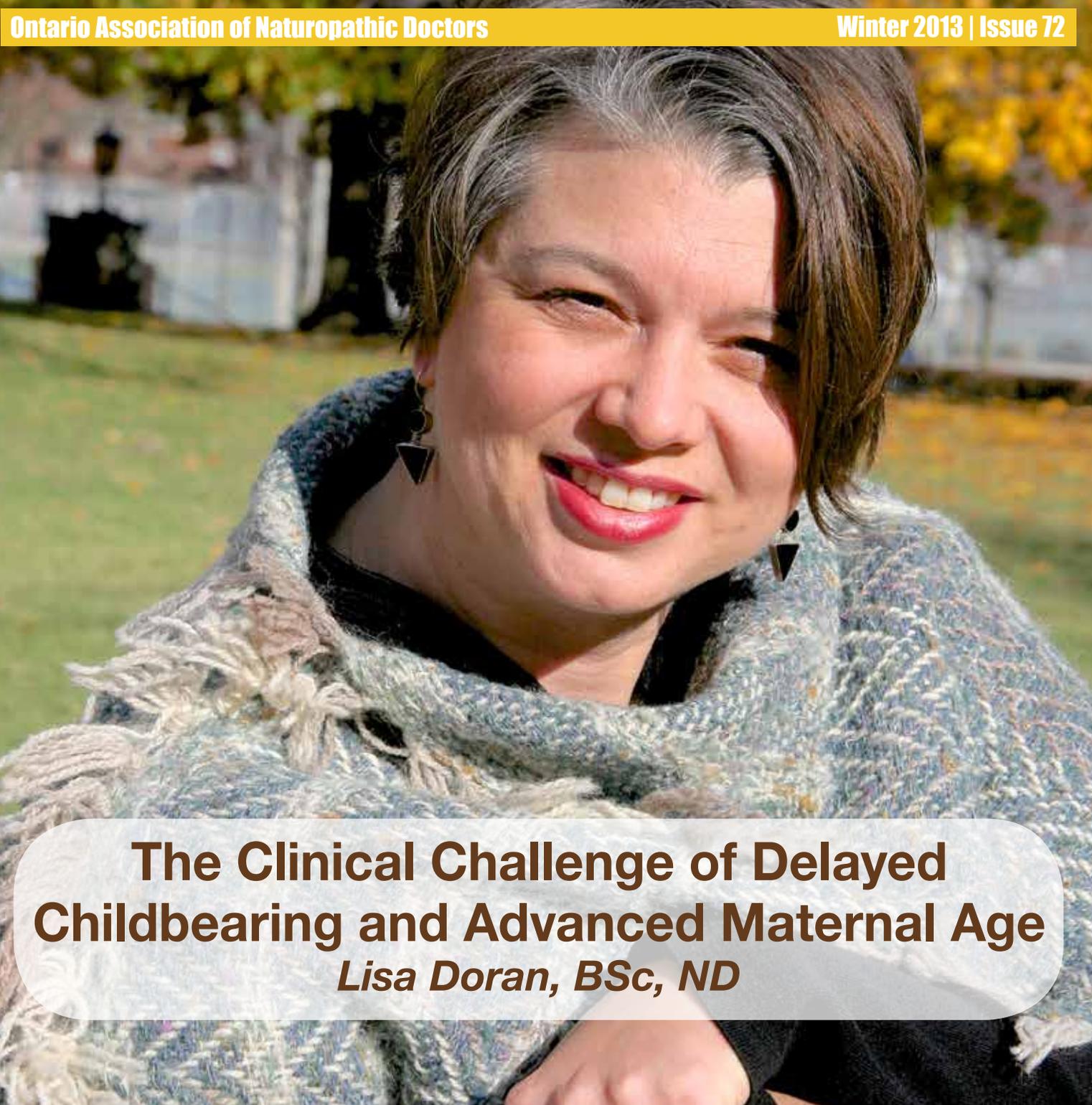


THE PULSE

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The Clinical Challenge of Delayed Childbearing and Advanced Maternal Age

Lisa Doran, BSc, ND



Spring Conference and AGM - Saturday April 5th - Foresters Conference Centre



Profile of Success

By Warren Coughlin

Andrea Maxim, ND

Hello Doctor,

Warren here again with another interview of one of your own. Both the OAND and I would love to know if you're getting value from this series. The NDs we have interviewed have enjoyed consistent success and have been generous in sharing their experiences and insights. I hope you are finding information that you can use to make your own journey more rewarding.

This month's interview was both unusual and very exciting. I had the great pleasure of chatting with Andrea Maxim.

Most of the interviews that I've conducted for the *Pulse* have been with wise veterans of the profession who have blazed a trail and made longstanding contributions to the profession.

Andrea is on track to make those same kinds of contributions. While she has only been in practice for a couple of years (she is a 2011 grad), she's already enjoying success that it's taken others many years to achieve.

Hers is a story of clarity, ambition, creativity and persistence.

Somewhere around the age of five, Andrea ran home and told her mother that one day, she would be a doctor. Obviously, at the age of five, she didn't know the range of choices available to her, but that desire was ignited.

While at McMaster, she did a co-op program. This experience illustrated clearly what she didn't want to do. So she began researching her options, including chiropractic. In the course of this research, she came across naturopathy, a discipline with which she wasn't previously familiar. The more she looked into it, the more she realized that it was exactly what she was looking for.

Andrea was fortunate enough to find work in an existing practice that she was then able to take over. She's been very diligent at continuing education and absorbing what others have done. In the course of exploring other successful professionals, she came to be inspired by Natasha Turner, ND author of *The Hormone Diet* who has carved a successful niche. Andrea thought that if Natasha Turner could accomplish this, then she should be able to as well.

As a result, Andrea set out to establish both her skills and her practice as quickly as possible. In her first year, she grossed \$100k. She committed to challenge herself, not just as a clinician but as a business owner.

Early on, she began asking herself the simple question "What would excite my customers?" (Note, she used the word "customers" rather than "patients".) As a result, she created a customer service process. Everyone starts with similar baseline measurements and then individualization is built on that. Every person receives a welcome package that describes her philosophy and what to expect.

She tries to keep it simple. Andrea's approach is to help the patient feel informed and in control. They feel like they're the ones making decisions rather than being told what to do. So that means people don't leave with \$500 of supplements that they don't really understand.

She does follow up calls to ensure they're doing everything they can to succeed. She offers discounts on supplements at particular occasions like birthdays and sends postcards every three months.

In her first year, she did as many marketing activities as she could. She did free talks, offered complimentary seminars, attended trade shows, created an online newsletter, and produced Youtube videos. She works six days a week and works out of two clinics.

Her first clinic is in Caledonia, and her second is in Burlington. This has given her experience in working with both rural patients and urban patients so she has an understanding of commonalities and differences between the two. As she says "The more I see, the better I get. I can cut back later."

As part of her growth, she took a strategic approach to client selection. Rather than worry about losing a patient, she is very candid with patients that, if they feel she isn't the right person, she is happy to refer them on to someone else. She's learned that someone's rejection of her has very little to do with her. As long as they leave knowing more and feeling in control, she feels she has fulfilled her responsibilities.

She's very focused on who and what she's comfortable treating. Andrea has opted for a narrow range of services at

which she excels. Therefore, she quite readily refers people to other NDs.

In terms of profitability, her most profitable services are in consultation and supplement sales. With respect to supplement sales, like others in this series, Andrea acknowledged that there is a steep learning curve. In the beginning, she carried too much. The trick has become to order less, but order more frequently. She now has a strong handle on what to carry and when to refer her patients to the supplements store. (Doing so not only manages costs, it also sets up a good referral relationship.)

Having said all of this, her first two years have really just been about establishing the foundations. Andrea has much larger aspirations. Like Turner, Andrea wants to establish both a movement and a reputation. She seeks to create a community of health minded people who inspire and learn from each other. A community where people act as advocates of her services and philosophy.

She recognizes that one on one treating will cap the number of people that she can help and the wealth that she can generate. So, she is beginning to build programs to help

simplify health and involve others in education and achieving health outcomes. In other words, she will be creating leverage. Her first step on this path is to write her book "MAXIMized Health" which is to be published soon.

It's pretty clear that there are more big things to come for Andrea. When asked what advice she might have for other NDs, she replied, "From what I've seen, it's all the mindset." If you can develop the mindset of a business owner as opposed to just being a clinician, results will follow. Think about the customer experience. How can you keep them happy and engaged? Try to overcome the fear. Successful people make fast decisions, and they recognize that there are so many people who need your services who you don't even know yet. Get out there and meet them.

A couple of last bits of advice were to have a good relationship with money. It's OK to love and to want to earn a lot of it. Be conscious of your time as that's the most valuable resource you have available to you.

And finally, remember that if somebody else has done it before, there's no reason why you can't.

WORDS FROM WARREN

Andrea's story is one that can ignite very different reactions. I've seen it before. Someone with a lot of gusto, courage and confidence will, for some, be an inspiration. They will accept her rallying cry that "I can do it too."

Others are likely to use it as an excuse not to go for it. They will say things like "I don't have that much energy." Or "That just sounds too hard."

Recognize that those answers are part of your brain that wants you to stay in a comfort zone. No one is saying that you have to move as fast as Andrea, or follow her path. But the lessons from her story are well worth considering:

- You're running a business, not just a practice.
- The customer's experience is as important as their treatment.
- Great results come from hard work.
- Think abundantly.
- If you don't have enough business, go and get it using as many tactics as you can think of.
- Think creatively about the best ways to serve more people and generate more income.

About Warren

Warren Coughlin is a business coach who specializes in helping grow businesses that matter; those that profitably and predictably provide people experiences that restore their faith in humanity. For six years he was the top coach in Canada with one of the world's largest business coaching organizations before going independent. He's also a recovering lawyer, a serial entrepreneur, an actor and a theatre director. For a 10-day free coaching program or to access some powerful tools for your business visit www.warrencoughlin.com. Warren can be reached at warren@warrencoughlin.com.

