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## Stop Blocking Yourself

I daresay \*every one of us\* has engaged in a behavior or made a decision (or series of decisions) that literally held us back, either personally or professionally. I'm typically involved when a person is holding themselves back professionally, but I'm conscious of doing this and not acting to make my \*own\* corrections. Right now, every person reading these words is currently engaged in something that is downright bad for your wallet, professional standing, mental health, or life/relationships.

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### Why do we do this? Why persist in being stuck?

For some, the fix is identified as being more painful than the bad decision(s). Maybe the correction will make you look tough or unyielding to your staff. Maybe your past decision felt so right at the time; it's now hard to disassociate from those feelings of "rightness", even when the outcome of the situation clearly is no longer serving you.

How do you identify what is no longer a benefit in your practice? As a person who looks daily at the financials of dental practices, I can give you a few examples of being stuck, and how to fix them.

**1. You made a hiring mistake, or promoted someone into a position that they cannot manage.** This is the number one problem I see in my work. Stop complaining about this or making excuses, now, and make the necessary change. You will open a path to hire someone who is far better for your practice, and free the struggling person to find their own route. Or perhaps they can find a practice that tolerates lower standards than yours – we all know they are out there! If you're tolerating mistakes, subgingival tartar on the X-ray, or lack of preparedness...STOP NOW. You are not the end of the road for any employee, and you deserve to work with the right people.

**2. Your staff salaries are 30% plus.** This is a nuanced problem. It comes with a lot of tenure on teams, and with higher demand for certain skilled employees (hygiene comes to mind). You can thank the DMSO's for the lack of skilled workers, but in the meantime you either must examine your benefit package and trim it or collect more. It's a numbers game to scale back the impact of higher compensation packages. I recommend running outstanding treatment plans for the past 24 months to see what sales slipped through your fingers and then working backward from there. IMO, it is

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essential that you have a skilled salesperson working in your administrative position to impact/correct this problem. If you were generous to your employees in flusher times, yet need to make a correction now, you can move forward if it is done with transparency and good communication.

**3. Your aged accounts receivable is over 1.1 times average monthly production.** This is the industry standard in collection numbers. If yours is higher, it is time to tighten your financial policy, or implement one if you have resisted. I encourage my clients to choose a floor limit (say, \$500) of treatment and have all patients sign a financial agreement that is court-worthy to correspond with that treatment. Court-worthiness implies a notation of exactly what procedure is being done, and the dollar amount associated. If you think patients will resist signing something else in your practice, realize the vast amount of paperwork YOU sign for the smallest procedure in a medical setting. This is now normal; the paperwork protects you in the event of default. If your balances are high, start now.

Feeling stuck? Past decisions back to bite you? You're certainly not the only one. Reach out to a peer or hire an expert to help you get past whatever obstacle you're up against. There's simply no reason to keep making the same mistakes in 2024.

Warmly,

Angie

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Angie Skinner is a nationally recognized Coach, speaker and author, specializing in dental practice profitability. She is a member of the National Speakers Association, and a Continuing Education provider through the AGD's P.A.C.E program. [Email Angie](#) [About Angie](#)

