

# YogaTherapyforDailyLiving

## How to Attract, Enroll, and Retain Clients

By Jacob Griscom

### The System for a Successful Private Practice

In business, there are principles and practices that can be studied, understood, and applied to generate consistent results. The results that concern us in the business of our private practice are the numbers of prospective clients we are attracting, the number of new clients we are enrolling, the retention and results of our clients, and our financial profit.

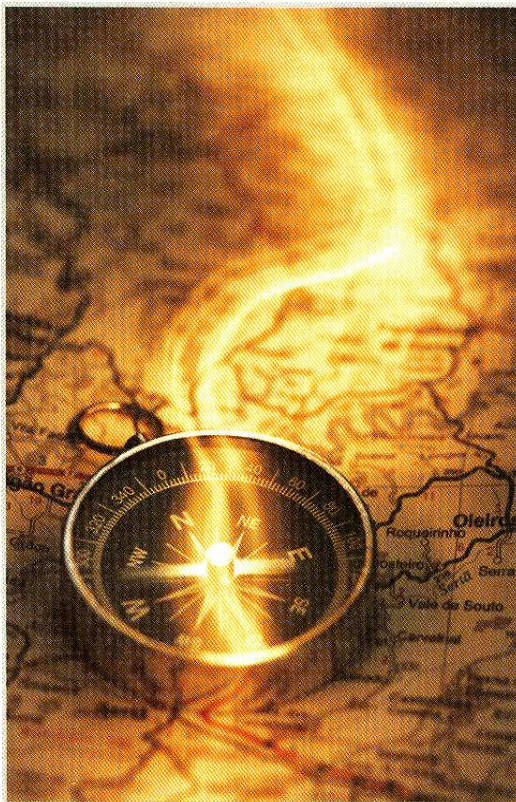
These are the areas that we need to focus on if we want to start or grow a financially sustainable practice in which we are able to focus on serving our clients and not on inefficient or ineffective business practices. If we put our attention on studying, understanding, and applying the practices of client attraction, enrollment, and retention, then we improve. In fact, some small shifts in understanding and practice can make a big difference, or even the difference between being able to do what we love for a living or not.

In this article, I'm going to discuss a step-by-step approach to achieving these results.

### A Reliable System for Serving People's Needs

People in general are not interested or concerned with yoga therapy as a profession, as yoga therapists are. They are concerned with themselves and their needs. We as providers are accustomed to the idea of focusing on our clients' individual needs in terms of treatment, but when it comes to discussing what we do, we often describe it in terms of the modalities we use, which prospective clients may not relate to their own needs. However, if we switch the focus to communicating about the needs that we serve instead of the modality that we practice, we will attract more clients

When we have our attention on the needs of our clients, the aim of our learning, writing, and teaching is not just for more information, but specific information that can help our clients. I certainly recom-



mend specializing your work within a niche audience. It's much more likely that you'll be able to serve one group of people really well and attract prospective clients and referrals when people see that you are focused specifically on them and their issues. Even as a general practitioner without a specific niche focus, you can focus on the predominant health concerns people are facing: weight management, energy, pain, sleep issues, and emotional stress (anxiety and depression). In health surveys, these are the top challenges that are consistently reported by respondents.

As a yoga therapist, you are not taking responsibility for their health in the way that a physician might typically do. You are empowering your clients to change behaviors and implement new practices to address the root causes of their health challenges. Changing behaviors requires more work than taking a drug. It takes repetitive attention and action, along with inner changes in consciousness and priorities. A practitioner's success is also related to the success of their clients, and so it's more beneficial to clients and practi-

tioners to use a program investment model instead of individual sessions.

For example, you may work with clients on a weekly basis for six months at a time with the option to pay you up front for the six months, or monthly at a slightly higher rate. Again the reasons for a client to invest and commit to working with you in a program like this do not have to do with yoga therapy, they have to do with their health needs and challenges. They are not investing in a "yoga therapy program," but choosing to prioritize a weekly focus on their health so that they can reverse challenges and get new results. This is the essence of client enrollment.

Your first conversation with a client should not be about whether or not they'd like to schedule a session with you. Instead, offer them a free session that is entirely focused on helping them clarify

their vision, goals, and challenges for their health and their life. Be entirely curious and ask questions about the costs and impacts their current health challenges have on their life, and the payoffs they would get from reaching their health goals.

The most powerful way for clients to commit to their own long-term commitment to health and healing is for them to connect with their inner motivation for it. So, rather than telling them that they need to work with you, let your clients build their own case for working with you. Question them gently but directly to uncover their motivation to commit the time and energy needed to change behaviors and get results. Because we are focused on helping our clients change behaviors, only a small portion of the value we offer is our actual recommendation or practice. The far larger portion of the value we offer is the coaching that helps our clients actually implement the change for long-term sustainable results. This is the essence of client retention because people will stay with you as long as they are continuing to

get value from personal growth and progress with their health.

## How to Boost Client Attraction, Enrollment, and Retention

Here are three steps you can take right now to boost client attraction, enrollment, and retention in your new or existing practice immediately:

1. Choose a niche market to focus your practice in, or as a general practitioner, start focusing on yoga therapy and ayurvedic approaches to weight loss, increased energy, pain elimination, sleep, and stress issues.
2. When you are asked what you do, speak to the results you help your clients achieve and ask for referrals. For example, "I help people eliminate chronic lower back pain and avoid drugs or surgery. Do you know anyone with low back pain?"
3. Trade in the session-by-session practice model. Start offering free sessions that clarify your prospective clients' vision, goals, and challenges. Enroll them in committed long-term programs

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with regular weekly sessions that give them consistent coaching support to change behaviors and get results.

## Implementation

The biggest difference between practitioners who build sustainable practices and those who don't is implementation. When we take action, we get results. We learn from our results and then take more action to keep learning and keep improving. If we can adopt an attitude of taking action every time we learn something, we will make rapid progress.

Take a moment right now to write out a plan for implementing the steps I just shared with you. You might be excited to try this, but since this is likely different than what you've tried before, you may also find this challenging. See if you can approach client attraction, enrollment, and retention as a scientist and a servant, and test these principles and practices to verify the results for yourself. **YTT**



*Jacob Griscom is the president of Everyday Ayurveda, School of Business. The Grow Your Ayurvedic Business certification program is designed to help you build a successful and transformative ayurveda or yoga therapy practice for yourself, your clients, and your community. Learn more at [www.everydayayurveda.org](http://www.everydayayurveda.org).*