My bias around learning is that there's absolutely no learning that's going to go on as we talk together. The only learning that occurs is when you do something with, you take action on, some new awareness that may have come out of our time together.

So I encourage you to make those notes of those little things that spark you, then be willing to invest in them. Because there are patterns that we can notice. We can notice patterns in our own choices. If we look at them, they begin to reveal the true nature of our own character. The kinds of things that we are for. The positive things we do.

So I would like to invite you to participate in an exercise that some of you I know have done before. I would invite you to participate it afresh. It's what I call the leadership experience exercise. So as we begin this process, what I'd like you to do is just take a small piece of paper or a corner of the paper and I want you to think about a leader in your life that had the most positive influence on your daily life. Your daily life today.

There may be many people that you can choose from. I would invite you to choose one. Write their name down or their initials so it's real clear to you. It shouldn't take but probably five to ten seconds to identify someone who has had a positive influence on the things you are presently doing daily. Write that name down.

Now I'd like you to do something else. I'd like you to list three words which best describe what this person contributes to your life. Any three words that come off the top of your head. Three words that describe what this person contributes to your life. Just three.

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Now if you'll give me just a little time to set this up, I'd like to have you just put that aside. We're going to come back to that. Oftentimes you have to talk about your biases and your connections, actually I'm not getting paid and I'm not selling anything while I'm talking to you, but I do have a bias. It's a part of my foundational philosophy around dentistry.

That dentistry can be a uniquely individualized, relationship-based, values-driven, deeper service, private practice. One that promotes positive health choices and time is allowed to help the patient clarify their best choice while connecting their choice to their expressed values.

Allison: Rich, are there...

Rich: There are a lot of... Go ahead.

Allison: Do you feel that that's literally unique to dentistry? Or it's just one of the places where that occurs? Are the other healing arts as well, you think that way?

Rich: I believe that there's other industries that are like that. I happen to work with an investment trust company that is as individualized, relationship-based as I endeavored my practice to be.

Allison: Okay.

Rich: I don't think it is just dentistry, but dentistry has been my crucible to work things out. So I'm not sure I'm answering your question, Allison.

Allison: You did. It can basically be in any business, you're just saying those are some of the gifts of dentistry that you notice.

Rich: Well, right. There are a lot of different things that I think are gifts in dentistry and that oftentimes they're either considered gifts or

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they're not considered gifts but there is an autonomy that's in dentists that allows each of us to shape our practice to our dreams. So we have choice.

To me, that leads into kind of a foundational behavioral truism around choice. That it's only when we have choice and then the freedom of choice in our own lives that we can offer choice to others. When we do not experience choice in our own life, we cannot offer it to others. So even the way in which we organize our office and the way in which we interact with our teams creates either an environment of choice or an environment of restriction.

One of the gifts of dentistry, I believe, is that you have the autonomy when you are in your own practice anyway, in private practice, where you can work that out. It takes a few years to work that out. I think it applies in other small businesses that are owner operated. I don't think it only occurs in dentistry but that was my environment to discover those things. The other thing that is a gift although oftentimes not received as one, is that as a leader and as a manager, in a dental office, it's small enough that you play both those roles.

You are the owner, oftentimes you're the owner, oftentimes you're the CEO, you're the chief operating officer or what I call the chief DD. Which is the doer of dentistry, you know. You can be the chief financial officer. You can wear the hat of the director of HR, hiring, firing, developing teams. So there's plenty of places to practice.

What I experienced is that most of the things that we end up doing in dentistry we didn't have formal education in. They came to us in different ways. That too, for me, is a part of leadership, is realizing the necessity of stepping up and figuring

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out how to wear that hat. When I think about leadership and learning, one of the things I think about is flexibility.

I'm going to talk a little bit later about situational leadership, the impact of situational leadership in my life. But developmentally, flexibility comes with life. There's an author that some of you have read, Gene Cohen, the M.D., PhD, wrote *The Mature Mind* and *The Creative Mind*. He talks about building flexibility in leadership and life as a developmental task. He's trained by Eric Ericson, so he has a developmental psychological bent and he talks about developmental intelligence.

This is what he says. He says, "Developmental intelligence is the greatest benefit to an aging brain and mind." So for those of us who are over 50, congratulations. "This is a degree to which a person has manifested their unique neurological, emotional, intellectual, and psychological capacities. The process by which these elements become optimally integrated in the mature mind. Specifically, developmental intelligence reflects the maturing of six intelligences. The synergy of cognition, emotional intelligence, judgment, social skills, life experience, and consciousness."

You know, I would often make the comment, it is just wonderful, adult learning is wonderful because you're actually conscious while you're learning. Oftentimes, I was not conscious in my early life around the learning that I was doing. I'm much more conscious as an adult. "As we mature, developmental intelligence is expressed in deepening wisdom, judgment, perspective, and vision. Advanced developmental intelligence is characterized by three types of thinking and reasoning that develop later than Piaget's formal operations and hence are referred to as post-formal operations.

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“They are relativistic thinking, recognizing that knowledge may be relative and not absolute. Dualistic thinking, the ability to uncover and resolve contradictions in opposing and seemingly incompatible views and systemic thinking which is being able to see a larger picture to distinguish the difference between the forest and the trees.” In other words, you can fly at 30,000 feet and see a pattern and you can also get down on the ground and do the work. You see both. It’s a both/and. “These three types of thinking are advanced in the sense that they do not naturally come in youth.”

I don't know what age were going to call youth, you know. But we see that represented in ourselves as well as others.

“Because naturally in youth, there are folks who prefer answers oftentimes in black and white, right or wrong. And usually prefer an answer to none at all. It takes time, experience, and effort to develop more flexible and subtle thinking. Our capacity to accept uncertainty” – parenthesis, these are my words— tolerance for ambiguity or ambiguity tolerance, end parenthesis.

“To admit that answers are often relative and to suspend judgment or more careful evaluation of opposing claims is a true measure of developmental intelligence.” That process for the most part, what Cohen studied is what happens after 50. Sometimes it starts at 40 or 45 because people got a whack on the side of their head, but anyway.

So I guess my point in putting that up there is that so many people are talking about emotional intelligence. And emotional intelligence is just one of the six intelligences that are developing in each one of us and can be stimulated and add to our flexibility of response. So like that Texas western and country song, that “life’s a dance you learn as you go. Sometimes you lead, sometimes you follow. Don’t worry about the things you don’t know. Take a chance on life.”” To me,

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that's what you're being invited to even within the gifts of dentistry. Life is a verb. It is not a noun.

So I went back to my MBA days and looked at some traditional classic definitions of leadership. I had to kind of smile a little bit. "Leadership is an activity of leading a group of people, an organization, or the ability to do this." This, meaning leadership. "Leadership involves establishing clear visions." How many times do we hear that? Right at number one.

"Sharing the vision with others so they will follow willingly."

"Providing the information, knowledge, and methods to realize that vision."

"Coordinating and balancing the conflicting interests of all members and stakeholders."

Sometimes I hear dentists say, "I really just want to do dentistry. I don't want to lead or manage." I say, "Well, that could be difficult. That could be difficult." Management on the other hand, the classic management definition "consists of interlocking functions of creating corporate policy through organizing, planning, controlling, and directing an organization's resources to achieve the goals and objectives." Doctor ... and the AMA tried to shorten that one because that one was getting so long and kind of boring in the 60s and 70s. They used to say, well it's just getting work done through people.

It was in the late 60s, I think it was '69 and '70 and '71 that I spent three different courses with Don Clifton who for the first time I heard the terms developmental. Don was famous for saying, "Really, from a developmental point of view, management is getting people done through work."

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This dang completely changed my focus in terms of how I think about learning and developing and creating teamwork. Then there were two unknowns at the time, Paul Hersey, who was from a small college in Ohio and Ken Blanchard who was from a college in Pennsylvania at the time. It was before he had written *The One Minute Manager*. The two of them had put together a program for university associates and traveled the country talking about situational leadership. They gave us a definition that works out. They said, "A leader is a person who's willing and able to influence behavior."

As I worked with that definition, I thought to myself, you know, I'm not sure I like that definition because I'm meeting leaders that are all about this directing others but not necessarily willingly. It was very authoritative kinds of leadership going on. They wanted other people to do things that they didn't really want to do themselves. Delegation was not a gift, it was a chore.

So it developed in me a need to rewrite the definition. So I came up with, "A leader is a person who's willing and able," willing has to do with attitude, and able has to do with skill development, "to influence behavior, their own first, then others, towards a preferred future." That definition emerged in me around 1975 after having struggled with that one for a while.

I worked with Clifton from the late 60s until he died in 2003. One of the things that had a great impact on me was his concept of ethics and what emerged from his research on ethics. He talked about it in a way that he didn't define it. He defined the action that was associated with it.

He said, "Ethics is the willingness to hold out for what is in the best interest of another person even in the face of resistance." So my definition then changed again as I kind of honored him in

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my life. I said, “You know, a leader is a person who’s willing and able to influence behavior, their own first, then others towards a preferred future, even in the face of resistance.”

All of you know, you’ve been in practice long enough to know that there’s always some resistance. That’s when you bump against the world developmentally and it helps you refine your definition and your skills and your convictions. In Clifton’s work on leadership, they sorted the strengths. For years, he looked at talent, he called it themes or talent themes. It was in the late 90s that they started calling them strengths. It creates a little bit of a misunderstanding in terms of the work that a person needs to do even once they identify their top five or top ten strengths.

But as he sorted those around leadership, what he found was that basically four things that a leader does. They’re executing—that’s not taking somebody to the guillotine—executing is about how to get things done. How to make things happen.

So there are certain strengths that when leveraged help people, help leaders get things done. There are certain strengths that help a leader influence and reach a much broader audience, selling their ideas, inside and outside of an organization, even within their organization selling their why. Why they want to do things the way they do, that’s a leadership function.

Then another function of the four, the third one was relationship building. The quick line on that one is that leaders develop a constituency. And relationship is that kind of essential glue that holds people together. Then there’s strategic thinking. Those four things. Strategic thinking is about focusing on what can and cannot be and continuing to stretch our thinking into the future.

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In a shorthand, that one for me is remaining vertical until you truly are horizontal. In other words, you are learning and growing, so you're stretching yourself and you're thinking into the future.

Allison: I'm going to have to quote that, Rich. I'm going to have to quote that. I like that.

Rich: The vertical one?

Allison: Yeah, remain vertical until you are truly horizontal.

Rich: Exactly. Well, I think that part of my bias is learning and growing is a part of being vertical.

Allison: Yep. We have a question, Rich. I think it's Jen.

Jen: Yeah, it's Jen. Rich, when you talk about the leadership, the willingness to hold out for a preferred outcome even in the path of resistance, how do—I'm not a dentist but I work with dentists and a lot of dentists that work with you. They are trying to walk the walk.

The leadership, this developmental leadership that you talk about, it makes sense. But how do you help someone realize that they're their resistance and getting in their own way? To see that in their own leadership? You know what I'm saying?

Rich: Yeah. That's a wonderful question.

Jen: It's kind of like they're trying to do this with their team for an example, you could do it with a patient, but a team. But in reality as I watch and listen and step back, I want to say, "Dude, you got to look at what you're doing because you might be the resistance even though you don't want to be it." Do you just have to let them self-discover that?

Rich: Well, you don't have to lay down and die until they discover it.

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Jen: Okay.

Rich: That's part of the relationship.

Jen: Right.

Rich: It takes courage and ethics because what you're really talking about is you are holding out for what is best for another person. So when you recognize that somebody is shooting themselves in the foot, there is a balance beam that you're walking. Sometimes you can hold up a mirror and you can ask, can I hold up a mirror for you? Is it okay if I ask you a question? If the person says no, then you don't ask it.

But if they say yes, then you might ask them another question depending on your relationship. You say, "How honest can I be?" Then they might ask, "What are you noticing?" Then you can say, "Thank you for asking. This is what I'm noticing and I'm wondering whether it's part of what's getting in your way." Now, they can only identify what's getting in their way. You can lead them to it. But they can only identify it. It's the same thing with a patient.

So sometimes what gets in the way is that the production quota isn't being met. Or there's other pressures that are on. My experience is that if I got caught, personally, in that place, then the harder I pushed, the harder someone pushed back. So it didn't get me any place.

Jen: I think what you just said, "Is it okay if I ask you a question."

Rich: Yes.

Jen: I think that that's key. I think that's been the missing link in some of my experiences. That I want to share but I need to ask if it's okay, if they're ready to hear it. No different than the patients, if they're ready to hear a treatment.

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Rich: Yeah.

Jen: I've got to ask for permission.

Rich: Yeah.

Jen: Because if they're not ready, it's not going to matter.

Rich: It doesn't mean that the hair on the back of the neck won't go up.

Jen: Right.

Rich: But what it does mean is that they have said yes, and so you can also have the conversation even upfront in developing a new client. Saying, "I understand." If you're going into somebody's office, realize that that person has already struggled with that. In terms of, "I'll let somebody see the inside of my office." I mean, it is a real gift when a dentist invites you into their office.

Jen: It's a privilege. It's a privilege. It's a trust. You never want to abuse that or take advantage of it and be mindful of it.

Rich: But when they do that, you can ask them a question. That is, "If I discover something that would be important for you to know, how can we handle that?"

Jen: How can we work through it, talk about it? What works for you?

Rich: Right. I won't, typically, would not do something in front of the whole group.

Jen: Oh absolutely not, in private.

[Rich and Jen speaking at same time]

No, that makes sense, thank you. That makes good sense to me. I was just going to say that I think sometimes even with the

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intention and understanding the developmental concept that we get so stuck on wanting to be so successful in that concept that we maybe don't look at our own resistance, mine as well. I have resistance and I need to be mindful of what I'm bringing to the table and be able to process it.

Rich: At the same time, I would invite everyone to be gentle on themselves. Over time, we will uncover our own blind spots. Sometimes someone needs to help us see it but oftentimes when something doesn't go right even for us. If there's a pattern to something, my hope would be that your curiosity would reflect on that. Take time to reflect on that.

What you might experience is that you become over time aware of something that you never saw before. You were doing everything that you thought you should be doing for the right reasons and then all of a sudden, it's a flat forehead day.

Jen: And being able to admit it is important.

Rich: Right. And even talk about it.

Jen: And talk about it, right. That's kind of taking the flat-forehead day and cracking it open and just talk through it.

Rich: Right.

Jen: Thank you.

Rich: The gentle on yourself type thing, I remember writing a piece. It was just a couple of sentences but it was about being gentle on yourself. "Be gentle on yourself. Learning takes time and comes best to us through positive energy applied through multiple course corrections in the attempt of pressing on. Learn to celebrate positive attitude, effort, and energy with and for yourself and others in your journey of life."

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You see, I know people a lot of times in leadership talk about outcomes. There are times in leadership in which it would be best for you to celebrate positive attitude, effort, and energy because the outcome isn't quite what you're looking for. But if you destroy that person, they're not going to get there anyway. So this is the flexibility piece that I was talking about earlier. One of the gifts of Blanchard and Hersey in situational leadership was the way they would look at things.

There was a time when—do you remember the time when you thought that maturity was age related? Then all of a sudden, someone came into your office who was wise beyond their years. In fact, you might have had two people in your employment and there was ten years difference, one was 28 and the other was 18, and the 18-year-old was more mature than the 28-year-old. I remember this sort of blowing my mind.

Then Hersey and Blanchard came along and said, “I want you to break this down even farther than an individual.” I said, “You’ve got to be kidding.” They said, “No, it’s task related.” Find a task in your in your own life that you do with all kinds of energy. Find another task that is on your to-do list and you have a hard time getting it done.

As your leader, as your manager, as your coach, there’s a difference depending on how I lead, how I develop you, what kinds of influencing behaviors I have on you when you're doing those two separate tasks because one you have your own energy around. The other one you don't. Yet, that is part of your task.

So they break it down. Just listen to the words, they break it down into telling, selling, participating, and delegating. Or another set of words: defining, clarifying, involving,

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empowering. Or directing, persuading, problem solving, or monitoring, or guiding, explaining, encouraging, observing.

Clifton used to say when you learn to delegate well, the person will accept it as a gift. He would go on and say that delegating is not about a clean desk. Delegating is about matching a person's strength and talent to the desired task.

So when someone new comes into your employ and they have no knowledge of the task, you're in a more telling mode. You're in a more guiding or directing mode. As they mature in that and begin to understand it, Hersey and Blanchard say well now they need to know the why. You need to talk to them about, it's more of a selling mode or a clarifying mode or a persuading mode. Why this is important. Why this needs to be done.

Pretty soon, they've got that one nailed and they're in the participating. There it's more of a facilitative relationship in which you're just helping them grow, learn and grow, and take ownership. I mean, you do the same thing with patients as you work with them as they move from crisis-oriented dentistry to proactive dentistry. It is the same thing. When you learn these things behaviorally, all you do is reframe.

So it doesn't matter whether it's a new employee or whether it's a new patient or anything like that. The process is very similar. Then delegating is turning it over to another person. You might be observing, you might be monitoring, you're really empowering the person to stand on their own two feet.

All those kinds of things you're doing, you know, Jen, and even when you're moving this person to new awareness, it will be more effective. Why? Because they will be more transparent. They will be willing to be more vulnerable. All those things create an environment in which people grow.

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Jen: And it seems safe.

Rich: And they get healthier.

Jen: Right, it seems safe but it seems like you'd have to go back through that cycle of telling, observing, delegating, whatever that system is to make sure that you kind of recheck it. You've got to inspect it to make sure they—especially with a new employee.

Rich: Absolutely, and for every task you do that. So this is where training breaks down in dental offices.

Jen: Absolutely.

Rich: Is that they get, "Well I told them once, I gave them the manual." No, for each task this person needs to be walked through this process. When I began to understand that, it helped me become more flexible because I saw it in myself, I guess, maybe because I saw it in myself. Somethings I just got done like that. Other things, I just, "Tell me again what you want me to do and why you want me to do it? I think you're just having me jump through hoops."

Allison: Rich, this is Allison, where I can find what you're talking about? That process? Like is it in one of his books or... ?

Rich: Yeah, actually you can go online and just type in Hersey H-E-R-S-E-Y and Blanchard B-L-A-N-C-H-A-R-D, or E-R-D, I think it's A-R-D. It will open you up to a whole new world and there are books on Amazon. I'm sure that someone is doing situational leadership training someplace. It was a three-day course. It was pivotal for me where I was. That was about 1970 or 1972. In terms of just my understanding of the responsibility of leadership.

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Jen: I think revisiting it, Rich, is what's so important for the leader or the dentist. Otherwise you're going to have team members in tears.

Rich: Yeah.

Jen: Because that's the cycle that I see. I've told you once, I've told you twice, but then the doctor goes away, thinks they've gotten the task down. Then the doctor gets upset because they never inspected what they expected. Then the team member is not trained appropriately. Then the team falls apart and then they feel crumbled.

Rich: Right. And if the only thing that the team member hears is a negative, then you basically will destroy the person. They will lose their self-confidence. When they lose their self-confidence, it's a steep downhill.

Jen: So with this new learning, you can turn it all around by asking the dentist, "Do you want to, is it okay if I ask you a question? How honest can I be with you?"

Rich: Right.

Jen: "This is what I'm observing. Do we want to try to get a different preferred outcome because people aren't feeling good? Or patients aren't feeling good? Or you're not retaining your patients, maybe could we look at certain things." So it's kind of like maybe they're not aware that they could be the problem. By how their interactions—not the problem, but part of the—maybe we just need to tweak the presence, the message, or something.

Rich: And/or that there's another point of view. For instance, when you look at the executing, influencing, relationship building, and strategic thinking, there is a rare bird who when they do their

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strengths assessment, in their top five would have one in each one of those categories. So what does the leader do? What does the dentist who's supposed to be a leader do if they don't have all four in there?

So you look at their top ten and you say, "You might clarify your sixth, seventh, and eighth, and actually you might find that you have quite a lot of leverage with those in being a leader." But you still might not have all four of them covered. So this idea that a leader has to be well rounded, I don't believe that. A team needs to be well rounded.

So part of this to me is getting into the whole selection piece because then a dentist really needs to be able to hold up their own mirror and say, "So what are my strengths and what am I looking for?" I'm not looking for people who "If I can't do it, I don't want them not to be able to do it." If they don't have the requisite strength to do something, I want to find somebody who's going to stand alongside of me who has the requisite strength to pull something off.

Now, to many people that's too challenging. They would rather be the king. I think it was Bud Hamm who used to talk about the king and all the twits. A lot of dentists operate their management that way. This is a different way to look at leadership and a different way to look at management.

Allison: Rich.

Rich: Yes.

Allison: I just wanted, just for integrity of time, if you want to, I know you mentioned you can stay on a little bit long but I know you wanted to get back to the exercise that we started with. We have about five minutes.

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Rich: Yeah, I want you to go back to those words, those three words. Here's a little exercise that's designed—and part of it was designed by Gallup. They asked people, they asked followers—you know, if you have a leader, you have to have a follower. Most of us, sometimes are followers and sometimes are leaders. I mean, we're not always leaders because we move in and out of different organizations and so we can practice both roles.

But anyway, they were looking for a way to get at a follower's point of view. So when you listed those three words, in reality, what you were talking about is your needs, your desires, your yearnings for a leader. Because that's what you saw in the leader you named.

What they did is they collected—I forget how many thousands that they collected—then they tried to study the top 25 words that were most frequently listed and looked for four categories that would describe the basic follower's needs.

They came up with four words. One was trust. In other words, what the follower needs is to trust the leader. What the follower needs, the second one, was compassion. What the follower needs is compassion. What the follower needs is stability. And what the follower needs is hope.

So if you were to take your three words and sort them, where would they fall from your point of view and your relationship with the leader that you named? Would they fall under trust? Would one fall under trust? Would one fall under compassion? You only have three, I know you're not going to hit all four categories unless one that you mentioned for you fits in both categories. But let's talk just for a little bit about each category.

These are the things that surfaced in trust. Things like honesty, integrity, respect, those are outcomes of a relationship built on

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trust. The interesting thing is when they do employee engagement type things is what they notice is that when people trust their leader, their engagement goes up six fold. So I mean, it's huge. So when you're thinking, Jen, about that one doctor who's having trouble, you wonder what the employee engagement is. Are they engaged in their daily activities?

This is what they found out about teams. Is that successful teams did not talk much about trust. Struggling teams, the topic of trust dominated the conversation. This speaks to how relationships develop in thriving teams and organizations. Relationships trump competence in building trust. In other words, it's not about perfect, it's about creating the relationship. It matches for a relationship-based practice.

Around compassion, some of the words that were—I mean, I have lists of words. When I've done this exercise, I have collected the words and it's sort of fun even to look at—but words like caring, and friendship, and happiness, and love were the things that were being looked for by the follower. They were a place of belonging.

The stability one, words like security, strength, support, peace—and peace isn't world peace—it's more a peaceful atmosphere or what I call emotional well-being in a dental office. In other words, there's not a lot of tension in the dental office. If there's a lot of tension in the dental office, then the environment doesn't feel very stable.

Then hope, followers want stability for a moment and hope for the future. So words like direction, guidance, they have faith in the leader, things like that. When hope is absent, people lose confidence, they disengage, and they often feel helpless. They often feel worthless. So to me, those are kind of the patterns that you begin to look for.

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I would invite all of you to, if you haven't already done this, do this exercise with your team, your own team. Realize that there's sort of some take-home points. Leaders who evoke learning in us concerning our identity and integrity, in other words, not who, but leaders invoke, those leaders that you choose, did they invoke learning concerning your identity and concerning your integrity? Those leaders evoke power to awaken a truth within us.

Did you discover a truth about yourself because of those leaders? Did they help you clarify their impact on your life? And did you discover the leader's heart? To me those are important things to consider when you consider your leadership.

Allison: Can you say again the one, did they help you clarify... your impact on your life or their impact?

Rich: Their impact.

Allison: Okay.

Rich: They allow us to clarify their impact on our life. In other words, even by doing this reflective exercise and you start thinking about that leader, you may never have thought about them in that way before. All of a sudden, you say, "Wow, this is what I do on a daily basis and it is rooted in a deep belief. That belief was influenced by that person." That becomes powerful. In many ways, it becomes powerful.

It becomes powerful because you become more aware of it. It becomes powerful because in a way, that's the way the leader lives on is through you. It's powerful for you because you become aware of it. When you become aware of things, it's like you can become more intentional about it.

Allison: That's awesome.

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Rich: As we learn more about who we are, we can learn ways of communicating and reveal rather than conceal our personhood from which the leading comes. So this is the dentist who is wondering whether or not they have to be boss or whether they can be real. They say, “You know, I am learning, I am becoming aware that as I reveal more about myself, as I communicate and reveal more of myself, that actually my leadership becomes more effective than if I conceal it.”

The other thing that happens when you become aware of these things is that you realize that there is quite a complexity to your own learning. When you become aware of that, you become a gentler soul because you realize the complexity of the learning of another person.

So here you're trying to develop somebody, a dental assistant, for instance. You say to yourself, “I’ve already told her how to do that” or him, how to do that. “I’ve already told them how to do that.” Then all of a sudden, they have a flat forehead moment. A thought goes through your mind and it says, “Remember the complexity of your own learning. How long did it take you to learn to do x, y, z as well as you now know how to do it?”

I think what happens, the potential of becoming a gentler soul is—and actually a better developer of others. So time is running out and I've got 25 more pages but no, I...

[Laughter]

Allison: That is probably true.

Rich: But there are some things I'd like maybe leave you with in closing. The best leaders that we've met live on in us and last beyond their lifetime. They're the leaders we respect. So they

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continue to live on because of the way they shaped your thoughts and beliefs.

Even though you might not notice it in the moment, in other words, you may never have noticed it before, now you do an exercise like this and you realize that the most effective—effective and affective—affective-domain leaders forever altered the course of your life. And they altered the course of your emerging leadership. Your emerging leadership occurs when you step up and begin to do some things differently.

I'd like to leave with you just seven simple tasks that you can do. Everybody likes a list. So I'll leave you with seven simple tasks you can do that will impact your leadership. It will allow you to practice at leveraging your strengths and basic skills and figure out what you need to know more about and the skills that you need to add to your quiver of skills. So here are the seven things:

Realize that visioning and re-visioning is a lifelong task. It is not an end in itself. It is a work in progress.

Second, be a mentor. You learn best when you engage others in learning. So if you want to learn, help others learn. You can do that in your own office. Take a different approach to development in your own office and the way you bring a team member on.

Dr. Pankey, swung on the top of the cross of dentistry is number three, know yourself. You cannot behaviorally, as we know, you cannot take someone where you've not been. So it's very important for some reflection.

Four, make sense of operational experiences. In other words, use concepts to organize and understand seemingly unassociated or random events. Dr. Pankey's concepts are

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conceptual frameworks. Think about the concepts that you want to transfer more than the exact one, two, three steps.

Allow a person the flexibility to invest themselves in the steps. As long as the concept is understood and the outcome is what you want, there may be some things that can be done just a little differently than you do them.

Five, stabilize values. Identify, clarify, and claim both personal and operational or organizational values. Talk about them. These are parts of, for instance, when Clifton talks about influencing, he's talking about knowing your organization and why you do things in such a way that you can talk about them and the values that are bearing them, so to speak.

Number six, build a constituency. Now for a dental office to me building a constituency is to employ our team members, patient or client, community, engagement, and beyond. So that's a leadership task. A very simple task but it is a task that will last you a lifetime.

Seven, create experiences that challenge the accepted form. Whether it is involved in your practice or your life. In other words, swim at a bias to the current.

Allison: Say that again, Rich.

Rich: Create experiences that challenge the accepted form.

Allison: Right, then what did you say after that... when? Had a bias?

Rich: Swim at a bias.

Allison: Swim at a bias?

Rich: Swim at a bias. In other words, if you're in a stream, don't just go down the stream with a current. Realize that because otherwise you'll just be tossed around over the rocks and

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everything else. You might even go over the dam. Learn to swim at a tangent to the current.

Allison: Gotcha.

Rich: So in life, in that way, you begin to operate on your own set of values. You can leverage your own strengths. To me, it's all foundational to your leadership. So these seven tasks can be intentionally performed and become a consistent discipline to maximize your leadership impact. As you internalize these seven tasks, practice them. Make them your own. Your leadership will emerge.

You can be gentle on yourself in your learning and growing. Remembering that important individual uniqueness only you can bring to your leadership. In other words, you can only bring you to your leadership. That uniqueness that is only yours is wanted in your leadership and with others. You can reflect your unique talent and your unique strengths. There are no two leaders that are alike. They all had to figure out how to leverage their strengths, their uniqueness.

As you learn to do this for yourself, from the inside out, you can also learn to offer the same process to others and delight as you experience their uniqueness emerge, their leadership. There is a smile on my face every day as I remember moments. I can say "I remember when" to a lot of folks and we can both smile about it. That's exciting.

I realize we're 15 minutes past the hour. I am delighted to have had this opportunity and I only wish I could see your eyes. This is an unusual experience for me because I usually gain a lot of insight by looking people in the eye and I can only hope that you're still vertical.

[Laughter]

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Allison: Rich, I thought it was amazing that you said just now that you get a smile on your face when you can look at people and say “I remember when.” I was sitting here smiling because you had just shared, “leverage your strengths and your uniqueness from the inside out.” Then when you said something about doing that with other people, it just made me smile. So I already had a smile on my face because of that. That makes me happy.

Anyway, I really really—and I think a lot of the people on the call feel the same way, when we get to develop our patients and develop our team and some people on the call work with other dentists. I appreciate your time so much, Rich, you gave even more than it was expected. And I know it’s late for you, so I appreciate everybody being on tonight.

Goodnight, everybody. Rich, thanks.

Thanks for listening to *Practicing with the Masters* for dentists, with your host, Dr. Allison Watts. For more about how Allison Watts and Transformational Practices can help you create a successful and fulfilling practice and life, visit transformationalpractices.com.