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- Get a small notebook and keep it with you at all times for notes, ideas, dreams, sketches, poems, questions, or impromptu brainstorming, then...

- Take note of the things you like about other places you go (things you want to emulate, paint, smells, art, whatever)
- Or Vice Versa
- See store - "Anthropology" for a good example
- Keep track of things you want to emulate.
- Keep your dreams written down

- Decide where you will practice
 - What “state”
 - What are the statutes in that states, what is the regulatory climate?
 - www.dhmf.state.md.us/html/diracc.htm
 - Will your license transfer
- What community?
 - What are the demographics
 - Contact the chamber of commerce
 - Culture, religious, economic growth, growth potential, medical climate, other acupuncturists in town
 - Is the community a good fit?
- Think about a speciality

- Consider a name for your clinic
 - Is it easy to pronounce, spell, and remember
 - Does it help market your practice?
 - Does it clearly convey what you do?
 - Check Name availability
 - Most of the Secretary of state web sites are www.sos.XX.us or www.ss.XX.us
 - If your chosen name is available, call the number on the website or try to apply for the name online.
 - Find out what the report/renewal requirements are for maintaining your business name.
 - Register your business name as soon as you can before leaving school and then print business cards with your cell phone number and give them to everyone. You will get calls on your cell phone from those business cards for many, many months after you have printed new cards.

- Make an equipment wish list
 - Make a list of all the equipment, furniture, art, carpets, phones, printers, fax machines, etc. that you want your clinic to have. Find out retail prices. Then check ebay, and other online auctions. Check outlet stores in your area. Then tell your family that what you want for Christmas or birthday...
 - It may take you quite a while to get everything you need, but you could get several new, needful items as gifts throughout your last year of school
 - Supply companies offer new grad and first time customer discount. Take advantage of these to fill your supply and pharmacy shelves.
 - Symposium prices can be a good place to find discounts as well. Certainly worth the price of admission...

- Look for a job
 - Create a presentation folder about yourself
 - Send it to every Lac, DC, MD, Orthopedic, PT, group-practice clinic in your proposed town.
 - Your timing is everything...this is done during your last semester in school
 - Follow up with phone calls, emails, or letters for the ones you are most interested in pursuing.
 - Place a classified ad in the school alumni newsletter and state association newsletter starting that you are willing to trade work for space.
 - Marketing budget can simply consist of being a little league coach, and going and eating breakfast at the local coffee shop every morning...

- Get your paperwork done
 - Design or copy all of the forms you will need to run your clinic. If you have an address, phone, etc. Put all that on your forms. If not, at least get the digital files ready to add that information later.
 - Patient forms
 - HIPAA requirement forms
 - HCFA 1500 forms
 - Clinic financial policy form
 - Herb instruction form
 - Ear Seed instruction form
 - Intake form
 - Dr. referral form or perscription pad form
 - Take a look at every form used in your student clinic...do you need something similar or not? Do you like the forms used in your student clinic? If no redesign for your own needs.
 - Return Labels
 - Thank you forms

- Budgeting
- How much capital do you need to start your practice?
 - What pieces of equipment and furniture do you already have? What more do you need?
 - How much will you need for signing a lease, business insurance, licensure fees, installing a phone, computer and software, printing forms, signage, aesthetics, and initial marketing?
 - What will you need in reserve to pay personal bills for the first six months
 - How much do you have and what sort of family or personal financial support structure will you have in place when you graduate? Be as realistic as possible.

Budget

Total Business expenses per month: \$3,000

Total personal expenses per month: \$5,000

\$8,000 Gross

Annual \$96,000

11-month clear: \$8,727.27 To make time for time off/vacation/etc.

40 hours per week * 4.2 weeks per month 168 Hours in a month of work

\$51.95 \$'s per hour of week

Call it 60 because we only work 48 weeks per year.

- You should be making money even when you are not in the office:
 - Selling product
 - Renting space to others
 - Teaching classes
- Green Qi
 - Making money allows you to help others.
 - Being successfully as you can be and then share the wealth.
 - We need to protect ourselves if for no other reason.

- Create your business card
 - During your last year create business cards even if it only has your cell number, email, and no address. Do a new one when you are out of school or when you know more exact information.
 - Remember:
 - This is a calling card – do not put 15 lines of text on a card. Name and phone are the most important, fax and email next.
 - Keep fonts simple and easy to read
 - Only one line about what you do
 - When you get a real location, throw away the old cards and get new ones made. They are cheap and scratched through looks tacky
 - Design a logo (or not)
 - Do not use the yin/yang symbol
 - Do not use the leonardo man in a circle
 - Use dragons with care
 - Ginko leaves have become overly popular
 - If you use chinese characters, put the english translation in small print below.
 - Take time with this. It's ok not to have a logo. Better a great one or none at all.
 - Be tasteful and original

- Clinic Brochure

- Make the brochure informational. This is what's important? That's what belongs on the front page. *Do you suffer from PMS?*
- Clinic location/name goes on the back.

- Success for practitioners in the world of alternative medicine is based on rich and varied personal relationships. We are not the Coca-Cola's of the world
 - Don't just sit in your office
 - *If your phone is not ringing when you get in, call a patient instead. Outbound calls are O.K. to make. Find out why a patient left. Find out how they felt about the treatment.*
 - Join the club
 - What do you like to do? What does the perfect patient look like to you? What are their hobbies, What do they read? What web sites do they visit? Where do they volunteer? What clubs do they join?
 - Teach a class
 - Give a talk
 - There are a lot of organizations out there that have meetings. Every Sunday there's a bunch of meetings in the newspaper. Write a pro-forma letter to send to all of these. Our clinic is hosting a bunch of talks... blah blah blah... I'm a local acupuncturist. Acupuncture could be helpful for your group. I'd love to come to your groups meeting and tell them about it.
 - Talk about acupuncture at a brown bag lunch.
 - Write an article (the simpler the better)
 - How not to get carpal tunnel
 - Low back pain
 - Work and stress
 - 10 tips for better breast health
 - 10 tips for PMS

- Create a creative introduction
 - Standing in line at a grocery store.
 - Sitting on an Airplane
- Build a contact list
 - Take cards from anywhere you see them listed. Build a mailing list. You local politicians, newspaper editors, every OB/Gyn on in town
 - Contacts from your friends on your mailing list.
 - Email if possible
 - Send a newsletter/announcement/classes you are teaching
 - Postcard announcing the opening. Or relocating
 - Send notices to all of he newspapers.
- Create a referral contact list
- Create a referral exchange program with other professionals
 - Get 10 businesses: Get a fish bowl: Put in your card for a free monthly prize. Share the information on the cards with everyone. You are building a mailing list of local people that could be your patients.
- Follow-up on networking fast!
 - Thank the people.
- Create a great event
 - Graffiti paint out day! (w/ high school student volunteers)
 - Toy donations from patients instead of paying for treatments to homeless shelter (whatever)
- Have a list of references available
 - Local health fairs. Get patients to schedule appointments for free during the health fair.
 - These for or five patients are willing to share their time to talk...
- Overcome shy
 - No shyness allowed!
 - Join toastmasters if you are shy.

- Even in a saturated market
 - How do you set yourself apart?
 - Consider a specialty
 - Vary your time availability
 - Make your clinic an uncluttered haven
 - Make your clinic a clean but cluttered surprise package
 - Don't be afraid of your craziest ideas
 - Have computer available for online searches for the patients.
 - Create a punch card program
 - Buy 10 get one free... people like that.
 - **Treat every patient as the most special person in the world.**

- Don't undercharge for your services
- Be available same-day for your patients
- Put free-second opinion consultations on your card
- **Stay up to date** and get impromptu articles to your patients
 - Acupuncture today and Journal of Chinese Medicine (Deadman's journal)
- Create a co-marketing business group
- How can you create an e-plus clinic

- Continuing education is a must.
- Don't be intellectually lazy!
- Sliding scale: Department of health and human services publishes standards of poverty.
 - Perhaps do a community clinic is a better idea. If you want more privacy you can pay more and have a schedule appointment.
 - Private clinics in your home work best if you have a separate entrance. Don't do it for very long. You don't want some people to know where you live.