

Ep #27: What I Would Tell My Past Self as a New Grad



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Heather Branscombe

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Welcome to *Clinicians Creating Impact*, a show for physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech-language pathologists looking to take the next step in their careers and make a real difference in the lives of their clients. If you're looking to improve the lives of neurodiverse children and families with neurological-based challenges, grow your own business, or simply show up to help clients, this is the show for you.

I'm Heather Branscombe, Therapist, Certified Coach, Clinical Director, and Owner of Abilities Neurological Rehabilitation. I have over 25 years of experience in both the public and private sectors, and I'm here to help you become the therapist you want to be, supporting people to work towards their dreams and live their best lives. You ready to dive in? Let's go.

Hello there, friend. It is that time of year again that so many new clinicians are entering our collective professions. I don't know about you, but for me, I'm seeing a lot of graduation photos in my social media feed. And I'm also talking to a lot of new graduates, especially those that are interested in working with us. And we also have some current staff members that have been working as rehabilitation assistants that are now about to leave us to embark on that next stage of their professional career by entering various professional therapy schools.

I've said it before and I'll say it again, no one is more amazed that it has been now 26 years since I graduated from school as a clinician. And I've been thinking about who I was at the beginning of my clinical career and what advice I would give myself now, now that I am well on my way in my clinical career. So no matter if you're a newer clinician or a more seasoned veteran like myself, I hope that my thoughts today and the advice that I would have for my new grad self may be of some help for you as well.

So, before I do that, I wanted to ask you a small favor. If you've gotten any value from this podcast so far, can you help some others, maybe even some new grads in your own profession, also find this kind of help? The best way that you can do that is to rate and review this podcast on your favorite place that you

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listen to podcasts. I've said it before, but it really does help the algorithm so when a clinician, even a new grad, is looking for help, resources like this one will come to their attention so much easier.

One of the listeners that I noticed on Apple Podcasts just simply added something like, "Thanks for creating this, Heather." In fact, they exactly added that, "Thanks for creating this, Heather," along with their rating. And that extra 30 seconds that I hope that it took them meant so much to me. And it means so much for those other clinicians that are also looking for help. So with that request and that said, let's get on to the advice I would give to my new grad self.

When I think about myself as a new grad, I remember being really worried about "getting it right." And that makes sense because I had just taken a bunch of courses and exams, including an exam to be registered with my health college. And all of that told me that there was a right and a wrong answer to any given question.

So the first advice I would give to myself as a new grad is there may be more than one right answer, and it also may be much more nuanced than you think. The thing about what makes being a clinician so amazing, according to me, is that you actually get to work with people. And people aren't widgets, people are complicated. We may have the same anatomy as people, although sometimes that anatomy is even different, but we come with different experiences, different understanding, different goals, hopes and dreams.

Working with people can be really complicated because people are complicated. And again, that's what makes this profession so amazing and at times can feel really challenging. So looking for a greater variety of potential right answers that could help me than what I would have looked at initially as a new graduate, it would really help a new graduate or someone else to think more critically and to be more creative in meeting my client where they actually might be at in that moment.

Advice number two. The second piece of advice I would give myself is you are enough and there's always more to learn. So even if you don't feel like you were enough as a clinician, and I could definitely say as a new graduate I didn't feel

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like I was necessarily enough as a clinician, but the fact that you are fully registered as a clinician, potentially with your health college, or that you've completed your academic degree, whatever that is, it tells you that there is a governing body that actually does feel like you are skilled enough as a clinician.

So courses and in-services and shadowing and connecting with other amazing clinical professionals will definitely add to your professional career. And you definitely want to take those opportunities. This is the kind of lifelong learning that you were challenged with, and probably committed to at the beginning of your clinical career, I know that I did. However, taking these kinds of experiences as an opportunity to feel enough as a clinician will never actually fill the hole that you're looking to fill.

The reason is that a course cannot make you, or any amount of knowledge cannot make you feel a certain way. You feel a certain way because of the thoughts that you have, especially around yourself and you as a clinician. So you get to decide that you are enough as a clinician, and then you want to be curious to learn more, and therefore increase your own personal and professional impact.

So the third piece of advice I'd give to myself as a new grad is that clinical work is a team sport. The great news for when I think about myself, the you, as someone who loved team sports, I loved team sports when I was younger. And I definitely loved team sports growing up. The good news is that clinical work is best viewed as a team sport. There are going to be times that you feel like you're working independently, but there's always an opportunity to reach out to other clinical professionals, both inside and outside your own clinical discipline, to enhance your own work life as well as the clinical care that you provide.

Now, unlike many other sports, you can start to choose the clinical team or the network of professionals that you will go to over the life of your professional career. So seek out those like-minded professionals and invest the time that it takes to develop those relationships, both inside and sometimes even outside of your work time. I guarantee that those investments will return a much greater return than any other clinical course you may decide to take.

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And finally, here's my bonus piece of advice. This is going to be hard and fun, and it's totally worth it. It's hard to know at the beginning of a path, especially as a new grad, whether or not the journey is going to be worth it or not. So to the extent that you rely on your own inner guidance, I can guarantee that this journey is going to be both hard and fun. And it definitely is worth the trip.

So these are my three tips, as well as my little bonus tip there, and my advice for myself as a new grad. And I wonder how similar or different it is to what you would say. I like these kinds of retrospectives because I just noticed how kind I was to my past self. And I suspect that if you were to talk to your past clinical self, you probably would be kind as well.

So notice that and notice that that is the kind of energy that is always available to us to be able to use, not just to talk to our past selves, but also to our present selves as a clinician. It's also the kind of energy that will help you to make the decision that is in the best interest for both yourself and the people that you work for and with.

So what advice would you give yourself from five years ago, yourself from 20 years ago, or even 25 years ago? How is it the same or how is it different than what I shared today? And how are you going to use that knowledge moving forward? Give those questions a try and let me know how it goes. I truly can't wait to see the impact that you create with that. Have a great week and I'll see you soon.

If you enjoyed today's show and don't want to worry about missing an episode, you can follow the show wherever you listen to your podcasts. And if you haven't already, I would really appreciate it if you could leave a rating and review to let me know what you think and to help others find *Clinicians Creating Impact*.

It doesn't have to be a five-star rating, although I sure hope you love the show. I'd really want your honest feedback so I can create an awesome podcast that provides tons of value. To learn more about me and the work that I do, visit my website at www.abilitiesrehabilitation.com/clinicianscorner to download your free getting it all done at work process and to see what I'm up to. Thanks so much.

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Thanks for joining me this week on the *Clinicians Creating Impact* podcast. Want to learn more about the work I'm doing with Abilities Rehabilitation? Head on over to abilitiesrehabilitation.com. See you next week.