

Episode 60 | Intentional Consequences: The Path To Getting What You Want

FULL EPISODE TRANSCRIPT



for **Veterinary
Professionals**

with **Dr. Cari Wise**
Veterinarian
Certified Life Coach

Negative consequences, positive consequences, and what this all has to do with birds and clients, that's what we're talking about in Episode 60.

Welcome to the Joyful DVM Podcast. I'm your host, Veterinarian, and Certified Life Coach, Cari Wise. Whether you're dealing with the challenges in Vet Med, struggling with self-confidence, or you're just trying to figure out how to create a life and a career that you actually enjoy, you'll find encouragement, education, and empowering concepts you can apply right away. Let's get started.

Hey, everybody. Welcome to Episode 60. I've been thinking about consequences quite a bit here over the last several weeks. Obviously, there's a lot of opportunities to think about the consequences of everything that's going on in the world these days. I'm sure that you've probably been thinking about consequences as well, but today I'm not really going to talk about negative consequences so much. I'm going to talk about intentional consequences, which is something we don't consider. So I started out and I wanted to look up the definition of consequence because what I noticed as I was thinking about this, is that what I consider the word consequence, I automatically assumed the negative. But it didn't really make sense to me if I was going to define it for myself, that consequence meant negative. So I looked it up.

Consequence in the dictionary says, a result or effect of an action or condition. Now that makes sense because I would absolutely consider a consequence to be a result - the result of an action. But what I found really interesting was what they had under definition number two, and they qualified it. They said importance or relevance. So the consequence was important to relevance, but they qualified it usually in the negative. So no wonder when we hear the word consequence, we automatically consider the negative consequence, but we miss the fact that there are consequences all the time and they're not all negative. This is very important for us to consider because crafting intentional consequences, taking actions that have intentional consequences is a very important skill for us to develop. No surprise for some of you out there, I'm going to bring this back to an example, a story of these crazy birds here at my house.

If you guys have been listening to Joyful DVM for a while, you've heard me tell the stories before about the Bluebirds here on our property. For those of you who are newer, I live in the country. So I'm here in Missouri. I live in the country and I have a deck on the back of my house. Over the last few years, I've been creating a bit of habitat for Bluebirds to raise their young. It was an ordeal last year. So if you're interested in that, go back, find those previous episodes, and you can hear all about what happened to the Bluebirds. The Bluebirds have taken a completely different twist this year. They're not around. They were around briefly for a moment in time and they built a house. I mean, they built a nest on the house that I put up for them, and then they disappeared. What we do have this year, in much greater quantity than we've ever had on the back deck before, our Red-winged Blackbirds. Now, because I live in the country and I live near a pond. Having Red-winged Blackbirds in this area is

very common. Typically they're out around the pond. They're over in the hills. They're kind of on the other side of the property. But over the winter, as I've had the birds over the winter, I started noticing them more frequently. Now they are very much enjoying what I've got set up in the backyard. The consequences and this is a negative consequence, the consequence of this is that many of the other species of birds that were around have decided not to hang out back there this year. Red-winged Blackbirds can be a bit aggressive. They can be very pushy about what they want, and so, even though there are multiple feeders out there, the Red-winged Blackbirds want them all. They think they need to be the first ones in line to feed and they get to go to whichever feeder they want to. So they can be very busy at one and other species of birds can come in. Songbirds. I have all kinds of like house sparrows and sparrows are kind of a nuisance. But in addition to the sparrows, the Finches. I have lots of different kinds of Finches - yellow finches and purple finches - and all kinds of Finches and Titmouse and all kinds of stuff.

I obviously like birds. This has happened as I've gotten older, it's very strange. But as I've watched these birds and I've watched the songbirds, hard-nosed all kinds of stuff come around, I've noticed what bullies these Red-winged Blackbirds really are. We're used to having bully birds around like we have Blue Jays around, but they don't tend to take over everything as these Red-winged Blackbirds have done. Since I've watched them and I've seen the consequences of their actions that there really inhibiting the other birds in the area, the ability of the other birds to do what they want to do, I started thinking about how that's not all that dissimilar to some of the things that we experienced in veterinary medicine. That got me thinking about what we can do to create more intentional consequences. It really is an example of how important it is for us to know what we want and create from that space, as opposed to knowing what we don't want and trying to create from there. Knowing what we don't want is important.

In the example of the Blackbirds, I don't want these blackbirds to be commandeering the entire back part of my house. I don't want that. Do I want them to live and to flourish and to do their own thing? Yes. Do I want them to get food? Absolutely. Do I want to be the one to provide it? Not here. Not in this way, because I don't like the consequence of that. The consequence of me catering to the Red-winged Blackbirds is that the other species of birds don't have the freedom to come and go as they have in the past, and I enjoyed that. So rather than thinking about that consequence of how me feeding the birds has resulted in an impact of having an overpopulation of these-winged Blackbirds in an area of our property that I don't want them, I started to think about what I do want. What is it that I want here? Well, what I want here is for the other species of birds to be back here, to do what they've always done, and for the Red-winged Blackbirds to go back to where they were before, or to at least establish themselves in a different area. So how can I get that? How can I cultivate more of what I want? How can I create an intentional consequence of more of what I want?

Well, I had to first know what I want. I know that I want these birds and not those birds. That's the

thing that I know that I want. I know that I want to hear songbirds outback. I want to be able to look out back and see a variety of different species. That's what I want. I know that I don't want to be constantly fighting against the Red-winged Blackbirds all the time. I know that I don't want them taking up all of my resources, and by resources, what I mean in this example is the food that I buy, the space that they occupy, my mental energy, the time that I spend thinking about this. I don't want the Red-winged Blackbirds taking up all that mental energy. This is not that different. It's not different at all, honestly, from what we experienced in veterinary hospitals. The lowest 10% of our clientele takes up 90% of our resources. We focus on them. We think about that all the time. We think about, not necessarily proactively think about them. We think about them in a reactive way in the vast majority of our time. They take up a lot of our energy. We see them there. We start a whole thought chain about them. We start creating all kinds of emotion and dread, frustration, all of that, and then that becomes a day in and day out of what we experienced. But if we would focus more on what we do want and cultivate that intentionally, create intentional consequences align with what we do want then what we don't want kind of falls away.

So in the case of the Red-winged Blackbirds, here's what I did. I knew what I did want. I did want some specific species of birds to really kind of flourish back there; to really frequent this particular area more often. So what did I do? I gave those birds what they wanted. I went and I bought a specific kind of food that I knew that those birds like, and the consequence of that, that intentional decision to kind of cater the meal - the bird meal - to these other species of birds, the intentional consequence was to help those birds, the unintended, but also a very beneficial consequence of that was that it's less desirable to those Red-winged Blackbirds. They just aren't as interested in what I have and so they started to already decrease in numbers. They're crafty. They're sneaky. They figure out other ways to get what they want. So as I've watched them, I've watched how they've then gone after another type of feeder that they don't typically have any interest in.

So again, how do I create my intentional consequence? Well, I'm going to remove that. If I have something else there, another type of food that was never meant for them, that they were never interested in until what they wanted to feed on was no longer available, now I'm just going to remove that. The consequences of that, the birds that use that one more regularly, they're going to have to find something else too, but here's a great consequence that popped up, one that I didn't know what occur until I tried it. Those birds that were using the other type of food now have gone over to that new type of food. They're completely fine with it. So again, the desirable birds, the ones that I really want to cultivate those relationships, and I want to cultivate back here are benefiting from the change that I made. The less desirable species, the ones that I don't want to spend my time on, those Red-winged Blackbirds that have just become a nuisance, I've eliminated once again their path to entry. I just continue to shuffle it in this way.

As I continue to focus on what the birds that I want to have back here do want, the consequence that

I'm creating is that the other ones that I don't want are leaving. This is so much like our clients. If we focus on how we want to serve the clients who appreciate what we do for them, the clients that we enjoy being around, that's the most important part. Who are the clients you want to be around? What are the relationships you want to cultivate? What are the actions that you want to do day in and day out in your job? If we focus on those things, it's not going to meet the needs of the entire client base, that's just not possible.

No matter what you do, by the way, it's never possible to meet the needs of the entire client base. But if you'll focus on what it is that you want to do, what you enjoy, what's important to you, if you focus on that, what's going to happen is you're going to build relationships with the clients who are in alignment with that. It's going to naturally select away from the clients who aren't, and that's good for them too. That's good for them too. So it may seem like you're just trying to craft an environment of the best of the best of what I call your ideal clients and you are, but you're not purposefully shutting other people. What's true is the way that you've been doing things probably never was right for those clients who are going to move on and go somewhere else.

Just like what I'm trying to do back here in the backyard of my house, just isn't right for these Red-winged Blackbirds. But that doesn't mean there's not a place that they fit and that doesn't even mean there are not ways that I will still continue to support them in ways that work for both of us. That's the key. It's going to be synergistic.

Consequences don't need to always be negative. When we take action from a place where we're always trying to avoid negative consequences, the result is that we live in less of a way that's aligned with who we are and what we want to do.

Life isn't about avoiding that negative consequences. Every action that we take, every single action that we take has a consequence of some sort. We're just conditioned to look for the negative consequence. We're just conditioned to automatically seek out and kind of try to predict the future on what the negative consequences going to be. But we aren't so well-practiced at predicting the positive consequence. How about we just drop the adjectives altogether and just realize there will be consequences? Also in doing that, understand that to create the greatest consequences what we need to do is focus on what we want.

For many of us, that feels very selfish. What do you mean what do I want? If I ask you, "Hey, what do you want? What do you want for your life? What do you want for your career?" You may be frozen. Most of us are. "I don't know. What do you mean what do I want?" Because we've gotten so stuck into a world of Have-To's that we have forgotten to ask ourselves what it is that we want. If you'll start with the questions, what do you want? What are you interested in? What are you passionate about? What creates excitement for you? If you start there and then take action from that place, the consequences

that you will create for yourself will be much better. You're going to create results that are really aligned with who you are and what you want in your life. And the negative consequence isn't even that negative. Yes, for sure. The consequences are never going to line up a hundred percent with everybody around you, but that was never the point. The point was for you to serve in the way that you are here to serve through the realm of veterinary medicine. That also holds true. You are meant to serve in veterinary medicine in the way that you can serve - in the way that only you can serve. It's going to be different from everybody else.

If we spend all of our time comparing ourselves to our fellow veterinarians and veterinary technicians in veterinary practices and veterinary careers, and if we spend all of our time worrying about the negative potential, negative consequences of decisions that we make, instead of focusing our attention on what we enjoy, on what we are good at, on what lights us up, and on what we want to create for our lives, then we will continue to create negative consequences for ourselves. But when we shift that around, when we put what we want first; when we put what we are interested in, and what's excites us first, at the top of that list, and we start to make decisions from that place, then the consequences are positive. They're good for everybody. It also opens up the door for others to step in where the gap exists.

We will never be all things to all people. We never were supposed to be all things to all people. We're only supposed to do our part. If we keep trying to define our part through a comparison model - comparing to other colleagues, comparing to other career paths, comparing to other bank accounts, comparing to other family dynamics, comparing to other goals - if we continue to try to establish our lives through that kind of comparison, we will always fall short of what feels right for us. That's where the consequences really start to become evident - the negative consequences. The way that we've traditionally examined consequences.

So instead, let's take three steps backward. Let's just start with, what do you want? What are you interested in? What excites you? If we can shift our focus onto what we want and who we are, the positive consequences are going to be far-reaching because it's going to be a ripple effect. Not only will we individually get more of what we want in this lifetime, but we will also become more of who we are in this lifetime. The example of that will be far more powerful than the costume that we put on day in and day out when we try to be like everybody else and meet these expectations that were never set by us individually. That's not what we're here to do, guys. We're here to become the best versions of ourselves; to identify what that even means, and it's a journey. Veterinary Medicine doesn't need to be a roadblock at all. If we continue to approach veterinary medicine through the lens of just getting rid of what doesn't work, rather than nurturing what does, then we will continue to fight this battle for the entire length of our careers. Trust me, I did it. I know. It's much harder that way. It's much easier when we shift that focus back to our own individual experiences, our own individual journeys. I'm not saying be selfish. Don't misunderstand. I'm not saying be selfish, self-centered

people. That's not at all what I'm saying. What I'm saying is to be true to who you are.

This is important. This is really important because every single one of us has an individual journey. It's when we start to compare our journeys to other people - we do this compare and despair. When we start to set our life goals based on what we think other people would find to be good life goals, or we don't even know what our own goals are so we just adopt somebody else's goals, that's when we start to live really small lives. That's when we start to become overwhelmed with the negative. That's why we tend to focus on the negative because we want to fix the negative in order to feel better. That's not the way to get there. The way to get there is simply to become more of who you are. To learn who you are. To embrace who you are. To make decisions from who you are and what you want. When you do that, the consequences are going to be far-reaching.

Not everybody's going to agree with what you do. Not everybody's going to like the consequences, but just like my example here of what's going on with the birds at the back deck of the house. They may not all like the consequences, but they're all adapting to the consequences. There are other ways for those Red-winged Blackbirds to get what they want in other areas. There are plenty of places to find bird feeders here on this farm. Bird feeders that are equipped exactly to give them what they want, but not here. Not in this place, in the backyard. This place isn't for them. This place is for other species of birds. This is where I provide something different for those people; something aligned with what I want. Those birds are coming in droves. They're increasing in population. I haven't cut anybody off. Notice this, I haven't. I just simply made, allow them to make choices. Through this, if the Red-winged Blackbirds would decide, they liked this other kind of food; they wanted to eat this kind of food; they wanted to do it the way that we do it here in the backyard, then they could stay. But they don't. That's not what they want. They're not willing to compromise that, and that's cool for the Red-winged Blackbirds, just as cool for a population of the clients who will self-select away from your practice when you start doing things the way that you want to do them. But we're all going to survive. We are all going to survive and that's the most important thing. Everybody survives. Those clients just like these blackbirds, who aren't the right fit for your practice will find their right fit, and in that place, they will actually flourish. They will do better. Their pets will get better care because they'll find that right fit practice for them.

As we continue to try to become the right fit practice for everybody, we become the right fit practice for nobody. As much as that is a negative consequence for the clients and patients themselves, it's mostly a negative consequence for you. You can't be all things to all people. You never were supposed to be. The most important thing you can do is figure out how you want to do this job. How do you want veterinary medicine to fit into your life? What's important to you? What lights you up? What you're excited about. If you can get back to that, come in word, focus on yourself a little bit. Remember who you are and start to behave in a way that is driven by who you are and not who you think you should be, your whole life changes.

FULL EPISODE TRANSCRIPT

| 7

Alright, my friends, I think I'm going to leave you with that to ponder. I'll see you next week.

Thank you for listening to the Joyful DVM podcast. If you'd like to learn more about the concepts and ideas discussed here, and how to apply them to your own life to create confidence and empowerment for yourself, you'll love Vet Life Academy. To check it out and learn more, visit joyfuldvm.com/vetlifeacademy. And if you're loving this podcast, I'd appreciate it if you'd share it with your friends and leave us a review on iTunes.

We can change what's possible in Vet Med together.