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# Striving For Perfection & Achieving Excellence



# The Growth Mindset



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**A**s we start planning for the first quarter of 2019, we realize how important growth is to the business. Carol Dweck, the theorist behind 'growth mindset' has identified five key themes to help consider how our mindset can either be our weakness or our strength:

## 1. Challenges

Challenges are typically avoided by fixed mindset individuals who strive to appear intelligent at all times and want to avoid risks. Those with a growth mindset, on the other hand, will embrace challenges and see them as an opportunity to learn.

## 2. Obstacles

Every business faces obstacles at times, and the fixed mindset individual may see these obstacles as a reason to give up on their plans, thinking that they cannot be overcome. 'Success consists of going from failure to failure with lots of enthusiasm' – Sir Winston Churchill once said.

## 3. Effort

As practice owners we know that a huge effort from our team goes into running the business. Their attitude towards this effort can greatly affect how much is applied.

Encouraging your team and telling them that their efforts will be rewarded rather than ignored can help the practice grow. 'When you see success as a journey you are less likely to think you have arrived,' – Sir Alex Ferguson once said.

## 4. Criticism

Criticism can be an opportunity to learn and grow, as growth mindset would encourage. Many fixed mindset individuals see criticism as negative and ignore comments.



Teaching your practice members to see criticism as an opportunity to learn and to reach their potential can enable your team to reach new levels of success.

## Success of others

The success of others can be an opportunity to feel that our success is not worthy at times, but the growth mindset recognises this as an opening to move to the next level and grow.

Perhaps a new practice opens around the corner, which seems to be very busy. Consider what they are doing to attract new patients. Perhaps they are using online booking or have a great introductory package price for new patients. Is there anything you can learn from them to advance your practice and see this as a positive?

We've seen how the growth mindset can help you to grow personally. Now take time to share the concept with your practice. Help them see that, with the view you adopt of yourself, you profoundly affect the way you lead your life and thus your business.

My perspective in business and life has always been that the glass is always half full.

# Cannabis in the Dental Clinic

**A**s oral health care professionals, dentists must be aware of the oral manifestations of disease that may arise from the use of medical-grade marijuana. The inhaled form of cannabis poses a risk to the patient's respiratory tissues and may lead to various conditions, including hyposalivation and xerostomia.

Dentists will also need to be mindful of the psychoactive reactions that patients using cannabis might experience. As well, there are potential drug interactions with benzodiazepines or antihistamines that may occur with the use of this substance. Because cannabinoids are organic matter and contain active ingredients, it is challenging to know the perfect ratio of cannabinoids as the potency may vary from dose to dose and batch to batch and as a result, make it difficult to ascertain the drug interactions which may occur.

A number of studies have suggested a direct relationship between cannabis use and periodontal disease.

Recent studies have tested the relationship between periodontitis and frequent cannabis use and adjusted for confounding factors such as cigarette smoking, alcohol use, social status and other health issues. Significantly higher rates of periodontitis were observed among the frequent users compared to non-users, with significantly higher numbers of sites with high pocket depths ( $\geq 4\text{mm}$ ) and attachment loss.

Further, periodontitis may occur at an earlier age in marijuana users than the general population with chronic periodontitis. A study of adolescents in Chile, however, found no association between regular use of cannabis and periodontal disease, but it may be expected that long-term use would result in periodontal disease later in life. In a histometric experiment, laboratory rats exposed to marijuana smoke had a significant increase in alveolar bone loss due to periodontitis, despite research that has indicated that specific cannabinoids, such as the non-psychoactive cannabidiol, may prevent bone loss.

On the legal implications for dentists, it is important to determine whether the patient is an active user. Active users should not have elective dental treatment. At times, this may be easy to spot; however, where the patient ingests this substance, it may be more difficult to predict. In these cases, dentists will benefit from having an open, non-judgmental conversation with patients to determine whether the patient is using cannabis or not to assess potential risks to the patient's safety.

In terms of prescribing medical grade cannabis, it is likely that the prescription privileges will be restricted to a specific group of dentists and will require additional education and significant regulations around this substance.



# **7 Rules** to make your practice **more profitable**



**R**unning a smooth and profitable dental practice is about planning, focus, standards, and learning to let go.

## **1. Plan, plan, and plan again**

I'm a real believer in having a goal in mind and that means having a plan. Have you got a plan to deal with the contract? What do you want to achieve? Do you want clinical freedom? Do you want to reach a threshold? Are you wanting a secure income? Once you understand what you want from your business you'll be able to set a clear route to achieving it.

Understanding your market and your customer are also key. My staff need to understand where the goal posts are. I often find communicating this, challenging. It's not just about profit. For many of us time is the most important thing; and your plan can work around that; giving more time for family as part of your plan.

## **2. Learn to let go**

Avoid micromanaging your practice. You need to accept that running a practice requires many different skill sets. You need to let go and to trust your team and with good training, staff can work quicker and more efficiently.

## **3. It's only business**

Many dentists prefer not to see their practices as a business. This is a mistake. The good news is that you don't need to have an MBA to run a successful and profitable dental practice. A one- or two-day course, or an evening class at a local college is a good starting point.

## **4. Diversification, it's not all about the profit**

An increasing number of dental surgeries offer nonsurgical aesthetic procedures, or even services such as podiatry.

Diversification is not so much about profit as it is about turnover. It can help with cash flow. Patients who need extractions might want teeth whitening, and in turn, pre-emptively need a dental check-up.

## **5. Taking stock**

Practices can spend money unnecessarily when they're not organised, especially when it comes to consumables. There are so many other variables such as late patients, dentists having to stand in for colleagues, and of course that temptation to open a new pack of something when you can't find what you need. Last in time or systematic ordering will help you taking control of consumables.

## **6. Never forget the patient journey**

The patient journey should never be far from your thoughts. The time spent waiting for an appointment is one of the biggest patient gripes. You have to come up with a constructive way to use the time they spend waiting for their appointment or for filling an updated medical history. Encourage your team to talk with patients to build long term relationships for the practice.

## **7. Remember why you love what you do**

There are many challenges to owning your own practice, but the rewards will always outweigh these challenges. Sometimes you just need to remind yourself of exactly why it and what you want to gain from it. Surround yourself with people that can help you and your business grow. Do what you love and it will not feel like work.



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