

FROM BURNED OUT TO INSPIRED

When Your Mission Becomes Your Burden

“I was so focused on keeping everyone afloat that I forgot we needed to thrive, not just survive. Chris helped me see that taking care of my team wasn’t separate from our mission—it was essential to it.”

-Dr. M., Founder & Owner, Pediatric Health Clinic



THE WEIGHT



I founded this pediatric clinic to serve under-resourced communities—kids who come in with more than just medical needs, families who’ve had negative healthcare experiences and are slowly learning to trust again. Meaningful work. Exhausting work.

Despite our best efforts, we were losing good people. Burnout was becoming the norm. Staff turnover meant constantly training new team members while trying to maintain our standards of care.

Then COVID hit, and everything got exponentially harder. Telemedicine for populations without reliable internet. A team struggling with their own fears while showing up for patients who needed us more than ever.

I realized I was so focused on the mission that I’d left behind the people carrying it out. I was good at the clinical side. The leadership part was drowning me.



THE UNLEARNING



I thought we’d work on staff retention. Chris kept inviting me to look deeper at my own patterns.

What surprised me was how much I needed to rediscover my own strengths before I could help my team step into theirs. I had to admit that some of my “dedication” was really about not trusting others to care as much as I did.

Then we extended coaching to my entire team, something I initially resisted. Investing in everyone felt like a luxury we couldn’t afford. But Chris helped me see that my team’s wellbeing wasn’t separate from our ability to serve patients.



It was fundamental to it. The approach: individual coaching for me, remote sessions for each team member using StrengthsFinder, a group coaching day for the whole practice, and custom action plans for each person.

During that group day, something shifted. People started talking about their strengths instead of their stress. Team members got curious about each other's talents instead of just covering for each other's weaknesses.



THE SHIFT



The biggest shift for me was one question: “What do my people need from me to do their best work?” instead of “How do I fix this myself?”

That reframe changed how I approached every challenge.

I learned to delegate meaningful work aligned to people's strengths. Team members started supporting each other instead of just surviving together. We began having conversations about growth, not just getting through the day. People started bringing solutions instead of problems.

I also reconnected with why I started this clinic. It wasn't just about serving patients. It was about creating a place where good people could do meaningful work sustainably.





THE EVIDENCE



Despite everything thrown at us during the pandemic, we didn't just survive; we expanded. Added services. Grew our staff. Moved to a larger space.

Staff retention improved in the worst labor market healthcare has seen. Team members take initiative instead of waiting for direction. Leadership feels energizing instead of draining. We're serving more families than ever, and it actually feels sustainable.

The most surprising discovery: Taking care of my team wasn't taking away from our mission. It was multiplying our impact. When people feel valued and can use their strengths intentionally, they show up differently for the families we serve.

If you started something meaningful but find yourself drowning in the responsibility of carrying it alone—you don't have to choose between your mission and your people. Sometimes the best thing you can do for your cause is invest in the people carrying it forward.



lead yourself well ... serve your great purpose

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