

Episode 64: REAL Talk: A Fun Conversation with 2 Med SLPs Who Are Now Professors and Loving It!

Meet Tim Stockdale and Wendy Chase, two medical speech-language pathologists currently working in higher education. Both of them are professors at Rocky Mountain University, and Wendy also serves as the Director of Clinical Education. They've been heavily involved in building the graduate program for speech pathology there, and they walk us through what a typical day looks like for them, the challenges they've faced, and how they're hoping to improve the field overall.

Discussion & Reflection Questions

1. Tell us who you are and how you became a speech-language pathologist.
2. Can you walk us through a day in the life of an SLP professor?
3. Both of you are very collaborative. How do you bring that collaborative approach into your graduate program so it's not so competitive?
4. What has been one of the biggest challenges of teaching?
5. What have you enjoyed in your job as faculty and in teaching these new speech pathologists as they move forward into their careers?
6. How did you decide between a clinical career path and getting a PhD?
7. What words of wisdom would each of you have for the student who's just graduated and is ready to start their clinical fellowship?

Quotes of the Conversation

"Anywhere you're employed, be nice to everybody. Don't treat the doctors better than you treat the cafeteria workers. Treat people decently. Treat everybody well. You know, we all support each other, and we all serve an important role in the grander scheme of things. I think the people component is a really big deal, and it'll make you enjoy what you do so much more when you go someplace and you can smile and wave and have conversation with whoever you meet."

- Tim Stockdale, MS, CCC-SLP

"I think I have definitely benefited from keeping an attitude of joy in doing the job. People respond to that. Your patients appreciate it a lot. I think the students appreciate it. When I'm teaching, I think colleagues appreciate it. Open-mindedness and joy are probably the two keys to success for most of us."

-Wendy Chase, MA, CCC-SLP

Tim Stockdale, MS, CCC-SLP

*Medical Speech-language Pathologist
and Professor at Rocky Mountain
University*



Tim Stockdale has served as a speech-language pathologist primarily in hospital and university settings. He is currently employed as clinical faculty for the MS-SLP program (medical emphasis) at Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions, in Utah, and does acute care work on the side. He

has worked with other faculty to revise the dysphagia management curriculum at Rocky Mountain University into

a 3-course series, and he organizes a yearly dysphagia management conference for continuing education. Prior to working in Utah, he had served as a clinical instructor at the University of South Florida and worked in several acute care settings. He received an undergraduate degree from West Virginia University and a Master of Science in Speech-Language Pathology from the University of South Florida. He is currently obtaining a clinical doctorate in SLP from Northwestern University. Tim is a life-long learner and wishes he had more free time to spend outside with his wife and kids.

Wendy Chase, MA, CCC-SLP

Speech-language Pathologist and Clinic Director at Rocky Mountain University



Wendy Chase is a speech-language pathologist who joined RMUOHP in July 2017 in the position of Clinic Director. Ms. Chase earned her BS at Central Michigan University and her MA at Northwestern University. She has 29 years of experience in clinical

positions treating clients from infancy through geriatrics and in locations from home care to hospitals. Ms. Chase was most recently employed as the Director of Clinical Education at the University of Connecticut where her focus was on inter-professional education and practice, communication and voice treatment with transgender or gender-fluid clients, and assessment of swallowing in clients with ventilator dependency. Her classroom teaching has focused on dysphagia and clinical methods. Ms. Chase believes that critical thinking and evidence-influenced practice are hallmarks of an excellent speech-language pathologist and strives to support student acquisition of these core skills through quality clinical education.



Keep the Conversation Going

You can find Wendy Chase at:

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The Missing Link for SLPs Podcast Show Notes

Mattie Murrey

Today, we have two for one — actually, three for one because you're getting three of us on the podcast. We're talking with Tim and Wendy. Both of them are professors at Rocky Mountain University, and we're going to be talking today just about so many fun things about the academic setting. So, welcome to this episode of The Missing Link for SLPs.

Mattie Murrey

Welcome to this episode of The Missing Link for SLPs podcast. I'm so glad you're here. This episode is part of the series "Real Talk." The series highlights real conversations with real SLPs about real topics of conversation in our field that are honest, open, raw, and very authentic. We are glad you're here. Be sure to visit our website at freshslp.com, where you will find more podcasts and more blogs. And leave a comment. We'd love to hear your feedback about what you're hearing, what you're listening to, and what your thoughts are. Glad you're here.

Mattie Murrey

Welcome to this episode of The Missing Link for SLPs podcast. Today, we have three for one. Sometimes it's me. Sometimes it's a guest. And our guest brought along another guest today, so this is going to be fun. And I don't know anything about Wendy. So, we have Tim, who's going to give us a brief intro and then Wendy, who is going to jump in. Partner in crime, I think you said, Wendy?

Wendy Chase

That is correct.

Mattie Murrey

This episode is just going to unroll for all three of us. So Tim, tell us who you are. And then, Wendy, tuck on in.

Tim Stockdale

If I go first, Wendy's going to overshadow me because she has much more extensive credentials. But my name is Tim Stockdale. I work as a clinical educator primarily at Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions. I also co-teach dysphasia. I've done a lot with the curriculum in that. And my background is a good split of acute care facilities and clinical education. Before here, I worked at the University of South Florida and just several acute care facilities. So, that's pretty much me in a nutshell.

Mattie Murrey



But you also are doing... I read in your bio — because I do have your bio — that you're working on your clinical doctorate.

Tim Stockdale

Yeah. I've got a little less than a year left. I'm working on an SLPB at Northwestern University. And I'm hoping to design a descriptive study to look at normative data for FEES. That's the aspiration at least.

Mattie Murrey

I'll ask you about that later because that's actually something I'm personally interested in.

Tim Stockdale

Oh, cool. Very cool.

Mattie Murrey

Yeah. Well, that's the fun thing about our field. We're always learning, and there are always things to learn. And things to teach. Wendy?

Wendy Chase

I'm Wendy Chase. I'm the Director of Clinical Education here at Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions. As you know, this is a fairly new program. We're about to start cohort five. So before this, I was at the University of Connecticut in the same position. I'm happy that Tim is doing his SLPB at Northwestern because that's where I graduated from — so, keeping it in the family, which is nice. And I worked for about 22 years before I went into academia, and my specialty is working with patients with trach and or vent dependency. So, I spent most of my time in a long-term acute care hospital, inpatient acute rehab. During my working days...

Tim Stockdale

Because you don't work now.

Wendy Chase

Because I don't work now at all. No, this job doesn't give me any challenges whatsoever. And I'm working on my PhD in Health Professions Education.

Mattie Murrey

Good. I have two other sisters who are speech pathologists. One of them said... When I applied for the professorship position, she said, "Oh, it's just a piece of cake." [And I'm like], "Oh, great! I've been in the field for 25 years. I would just love to relax." It is not.

Wendy Chase

Nope. [It's the] hardest job I've ever done in my life, but really, really worth it, because these students are awesome. And the things we get to teach them today are so much more different than the things we got to teach them back in the day.

Mattie Murrey



Right. And that's why I have this podcast on the website because it's just, I don't know. To me, this is my legacy paying it forward to the students as they come behind. So, excellent. Would each of you please share your story on why you became a speech-language pathologist?

Tim Stockdale

Okay. Really quick, can I ask for permission to be myself? Because that's a heavy request. I don't have that exciting of a story with that. I've done several things. I sold real estate for a little while. I've had my own business in some other areas. I really wanted to be in a helping profession, like many of our colleagues, and I wanted to do something that made me feel cool. I don't know. So, I shadowed some speech pathologists for a while, and I was like, "This is all right." And then I shadowed in a hospital and saw someone doing a modified barium swallow study, which I just thought was really cool. This type of diagnostic test where you're in a radiology suite. You're working with airway protection and a number of other things, of course. And it just really clicked. It really clicked. And so, from that point, I just was very interested in dysphagia management. And I've tried to really pursue that niche for a long time. And I love it. I love it.

Mattie Murrey

Excellent. That's a good story. I do not know of any other speech pathologist who started out selling real estate.

Wendy Chase

You know, I had a CF supervisor who wanted to be an accountant in the worst way. And if she hadn't been a speech pathologist, she would have been an accountant. It's like, really?

Mattie Murrey

Those are like opposites.

Wendy Chase

Yeah. Yeah. Anyway, I got into speech pathology because my mom was a teacher. And I knew I wanted to be a teacher of some type, but I didn't want to be a classroom teacher. And a very good friend of hers — I babysat for her children — was a speech pathologist. And she was one of the most admired people in my life. I felt that she was just the epitome of cool, smart, fun, [and] creative, and I really admired who she was. And I didn't really commit to speech pathology until later in my college career. So, I didn't go into college thinking that's what I wanted. I tried education a little bit. And then, I switched over and started on the communication disorders side. And it just clicked. It just clicked. So many different things to do. So many awesome opportunities. You could do so many different kinds of things with it. And then, of course, you know, 22 years after my career started, I got to come back to teaching as well. So, full circle, all the way round.

Mattie Murrey



Sounds like you guys have a lot of fun because you've used the word "cool" several times, [and] other words that are normally not sprinkled with the description of a speech pathologist as well, but happy to embrace those.

Wendy Chase

Speech pathologists are some of the coolest people in the world. And I think that's important for students to get, that you join a group of people who can really do very, very meaningful things in life.

Mattie Murrey

One of my favorite things about being a speech pathologist is hanging out with other speech pathologists because, oh my word, do we have fun. I hung out with somebody a few days ago. She is Dr. Anita Cruzon. She just received the Lifetime Achievement Award for Minnesota Speech and Hearing. We're rolling on the floor laughing because she'd say, "Well, I've never heard anything come out of somebody's mouth like that." And it's speech-pathology stuff, you know? It's talking about voices and all sorts of fun things.

Tim Stockdale

Yeah. We definitely have fun with it. I find that, when you're passionate about something, you don't want to isolate it from your personality. You want to harness that passion. And when you're passionate about something, you get excited. You laugh and you make jokes and you talk about it with other people. And I think that's really important, not only for us to kind of enjoy that in our own lives, but also to set an example of that for our students, so they catch that same passion, too, and realize that they can do something that they love and not have to lose their personality.

Mattie Murrey

Would you say that's been one of the successes of your careers, one of the reasons why you've succeeded? How would you define success then?

Tim Stockdale

It's probably a mixed bag. I think it's like a razor's edge, where I've succeeded some because of it. And I've also fallen flat on my face because of it. And you know, if places and their people have the same sort of philosophy, which really, I find SLPs to be very passionate about what they do — caring for the people they work with, of course, and overall, just [being] really awesome people. And so yeah, I think it's worked to benefit a lot. And to develop that sort of camaraderie that allows people to learn from one another, to stand on each other's shoulders and not have to reinvent the wheel throughout everyone's career, and really, just kind of ignite each other has been very, very helpful. And it has been something that I've really loved embracing as part of my career.

Wendy Chase



I think I have definitely benefited from keeping an attitude of joy in doing the job. People respond to that. Your patients appreciate it a lot. I think the students appreciate it. When I'm teaching, I think colleagues appreciate it. Open-mindedness and joy are probably the two keys to success for most of us — that and the fact that we call each other the Nerd Herd and have very geeky conversations about speech stuff and occasionally shoot Nerf guns at one another around the office. That probably is what keeps it going.

Tim Stockdale

Yeah.

Mattie Murrey

Tim's putting his finger up to his lips, like, "Sh, don't tell."

Tim Stockdale

Well, if you could see what I could see. Wendy loves Diet Pepsi. She loves it. And so, I planted them all over her room, and she has this mannequin of a baby for teaching. You know, it's a medical teaching model. And it is embracing a Diet Pepsi. It's got one arm around it. And that's what I'm looking at right now.

Wendy Chase

On my bookshelf.

Tim Stockdale

Yeah, that's right. Right between the "Optimizing Cognitive Rehabilitation" book and underneath "Assessment of Communication Disorders." It's going to be a smart, smart child.

Mattie Murrey

Maybe you guys can take a picture and we can put it in our show notes.

Wendy Chase

We should probably do that.

Mattie Murrey

That would be fun to put on the web for when you download. So, what is the secret to... I'm trying to think of how I want to word this question. You guys are refreshing. You guys are fun. You guys enjoy what you're doing.

Tim Stockdale

You could say hip and cool. That's okay.

Wendy Chase

Say that about Tim. I'm old. So, you know...

Mattie Murrey



You're also collaborative. How do you bring that collaborative, "let's work together" approach into your graduate program so it's not so competitive and tight?

Wendy Chase

That's a good question.

Tim Stockdale

These are questions that Wendy ponders at night, and they keep her up. She does an excellent job in the execution of them.

Wendy Chase

I think we benefit from the fact that this is a newer program. We all came from around the country for the explicit purpose of trying to do it differently, when the original faculty came together. And so, in order to make something new, or a little bit different, we all had to really collaborate. We had to talk a lot. I mean, we've been in business for five years. We're on curriculum number three because you keep looking for the ways in which you can do it better. And nobody can do that by themselves. And I think we all recognize that we need one another, and one another's specialties and passions that are different from our own, in order to make that work. When I hired the clinical faculty, I looked explicitly for people who had very different approaches to life, and areas of interest. Tim definitely falls into the very different category.

Tim Stockdale

In the most wonderful way.

Wendy Chase

In the most wonderful way. So, that we could all really benefit from one another. And I think as long as you keep that attitude of, "Someone knows more than you do, talk to them and you'll know more," then we can make it work. So, it's really been fascinating to watch this group kind of grow and come together and learn about where their place is in the grand scheme of making it better. Tim brings a lot of the goofiness, and he challenges us every day on the details, particularly regarding dysphasia. And I think that's important. It's not just important, it's critical. It's critical to the success of staying on top of what needs to happen with education in these areas, because it's not the education we had. It shouldn't be the education we had. I mean, I can say that I was in one of Jeri Logemann's very first classes on dysphagia, where we'd spend as much time learning how to start dysphasia programs as we did learning about dysphasia because it was so early in the game. And now I have Tim out there, teaching these students how to measure discrete components of the swallow to determine if we're talking about typical or not typical before we even get into, "All right, well, now what are we going to do about it," so that there's not so much over diagnosing — and all the other kinds of things that have gone on with dysphasia as we've gone through the years.

Tim Stockdale



Yeah. Within the past 10 years, there's been so much coming to the surface that exemplifies or evidences the need for us to really give greater depth to dysphagia management in particular. So, it's been fairly relevant to a medical background or a medical setting. That's just something that I am very passionate about. There have been a lot of very smart people who've done some excellent research to show that we've got to do better in that area. And so, we're really trying to put our hearts into it and put our minds into it, and to think through how we can be the change or be a catalyst for the change that we need.

Mattie Murrey

I love your energy, though. I just love the energy. And I love the excitement you guys bring. And I'm sure your students carry that forward.

Wendy Chase

I would certainly hope so. I think we're successful if we send them out there trying to keep learning and keep doing it better. That's the ultimate success, I think, for a student, is to go forward and keep trying to do it better.

Mattie Murrey

Yeah. That's a lifelong skill. And have fun.

Wendy Chase

Yeah. That's the key to this field.

Mattie Murrey

Yeah. So, this is one [episode] of the series, "A Day in the Life of a Medical SLP," but all three of us are professors. Do you mind if we just kind of segue into a day in the life of an SLP professor?

Tim Stockdale

Yeah.

Wendy Chase

Sure.

Tim Stockdale

This is your show.

Mattie Murrey

Well, students are like, "Oh I know, you're so busy, professor." And I'm like, "Yes, I am, but I can definitely make time for you — if not right now, how about at 3:35?" You know what I mean? So, tell us how your days roll out. Take a typical day or a clinical day. Maybe they're all the same for you.

Wendy Chase



They're all the same for us, actually. Very interspersed. Our clinic operates from 8 to 6 every day on campus. And the classes happen in and around clinic, and clinic happens in and around the classes. So, whenever our students are not in a class, they are available, as far as we're concerned, for a client assignment. So, we jump back and forth all day long between classrooms, teaching labs, and clinical supervision in our clinic. I think something you said a minute ago, you know, when the students say, "Do you have a few minutes?," and you say, "Maybe not right now, but later," you know... The students very often come to us and say, "I wanted to meet with you, but you're so busy." And we have to keep telling them, "That's not your problem. Of course we're busy. We're tremendously busy, but that's not your problem." If you have something you need, you need to let us know so we can figure out a way to help meet that need. So, I think free time doesn't exist. But there's always time for the students.

Tim Stockdale

That's true. Very true. Free time particularly doesn't exist for Wendy because she has high aspirations as far as what she's doing. You know, I really think that one of the main things that I can emphasize about this is, it's a journey in planning and critical thinking and getting in the mind first to try to design and implement what is best — to try to reflect on what you're doing, and try to continually make sure that we have a plan for the best practice and clinical practice and teaching and education that we can have. And then, a lot of the other stuff falls into place. I mean, I have no idea how much time Wendy and Linda Spencer and all the other original [staff] have spent on curriculum design, and just like trying to figure this stuff out, like, what's the best way to do this? And then, within the curriculum design, what's the best way to teach this? Teaching methods and so on. I learned a tremendous amount from that, but I think that we are thinking individuals, and that's the core of everything that we do. We've got to figure stuff out. We've got to continually improve. And then we live it out in our practice. And so, I think that's particularly true in graduate school or in any type of higher education. We're shaping our field with the things that we do. We're establishing credibility. We're taking care of our patients. And so, we really have to think critically in how we do that, and how we teach other people to do that, which is, I think, at the core of education.

Wendy Chase

Yeah. I think, on a more granular level, I will meet with students, and we will talk about their lesson plans. And I will ask questions, like, "What's your rationale for that?" The students tease me because I'm constantly saying, "What else? What else? What else?" I'll see if I can't get them to think a little bit deeper on whatever the subject is. We have group supervision, we have individual supervision, and we have clients who are either in the clinic or on telepractice. We do both. We're about 75/25 right now — [75%] in the clinic and 25% still telepractice. But we were doing telepractice before the pandemic. We'll keep doing it after the pandemic because it's the right method of treatment for many patients. It works really well for a lot of my particular caseload right now, which is transgender voice.

Mattie Murrey



Oh, yeah. I do that as well.

Wendy Chase

Yep. So, we're working with students in a different way each semester, depending on where they are in their continuum of development. So, it's semester three for our clinic students, which means we expect more self-assessment and more ability to advocate for their own needs as a supervisee, to get them ready to go off campus in the fall for their externship semesters. So, a lot of our supervision and supervisory practices this summer are a little different than they were in semesters one and two because the students need to be in a little bit [of a] different place, and an ability to work with off-campus supervisors and in different work settings. And so, we do that. We read soap notes and cosign them. And Tim works with his diagnostic team. So, the students get assigned to diagnostic teams with the different faculty, and whoever's on the caseload for evaluations that week — on each supervisor's caseload — they have to prepare their assessment plans and write the reports. And then, supervisors need to read them and critique them and send them back again and again, and review tests. And we have a pretty robust lab schedule. So, a lot of our day is putting labs together. We just had Trach II labs last week, where the students had to identify the parts and components of 12 different types of trach tubes, and they had to practice doing trach care on the mannequin. And all of that is preparation time. So, it's a lot of different activities. And then we go to committees. So, Tim's on the Interprofessional Education Committee and works on our IP events and setting up the cases for that. It's a lot of different things each day. And somewhere in there, you try and fit in reading about what's going on in the world of speech pathology, and what's new when shooting off articles to one another saying, "Look at this. Look at this." And we do a lot of that for one another.

Tim Stockdale

Yeah, we definitely do. We definitely do. We take good advantage of each other as resources, not just because of, but particularly because of, the time constraints that we have from other demands. And if one of us is just really dug deep into some recent literature, then we can converse about it, and everyone else benefits from that. So, it's really helpful. One of the things that Wendy said that I think is just of paramount importance... She talked about meeting students where they are, depending on which semester they're in — so, changing our expectations for them, and particularly in this semester, going for self-advocacy. You know, [there's] a big transition between undergrad and graduate school. For undergrad, there's a lot of guidance. You just kind of come in and you do the thing, and you get a good grade and try to get into grad school. You compete with all these other people to try to get a place. In graduate school, we want to not just teach them information, but we want to teach them to reflect and self-advocacy, so they can become these clinicians who can go out and not just be automatons, but they can go out and learn to examine their practice and learn to advocate for their patients and try to continually develop and become better. And so, that sort of teaching, that thinking process, is unique, I guess. Because it's not just knowledge, it's kind of teaching a mindset of self-reflection and so on, which has really been interesting.



Mattie Murrey

You sound like you have a very comprehensive program.

Tim Stockdale

It's expansive. That's a good way to put it.

Wendy Chase

But I think we're constantly learning from what we're doing and fixing it again. Like I said, we're on curriculum number three. We just can't let it lie and be what it is. You have to look at what works and what doesn't work with the students. We do this thing where the faculty meet each week to do either reflective supervision, meetings, or supervisory practices education. So, we're constantly trying to improve the way that we supervise students. And we're more successful some days than others, for sure. But there's so much to learn, even within that context. [There's] so much to explore about how we look at educating students and how we look at supervising students, and what needs to change at each point along their continuum of development so that they can come out as critically thinking individuals that will make a difference. It might not rest on, "This is the way I've always done it."

Tim Stockdale

That's the worst phrase in the world.

Mattie Murrey

Right. What has been a challenge of teaching?

Tim Stockdale

Hm, I'll let you answer this one. Nevermind, she's good at everything. Nothing.

Wendy Chase

Go ahead, go, Tim. Because, you know, it's interesting, Tim. I think this is the first couple of years where you've really had a combination of classroom teaching and more direct clinical education, and it's a very different kind of experience, classroom teaching from clinical education. And yet, there's so much that's the same in it, but you can't presume skills as a supervisor are going to translate into working as a classroom instructor. So, what's been the challenge, do you think, in transitioning those skills from supervision to classroom?

Tim Stockdale

Wow, that is an interesting question. So, there have been several things that have been a lot of work and have been challenges. I guess whenever you say challenge, I'm thinking of the thing that's the most difficult. So, I mean, as far as the work that goes into things, I think the curriculum design has been a tremendous amount of work. You're stepping back. When you're watching other people teach, or when you're in grad school, you can easily be critical and think, "Oh, I would do it this way. This makes so much more sense. Blah, blah, blah." But when you have to step out and see the total picture from beginning to end — or from beginning to, like,



send you out on your own and become a lifelong learner — there's just a lot that goes into it. So, there's been a lot of time and collaboration that's been spent on identifying what students need to know, especially in response to some recent literature about SLP proficiency and dysphasia management, and really finding, like, the missing pieces. But that's been really fun.

Mattie Murrey

The Missing Link!

Tim Stockdale

Right. Right. So yeah, that's actually a great point. But that's been fun. It's been challenging, but I've really enjoyed it. So, it's a good challenge, I guess. The thing that I feel like I'm still... Maybe the hardest part for me, in general, is, I'm very extroverted, very conversational. I love talking with people, and I love the feedback that I get in conversation and that sort of thing. And so, many of the classes that I work with, I love for them to be discussion-style. And so, sometimes, the students, if they've just had multiple classes before, are just burnt out. Sometimes, it can be challenging to get that engagement that you like. And so, I have to not let that... You know, I have to be consistent no matter what, because you can do a lot, but you can't change the behavior of other people. So, [that's] with the caveat, we've had really tremendous engagement with our students. They have just excelled in discussion, particularly this year, I think, because they realized, with COVID, what they've missed out on. I've never worked with students who are this engaging and conversational in class, and that's been terrific. But still, the challenge is eliciting that type of response, from those with whom you're working, that you are looking for and that you desire. Because there are just so many other factors in their lives and in their schedules that go into that. So that's been my biggest challenge, I would say.

Mattie Murrey

We're coming up toward the end of our time, and I have two more questions. What has been just a joy with your program? Because I hear it coming through. What have you so enjoyed in your job as faculty and in teaching these new speech pathologists as they move forward into their careers?

Wendy Chase

Can I go first?

Tim Stockdale

Yeah, go for it.

Wendy Chase

Thanks. Okay so, the fun part for me is that this is the first university position I've had where we've really gotten to embrace a lot more stimulation experiences, or hands-on experiences, in that first year. So, we go over to the acute care hospital. We work with high-tech mannequins. We put the students over there four times in their first year to do some things that allow them to really explore how they work together with their team and communicate with one another,



and then also be in that environment. And that was a huge learning curve for me, and for the rest of the faculty. So, to design those events from scratch and build the models and create all of the parameters for how the things change on the monitors, and with the mannequin every 30 or 60 seconds throughout the SIM, learning how to do all of that has been just fascinating. [It's] challenging, but I love the fact that we get to see the students practice their thinking in real time in an environment in which they're going to eventually practice. And so, that's been a really fun component of this program for me.

Tim Stockdale

I thought you were going to say that...

Wendy Chase

Working with Tim was the best part of this experience.

Tim Stockdale

I'm a little taken aback.

Wendy Chase

That's what brings the joy: working with Tim.

Tim Stockdale

Well, what can I say? What can I say? My favorite part... Man, there are lots of favorite parts. One of my favorite parts though is definitely the environment and people that I work with. Not to be cliché, but [there's] a lot of growth mindset. A lot of friendliness and embracing innovation and genuine concern for students and genuine concern for pursuing further knowledge in the field. So, I love that. I love being able to work on revising our practice patterns and our curriculum without such extensive bureaucracy that allows us to adapt quickly and to make changes. I love working with students. I love it when you get a student, who this may not have been their area of interest, and then they work with a patient with aphasia, or they're in the dysphasia management classroom, and they're just like, "This is really cool." And you can see that develop, that passion develop. That's probably my favorite part.

Mattie Murrey

I would agree. Being there in that moment — that "aha" moment. And you know they're going to step in and make a difference in the lives of those they work with. And then we say, "Job well done." Yep. For us.

Wendy Chase

I agree.

Mattie Murrey

Before I said I had two questions. That was one of them. I forgot. I want to double back, Tim. I'm deciding where I'm going to go with my career right now. I have a Master's, and I've been accepted to an educational doctoral program.



Tim Stockdale

Oh, wow. Congrats.

Mattie Murrey

And I'm also thinking [about] maybe a clinical doctorate because I'm just not sure where I want to go. How did you make the decision to step into the clinical versus a PhD, for example? And I know, Wendy, you're doing your PhD.

Tim Stockdale

A PhD wouldn't be feasible for me right now. There's just too much other stuff going on. I have a couple of small kids, and my family moved out to Utah, away from everybody. And they need a lot of time with that. I would love to have the knowledge that you would get in a PhD program. It's just not feasible right now. You know, all the programs are different. And depending on where you go, there seems to be a good fit for everybody. It's just picking what is most congruent with your goals and so on. I wanted to attain a higher degree, I wanted to learn more, and I wanted to do something that would facilitate my ability to work in academia. And so, that's mostly it. But I was constrained by the inability to really commit to a PhD.

Mattie Murrey

Wendy, you're shaking your head?

Wendy Chase

Well, you know, I'm old.

Mattie Murrey

Older.

Wendy Chase

Older. I had all the same constraints that Tim did when I was younger. I certainly have always wanted continued formal higher education. But, you know, I had to push my kids out of the house. So, once they left, then I had an opportunity. And I think, for me, I'm actually in a Health Professions Education program for my PhD. So, it's not a speech program. And I'm in a cohort with other healthcare professionals, all working toward improving healthcare education. And for me, that's exactly the right fit at this point in my life, to work on ways to make education better for our healthcare professionals, in speech pathology in particular. So, for me, it really fit what my interests were. And the opportunity was there. My youngest just graduated from college, so I can focus on some of these things. And yeah, I think I would have loved to have done this when I was a little younger, but it just wasn't an option. So, for me, it's the right thing. I would have loved the SLPD as well, but I think it would have been more clinically focused in terms of a patient population, and I'd much rather study the students [and] how they learn.

Mattie Murrey



Well, thanks. So, in the few remaining minutes we have left, what words of wisdom would each of you have for the student who's just graduated and is ready to start, or the students who have just graduated and are ready to start their clinical fellowships?

Tim Stockdale

Do not fake it until you make it. You hear that sometimes in grad school because there is an overwhelming amount of information and skills to learn. That makes for shallow practitioners, and that doesn't help our patients in the way that we need to. We really need to emphasize critical thinking and asking why and not being overconfident in our skills. Being self-aware of ourselves as practitioners. Knowing what we can do better. And being okay with not knowing the answer, but having a set of resources that we can go to to try to find those things. It's never okay to make crap up. I'm sorry, I just said "crap" here. It's never okay to make stuff up. We want to do our best, and that really necessitates that we know our limitations. We strive to become better all the time, but we don't fake it. Our patients deserve better. Everybody deserves better. We need to be authentic and vulnerable, and willing to step up to try to become better, but not overestimate our abilities.

Wendy Chase

Well, that's interesting because what I was going to say was, know your resources and use them. You don't know everything. You won't know everything. You can't have seen or done everything in graduate school. It's absolutely impossible. But you should know how to access your resources. And that's the most important thing you can do in your CF. Call your friends. Your peers know all kinds of things. They had different experiences than you did. Call your old professors. Call your CF supervisor. Go to the ASHA Practice Portal. Try to teach the students. Start there. It's a really good place to start. So, access your resources. Don't be afraid to be wrong. Don't be afraid to not know. Very much what Tim has just said. You can't succeed until you recognize that you need to know more. Think it through and you'll do okay. And be nice to people. Collaboration and teamwork are key.

Tim Stockdale

Yeah. Anywhere you're employed, be nice to everybody. Don't treat the doctors better than you treat the cafeteria workers. Treat people decently. Treat everybody well. You know, we all support each other, and we all serve an important role in the grander scheme of things. I think the people component is a really big deal, and it'll make you enjoy what you do so much more when you go someplace and you can smile and wave and have conversation with whoever you meet.

Mattie Murrey

That's a great note to end on. Thank you very much for your time today.

Tim Stockdale

Thank you.



Wendy Chase

Thank you for having us. We enjoyed the conversation.

