

The Bigger Picture

Dentists have varying levels of expertise based on their passion to learn which drives their education and training after dental school. My level of training includes over 3,000 hours of post-graduate education. Therefore, I now see dentistry from a far different viewpoint than I did right after graduation - similar to what one might see at various heights while climbing a mountain. I'll never quit climbing the mountain, but from my current level of ascent I can see more of "The Bigger Picture" when diagnosing and treating my patients than I did after dental school and earlier in my career.

The uniqueness of our Dental Wellness Center lies in its model of health developed through extensive research of healthy oral systems which includes the muscles, ligaments, joints, gums, and yes – the teeth. Our patients are taken through a co-discovery process to assess the underlying cause(s) of their problems, as they are able to compare their oral system to that of the model. This model of health is in contrast to customary dentistry which basically offers repair and replacement of teeth, cosmetic enhancements and teeth cleanings. Customary dentistry, in treating symptoms without an understanding of the underlying causes may continue, or even worsen the health of the oral system. Following are a few examples:

- Repairing a broken tooth without assessing the true underlying cause of the breakage
- Cleaning teeth, deep scaling and gum surgery done without oral biofilm assessment to discover whether there is a systemic component involved - which is the case more often than not. For instance, a person with diabetes, prediabetes or a high cholesterol level cannot afford to have bleeding, inflamed gums as the condition is a factor in the gum problem and the gum problem makes the condition worse – a "closed loop." (See Scotsdale Project*)
- A bite that is not in synch with the jaw joints (TMJ's) can cause headaches, neck aches, vertigo, ringing in the ears and worn teeth. As indicated above, treating the teeth without diagnosing and correcting the misalignment first could worsen the problem. See "Bioesthetics, Oral Beauty and Function"

An important aspect in the co-discovery process is the attitude of the patient. Some desire fine, comprehensive care, but are fearful due to previous unpleasant experiences. Some only want a quick fix, without an interest in assessing their complete oral health. Others have been on a long search for a dentist who will consider their uniqueness, both dentally and on a personal level. I prefer working with patients who place a high value on optimum health and who want a dentist that shares this value. I have found that it is difficult to provide meaningful, long lasting dental health care services to someone whose level of interest in their health is less than mine.

Entering our Dental Wellness Center's family of patients is a process that begins with us getting to know one another to discover whether there is a match. If there is, we then collect the necessary data for a true look at "The Bigger Picture" and then developing a thorough diagnosis followed by preventive and treatment solutions to fit within their unique situation - for a lifetime of dental health.

*https://www.caseyhein.com/wpcontent/uploads/2012/09/REPORT_OF_THE_INDEPENDENT_PANEI_OF_EXBLUEPERTS_OF_THE_SCOTTSDALE_PROJECT1.pdf