

**DISPENSING ETHICALLY
while
REMAINING PROFITABLE
The AARON MANTRA.**

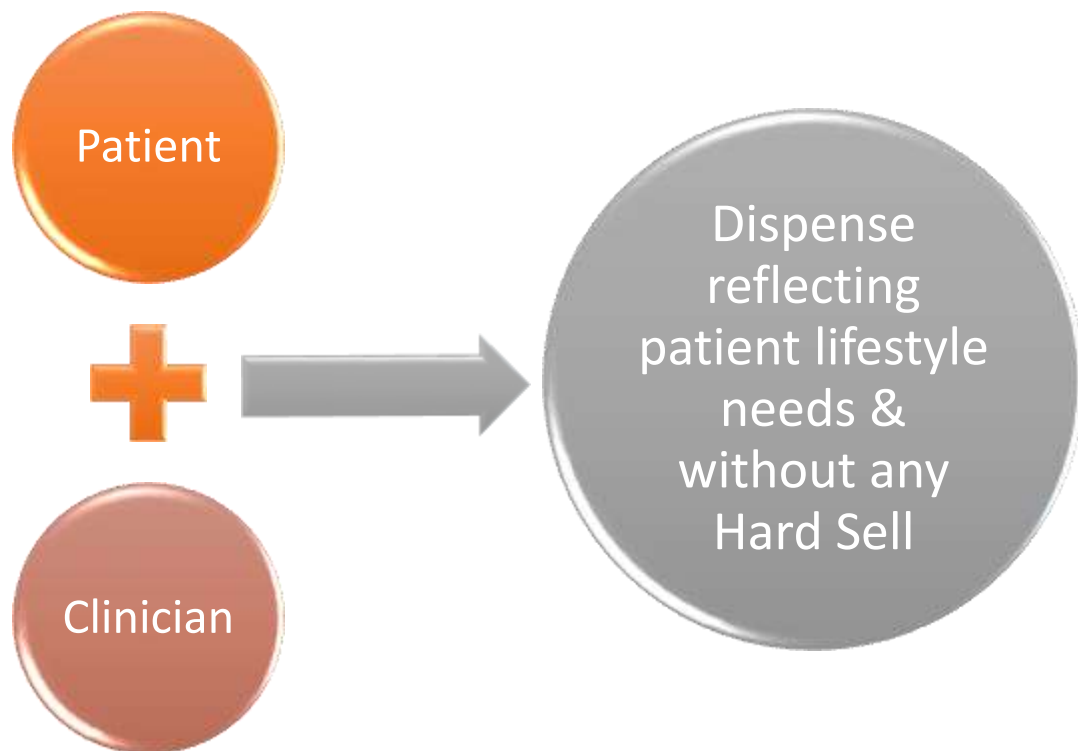
**Remember:
If the patient needs are met.
If colleagues feel valued and fulfilled
Then.....
Business success will follow
(It is NOT the other way around!)**

The AARON Mantras

LOYALTY COMES FROM TRUST
TRUST COMES FROM UNDERSTANDING
UNDERSTANDING COMES FROM EDUCATION
and.....
EDUCATION TAKES TIME AND PATIENCE

**OUT OF
COURTESY!**

**Patients are
NOT
PRICE FIXATED
They are
VALUE CONSCIOUS**



A prescription is simply a bunch of numbers

It tells you nothing about what the patient needs,
what they value, what they do or what they worry
about.

DO NOT PIGEON HOLE PATIENTS

We have no right to assume

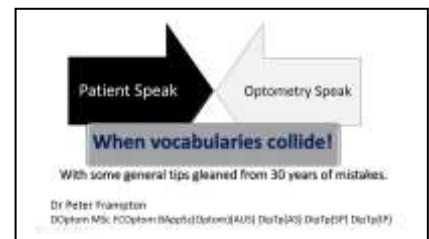
- a) What a patient can or cannot afford.**
- b) What a patient may or may not feel is important or valuable.**

Our role is to use our expert knowledge to advise and guide

We have a strict protocol on how to approach dispensing.
This reflects our general policy of:-

Remember:
If the patient needs are met.
If colleagues feel valued and fulfilled
then.....
Business success will follow
(It is NOT the other way around!)

1. NEVER HARD SELL for Targets
 - a. Unnecessary if you tap into patient needs and supply a solution rather than an appliance.
 - b. This process MUST start with the optometrist, finding out how the patient lives and what they enjoy. This takes time.
 - c. Even if there is no change –ASK THE QUESTION: Do you want new Spectacles anyway?
2. Ensuring the patient is involved in the decisions.
 - a. See **Communication PowerPoint on Website**
 - b. Success will be more assured if the patient is Involved in decision (takes ownership)
 - c. If non-tolerance then there will not be an aggressive confrontation but rather two people sorting out a problem
3. Ensure the patient is aware of options so they can make an informed decision
 - a. **Out of Courtesy**



OUT OF COURTESY!

- b. No one will ask for a solution if they do not know one exists!
- c. Value, not Cost, is the consideration:
 - i. Think of our **Reading Glasses Leaflet**. This gives patients five options:
 - 1) Ready Readers, 2) SV Prescription reading spectacles 3) Varifocals/Bifocals, 4) Degressionals 4) Contact Lenses
 - ii. All allow the patient to read.
 1. If cost were the only consideration we would all buy Ready Readers. But.....

2. We are not offering a product we are offering a solution to a lifestyle inconvenience.
4. Never presume what a patient may or may not value or wish to afford.
 - i. You are simply giving the patient the courtesy of not presuming what the patient may want or value
 1. We do not mind if they wish to spend nothing or a lot.
 - a. Offering only the cheapest is actually rude
 - b. Pushing expensive and over selling is equally morally and ethically WRONG.

DO NOT PIGEON HOLE PATIENTS

**We have no right to assume
What a patient can or cannot afford.
What a patient may or may not feel is important or valuable.
Our role is to use our expert knowledge to advise and guide**

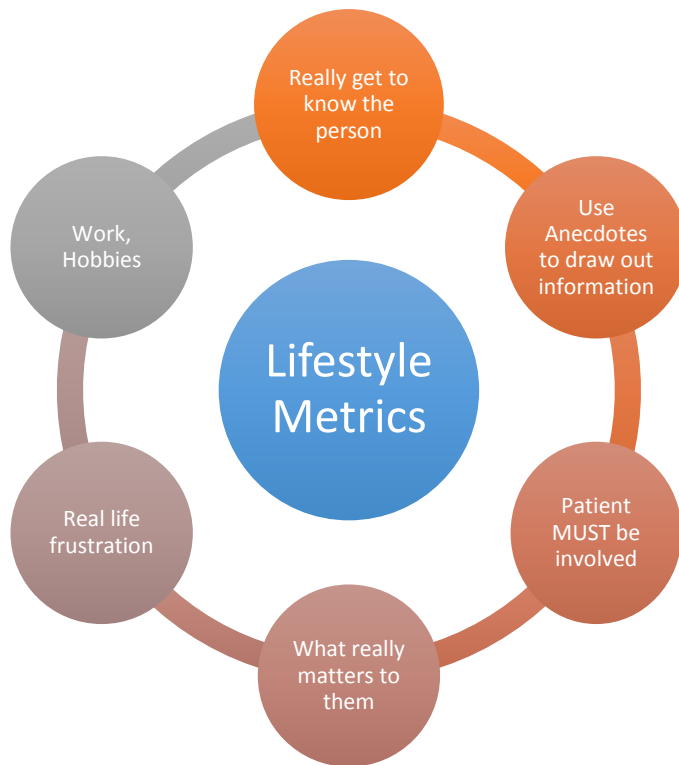
Adapted from our **Dispensing Mission Statement**: We have no right to dictate what you may value; our role is to ensure you have the fullest choice. Prior to looking at specific frames and lenses we feel it is important to ensure we can supply what you actually want, not what an anonymous business policy dictates we try to sell. We stock the largest range to suit every budget. If you don't have any set ideas we can select pieces from throughout the range and see where we head. You guide me as to what you may value. **(Offering the fullest choice – from inexpensive to very high end is an absolutely positive thing to be proud of, not embarrassed by. Never do the patient the injustice of presuming what they want!**

5. The patient is less likely to take the prescription elsewhere if the following is explained:

**A prescription is simply
a bunch of numbers**

**It tells you nothing about what the patient needs, what they value,
what they do or what they worry about.**

- a. The prescription is simply the starting point to customising an optical appliance to suit the individual.



A Prescription gives a
 A Distance power
 and if needed
 A Near Add
 This must be modified to suit specific working distances such as Desk Top, Painting, Music.
 What best suits the individual lifestyle needs: Varifocals, Bifocals, Degressionals, Single Vision for distance intermediate or near. Stronger reading Add for niche craft spectacles. Lower reading add for car dashboards. This list is not inclusive.

Outside Dispensing Fact Sheet below outlines the risks for the patient and prescribing optometrist. Not worth the risk so.....

- b. If a Patient wants to take the prescription, the pitfalls must be, politely, pointed out.
 - i. If they wish to take the prescription elsewhere it is their right.
 - 1. However it is also our right to explain, politely, that we believe it is too fraught with risk for us to keep them on as patients.

ESSENTIAL DISPENSING STEPS

STEP 1: HAND OVER

The dispensing professional is a vital member of the clinical team. The optometrist should hand over, one professional to another, and introduce by name. The optometrist should bring the dispenser up to speed on what has been discussed about lifestyle and identified needs.

Step 2: The **FIRST** strategic part of dispensing **MUST** be their existing spectacles. Whether a new patient or existing, the process should be similar.

1. What is the patient currently wearing?
 - a. Even when an existing Patient it cannot be assumed what they are wearing is our last prescription.
 - i. Their spectacles may be quite old
 - ii. They may have had them dispensed elsewhere and the choice of lens may be different
 1. See our **New Patient Information**, below, for questions (not inclusive)

		Data Protection and Patient Information
M / Ms / Miss / Mr		ID Number
Postcodes		DOB
Address		
Postcode		
Data Protection		
Acion Optometrists complies with the 1998 Data Protection Act ensuring personal information about patients is processed fairly and lawfully. Full details are outlined in the 'Data Protection' leaflet available in reception.		
Please acknowledge your consent by signing below.		
I consent to the use of my personal information for the purposes and on the terms set out in the 'Data Protection' leaflet.		
Signature: _____		
Frame Type	PLUS lens Centre thickness	
Frame Dimensions	MINUS lens Edge thickness	
Bifocal Type	Front Sphere curve R&L	
Varifocal Type	Base curve R&L	
Degressive Type	MAR coated	
Optical Centres	Flinted	
	Photochromic	
	RIGHT	LEFT
	Sphere Cyl Axis Prism Base Sphere Cyl Axis Prism Scope	
Dist		
Int		
Near		

Patient Information to Aid Dispensing
What spectacles do you wear? Single Vision Distance Single Vision Readers Single Vision Computer Varifocals Bifocals Occupational Degressivals
Do they meet all your requirements? DOI, comfort & appearance, vision.
Have you ever had problems with a frame?
Are you having any problems with your current spectacles?
Have you ever had an allergic reaction to a frame material?
Have you previously been dispensed Tints Lens coatings Prisms
Have you ever had problems with any of these?
Have you ever experienced dissatisfaction with spectacle lens thickness weight
Are you wearing CL's / Spectacles?
Have you ever worn, or wanted to try contact lenses?
Do you have any visual difficulties with hobbies, sports or work?
Would you be interested in our Eyeplan Scheme?

2. NEVER feel unjustified to question with the Optometrist the prescription if you identify potential problems. Identifying problems is in the Dispensing Optician syllabus and is a vital skill.
 - a. It is not an excuse to say 'It is not my role to question the optometrist's prescription'. This is totally inappropriate for professional dispensing
 - b. REMEMBER:

**A prescription is simply
a bunch of numbers**

It tells you nothing about what the patient needs, what they value,
what they do or what they worry about.

STEP 3: To allay any fears (some Patients have been prescribed unnecessarily elsewhere and are wary of ALL optometrists) set out our policies of fairness and non-judgmental dispensing policies.

DO NOT PIGEON HOLE PATIENTS

**We have no right to assume
What a patient can or cannot afford.
What a patient may or may not feel is important or valuable.
Our role is to use our expert knowledge to advise and guide**

Peter Frampton often states, especially to new patients: ***'If you do not leave here trusting me and my colleagues, I have failed'***

See our Dispensing: **Our Policy Fact Sheet** (below)

FACT SHEET

Dispensing: Our Policies

Prior to a technical dispense it is important to explain the practice policies ensuring our service is patient led. Absolutely fundamental to our business ethos; you must trust our advice. If you do not leave with that trust, whether you purchase anything or not, we have failed.

A spectacle prescription is simply a "Bunch of Numbers", it tells nothing about what you may or may not need. It is a starting point for the dispenser, but the most critical process is interpreting your lifestyle requirements so the most appropriate correction can be recommended.

'Bunch of Numbers'

A prescription gives a technically measured distance prescription and, if necessary, a reading addition. It is a starting point for an effective dispensing process but says nothing about what you may need, what you value or indeed what you worry about with your vision. These numbers do not necessarily reflect specific lifestyle requirements. It is the role of the dispenser to take time to interpret your needs and recommend an individualised correction for you.

A thorough lifestyle case history takes time

Your individual lifestyle needs will be investigated by the Optometrist, but the dispenser, after being introduced by the optometrist, will continue the process, vital for an effective dispense. We could supply optically perfect glasses but if they do not fulfil your lifestyle needs they are less than adequate and therefore can be extremely frustrating. Rather than pigeon holing patients and dispensing generic devices you should become part of the decision making process ensuring the final dispense delivers a solution to your optical needs, not just an appliance. This assessment is without doubt the most crucial part of the dispensing process. It will identify, to both your adviser and yourself, the most suitable choice of correction – contact lens, single vision glasses, varifocals, progressives, Res Specs. The frame selection or technical spectacle lens type will follow only after this process. Patients very often have limited knowledge of the options available. As we stress: out of professional courtesy we must inform you of your options. An informed decision can then be made.

'Out of Courtesy'

We have no right to dictate what you may, or may not, need or value; our role is to give you the fullest choice.

To dispense appropriately we must take the time to know you and you must trust our advice. Remember, if you do not leave totally trusting our motives, and us, we have failed! The term 'out of courtesy' is an excellent way to introduce our huge range, without pressure. We offer a fullest range not a restrictive range. If you have no clear idea we will show selections from the entire showroom, not just low end, not just high end. By not being judgmental no one is made to feel intimidated or patronised. Because we do not limit patient choice it is easy to be considered expensive; we are not. We certainly provide expensive options when appropriate but, like for like, we are competitive. The J&J Oasys contact lens, is our most expensive; it is also our Number 1 lens, not because it is expensive but because it is the best.

We strive to avoid gimmicks, preferring honesty and quality above all else.

The 'Second Pair Free Myth'

Our permanent commitment is a second pair half price. Without explanation it may not seem a great offer when some places suggest the second pair is free. We had better clarify.

Complete single vision glasses start at £35. If you want a spare pair it would be £17.50: both pairs total £52.50. However, the choice to take the second pair is yours, you will not be forced to have it if one pair is all you require. Varifocals have the same issue. Ours start at £55.00 with a frame but we need to explain the benefits of different types before we decide on which might best suit your needs.

Two pairs, if a spare is valued by you, could then be as little as £82.50! But this is permanent policy for our entire range of both frames and lenses, not a limited range of frames or unspecified lens quality. Prada, Tiffany, Tom Ford, Gucci, Oakley, RayBan, in fact our entire, and very extensive, range can be taken at ½ price. ½ price will also include any lens type required including our premier range Nikon. This ensures, if you want a second pair you can get the one you want, not one we decide for you.

After all else, regardless of the outcome, if you do not leave the practice trusting us and our advice we have FAILED.

STEP 4: Lifestyle Case History.

This should relate to what has already been discussed by Optometrist BUT The Optometrist may not have had time to fully develop the options so a thorough lifestyle case history is still important.

1. To build a vital rapport with the Patient so they trust you
2. Also may find other areas to discuss niche products

From **Dispensing Fact Sheet Mission Statement** (below) - but this is not a script.

LIFESTYLE: Let me first confirm what (SPECIFIC OPTOMETRIST) has explained to me about your lifestyle needs. This is important, we could give you optically perfect glasses but if they do not fulfil lifestyle needs they are less than adequate. So I will reiterate the conclusions (SPECIFIC OPTOMETRIST) explained to me. Once I am sure I understand your needs we can talk specifics.

STEP 5: Set out our policy with a positive spin.

An Anecdote first: Peter was in the USA at a lecture. The speaker asked his audience: 'how many of you recommend based on price?' When a large proportion of the audience raised their hands he retorted: 'So your best advice to your patients is second best!'

Offering only the cheapest is like saying you do not value better so I won't offer better. This is WRONG; patients deserve to choose for themselves what they value, not what management presume they value based their own price fixation.

We believe in giving everyone the greatest choice: of Professional Services, Frames, Lenses, Contact Lenses

Remember:

**Patients are NOT
PRICE FIXATED
They are
VALUE CONSCIOUS**

Our biggest selling Contact Lens is also our most expensive, because people appreciate the VALUE rather than COST.

So.....again, again, again.....

**DO NOT PIGEON HOLE PATIENTS
We have no right to assume**

**What a patient can or cannot afford.
What a patient may or may not feel is important or
valuable.**

Our role is to use our expert knowledge to advise and guide

1. We are not expensive (but we are perceived as such because we also stock expensive product).

- a. This is one of our greatest challenges and can only be overcome by Education, Education, Education and Time, Time, Time.

To ensure we offer people full choice we do not constrain them to 'cheap'

- b. This is an absolutely positive thing to be proud of, not embarrassed by.

c. Even say: *'We are perceived as expensive, simply because we offer a huge choice. But like for like we can rarely be beaten'*.

- i. Indeed it is easy to discredit those ridiculous 'second pair free' gimmicks. Does anyone really believe the concept? Try asking for the first one only at half price!

- ii. Second Pair Free Myth – From our **Dispensing Policy Fact Sheet:**

The 'Second Pair Free Myth'

Our permanent commitment is a second pair half price. Without explanation it may not seem a great offer when some places suggest the second pair is free. We had better clarify.

Complete single vision glasses start at £35. If you want a spare pair it would be £17.50; both pairs total £52.50. However, the choice to take the second pair is yours, you will not be forced to have it if one pair is all you require. Varifocals have the same issue. Ours start at £55.00 with a frame but we need to explain the benefits of different types before we decide on which might best suit your needs.

Two pairs, if a spare is valued by you, could then be as little as £82.50! But this is a permanent policy for our entire range of both frames and lenses, not a limited range of frames or unspecified lens quality. Prada, Tiffany, Tom Ford, Gucci, Oakley, RayBan, in fact our entire, and very extensive, range can be taken at ½ price. ½ price will also include any lens type required including our premier range Nikon. This ensures, if you want a second pair you can get the one you want, not one we decide for you.

After all else, regardless of the outcome, if you do not leave the practice trusting us and our advice we have FAILED.



SECOND PAIR 'FREE' MYTH
Why not just buy 1 pair cheaper?
£69 £52.50
ONE PAIR OF COMPLETE SINGLE VISION FROM **£35**
ASK A MEMBER OF STAFF FOR DETAILS

SECOND PAIR 'FREE' MYTH
Why not just buy 1 pair cheaper?
£118 £82.50
ONE PAIR OF COMPLETE VARIFOCALS FROM **£55**
ASK A MEMBER OF STAFF FOR DETAILS

From **Dispensing Fact Sheet Mission Statement** (below)- but this is not a script.

Dispensing: 'Prior to looking at specific frames and lenses we feel it is important to ensure we can supply what you need and value. We have no right to dictate what you may value; our role is to ensure you have the fullest choice. We are really lucky here because we are not constrained by big business policy; this allows us to offer virtually anything you may want. We stock the largest range regardless of your budget we can supply'.

'If you don't have any set ideas I suggest we choose selection from throughout the range and see where we head. You guide me as to what you may value'.

BUT..... be aware of

STEP 6: Liaising with Technical Support

Until this point in the dispensing process nothing required the technical knowledge of a Dispensing Optician. It required empathy and understanding of Patient needs.

However, if in any doubt, before showing frames liaise with the Dispensing Optician to identify any technical requirements:

Frame: size, shape, fit.

Lenses: Form, varifocal types: corridor depth, width progression.

1. This process does not need to make anyone look inferior.
2. Peter will openly admit to patients he knows little about dispensing and welcomes the input
3. The patient will not think less of you or the service if this is done with dignity and respect from both professionals.
 - a. If frames already chosen may not be the best the Dispensing Optician must give 'wiggle' room. *'Yes that frame looks great but perhaps a deeper one may be better in this case'.*



FACT SHEET

DISPENSING INTRODUCTION: MISSION STATEMENT

Before we start we feel it is very important to explain our customized approach to dispensing ensuring you get what you want in style and lenses and it fulfils your lifestyle requirements.

LIFESTYLE: Let me first confirm what (SPECIFIC OPTOMETRIST) has explained to me about your lifestyle needs. This is important, we could give you optically perfect glasses but if they do not fulfil lifestyle needs they are less than adequate. So I will reiterate the conclusions (SPECIFIC OPTOMETRIST) explained to me. Once I am sure I understand your needs we can talk specifics.

THEN: (Dispensing) prior to looking at specific frames and lenses we feel it is important to ensure we can supply what you need and value. We have no right to dictate what you may value; our role is to ensure you have the fullest choice. We are really lucky here because we are not constrained by big business policy; this allows us to offer virtually anything you may want. We stock the largest range

Our permanent commitment is a second pair half price. This is not a marketing ploy and applies to our entire range not just a selected or discontinued range. For example complete glasses (frame and lenses) start at £35; if you want the second pair it would be half price (£17.50) totalling £52.50 – however the choice of the second pair is yours, rather than being forced to have it whether you want it or not. Varifocal lenses have the same issue. Ours start from £55 complete with a frame but we need to explain the benefits of different types before we decide which might best suit your lifestyle needs.

If you don't have any set ideas I suggest we choose selection from throughout the range and see where we head. You guide me as to what you may value.