SPEAKER PACKET

Does It Get You Closer?

Picture your life five years from now, as good as it can possibly be.

Dr. Brett Kessler helps high achievers decide what success means to them and make every decision count.

LEADERSHIP · PERSONAL GROWTH · WELLNESS · HEALTHCARE



Dr. Brett Kessler

Catalyst for positive change

161st President, American Dental Association (2024-2025)

brett@dentistryreimagined.net

doesitgetyoucloser.com

THE PROBLEM

Looks Good on Paper

Successful, busy, and dreading Sunday night.

Many high achievers have done everything they were supposed to do and still don't have the life they wanted. They drifted, one default decision at a time, away from the life their success was supposed to make possible.

They were taught that being busy is the path to success, so they kept their heads down and never spent the time articulating what success means for them. The pressure finds other outlets: burnout, anxiety, depression, and coping mechanisms that stop working.

Sunday night is the hardest night of the week.

They reached the top of their field and found none of the freedom they expected.

The work became the identity.

They've never stopped long enough to define what success means for them.

A partnership, employer, or business model no longer fits their values.

Asking for help feels like weakness, so they figure it out alone.

WHO BRETT SPEAKS TO

Dentists, physicians, pharmacists, veterinarians, lawyers, and entrepreneurs who built a business from scratch. Men and women, often mid-career. Some are burned out and trying not to crash; others are doing well and ready to decide what comes next. From the outside, everyone assumes they're thriving.

What unites them is the gap between the life they're living and the one they meant to build.

THE QUESTION

If your life were as good as it can possibly be five years from now, what would that look like?

Where would you live? Who's with you? What do your vacations and your health look like? What does your work look like, and does it feed that life? Once the picture is clear, every decision gets one test.

Does it get you closer?

THE FIVE MOVES

1 Start Where It Hurts

Begin with the business problem in front of you. Build confidence with small wins, then ask the bigger question.

2 Define Success

Picture your life five years from now and name the values underneath it. Courage comes first.

3 Ask: Does It Get You Closer?

Give every decision the same test: does this bring me closer to that vision, or further away? If you keep moving further away, question the vision. It's okay to change it. It's your life.

4 Let Go of Who You Are

When I let go of who I am, I become what I might be. Then ask: who do I have to become?

5 One Step at a Time

Big change happens a little bit at a time. Most moves can be undone, and you can always move back.



MEET BRETT

Dr. Brett Kessler

“I am a catalyst for positive change in the world.”

LEADERSHIP · PERSONAL GROWTH · WELLNESS · HEALTHCARE

Dr. Brett Kessler asks high achievers one question before every decision: **does it get you closer?** As the 161st President of the American Dental Association, he led 163,000 members through one of the profession's most transformative periods. A dentist since 1995, a two-time Ironman World Championship finisher, and nearly three decades in recovery, he speaks to physicians, dentists, lawyers, and business owners about reinvention, leadership, and deciding what success means.

161st
President, American Dental Association

Congress
and the White House: testified on oral health

2×
Ironman World Championship finisher

28 years
in recovery, and counting

HOW BRETT SPEAKS

Authenticity
Real stories, real struggles, real solutions. The messiness is the point.

Actionable and Inspirational
Frameworks, tools, and practices to use immediately, going far beyond good feelings.

Vulnerability as Strength
Brett shares what's hard because vulnerability opens people up to change.

Evidence-Based
Grounded in research, experience, and what actually works.

Every presentation carries a core conviction: your life matters. Success means building a life you actually want, a life that grows you rather than drains you.





THE FLAGSHIP KEYNOTE

Does It Get You Closer?

See page 8

THE TURNING POINT

A Blank Page and a New Chapter

“I was able to end chapters, but not end my life. And with a blank page in front of me was able to write a new chapter full of possibility, achievement and impact.”

At his bottom, Brett called the Michigan Dental Association's well-being program and asked for help. That call saved his life. Every day since has been a bonus day, and what he built after it is the proof that the question works.

1998	Called for help, and a new chapter began in recovery.
2003	Opened Town Center Dentistry and Orthodontics in Denver with zero patients and no insurance.
2007	First testified before Congress on behalf of the American Dental Association.
2014	Became President of the Colorado Dental Association and helped create a dental benefit for low-income adults, giving 300,000 people access to care.
2018	Turned 50, sold the practice, ran for the ADA's national board, finished the Ironman World Championship in Kona, and celebrated 20 years of sobriety.
2024	Picked up his 26-year sobriety coin the day before he became the 161st President of the American Dental Association.



KEY CREDENTIALS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The Foundation Behind the Work

161st
President, American Dental Association

163,000
ADA members led, 2024-2025

2×
Ironman World Championship finisher

LEADERSHIP AND POLICY

- Past President, American Dental Association (2024-2025)
- Past President, Colorado Dental Association
- 14th District Representative, ADA Board of Trustees
- Chairman, Colorado Dental Well-Being Committee
- Congressional Testimony (2007, and multiple times since)
- White House Testimony on Healthcare Policy (2025)

HONORS AND FELLOWSHIPS

- Fellow, American College of Dentists
- Fellow, International College of Dentists
- Fellow, Pierre Fauchard Academy
- Denver Post “Strength in Health” Award (2015), the only Colorado dentist
- “Top Dentist,” 5280 Magazine (2005-Present)

EDUCATION AND TEACHING

- Doctor of Dental Surgery, University of Illinois Chicago (1995)
- General Practice Residency, Northwestern Memorial Hospital (1995-1997)
- Dean's Faculty, University of Michigan (1997-1999)
- Clinical Associate Professor, University of Colorado School of Dental Medicine (2003-2011)

PRACTICE, WRITING, AND SPORT

- Private Practice, Michigan (1997-1999) and Colorado (from 2000)
- Numerous national publications in peer-reviewed journals and multiple media outlets
- Two-Time Ironman World Championship Finisher (2018, 2019)

PRESENTATIONS

One Question, Built for Your Room

Every talk carries the same question into a different stage. Each card shows the page with full details.



THE FLAGSHIP KEYNOTE — PAGE 8

Does It Get You Closer?

The One Question Behind Every Decision You Make

45 TO 60 MIN



FOR LEADERS — PAGE 9

Leading with Purpose

Navigate Disruption, Build Trust, Lead with Clarity

60 TO 90 MIN



FOR RESILIENCE AND RECOVERY — PAGE 10

From Rock Bottom to Significance

What You Build After the Bottom

45 TO 90 MIN



FOR A HARD STRETCH — PAGE 11

Race the Mile You're In

Lessons from the Ironman World Championships

45 MIN



FOR WELLNESS PROGRAMS — PAGE 12

Mindfulness

Techniques I Use to Unscramble My Brain

60 TO 90 MIN



FOR GRADUATES — PAGE 13

The Next Right Thing

A Commencement Address for Graduates

25 TO 30 MIN

FOR DENTAL CONFERENCES AND STUDY CLUBS

PAGE 14

Behind the White Coat

What We Don't Say in Dentistry

15 MIN · 60 TO 75 MIN

PAGE 16

Practice Philosophy

Building Relationship-Driven, High-Impact Dentistry

60 TO 90 MIN · WORKSHOP

PAGE 17

Elevating Dentistry

Oral Health as Essential Healthcare

60 TO 90 MIN · PANEL



THE FLAGSHIP KEYNOTE

Does It Get You Closer?

The One Question Behind Every Decision You Make

There's only one way to build the life you actually want: ask one question before every decision you make.

Closer means closer to the life you'd be living if things were as good as they can possibly be five years from now. Plenty of successful people have never stopped long enough to picture it. They kept their heads down, climbed as high as their field allows, and still dread Monday morning. That's drift, and drift happens when decisions get made by default.

Brett shares the turning point in his own life and what he built after it: a practice from zero, two Ironman World Championship finishes, and the presidency of the American Dental Association. Then he turns the question on the room and walks the audience through the five moves.

ATTENDEES WILL

- Picture their life five years from now, if it's as good as it can possibly be
- Name the core values underneath that vision, starting with courage
- Test the real decision in front of them against one question
- Let go of the story that keeps them where they are
- Leave with one small step they can take tomorrow

LENGTH

45 to 60 minutes · keynote, workshop, or breakout

PERFECT FOR

Conferences and leadership retreats for physicians, dentists, pharmacists, veterinarians, lawyers, business owners, and professional associations

"If your life were as good as it could possibly be five years from now, what would that look like?"



FOR LEADERS

Leading with Purpose

Navigate Disruption, Build Trust, Lead with Clarity

In uncertain times, clarity is a competitive advantage.

Brett led the American Dental Association through one of its most transformative periods. The framework that guided him is the heart of this keynote: mission, vision, and core values working together to create clarity in chaos, for any team, practice, or organization facing unprecedented change.

Audiences discover how to separate ego from spirit in decision-making, build trust across diverse stakeholders, foster collaboration when people disagree, and execute with excellence when the path forward is unclear.

This is leadership grounded in authenticity over authority: the kind that builds teams who follow you, stay with you, and grow with you.

ATTENDEES WILL

- Understand what authentic leadership looks like and how to embody it
- Identify their own core values and personal mission
- Learn strategies to navigate the forces disrupting dentistry
- Develop practical habits for sustained leadership excellence
- Create a personal mission statement framework to drive intentional action

LENGTH

60 to 90 minutes (customizable)

PERFECT FOR

Dental and leadership conferences, executive retreats, professional and personal growth programs, management training, organizational change initiatives

"Does it get you closer?"



FOR RESILIENCE AND RECOVERY

From Rock Bottom to Significance

What You Build After the Bottom

Success is never a straight line.

Drawing on his own journey from his lowest point to leading the nation's largest dental organization and racing at the Ironman World Championships, Brett shows how setbacks become launching pads for growth when you understand your purpose.

Attendees learn how recovery work builds self-knowledge, how that self-knowledge becomes a leadership asset, and how clarity about what you stand for attracts the right people, the right opportunities, and the right life.

An unexpected challenge marks the end of a chapter. You have a blank page in front of you. Write your best story.

ATTENDEES WILL

- Understand that reaching your mountaintop is a continuous journey, with multiple peaks and valleys
- Discover your "why" as the foundation for lasting success
- Learn to leverage setbacks as opportunities for growth and service
- Recognize how empathy and service become transformative leadership forces
- Prioritize holistic wellness as the foundation for personal and professional triumph

LENGTH

45 to 90 minutes (customizable)

PERFECT FOR

Anyone who has been dealt an unexpected challenge. Annual conferences, leadership retreats, personal and professional growth programs, and professional associations.

"I couldn't fix my broken brain with my broken brain."

FOR ANY AUDIENCE IN A HARD STRETCH

Race the Mile You're In

Lessons from the Ironman World Championships





LENGTH
45 minutes

PERFECT FOR
Anyone who has been dealt an unexpected challenge. Annual conferences, leadership retreats, personal and professional growth programs, and professional associations.

Getting through the part that feels impossible. One mile at a time, from a changing tent in Kona to the finish line on Alii Drive.

Eight hours into his second Ironman World Championship, Brett sat down in the changing tent and closed his eyes. Headwinds on the bike, a sore hip, blisters, and twenty-six miles of running still ahead. A volunteer brought him food, let him sit, and then told him to get going: just run a mile to the next aid station, then run another.

He finished in fourteen hours and twenty-seven minutes.

"I learned that saying in my recovery groups. It is another way of saying live in the moment, right here, right now. Later I started saying it to the triathlon and marathon teams I coached: just race the mile you're in."

Do not think about mile twenty-six when you are standing at mile one. The future hasn't happened yet. This mile is the only mile that exists.

BRETT KESSLER, DDS



FOR WELLNESS PROGRAMS

Mindfulness

Techniques I Use to Unscramble My Brain

Peak performance requires mental clarity, emotional resilience, and the ability to make decisions from your values instead of your fears.

What if performing at your best has less to do with working harder and more to do with how you work with your own mind? Brett shares the mindfulness techniques that helped him excel as a leader, clinician, and athlete.

Attendees leave with practical tools they can use the same day to quiet negative thought patterns, build mental resilience, and perform at their highest level: tools that work in the real world, in real time, under real pressure.

ATTENDEES WILL

- Learn practical mindfulness tools: meditation, visualization, intentional journaling
- Understand how brain areas influence emotions and decision-making
- Discover techniques for developing emotional intelligence
- Recognize the difference between growth and fixed mindsets
- Develop strategies for overcoming obstacles in real time
- Create a framework for setting and achieving ambitious goals

LENGTH

60 to 90 minutes (includes practical exercises)

PERFECT FOR

Dental and wellness conferences, professional development programs, stress management workshops, team building events, healthcare provider gatherings

"Tomorrow is probable but not guaranteed. Therefore we have to live our best lives today (and every day)."



FOR GRADUATES · COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

The Next Right Thing

A Commencement Address for Graduates

Success in life begins with taking care of yourself, continues with defining your purpose, and is sustained by consistently doing the next right thing.

Graduates stand at a pivotal moment, at the threshold between education and career. Through vulnerable storytelling and embodied practice, Brett helps them discover that seeking help is a sign of strength, that wellness is part of professional practice, and that their vision for their career should support their life goals and fuel them.

GRADUATES WILL EXPERIENCE

- The power of vulnerability, and the lesson that seeking help is strength
- A practical decision-making framework, "do the next right thing," that guides daily choices and major decisions
- The dimensions of wellness through embodied practice: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing
- An interactive moment with guided gestures they can recall throughout their career
- Permission to prioritize self-care as essential professional practice
- A challenge to formulate their own vision for their career that supports their life goals

LENGTH

25 to 30 minutes

PERFECT FOR

Graduation and white coat ceremonies, residency completions, student orientation programs, and career development symposia in medicine, dentistry, law, business, and beyond

"When you are on an inspired path, angels appear on that path with a message. Keep looking for the angels!"

This address is honest about struggle. It's embodied, practical, and begins the wellness conversation on day one.



DENTAL PROGRAM · 15-MINUTE SHOWCASE

Behind the White Coat

What We Don't Say in Dentistry · The dental version of the flagship

Everyone is going to go through something in their lives that challenges them and makes them question their purpose. For some, it's addiction. For others, it's burnout, broken relationships, health crises, or the slow realization that they've built a life that doesn't fit anymore.

Those moments mark the end of a chapter and the beginning of your reinvention.

His recovery work helped him articulate who he was and what he stood for. That clarity became magnetic. It was attractive to colleagues, staff, and patients. He achieved things he never imagined, all while being true to himself.

That's what this conversation is about. The gap between who we are and who we pretend to be. The courage to name what we're actually facing. The choice to reinvent. The discovery that success comes from alignment rather than achievement.

TAKEAWAY

Authenticity and success are not in conflict. The path to real success runs through authenticity.

LENGTH
15 minutes

PERFECT FOR
Speaker showcases, study club introductions, breakout sessions where club directors want to know who you are

"Who are you? What do you stand for?"

DENTAL PROGRAM · 60 TO 75 MINUTE FULL PRESENTATION

Behind the White Coat

Everyone is going to go through something in their lives that challenges them and makes them question their purpose. For Brett, it was addiction: a bottom he hopes no one ever has to experience. He was lucky to live through it.

It was the end of a chapter, and the end of his life as he knew it. He took it as an opportunity to reinvent himself and build a new life, and he has reinvented several times since.

Unexpectedly, his recovery work helped him articulate who he was and what he stood for. That clarity gave him focus, and it became magnetic. It was attractive to colleagues, staff, and patients. He was able to achieve things he never imagined, all while being true to himself.

That's what this talk is about. The gap between who we truly are and how we portray ourselves to the world. The moment when we realize that the life we built, though we may have achieved some level of success, is leaving us unfulfilled.

This leads us to a crossroad with a choice: to stay stuck or reinvent. And the discovery that success comes from alignment of our achievements with our values.

Brett shares his story to open the door, then turns it on the audience. It becomes a permission structure to name what they're actually facing: imposter syndrome, burnout, the loneliness of ownership, the fear that you've built a life you don't actually want.

He closes with the framework he uses now: separating ego from spirit, building a values-based life and practice, and redefining success as alignment instead of achievement. The audience leaves with a personal mission statement framework that cuts through the noise and reconnects them to why they became dentists in the first place.

“This is the talk I wish someone had given me when I graduated from dental school.”

ATTENDEES WILL

- Understand that everyone faces a moment that challenges their purpose
- Recognize vulnerability as a strength, authenticity as a competitive advantage
- Learn how clarity and alignment attract people, opportunities, and meaning
- Discover the difference between ego-driven success and spirit-driven success
- Leave with a practical mission statement framework to implement immediately

LENGTH

60 to 75 minutes (flexible based on audience)

PERFECT FOR

Dental conferences, leadership retreats, wellness programs, professional development initiatives, study club symposiums



DENTAL PROGRAM

Practice Philosophy

Building Relationship-Driven, High-Impact Dentistry

Transactional dentistry creates transactional relationships. Values-based dentistry creates meaning.

Patients who value what you value stay, refer, and become advocates. Brett shows dental teams how to move a practice from commodity service to valued partnership, creating patient desire for optimal care through education, co-discovery, and comprehensive treatment planning that addresses health, function, and aesthetics.

The practices that thrive today and beyond attract patients who see them as partners in their health.

The framework works for solo practitioners and larger offices, in affluent markets and underserved communities, because it rests on genuine value creation, authentic relationships, and clarity about what you're building.

ATTENDEES WILL

- Learn how to establish a relationship-based practice model
- Discover strategies to create genuine value that patients recognize and desire
- Understand the co-discovery process that transforms patient education
- Master comprehensive exam techniques that uncover true oral health needs
- Develop treatment planning approaches that deliver long-term results and patient loyalty

LENGTH

60 to 90 minutes (half-day or full-day workshop available)

PERFECT FOR

Dental conferences, practice management seminars, continuing education courses, study clubs, new dentists, dental students, practice ownership programs

"There are 4 million people in Denver. I realized I didn't have to be the dentist to all of them."



DENTAL PROGRAM

Elevating Dentistry

Oral Health as Essential Healthcare

Dentistry remains separate from healthcare. This separation harms patients and limits the profession's impact.

Oral health is health. Brett challenges the outdated divide between oral and systemic health and lays out a bold vision for integration, from the widening disparities in outcomes for adults and seniors to the policy decisions that keep medical and dental coverage separate.

Attendees explore the movement toward health-centered dentistry: the whole-health approach, medical-dental integration, and innovations like salivary diagnostics and AI that are transforming care delivery. Most importantly, they leave knowing what they can do right now, in their own practice, to move toward that future.

ATTENDEES WILL

- Understand why oral health is essential to overall wellbeing
- Learn the policy decisions that created the medical-dental divide and how to bridge it
- Discover the health-centered dentistry model that emphasizes prevention and integration
- Explore innovations transforming care delivery
- Develop strategies for implementing new practice models that reward disease prevention
- Understand the insurance reform landscape and what's coming

LENGTH

60 to 90 minutes (adaptable for panels or policy debates)

PERFECT FOR

Healthcare policy conferences, medical-dental integration summits, insurance industry events, public health forums, advocacy organizations, dental school leadership programs

“Anything is possible.”

ENGAGEMENT OPTIONS

Built Around Your Event

Full Keynote

45 to 90 minutes of presentation and interaction.

Workshop Format

Half-day or full-day programs with case studies, group discussion, and skill-building exercises.

Panel Discussion

Moderated conversations on leadership, wellness, and the future of healthcare and work.

Breakout Session

A smaller group format for a deeper dive into specific topics.

Study Club

Customized talks tailored to your club's interests and demographics.

Virtual or In-Person

Both formats available; in-person delivery creates deeper connection and impact.

BEYOND THE STAGE

Every path starts with the same question.

Leadership Programs

For leaders promoted into roles overseeing whole teams: a way to make decisions against a clear vision for themselves and their people.

Coaching

One-on-one and mastermind coaching in three-month cycles, meeting weekly or twice a month: clarity on where you are, a vision for your best life, and a partner to close the gap.

Mastermind

A group for established professionals who write their vision and test real decisions against it together.

Strategic Planning Retreats

Disconnect from your daily life for a weekend to bring clarity and focus to what matters most in your life.

FOR DENTAL PROFESSIONALS

Dentistry, Reimagined

The coaching arm for dentists, led by Brett and his partner Mark Kogut.

doesitgetyoucloser.com/dentistry-reimagined

APPENDIX · BIOS FOR YOUR PROGRAM

Short and Medium Bios



Ready to paste into your program, website, or introduction. The long bio follows.

SHORT BIO

Brett Kessler, DDS, helps high achievers ask one question before every decision: **does it get you closer?** As the 161st President of the American Dental Association (2024-2025), he led 163,000 members through transformative healthcare challenges. A dentist since 1995, Fellow of three dental honor societies, and two-time Ironman World Championship finisher, he speaks openly about recovery as the turning point that made the rest possible.

MEDIUM BIO

Dr. Brett Kessler asks high achievers one question before every decision: **does it get you closer?** His framework helps professionals who have done everything right and still don't have the life they wanted decide what success means to them, then test every decision against it.

As 161st President of the American Dental Association (2024-2025), he led the nation's largest dental organization during one of its most transformative periods. He has testified before Congress multiple times since 2007 and before regulatory agencies including the White House in 2025. He is Past President of the Colorado Dental Association, Chairman of Colorado's Dental Well-Being Committee, and a consultant to the ADA on wellness initiatives.

Practicing esthetic, functional, and reconstructive dentistry since 1995, Dr. Kessler completed his General Practice Residency at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, practiced in Michigan, and moved to Colorado in 2000. He has been named “Top Dentist” by 5280 Magazine annually since 2005 and received the Denver Post's inaugural “Strength in Health” award in 2015. A Fellow in three dental honor societies, he is also a two-time Ironman World Championship finisher.

APPENDIX · LONG BIO

For Programs and Introductions

Dr. Brett H. Kessler is a nationally recognized leader in dentistry, healthcare policy, and professional wellness, and the voice behind one question: **does it get you closer?** As 161st President of the American Dental Association (2024-2025), he led the nation's largest dental organization and its 163,000 members through unprecedented challenges in healthcare delivery, policy reform, and professional wellbeing.

Dr. Kessler first testified before Congress in 2007 on behalf of the ADA regarding the ravages of methamphetamines on oral health and has testified before Congress multiple times since. He has also testified before several regulatory agencies including the White House in 2025, advocating for the integration of oral health into primary care and expanded access to dental services.

During his ADA leadership, Dr. Kessler served from the 14th District as its representative to the ADA's Board of Trustees, where he chaired the ADA's Science and Research Institute, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, and the Audit Committee. He is Past President of the Colorado Dental Association and currently serves as Chairman of Colorado's Dental Well-Being Committee and as a consultant to the ADA, having served for several years on the Dental Well-Being Advisory Committee and the Council on Dental Benefits.

Practicing esthetic, functional, and reconstructive dentistry since 1995, Dr. Kessler completed his General Practice Residency at Northwestern Memorial Hospital from 1995-1997. He then practiced in Michigan from 1997-1999 before moving to Denver, Colorado in 2000, where he founded Town Center Dentistry and Orthodontics in 2003. He has been recognized by his peers as a “Top Dentist” by 5280 Magazine every year since the award's inception in 2005. In 2015, the Denver Post featured him with its inaugural “Strength in Health” award as the only dentist in Colorado to receive this distinction.

Dr. Kessler is a Fellow in the American College of Dentists, International College of Dentists, and the Pierre Fauchard Academy. He earned his Doctor of Dental Surgery degree from the University of Illinois Chicago School of Dental Medicine and his undergraduate degree from the University of Iowa. He served on the Dean's Faculty at the University of Michigan while in private practice there from 1997-1999, and as a Clinical Associate Professor at the University of Colorado School of Dental Medicine from 2003-2011, where he taught occlusion and morphology.

An accomplished endurance athlete, Dr. Kessler keeps in shape by both coaching and participating in various endurance races across the United States, including two finishes at the Ironman World Championships in Kona, Hawaii (2018, 2019). His athletic pursuits inform his approach to leadership, emphasizing mental resilience, physical wellness, and purpose-driven performance.

Dr. Kessler speaks internationally to various organizations and dental societies with a focus on wellbeing and leadership concepts. His presentations blend vulnerability and authenticity with evidence-based strategies, leaving audiences inspired and equipped with practical tools for immediate implementation. He and his wife Gina, an orthodontist, have four children: Abbey, Max, Sydney, and Riley.



BOOK BRETT TO SPEAK

Does It Get You Closer?

Bring the question to your next event.

brett@dentistryreimagined.net
doesitgetyoucloser.com
LinkedIn · Instagram · Facebook · TikTok @bikodds

Looking forward to connecting with you and your community.