



## Episode 10 - How Not To Waste Your Abundant Gifts

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HF: *I find that my clients often are uncomfortable when I ask them what their gifts are. It's like asking them about their sex life.*

Welcome to the Doctor's Crossing Carpe Diem podcast. If you're questioning your career in medicine, you've come to the right place. I'm Heather Fork, a former dermatologist and founder of the Doctor's Crossing. As a master certified coach, I've helped hundreds of physicians find greater happiness in their career, whether in medicine, a non clinical job, or something else. I started this podcast to help you discover the career path that's best for you, and give you some resources and encouragement to make it happen. You don't need to get stuck at the white coat crossroads. So pull up a chair, my friend, and let's carpe that diem.

Hello, hello, and welcome back to the Doctor's Crossing Carpe Diem podcast, you are listening to episode number 10. Since we're right here in the midst of the holidays, with this episode airing on Christmas Eve, I thought I'd join in the spirit and have the theme of this podcast be about your gifts. Specifically how to identify your abundant gifts and not let them go to waste. I find that my clients often are uncomfortable when I ask them what their gifts are. It's like I'm asking them about their sex life. And trust me, I'm not doing that. That's a different kind of coach!

There are two things that are happening here I believe. One is that they feel if they talk about their gifts, it's somehow bragging, it's arrogant. And we've been conditioned to not do that kind of thing, that that's not acceptable and we should

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just act like they don't exist. Another thing that can happen is you don't know what your gifts are because they're natural for you. They come easily and it's just part of who you are. And you think everybody does these things that way. So it can take a bit of an outside perspective sometimes to really see and recognize what these gifts are that you have, how are you using them? And then to get comfortable in just letting them be a part of who you are and finding ways to speak about them and use them.

**Today, we're going to look at three different ways to not let your gifts go to waste.**

**All right, Numero Uno, number one, identify your gifts.**

When we think about our gifts, it's common to fall into the trap of believing that gifts only belong to those people who have special artistic, musical or athletic abilities, or those who are super intelligent. Famous people such as Georgia O'Keeffe, Beyonce, Michael Jordan and Steve Jobs come to mind. Yes, these sparkly people do have extraordinary gifts. And they did something remarkable with them. But you have many gifts. Yes, you. And not just one or two, you have an abundance of gifts. Many gifts are not flashy on the surface and they can seem quite ordinary. But their magic is that they're connected to your spirit. And when you use them, they have exponential powers.

**Here's an example:**

How many of you have heard of Marie Kondo. She's the Organizing Empress who wrote the well known book, *The Life Changing Magic of Tidying Up*. As she instructs her readers to go through their house and pick up everything in there one at a time and ask the question, does this spark joy? And if it doesn't, you're supposed to get rid of it. So who would think that having a skill for organizing, cleaning out closets and taking things to Goodwill would be a gift seriously. But the difference is that this talent that she has, this interest, is connected to her spirit. And it becomes a self fulfilling, like a feedback loop, where she enjoys what

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she's doing, she gets positive reinforcement doing it so she uses it more. And then as she does that, she starts expanding and taking it out into the world and it becomes a gift to other people. So this is part of that exponential power of using your gifts.

Now, I'm going to mention a number of gifts that I see in my physician clients. And I'm curious if you identify with any of them. And one caveat here, if thinking about something as a gift of yours feels like too much, just focus on how natural this skill is for you, and how much you like using it. That's what it's really about.

Do you have a knack for problem solving and troubleshooting? Are you a MacGyver? Can you quickly establish rapport with patients? Do they tell you things they haven't shared with anyone else? Are you able to break down medical jargon, and teach your patients about their conditions in a relatable way? Do they say, Hey, Doc, no one ever really explained my diabetes to me, now I get it.

Do people remark on how calm you are under pressure, even if chaos is swirling all around you in the emergency room or in the operating room? Even though you feel anxious inside, you're able to sort of fool people, but maintain that calm demeanor, and stay in control. Can you build consensus and motivate a team of dispirited staff? Are you intuitive? And do you get hunches about what's wrong with your patients?

I had a client, she's an OB GYN, and she would tell me how when she'd be on call, and a patient was in labor, the nurse might call her at home and say, they're fine, it's going to be a long time, you don't need to come in. And she'd get this hunch, like, Oh, no, I need to go! And she'd get in her car and she goes to the hospital. And the nurse will say, *What are you doing here? I told you, you don't need to come.* She's like, *No, I need to come,* and she'd go into the patient's room, and there would be a problem brewing. Think about if that happens to you, maybe not quite so dramatically, but when just when you know what to ask your patient or you can sort of hear what they're not saying.

Some of the other gifts I hear my clients talking about are a talent for analyzing data, loving to crunch numbers and make decisions - big decisions based on what they're getting from data and information. Here are few more. How about a talent for presenting to an audience in a really engaging way, making them laugh and discover new things and go away like wanting to listen to you again? How about are you able to see problems from a variety of perspectives and different points of view? Now that's a gift, it may just seem like something that you just do but not everybody does that. How about being a leader and handling conflict, that's very uncomfortable, it's not an easy thing to do. And then one of my favorites, which is having a great sense of humor. I really admire people who can stay affable under pressure, and they crack jokes and they can just kind of bust the tension in a room by saying something funny.

I could keep going on and on but I encourage you to take some time to make a list of your own gifts. Feel free to simply title it, *The Skills I Enjoy Using* if that's more comfortable for you. If you're having trouble coming up with a list, you can do what some of my clients do which is ask your partner, query other family members or friends, notice when people compliment you, what are they complimenting you on? What do they come to you for? What problems are you solving for them? And look at what are you doing that no one is paying you for?

I often find out when talking to my clients that late at night or early in the morning, they're doing all this research on a topic or they have this business idea that they're working on, but they don't really tell anybody about it. So there's a lot that can happen when you just let your energy take you somewhere. And those are really good clues.

**All right. Now we're on to number two, which is to be grateful for your gifts.**

Now that may sound kind of obvious, but this helps us let go of this feeling that it's arrogant or you're boasting to even acknowledge your gifts. So here's one way to think about it that I find helpful is we didn't create ourselves. These gifts were given to us. And yes, through discipline and work. We can hone them, we

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can use them, but they're given to us - they are gifts. If you imagine if someone, like a friend or somebody, gives you a physical gift, they hand you this wrapped package, what would it be like if you said, *Oh, no, I don't want that. Oh, I don't deserve it. Give it to somebody else. Or Oh whoa, that's way way too much. You know, please just a little, just a little thing for me.*

Or perhaps you take it, and then you put it in your closet, you don't even open it, or maybe you use it a few times, and then you forget about it. If we do that with our own gifts that are given us as a person, then they languish, we don't get the benefit of them. And in some ways, we're not being grateful.

**All right, now we're on to number three, choose the gifts you want to use.**

I have a story for you and it's about the actor and model Mehcad Brooks. I have this article about him from 2010 from the Austin newspaper in my hand, I've saved it. If you're not familiar with him, he's an actor and model and he was on *Desperate Housewives* and he was in the series *True Blood*. Well, he had a number of gifts in addition to his talent as an actor in his modeling. When he was, this article talks about how when he was a high school student here in Austin, he had a 4.0 GPA. He was offered scholarships to play basketball in college, he was recruited by Ivy League schools, and he was getting a lot of pressure to pursue a basketball career by his family and coaches.

At the same time, he was acting in the play *Othello*. He's quoted in the article as saying, *I realized at the age of 16, or 17, that if I didn't play sports for the rest of my life, I'd be fine with it. But if I didn't act, I wouldn't know what to do.* When he tried to quit basketball, his coaches called his home urging him to come back to the court, and others told him he was throwing his life away. He ended up faking seizures on the basketball court to get out of playing, and thus, his acting career was born.

When you think about your own life and career, take some time to write down the gifts that are important for you to use. Are you using these gifts in your

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current job? Do you want to see how you could use them more? If your gifts are languishing in your current position, do you need to find a different job or even a new career?

For me, the gift that I really love to use is to help people find their true path and direction. And to fully use that gift, I did have to change careers. But that has stayed the primary gift that I love to use all along and it just increases. It is a really nice feedback loop. When I, I use it, I get to see the benefit of it in other people's lives, I get energized from it, I want to use it more.

This is what I'm talking about, about the exponential power when you tap into these gifts that you've been given. But have a look at your own life and see what's true for you. You may not find a job where you can sing and play your guitar and get paid for it but using your gifts and talents in your personal life is a huge energy booster. And it can bring in new energy to help with your career plans. This is something I talk to my clients about, which may seem counterintuitive.

When we're doing a lot of career work and exercises and they're reading blogs and listening to podcasts, looking at their skills and working on their resume, I say take time to do things that you love to do in your personal life because it's going to really help with figuring out your career and here's why. When you're feeling that joy and the enjoyment at home, you're connecting to your heart and you're reconnecting the circuitry that often gets disconnected or rusty. So when those wires get reconnected to your heart, your heart is a big part of your internal GPS and it really helps you in that career direction and just finding what's right for you.

**Alright, let's recap the three ways to not let your gifts go to waste.**

**One, identify what your gifts are.**

**Two, be grateful for your gifts, love them, appreciate them.**



**And number three, choose which gifts you want to use.**

I hope this episode has given you some ideas and inspiration for using your gifts in your own unique way. Don't leave them unwrapped under the tree or forgotten on a shelf gathering dust. And don't indulge any thoughts that somehow when gifts were given out, you came up short. Trust me, you didn't. It's an act of gratitude, not arrogance to fully honor who you are and what you've been given. In the light of day, invite your gifts to dance with you and be part of the rhythm and magic that makes you who you are.

May find deep joy and satisfaction using your abundant gifts in the new year. Carpe Diem, my friends. I'll see you in 2021. Bye for now!

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