

Disciplined Focus

From the Cockpit to the Coral Reef, Orthopedic surgeon Dr. William A. Leone relies on the same disciplined focus that fuels his adventures to restore mobility for patients worldwide.

Patients see William A. Leone, M.D., founder of The Leone Center for Orthopedic Care at Holy Cross Health in Fort Lauderdale, as the physician they trust to eliminate their hip or knee pain and help them return to an active lifestyle.

What they may not see is that the meticulous surgeon in the operating room also leads a life full of adventure. Outside the hospital, Dr. Leone is a commercial pilot, avid scuba diver, and inventor. For decades, he has pursued his passions with curiosity and zest. This love of movement and exploration shapes his work. He helps patients regain freedom to move, explore, and experience life without limitation.

Dr. Leone, a Lighthouse Point resident for over 25 years, explains that his pursuits, whether soaring 10,000 feet in the air, diving 60 feet below the ocean's surface, or making critical decisions in the operating room, all share a need for focus, precision, and composure under pressure.

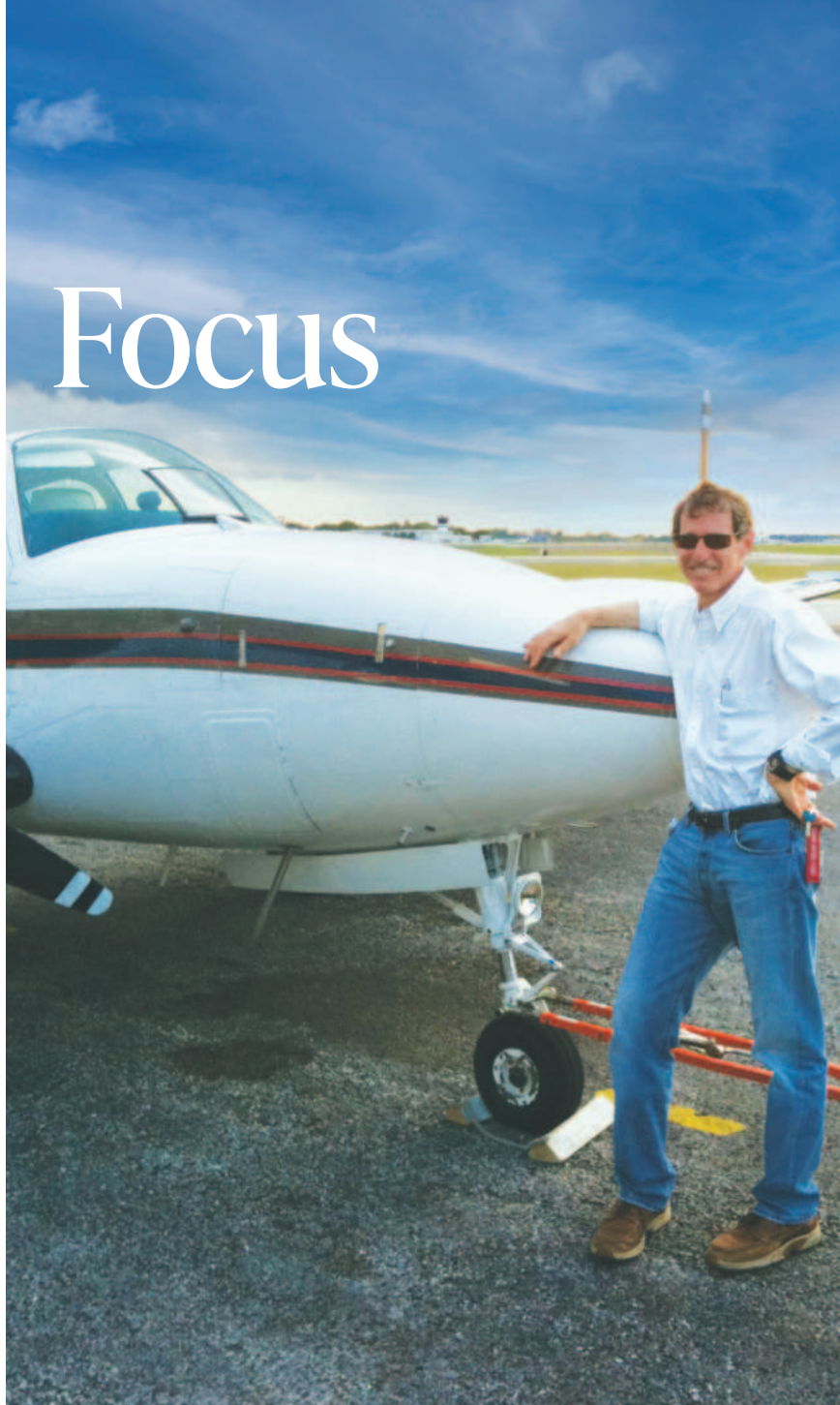
Some physicians celebrate finishing medical school by buying a house or a luxury car. Dr. Leone bought an airplane. "It wasn't practical," he admits with a laugh. "I had a car with 152,000 miles on it, but I had always wanted to be a pilot."

He eventually earned an instrument and commercial pilot's rating and still sees parallels between flying and medicine.

"Flying is a lot like surgery," he says. "You have to be completely present in the moment, while constantly planning the next step and being ready to respond to the unexpected."

Growing up in Miami, the ocean was his second home and his "happy place." Dr. Leone earned his scuba certification at just 13 and spent countless hours diving in Biscayne Bay and the Keys. Today, he continues to enjoy scuba diving the beautiful reefs off our beaches. "I also love the art and freedom of free diving, which uses only a snorkel to breathe. Diving is wonderfully tranquil," he says. "You get to enter a magical three-dimensional environment and leave no footprint behind."

Whether it is enjoying the beauty of flying high above the earth



or diving deep below the surface, Dr. Leone sees a common thread. "They're both three-dimensional," he explains. "You're moving in multiple planes. You're constantly adjusting your perspective and understanding how everything relates to everything else."

That sense of perspective, gained from his diverse experiences, helps shape his approach to medicine.

A CALLING IN ORTHOPEDICS

Dr. Leone always knew he wanted to follow in his father's footsteps and become a physician. "It fits my personality," he says. "What comes naturally to me is communicating with people, and creating with my hands, this too is three dimensional and dynamic."

Although he once considered plastic or hand surgery, he ultimately found his calling as an orthopedic surgeon who replaces hips and knees. "It's so gratifying when a patient shares that their pain disappeared almost immediately after surgery and that



EVOLVING APPROACHES AND ENDURING VALUES

After more than three decades in practice, he has witnessed and participated in a remarkable evolution in hip and knee replacement surgery. “I see patients getting well faster and easier than ever before and returning to an active lifestyle.” This has occurred for several reasons.

Combining computer navigation and robotics, which he routinely uses, has made surgery more precise and reproducible. Refining surgical techniques that are less invasive and less traumatic has led to a more predictable, faster recovery. And modifying post-operative pain protocols and rehabilitation has also had a wonderful positive effect, resulting in a faster and more confident recovery.

While advanced technologies and protocols matter, caring for someone is ultimately a human endeavor built on trust. As Dr. Leone explains, “I conduct thorough physical exams, review X-rays and other images, and engage in genuine discussions. In my experience, this approach leads

not only to the best possible results but also to the most positive experience. This is my goal.”

As a result of his patient-focused approach, his practice has grown into a “destination practice,” caring for folks from his neighborhood and from throughout the United States and the world.

For Dr. Leone, whether flying a plane, diving beneath the ocean or performing surgery, the philosophy remains the same. “Whether in the O.R. or not, I strive for balance, precision and being present in the moment,” he says. “I enjoy challenging myself and perfecting my skills. I love caring for people and watching them get well.”

And ultimately, he says, life is about something even greater. “It’s about opening your heart, making it bigger and helping the people you’re fortunate enough to meet, whether they’re patients or not.” ✪

they no longer limp. And they thank you from their heart.”

A recognized orthopedic expert in his field, he has operated on thousands of patients with hip and knee conditions from around the world.

“People come to me feeling broken and believing their quality of life is gone,” he says. “I’m able to relieve their pain and regain their mobility and independence. It is truly a privilege.”

Early in his career, he built a reputation for caring for patients whom other surgeons turned down. “I built my practice by taking cases nobody else wanted or felt comfortable doing,” he says. However, in 2009, Dr. Leone chose to change his practice. “At that time, I was seeing more patients and spending less time with each. I was running faster and faster. It’s not how I wanted to care for people.”