

FIERCE FREEDOM AWAITS

with Dr. Yashika Dooley

Episode 7 – Leaning Into Your Niche with Dr. Kim Wolf

This is the Fierce Freedom Awaits podcast, episode number 7. Today, we're talking about being your true self, charting your own path and being willing to step outside your comfort zone and seeing all the amazing things that can happen along the way. Are you ready? Here we go!

Dr. Dooley: Hello, ladies, and welcome back to the show. I'm your host, Dr. Yashika Dooley. Today we have Dr. Kim Wolf, who is the Director of Pediatric Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine.

Dr. Wolf: It's a mouthful.

Dr. Dooley: It is a mouthful. Thank you. Welcome to our show.

Dr. Wolf: Thanks for having me. I'm very excited to be here. That's why we just call it OMM. It's much easier to say.

Dr. Dooley: Tell us how did you get into medicine? How did you start on this venture?

Dr. Wolf: Actually, when I was four years old my family doctor, I thought she was a pediatrician in my four-year-old wisdom, but my family doctor gave me a book on Elizabeth Blackwell, the first woman in medicine in the United States. My stubborn little feminist four-year-old self said if she can do it, so can I. My family doc was a woman as well.

I didn't realize the context that obviously she had done this more than a hundred years prior. That's when it started. I told my mom at four years old that I'd be a pediatrician and here I am. I love it, and I went to osteopathic school because my mom has multiple sclerosis and a DO performing OMM on her was the only thing that really provided symptomatic relief over the years. That sort of peaked my interest and is why I set out in osteopathic school.

Dr. Dooley: That's awesome. Before you actually went to medical school, did you ever receive treatment yourself? I know you said your mom did and you had seen that that was really helpful. How about for you?

- Dr. Wolf: Great question. I actually have not. I had shadowed DOs who were doing it on their patients. I knew my mom's story, but I personally had not received it prior to going to medical school, which is shocking when I think back on it that I was so sold without having experienced it myself.
- Dr. Dooley: What kind of benefits did you see that your mom was receiving? Was it pain relief?
- Dr. Wolf: Some pain and discomfort relief, but also it helped with her fatigue. These are symptoms that are less vague, and I'll admit that those of us in the osteopathic world don't fully understand how we get these effects. A lot of us have theories and ideas, and there's a lot of emerging research that I think will help illuminate why we get relief from these more vague symptoms, but she got relief from fatigue and some of her neurologic symptoms, so some of the weakness, numbness, tingling, things like that.
- Dr. Dooley: You decided to go to school. Did you apply at all to any traditional medical schools or were you just kind of like I just want to do this one thing?
- Dr. Wolf: I applied to everything. I sought out osteopathic schools, but there is still a stigma around osteopathic school. Of course, I applied to allopathic schools. I was like I don't need to go to an osteopathic school. As soon as I interviewed at the osteopathic schools, I knew that was where I belonged and what felt right for my career and what I wanted to do.
- Dr. Dooley: You finish medical school and what was your desire as far as a clinical path? Did you always know that you were going to work with children or did that evolve over time?
- Dr. Wolf: I always knew I'd work with kids. Like I said, when I was four I said I'd be a pediatrician. I wavered slightly in third and fourth year. For a brief moment I thought I'd be a family medicine doc. Then I remembered very clearly a moment interviewing a morbidly obese, hypercholesterolemia, hypertensive, diabetic about her diet, and she spoke Spanish and looks at me and goes, "[Foreign language] bread and sugar." I hate adults.
- Then I considered OB for awhile. I really enjoyed that, but I realized that after the baby was delivered I wanted to follow the baby and was kind of over moms. All roads pointed to pediatrics. Then I knew that I wanted to incorporate osteopathic manipulation into my practice. My initial plan was for it to sort of integrate it into my daily practice in a smart part of my practice. It sort of took off and has led me down a different pathway.
- Dr. Dooley: I know that you are in academic medicine. Did you think that you might have wanted to be just kind of in a private practice or a little bit more of a clinical setting?
- Dr. Wolf: I did. I thought I would be private practice. When I think back about my vision, I saw myself in a private practice, having families for the 18 years, and really having that continuity with them and knowing them. That relationship had been really important when I was a kid with our family physician. When I graduated from residency, I stayed on at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio. I was originally given 90% of my

time doing general pediatrics and then one-half day a week was pediatric OMM clinic. They largely gave me that because it was part of the residency clinic to expose our pediatric residents to the manipulation.

Within a year I was up to a day and a half. By the time I left there at four years, the pediatric manipulation clinic had really taken off and was over 80% of my clinical time. We had a year-long wait to get into the clinic, and we had families driving from over three hours away to come see us. The demand is really what grew that and directed my career.

Dr. Dooley: You have this year-long wait. What are the majority of the patients that you are treating coming with? What are their parents bringing their children there for?

Dr. Wolf: The most common things, it sort of depends on the age. In pediatrics there's going to be different problems in our newborns versus 18-year-olds. In the newborns and young infants one of the most common problems I saw, which I love treating, is issues with breastfeeding and problems latching. Bottle feeding as well can be an issue, but more commonly with breastfeeding because mom is symptomatic with a poor latch, a painful latch, things like that. I saw a ton of those kids, and it's really rewarding that you can treat them.

They can have actual dysfunction of the muscles of the tongue. A lot of them have those squished, asymmetric faces that are pooling on the muscle of the tongue asymmetrically, and that affects the latch. Also, the occiput at birth, people don't think about it, but it's in four pieces. What's coming out between those pieces, which is soft cartilage at that time, is actually your cranial nerves that are controlling your tongue, the posterior pharynx, the muscles of mastication, all of those. By treating the occiput especially, you can help influence the actual nervous function and improve that latch.

Those are some of my favorite kids to treat because you get these moms who are exhausted and frustrated, and you can make that baby latch before they leave the office most of the time. I also treated a lot of infants with torticollis, so a twist in their neck, or plagiocephaly, so misshapen or flattened heads. The plagiocephaly for us is not just about the symmetry and the cosmetic appearance of it, but it's also about function. If you've got flattening in the back of the head, you've got asymmetry in the face, which can influence vision. It can influence your dental history. If you have one maxilla that's pushed anteriorly, you're going to need braces down the road because you're not aligned. For us it has bigger implications than just the cosmetic.

In older kids I treated a lot of back pain, scoliosis, tons of sports injuries. I had level ten gymnasts and college athletes literally from every sport you can imagine. It was really rewarding. They're a great population to work with because they're so motivated to get back to their sport.

Dr. Dooley: I can imagine. That sounds awesome. You really have a wide range, and it sounds like you can make a big impact pretty easily, which is nice to see. You then have this opportunity to do more. What kind of is your next step? You're growing this clinic. It sounds like there's an amazing need. What's the next thing in your life?

Dr. Wolf: I chose my residency based on the – it was formerly the dual-accredited residency at Nationwide Children's in Columbus, Ohio. The reason I chose it was because of the focus on osteopathic manipulation within a pediatrician curriculum. When I graduated from there, I stayed on. I was doing the OMM didactic sessions for the residents, and I was treating patients in clinic and teaching residents in that setting. About three years out as soon as I was eligible, I got asked to be a co-program director for that residency program, which was really amazing.

Dr. Dooley: That is amazing.

Dr. Wolf: It was a really exciting opportunity because this was as the ACGME single accreditation system was coming into effect. When I graduated from the residency we were dually accredited, meaning that I could take allopathic boards or osteopathic boards. I took osteopathic because that part of my career was important to me. With the new single accreditation, we became a program within the larger pediatric residency at Nationwide Children's and then received what's called osteopathic recognition under the new single accreditation from the ACGME. I got to be the co-program director of that track with a focus on osteopathic medicine.

Dr. Dooley: Just to even hear that somebody has an opportunity like that right when you're eligible a couple of years out of residency, you don't hear about that very much.

Dr. Wolf: It was quite the honor, and it was very humbling. To be honest I think I had sort of made a name for myself at that point at the hospital based on the strength of my clinic. Also, I had a unique niche. I had sort of found that there are very few people who do pediatric manipulation.

My co-director was an MD who was much more experienced than I was. He was a really great asset and resource as far as the actual program director administrative tasks because in my young career I had not had that perspective. Then I sort of took on the role of leading their osteopathic education. It was a great balance, but it trained me and taught me a lot about the administrative side of academic medicine, which peaked my interest for next steps.

Dr. Dooley: How long were you in that position or what then was the progression from there?

Dr. Wolf: I was at Nationwide Children's for a total of four years after I finished residency, so seven years if you include residency. Then I was program director for just about a year when I left. I left because I was literally offered my dream job that was too hard to pass up. A position was created for me at Touro University College of Osteopathic Medicine in California. I was offered the role of Director of Pediatric OMM.

Literally no one else has that title, at least not that I'm aware of. It was created just for me, and it was because my boss had a vision of expanding what I was doing and making it into a national scale, so giving the ability to offer CME in pediatric, osteopathic manipulation, being able to offer integrated osteopathic pediatric curriculum to our medical students. When I was a medical student I think I had one lecture on how you can do OMM on pediatrics. It's obviously much more complex on that because they have unique anatomy and you need to treat them differently.

A toddler doesn't follow directions like an adult does. It's got a unique skill set. That's what I've been working on implementing at Touro, but also I'm able to function more on a national level, which I can tell you more about as well. The other big part of it that I'm loving is research. I'm actually doing more research related to pediatric OMM as well in my new role.

Dr. Dooley: How did they even find you? It sounds like they made this position for you, so I'm assuming they weren't just putting out an application that you applied for. How was that connection made? Oftentimes it's the connection that's so important.

Dr. Wolf: Networking is everything. One of the people I had followed around because she literally wrote the textbooks that exist on pediatric manipulation, her name is Jane Carreiro. She is a dean at the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine. She had really been a huge inspiration for me. Someone asked her we need a speaker on pediatric manipulation for the AOA, the American Osteopathic Association national conference in 2016. She recommended me, which was super humbling.

Someone I sort of idolized and followed around recommended me. It was a two-part talk, and I was paired with my current boss, Dr. Stacey Pierce-Talsma. That's how we met. The rest is sort of history.

Dr. Dooley: What a great opportunity. It sounds like you just ran with it and made an awesome accomplishment out of that. After the talk, obviously things went well with the talk. She wants to create this director position for you. Did you have any hesitation or did you just know this is where I belong?

Dr. Wolf: When someone offers you a position literally made for you that sort of describes your dream job, it's very hard to say no. The hardest part about leaving, there was some hesitation. I loved my residence. I was very close with them. I loved the work I was doing with them.

I knew they'd be left in great hands. I knew that the program would continue and carry on and that I could stay in touch with them and influence them in other ways. That helped me feel at ease about that. The other hard part was my patients. It was really emotional leaving them, but fortunately I have kept in touch with a number of them. I set up a Gmail account just for my former patients, and I hear from them all the time, which is really incredible. That helped ease that transition too.

Dr. Dooley: Now in your new role, you talked a little bit about some of the things that you do, working more on a national level, but also doing clinical and research. Let's kind of delve into that. On a national level I think especially to be so young in your career, you have really made a name for yourself. Let's talk about that. Like you said, being in the niche area has really allowed you to rise. I feel like you have soared far faster than most people are able to. Let's talk about that because you've made an incredible opportunity and path for yourself that most don't even think about.

Dr. Wolf: I feel incredibly lucky to have fallen into this path. It's definitely where I'm supposed to be. Having this little niche has definitely allowed me to take off. Again, I also think I've had great connections in people who have pulled me up and helped me along and guided me every step of the way. I can't stress the importance of that enough, going to conferences and networking and making yourself known and what you want to do known. I think if I hadn't talked with Stacey, who I was paired with, about my passion for this, she would have not known that I was potentially interested in the position she designed for me. It's been great.

I teach osteopathic manipulation to first through fourth years, primarily first and second years on campus. I'm technically an employee of the Department of Manipulation. At my clinical time I have a free clinic that I supervise our students in on campus exclusively for pediatric OMM. I also work in our Solano County clinic doing pediatric manipulation as well. All of my clinical time is exclusively pediatric manipulation. No more general pediatrics, which makes me sad. I sort of miss that, but maybe someday.

Then I'm doing a lot of national work. The most recent thing I'm involved with is the American Academy of Pediatrics has a section on osteopathic pediatricians. We're one of the largest sections within the American Academy of Pediatrics, which is phenomenal. I was recently elected to the executive committee for that.

I'm very excited to take on that role because it will give me more of an ability to reach a national audience to work on promoting better osteopathic pediatrics CME not just for pediatricians but for physicians that focus on manipulation and need more training in the pediatric world, but also family practice docs. This is not just open to DOs. We are also reaching out and encouraging MDs to come and learn about what we're doing as well. Especially with single accreditation, now MDs can potentially get into an "osteopathic recognized track" or program. There's an option for MDs to get involved as well.

With the AAP, a couple weeks ago I actually presented at their national conference and exhibition talking about pediatric manipulation. There's an event coming up in the future in February of 2019. It's the very first time, we're really excited about it, that the AAP has offered a standalone CME course that's eligible for both allopathic and osteopathic AOA and AMA CME credits. Again, we encourage MDs to come join us as well. There's going to be a lot of OOM.

It's called Caring for the Whole Child, so it's sort of a comprehensive approach to pediatrics. We encourage people to join us there if they'd like. Those are some of the big national things I'm working on.

You mentioned research, so I've previously done research on the breastfeeding problems and manipulation. We're trying to get that study published. I've also done a study looking at [26:30] and asthma in pediatric patients. That study should hopefully be published soon as well. I've also been published for treating my osteopathic work with concussion. I got really great results in that population and would love to someday get a bigger study going for that.

Currently I'm partnered with UCSF working on a study looking at OMM and autism. I actually treat kids at a school specifically for children with neuro developmental delays. We're seeing phenomenal results in those kids. Again, some of the more abstract things you wouldn't expect.

One of the kids was functionally nonverbal when I met him, and now he responds to questions. He makes eye contact. He's singing. He's writing. It's really incredible to see.

Dr. Dooley: It sounds like you have had a lot of amazing opportunities. Do you feel like some of the choices that you've made have really allowed this to be in alignment? I feel like the amount that you're doing, to be so junior in your career, usually the opportunities just aren't even there. The research might be going on, but you're just not the one that's involved because there are so many other people that are ahead in line.

Dr. Wolf: Like I said, I feel very lucky to be where I am and doing all that I'm doing and have this many really unique opportunities. I honestly have to credit my mentor. His name is Brian Loveless. He was my mentor starting back in medical school. I was probably two years into my career. First year you really don't know what you're doing. Who can focus on outside things when you're just trying to survive?

At about that point he gave me a word of advice and said, "Don't say no to any opportunity. Each opportunity will open the door to something else." A couple months after that I got invited to speak at the Ohio Osteopathic Symposium, and they wanted me to talk about osteopathic scholarly activity. I literally didn't even know what I would talk about or what I would say, but I was hearing his voice in the back of my head saying say yes. I said yes, and it went really well.

From there I was actually offered to give that talk in Arkansas at a GME summit there. I was also offered to give – I've now done three webinars for the AODME and AODGME, so the American Osteopathic Association of Graduate Medical Education on scholarly activity within the osteopathic world. I think that started getting my name out there. Obviously that was not my passion. That was not what I ultimately wanted to focus on.

I do care about it. It's important to me, but I love my kids. That's what I wanted to get back to. That sort of opened the door for people to hear me speak to know that I'm a good speaker, that I enjoy speaking, and I think other opportunities came from there.

Dr. Dooley: I think that's great information that he gave you. Having a mentor is key, but having a mentor that can give you really great tidbits of advice like that is helpful. Especially when you're so junior, you don't know what to say yes and no to. I think also, anytime you're given the opportunity to speak on a bigger platform, even if it's not exactly what you want to talk about, it does exactly what you say, gives people just the opportunity to connect a face with your name. They hear that you can talk.

Most of us can talk about most things. Give us a little time. We can do the research. If you're a good speaker, either you have it or you don't. You can practice a little bit, but some people just can really click with the audience and get the information out. It sounds like you were able to do that.

Dr. Wolf: I was able to put my own little spin on it. I was talking about osteopathic research, and so I talked about what osteopathic research I had done with kids. I got people to hear that side of my passion too. There's ways to incorporate that in. I agree that early on in your career, take those opportunities on. Don't be afraid of them because we're all smart people in this field. You don't get here if you're not intelligent and can't figure things out. Again, that really pushed me.

I would say though the caveat is do that early on and take on things you're not 100% excited about. As you get more focused, at this point in my career I say no to lots of things that don't really serve me and my goals. My plate is pretty full. That advice applies early, but don't be afraid to say no later on and respect your boundaries and what you're capable of doing and able to give the time to.

Dr. Dooley: So, switching a little bit, I love the fact that you are really involved in Sseko. You have this whole clinical academic world where you're doing some awesome things, but you are also doing some other awesome and interesting things. Tell us about Sseko. There might be people who have never heard of it like me. I would love to let them know exactly what this is and how you got involved.

Dr. Wolf: [Sseko Designs](#) is my side gig. I will be honest, I did not see me taking on a side gig because as you've heard, I'm pretty busy. I already have a lot on my plate. Sseko is such a unique company that I felt that I had to be a part of what they are doing. We're an ethical fashion company. Our founder started about nine years ago, and she actually went to Uganda, which I think is really unique and an important part of our story, and talked to the people of Uganda and found out what a need was that she could help fill. I think that's a very different model than a lot of charities are taking where we sort of as Americans from our perspective decide what might benefit people in other countries and third-world nations and other cultures that we're not as familiar with and trying to impose what we want for them.

I think those are all well intentioned, but often not exactly what's needed. Our founder went over to Uganda and found the Cornerstone Leadership Academy, which is a high school that accepts the best and brightest girls from around Uganda. They have hundreds of applications and only take about 30 students a year. When these girls graduate, they're the best and brightest.

They have a nine-month gap before they go off to university. During that nine months they're expected to find employment to help fund their college, which is very difficult to do because first of all, it's hard to get a job in Uganda at all. Second of all, they're very low paying, so it's hard to save up enough to fund. Third of all, it's much more difficult to get a job if you're a female.

What Liz created was Sseko, which employs these girls during their nine-month gap between high school and college. During that time they are housed at Sseko. They get healthcare. They get fed by Sseko, and they have to save at least 50% of their earnings in a fund that's protected. Their family can't use it. They can't use it because they're 18-year-old girls who haven't had a saving account before. It's to protect their money for their education.

Most of them are able to save about 80 to 90% of their earnings because we're housing and feeding them. At the end of their nine months, we're currently matching whatever they've saved at 300% with the hopes that they are able to go to the university but also pay for their living expenses, their books, everything they need to be successful. We have sent 106 women to university in our 9 years and hope to keep growing that. This year we employed 19 of the 30 women from that class at Cornerstone and next year hoping to employ all 30.

They can make beautiful products including my blazer, my blouse, my necklace, my earrings, so lots of really gorgeous products. We also have leather goods. You can custom design your own leather bags. It's high quality products and the idea behind that is we're a business. We want to thrive and survive so that they're able to keep thriving and surviving over there.

We also employ full-time employees of women. Our team is locally managed and our workshop over there is owned by Ugandans as well. That's really an important part of what we do too. Our full-time employees get healthcare. They get childcare. They get a retirement fund set up, which is almost unheard of in Uganda. They're getting fair wages.

We are a fair trade federation verified corporation, so we are held to this accountable standard from an external entity as well. We're doing some really awesome things. I sort of felt I had to be a part of that.

Dr. Dooley: How did you first hear about it? Did you know her?

Dr. Wolf: No. One of my friends from college found out about the company through a friend of hers. It sort of found its way to me. I was her first customer. After I bought my first product I was sort of hooked.

Dr. Dooley: You got involved because you liked what the company is all about and about serving and giving back. You didn't have any experience with multi-level marketing.

Dr. Wolf: For the first six years we were in existence, our products were sold in boutiques and fair trade shops and stores like that. Our founder realized she had built this amazing community of women in Uganda and didn't have that here. We're called fellows, those of us who are doing the sales. The other reason she wanted it is when you go into a store and just see a pair of sandals or a bag and buy it, you don't really know and appreciate the story behind it whereas when you buy from me, I'm able to tell you exactly where that purchase is going, how your money is being spent, what the impact really is. That's why she switched to this model.

Dr. Dooley: I know that you have not been in this business very long. You've done really well in a very short period of time. How are you able to combine this with all that you're doing in your academic life? Does it take a lot of time? How do you make the two work synergistically and all of that?

Dr. Wolf: I feel lucky that it has done as well as it has. I joined back in January of this year, so it hasn't even been a full year yet. I joined largely to support my friend in her efforts. She's a stay-at-home mom and this is her main source of income. I thought maybe I can help her and spread the word a little bit. It sort of took off.

It takes a variable amount of time. I won't lie that certain months when I'm super busy or traveling a ton for work, I don't do as much. When I'm able to give it the time, most of my sales are online. The nice thing is I can do it from anywhere, anytime. That really helps it be functional. It gives me the freedom to do that.

It is a side gig. I do have the luxury of my sales, I'm not dependent on them. I have been able to use my commission to give back to lots of other causes. I raised money for **[40:31]**, the organization helping support families who were separated at the border. I've used it to donate to five different political candidates that I really supported their agendas including three physician women who were running. It was exciting to support them.

I've given to the National Infertility Association. I've got a couple others coming up soon to benefit other causes I really care about. We did one recently for the Malala fund. It's been awesome in that way to give back extra on top of the work I'm doing. For me that's really helped. The products are amazing, but the story is what helps sell it. Who doesn't want to buy a product that's benefiting women's empowerment and breaking a cycle of poverty?

Dr. Dooley: I know sometimes especially as physicians, there tends to be this kind of stigma about being in a multi-level marketing company or having a side gig that has really nothing to do with medicine. One of the things that I find amazing is having another source of income, having passive income, it really does give you a lot of freedom to be able to have this extra income to do whatever you want. How would you explain that to someone who maybe feels like they're not quite sure, especially about an MLM or doing anything outside of medicine, the side gig?

Dr. Wolf: It's a very personal decision. You have to decide if you have the time for it and the capacity for it. The stigma was hard at first. There definitely is that stigma with MLM or direct sales, whatever you want to call it. With Sseko I felt fortunate that I don't feel I'm selling a product as much as I'm selling a story and our cause and the impact that we're making. That helped me get over it.

The extra income has definitely been nice. I've also gotten lots of other perks, lots of beautiful, free product. I'm very close to earning a trip to Uganda next year to go and meet our colleagues over there. We also do a national conference every year. I earned this year in July that trip for free. I've already earned next year's for free as well. There's all kind of other perks in addition to the income within these companies.

You have to find one that speaks to you and one that you're comfortable sharing with others. Sseko is just something I'm really passionate about. I think about any other company that I loved or store that I loved or product that I love, I would tell my friends and family about it. That's sort of how I think about it at this point.

I love having something completely outside of medicine. It uses a different part of my brain. It opened up my network. I've met really great women from all around the country, lawyers, teachers, social workers, amazing stay-at-home moms who are offering their kids extra opportunities through this job. It's really been incredible to network in that way.

Dr. Dooley: How were you able to grow your own portion of this company? You don't really market. You keep those two worlds separate, your medicine world and your fashionable world. What were the things that you did? How did you grow this amazing company and this network?

Dr. Wolf: Mostly sharing the story via online parties, so expanding my reach through my friends and my family, but also I'm part of a really amazing physician women's group on Facebook that has allowed me to share Sseko within it. We were doing fundraising for some great causes through that group, and so I contributed my commission to support our candidates, which was incredible. I think outside the box of how I can reach more people and share with more people, especially people that I think would connect with what we're doing and the work that Sseko is trying to accomplish.

Dr. Dooley: I really think it sounds like in general you think outside the box. You find these kind of niche markets and you're able to really utilize them to your benefit. Because you don't have a lot of competition, because you are doing it your way in a tight area where there's not a lot of competition. You're able to flourish and grow in a way that most people may not be able to in other areas.

Dr. Wolf: I feel very luck that I've found my little niches that I love.

Dr. Dooley: I think that's also passion, and it shows. Your face glows when you talk about the things that you care about. Your posts on Facebook also show your passion, your love. I think that authenticity comes across. That's really what drew me to you absolutely.

Dr. Wolf: Thank you.

Dr. Dooley: Tell me, what have been some of your biggest challenges either in your academic career or even in this side gig or in life? What have been some of the things that you've had to overcome, and how have you done that?

Dr. Wolf: In the side gig the first was sort of the direct sales stigma and getting over that fear. Also, it uses a completely different skill set than medicine and my teaching. I had to teach myself those skills. I think what has worked is like you just said, I went back to my passion. I think I'm an effective speaker because I'm really passionate about what I speak about. I'm really passionate about Sseko. I think that gets others excited about it as well.

Knowing your passions and know what to follow has sort of helped overcome those challenges and helped me be creative with that. In my professional career I would say the biggest barrier has actually been marketing my niche. It's worked to my advantage for sure, but it also presents other challenges. Very few people actually understand what osteopathic manipulation is, so half the time I'm explaining what it is. There other challenge I run into that I'm sure in medicine people are aware is why aren't there more studies and evidence to back it up. I've got a whole lot of theories about that.

Especially with pediatrics there's not a lot of studies to back up what we do in general either. Even though we claim that there are, there really aren't. Most of our drugs are devised from adult studies and modified. I sort of present that argument of we hold all of this to the gold standard of a randomized clinical trial, but that model doesn't work for everything in medicine.

An uphill battle has been encouraging people to keep an open mind and to try it and see. If it works for patients, it works. If not, oh well. It's not harmful. There are not really many adverse effects or side effects or things like that. For me that's been the hardest challenge is getting buy in from people who aren't familiar, but working on that.

- Dr. Dooley: I love the fact that you continue to work on it. You don't let what other people feel or the fact that they may have some biases or these other thoughts that aren't serving them come in and prevent you from being able to share. I think it's your ability to share regardless of what other people may think has helped you grow both academically but also in the side business. It's hard sometimes. That sphere steps in the way and you're like I just won't share anything. I don't want to reach out and talk.
- Dr. Wolf: The CEO of Sseko calls that our little lizard brain, that voice that says you can't do something. It's a hard thing to overcome. I'd say the best tip I have for overcoming it is I try to promote education and keep in mind the people who are speaking out, whether it be against direct sales or against OMM, often are uneducated or unfamiliar on what it is we're really doing and why those things exist and how they function. I try to view myself as teacher and educator in that role and say here are actual explanations. Before making that assumption, how about talk to someone who knows that they're doing? That sort of helps me overcome that fear and a lot of the negativity that surrounds it.
- Dr. Dooley: I think being able to just continue to educate and realizing that a lot of times people's hesitation isn't lack of education, lack of understanding, lack of knowledge. Like you said, if you take that role of teacher and educator, sometimes you can help break down those barriers because it's just helping them to understand what it's about. If someone is listening, what are some of the big takeaways or some key points that if they remember nothing else, you want to leave them with?
- Dr. Wolf: Follow your passions. I think if you're not passionate about what you're doing, it's really hard to sustain, especially in medicine, which is a challenging field to begin with. If you don't absolutely love what you're doing, figure out what you need to do to change that and how you need to modify that. Get a good mentor, one that's not afraid to push you. That's important. That's a big part of mentoring.
- Be true to yourself. It's corny, but it's so true. It sort of follows along with be passionate. Figure out what works for you and who you really are and incorporate that into what you're doing.
- Dr. Dooley: Any final thoughts you want to share or if people want to learn more about you, they want to learn more about Sseko, buying the product, getting involved, how can they do that? What's the best way?
- Dr. Wolf: I believe you're going to share the link for [Sseko](#), so I won't read that out loud because it's hard to follow. I'll share that link if anyone is interested in learning more or shopping. As far as reaching me, the best way is probably via email, so my email is Kimberly.Wolf@tu.edu. I'm open to any and all questions or anything else that you want to reach out about. Please feel free.
- Dr. Dooley: That's awesome, especially if they want to contact you for some speaking engagement. You've got lots of sharing the word. I will have everything right in our show notes. We'll

put the links both for all of the information that you shared. Thank you for joining us. I really do appreciate it.

Dr. Wolf: Thanks for having me.

Dr. Dooley: Absolutely.

It is amazing what can happen when we don't let our fear, self-doubt or any other barriers stand in our way. Often, the hardest thing is trusting our instincts and being willing to try. If you are willing to learn from your failures, learn from others around you and just take the next step, and then the next step again. You will often find that all the answers you are looking for are right in front of you.

Regardless of the outcome, if you follow your passion, and are true to yourself you will always be proud of what you have accomplished, and you will always know that discipline and patience will help you achieve a rich and abundant life.