

# Herbal Explorations

nuherbs Co., The Future of Chinese Medicine

## In This Issue

Weathering Economic  
Downturn, Part 2

TCM Journeys:  
Jake Paul Fratkin

15% Off!

15% off Yin-Care Mouth  
Wash.

Use code: YC0809

More 15% off!

We carry Organic  
Schisandra Fruit! 15% off  
Wu Wei Zi!

Use code: OS0809

## Refer a Friend

Refer a colleague and  
receive \$25 off when a  
purchase is made by

nuherbs Co.

3820 Penniman Avenue

Oakland, CA 94619

phone: (800) 233-4307

fax: (800) 550-1928

[herbalexplorations@nuherbs.com](mailto:herbalexplorations@nuherbs.com)

[www.nuherbs.com](http://www.nuherbs.com)

## Smart Business: Weathering Economic Downturn, Part 2

*In the second part of this  
business-focused article we  
suggest some ways to streamline  
your business and save on  
expenses.*

### Be focused

**Specialize.** Do you have a particular area of interest? Are you known for treating a certain issue? Think about your background and your skills. While narrowing your scope might seem like it would decrease your earnings, it could in fact do the opposite. People will make a point to find the best doctor for their problem and they will often pay a premium for someone with an excellent reputation in a certain area of medicine. If you are passionate about sports, consider highlighting treatments geared towards athletes and sport injuries. Use your language skills to focus on a specific population. Think about how you might combine your massage background with acupuncture treatments to develop a special type of session that is both healing and relaxing. Just remember not to alienate your current clients, particularly if their ailments do not fit under your

specialty. Making them feel special while at the same time sharing your enthusiasm about your new focus will keep your name in the forefront of their minds. Remember, word of mouth is king.

**Examine your current clientele.** If you are unsure what certain skills you might have to offer or you do not have a specific area of interest, review your client list. Are there any groups of people or types of dis-ease that frequently present to you? For example, perhaps you have seen many women for fertility problems and you felt joy helping them bring life into the world. Consider focusing your practice on fertility. Speak with your clients and use their feedback to help you tailor parts of your practice towards this market sector. While you are putting together a marketing plan for these specialized services, be it by word of mouth or advertising, it would be a good time to create bundled service packages that highlight your specialty. Be consistent, offering packages and reduced rates for treatments that relate to your focus.

*continued on page 3*

# Q&A



## TCM Journeys: Jake Paul Fratkin

*Many of you are already familiar with Dr. Jake P. Fratkin as an author and a teacher. His book Chinese Herbal Patent Medicines, The Clinical Desk Reference sits on countless practitioners' desks as a reference tool. Enjoy a peek into this highly regarded practitioner's life.*

***Why did you become involved with Traditional Chinese Medicine?***

It could only be destiny, karma. I always intended to become a doctor, since 4th grade, and thought about many possibilities within that: researcher, psychiatrist, surgeon, even medical illustrator. In college, I was a zoology major, with Chinese as my language. (Originally, French was my language, but I couldn't wake up early enough to make it to class, so I switch to any language that fit into 11 am. This was Chinese.) With an interest in Chinese medicine, I started to study Chinese history and philosophy, and became fascinated. As I prepared for medical school, I developed a strong distrust for the chemistry-pharmaceutical bias of medicine, seeing doctors as overpaid drug salesmen. Disturbed about pharmaceutical medicine, I decided to go into biology instead. I actually did a couple of years working with monkeys in the Caribbean. When James Reston had his appendectomy with acupuncture anesthesia in 1974, I thought, this is cool. Within two years, I became obsessed with all things Chinese: Chinese philosophy, *qi gong, taijiquan*. I went back to Wisconsin to study more Chinese hoping to study in mainland China eventually, and in Chicago I met Dr. Ineon Moon, a Korean acupuncturist. He took me on in an

apprenticeship that lasted 7 years. In Chicago, I also studied Chinese herbal medicine, in a traditional Hong Kong-style pharmacy with Dr. Pak-Leung Lau, and in formal classes with Dr. Zhengan Guo, who was trained in Lanzhou, China. Later, I spent a year (on several trips) studying at herbal hospitals in China.

***What is in your cupboard/medicine cabinet?***

My personal medicine cabinet looks like a mini-pharmacy. I carry formulas from numerous companies. Gan Mao Ling is my favorite medicine, which I take at signs of immune stress that might allow a virus to spring up. I have been known to use Yin Qiao San, Huo Xiang Zheng Qi Wan, Qing Qi Hua Tan Wan, etc. - medicines for acute intervention. I love Guilin Watermelon Frost. I sometimes use formulas for sleeping, like An Shen Bu Xin Wan. And, occasionally Nan Bao, for special occasions.

***What is your favorite place?***

I love the woods near my house. It runs along a creek, is maintained by Boulder Parks, and has horse pastures with views of the Flatirons and Rocky Mountains. After that, it is the home of my wife's family, in the southern French Alps. Quiet, moist, green, fantastic views. We go most summers.

***Are there any tidbits of herbal wisdom that you can share?***

This may come as a shock, but I think most American herbalists are prescribing at 20% of their potential, because traditional pulses and tongues and

*continued on next page*

zang-fu differentiation is too difficult to master. Twenty years ago, I started using electro-dermal testing (VegaTest) to hone in on effective formulas. My herbal prescribing is based on seeing which herbal medicines resonate on electro-dermal screening. After formal study in China, and constant study of classical and modern texts, I can say that I learn the equal of this information by using electro-dermal screening, matching formulas to real patients. I say this based on my clinical results. VegaTest machines are no longer available in the United States, replaced by more computerized versions where the signatures of medicines are stored in a computer. I think that herbalists should look at electronic feedback systems. This may become the 21st century approach.

***What are your thoughts on the future of Traditional Chinese Medicine?***

I have conflicting cynical and optimistic thoughts. The cynical/realistic side says that Western institutionalized medicine will never accept Chinese herbal medicine, with the possible exception of a few expensively extracted standardized formulas that pass scientific scrutiny from American research. While acupuncture, as a stand-alone therapy, will probably find its way into conventional clinics and hospitals, herbalist will have to continue acting as independent providers without the benefit of insurance reimbursement. The optimistic side, however, looks at several factors that may mark the end of Western medical arrogance and dominance. The first is cost - TCM is cheaper than Western medicine for managing the moderate medical conditions that comprise the bulk of medical visits. The second is effectiveness. We can cure, whilst the other only controls. Stop Western medicine, and you still have the condition.

***More information about Dr. Fratkin can be found at [www.drjakefratkin.com](http://www.drjakefratkin.com)***

*continued from page 1*

**Buy and sell products available only through you**

**Carry unique goods.** Times are tough, and people search for the best deal now more than ever. Large online companies are able to offer products at a higher discount than many small businesses. Instead of carrying the equivalent of Centrum vitamins, buy and sell products that are unique and only available through you, the practitioner. For example, use products like the nuherbs Co. Herbal Times Teapills or Herbal Extracts that are only available through the practitioner channel. If you only carry products found elsewhere for less, you are more than just losing the money, you are also missing yet another opportunity to interact with your patients to discover other problems you can help them address.

**Focus on savings**

**Shop around.** Search for the best deals for your insurance, phone, internet, and other operational services. Compare bundled with stand-alone services. These days many people do not have landlines in their

home and use only cell phones. Would it work for you to add a cell line to your plan and use that as a business phone? Often this can cost as little as \$10 per month. Wondering how you might fax without a landline? If you operate mostly using your computer and old-fashioned paper, rarely using a fax or copy machine, do some research into online faxing services that send directly from your computer over the internet to the recipient's number.

**Time is money.** Cliché but true. Concentrate not only on dollar savings, but efficiency, service, etc., so that you have more time to focus on your business. If you hate doing your billing and are really slow at it, hire someone to come in for a few hours each week to do it. The money spent would allow you to see more patients, read up on new findings or even meditate. From stock-checks to cleaning, there are many tasks you might be able to hire someone to do that will not cost you dearly but will save you valuable time and energy.

**Become a coupon clipper.** Make sure you take advantage on specials like free shipping and limited-

*continued one next page*

# Just in!

We now have the 2nd edition of Chinese Herbal Medicine: Formulas & Strategies by Dan Bensky, Randy Barolet, Andrew Ellis & Volker Scheid, our May 2009 TCM Journeys feature, in stock!

This important reference book has been updated with new material.  
Make it a part of your library today.

[Item no. TX008A](#)

*continued from page 3*

time offers. If you see great discounts at your office supply store, use the coupon now and stock up on items you might need later. If you need a certain formula but not enough to meet free shipping minimums, take a look at your stock and see what formula you might run out of next. Order a few bottles of that one, too, to receive the free shipping.

**Get another number.** Investigate business licenses or memberships that might save you money. For example, if you are in California and you order from us frequently, it might be worthwhile to get a California state reseller's license because you then would not have to pay sales tax on the orders your place with us. Even things as simple as frequent shopper cards at your local

grocery store can help you save. Think about opportunities like these where you can save each time you purchase something.

**Give yourself a break.** Speak with your accountant or do some research to see whether you are taking advantage of tax deductions or credits available to you, particularly if you are a small business and independent contractor. The extra work (done by you or your new billing assistant) can save you thousands of dollars.

We hope that these tips have given you some ideas about where you can save, spend and streamline to make your business more profitable in the coming years.

[www.nuherbs.com](http://www.nuherbs.com)

nuherbs Co.  
3820 Penniman Avenue  
Oakland, CA 94619