

# Connecting Emotionally with the Established Patient:

## Start of the Appointment

There are three distinct and important times to connect emotionally with your patient during a treatment visit. These three are the start, the middle and the end of the appointment.

Yes, it seems so obvious and yet, the following simple method of ensuring emotional connection is ignored *in part* in almost all appointments. Ouch!

It falls into the same category as asking for referrals: “I know I need to do this, but I just forgot.” So listen up: Do It. There is an ancillary benefit of great importance: *you will feel* more satisfaction and joy in practice. Who else wants to feel even more satisfaction ~~from being a~~ dentist?

Do the following three steps and your patient will feel better about you... and the appointment... and be more appreciative of you... and be more likely to refer.

**Remember your patient remembers what they feel experientially.**

Now create the experience you want them to have.

This first step is the beginning of the visit with you. You should greet them, be friendly and warm. Spend a approximately **1 minute re-creating the relationship** by asking about her, her work, her family, or her life in general. If appropriate, disclose how your life, family, etc. are going too. Self-disclosure is part of being authentic. Authenticity leads to trust. Trust leads to acceptance of your recommendations for care.

Make some eye contact, longer with a woman than a man. Then tell her what you will be doing, what to expect including any challenges that you will face that day, how long you expect it to take and any likely situations that could happen that could affect the treatment. Answer any questions she may have briefly. (These should be few, if any.) Ask for permission to start treatment.

Remember to *display the care in your heart and knowledge in your mind*. It is perfectly ok to describe the functional and technical advantages of the service you are about to provide. This knowledge helps to eliminate the fear of the unknown and reassure her that you will be taking care of her. Speak to the benefits of treatment and advantages of how *you* provide the care.

Truthfully, this step is part of building the brand called you. This is what the patient is paying you for. The brand called you is what differentiates you from every other choice she had when picking a dentist.

Don't be too serious. Just **connect emotionally** with your patient if you do nothing else at this point.

The middle and ending of the appointment are the parts of the appointment that continue the emotional connection so carefully crafted at the start of the appointment. Done well and the satisfaction of your patient rockets to new levels. More on these in another weekly fax another day.