

Prologue: A Declaration of War

Face-to-Face with the Cure for Heart Disease

The First Meeting of the Authors

I tend to be a skeptic. That's the first thing you need to know about me.

As for Dr. Dwight Lundell, I would call him a truth seeker—he's beyond skepticism because he has the knowledge to challenge philosophy with fact. He's a guru of scientific fact.

So, how did I—the skeptic writer, known to be a tad irreverent—end up co-authoring a book with a doctor who has an unblemished reputation in cardiovascular medicine?

The first time I received a call from Dr. Dwight Lundell, asking if I would be interested in co-authoring a book with him, I admit I was extremely skeptical. The gentle, yet direct, voice on the other end of the phone politely proclaimed one of the greatest medical statements in history—heart disease had found a cure! Yes, of course I was skeptical. Was this guy actually going to say something that could change the world?

The Cure For Heart Disease

Sure, heart disease is a huge topic. But, if this doctor was going to feed me the same old mucky information that isn't making a dent in a growing heart disease epidemic, why would I care? Why would anyone care?

On that initial phone call, Dr. Lundell asked me, "Todd, how much do you know about heart disease?"

Well, I'm already a health freak. I thought I knew quite a bit. And, I thought he was about to rattle off the same information we've all heard for decades. So, it was to my surprise when he followed that initial question with, "If you do know anything about the disease, are you truly willing to change your perspective?"

Wait a second. What? Will I change my perspective? Sure, I'll change my perspective if someone would give me a reason. But, so far, no one has ever given me a real reason to change the way I think—about anything. I've written for, and about, some of the country's most recognized companies and people—billion dollar corporations, best selling authors, politicians, and high-powered executives. Plus, I have a wealth of experience writing in the health and wellness arenas—working side-by-side with leaders in medicine. Put it this way, if you can imagine it, I've probably written it at some point in my career. But, none have changed my perspective—I'm hard-headed and stubborn. So, what could Dr. Lundell possibly tell me that could truly change my perspective, change my mind, and transform my life?

That's when Dr. Lundell said something to me that I had never heard before as a writer.

"Todd, will you challenge me?" he asked. "Heart disease has found a cure."

Prologue: A Declaration of War

Okay, slide the hook deep into my lip—I was intrigued. Of course, I had expected a bold statement from Dr. Lundell—anyone with his credentials surely had earned the right to plant a flag of knowledge—he was one of the first surgeons to operate on a beating heart. Of course he has earned the right to make a bold statement. And, without a bold statement, why would anyone want to write a book? But, why did he ask if I would challenge him?

We chatted a bit more on the phone. We set up a time to meet. And, I hung up the phone wondering if I had just bumped into something too good to be true. Can there really be a cure for heart disease?

Upon our initial face-to-face meeting, Dr. Lundell continued to surprise me. His demeanor is easily approachable, conversational, and even a bit laid-back—not something the average person would expect from a man who has helped shape cardiovascular medicine. He was direct, and without blinking, brilliantly recited statistical information that would ultimately bewilder the average person's thought process.

It wasn't until Dr. Lundell began speaking of his career history that I gained an insight that is rarely seen by most of us—the true meaning and responsibility doctors face when they take an oath. That day, I realized that medicine, at least in Dr. Lundell's perspective, was much more than a career. It was his passion and his purpose.

Somewhere in the middle of Dr. Lundell's statistical barrage about the cardiovascular epidemic our nation faces, he began reciting a story from his past—a story that quickly transformed a swarm of data into a personal mission statement. "Todd, I've saved many lives," he said. "But, as many times as I've revived life, the heartache of losing a patient never becomes a simple statistic. And, I'll be honest. As a doctor, you tend to hope that with time, you will be

able to separate yourself emotionally from your patients. But, I couldn't. When your own two hands are the last chance for a person to live, and then you walk out of surgery to look a family in the eyes and tell them the bad news, it's haunting. It's horrible. And, it's especially horrible when you know that you could have saved that person's life if you had met them a few years earlier. I was walking away from a family once, hearing them mourn my horrific news—a widow and her children had just lost a husband and a father—when I realized that my thinking was backward. I knew that I had to somehow change the way I practiced medicine. We can cure heart disease. So, why don't we? That's when I knew I had to reach people before they ended up on a table in front of me. That's why I'm writing this book."

Sitting across the table from Dr. Lundell when he spoke those words made me shiver. His sincerity, passion, and even frustration were glaringly obvious. Yet, as much as I wanted to jump up and yell, "Count me in! Let's save some lives!" my skepticism took over. And, there's no doubt in my mind that he heard that skepticism in my voice when I asked, "So, you're saying that you can cure heart disease—something an entire medical community has been bumbling to cure for decades?"

He hesitated. The corner of his mouth rose slowly, smirking at my seemingly confrontational question. "This is exactly what I meant when I asked if you would challenge me," he replied. "No. I cannot cure heart disease, but you can. In fact, if we present this information correctly, anyone who reads the book will be able to save more lives than I ever could as a heart surgeon."

That's the statement that secured my intrigue and my trust. And, it's not because Dr. Lundell uses overly convincing language. In fact,

as an interviewer, I would often prod Dr. Lundell for more entertaining and inspiring language. And, each time I approached a sizzling sentence, Dr. Lundell reeled me back and said, "Todd, we have the science. There's no need for sizzle."

So, you might be wondering; why am I sharing my skepticism with you before you even read the first page of Chapter 1? Well, that's a good question. I know, as a career writer, that sharing my skeptical nature isn't the best approach to promoting a theory that will revolutionize medicine. However, I think it's important to share because I believe that many of you reading this book are skeptics just like me. And, I believe it's why Dr. Lundell asked me to help him share his knowledge—to challenge him and the scientific evidence included in this book.

Throughout this book, I do challenge Dr. Lundell. Hopefully, I raise the same questions you would raise. Hopefully, I expose those raw questions that we may never get the chance to ask our family physician—much less an opportunity to ask a heart surgeon.

As you read this book, understand that Dr. Lundell wants you, like he asked of me, to challenge the material and information presented.

"When the readers of this book begin to change their lives, and fight this battle, their friends, family members, coworkers, and our culture in general will try to sabotage their newfound freedom from disease," said Dr. Lundell. "We, as a culture, need to get accustomed to challenging all information. We face this current epidemic because people didn't challenge the information they were being given. So, I want people to question this book. I want people to question everything. The facts are the only things that are real. And, with the facts, we can all win this war."

The Cure For Heart Disease

He's right. What you'll discover in this book is that the scientific facts are indisputable. You'll realize that understanding the health crisis we face isn't extremely complicated—and it can find resolve. You'll understand that there truly is a cure for heart disease. And, you'll understand that only you have the power to win this war—each and every one of you.

"This is a war," said Dr. Lundell. "It's a battle inside our bodies. It's a battle zone in our current culture. And, it's a war of information that is fought by challenging the incorrect philosophies which have made this disease a sorry epidemic—one that shouldn't exist in the first place."

Those are words that make sense. Yet, I am not a person who is easily swayed. I need direct answers. I need proof. And, I need simple solutions.

I am just like you, the reader. In the process of writing this book, I was learning the information for the first time. I was asking questions.

Now, it's your turn. The information necessary to cure heart disease is contained within the following pages. War has been declared.

— Todd Nordstrom