


BRYSON'S BITS



I am so excited to help kick off our very first issue of the IACA Newsletter. The IACA Newsletter allows us to have better and more frequent communication with our members. Important information and updates on our upcoming annual sessions will appear in every issue. We will be able to highlight and focus on the varied and distinguished speakers that will be presenting at our conferences as well as unique technique articles and interviews with our IACA members. One of the many benefits of being a member of the IACA is the atmosphere of sharing and helping to motivate and empower fellow members.

The newsletter will continue to evolve and change with your feedback. The IACA Board and I always welcome your thoughts as to how we can improve the IACA. We are looking forward to our best meeting ever July 19-21 in Chicago. I want to thank Dan Jenkins, our editor, for all of his hard work on this project. Dan brings a wealth of experience to the editor's position. – **Randy Bryson, DMD**

NOTES FROM YOUR EDITOR

Dan Jenkins D.D.S., FICD,
American Association of Dental Editors, Certified Dental Editor

What's in it For You?

This is the first edition of the Newsletter of the International Association of Comprehensive Aesthetics. We hope in the publication of this newsletter we can provide you with yet another benefit of being a member of this forward thinking organization. If you have any ideas for this publication or wish to participate in its production please let us know. Members are invited to submit articles and cases to the IACA Newsletter for sharing through publication. That actually is a benefit of membership!

Membership in any organization should have benefits. The communication or sharing of ideas within a profession is a benefit that our dental forefathers did not have as readily as we have today. With modern technology such as the Internet, we are now able to send and receive information to each other within minutes from around the world in our international organization instead of taking weeks or months. We hope to publish new information as we find it on the IACA website. Of course the IACA blog provides a site for members to exchange ideas with each other.

When it comes to emphasizing the benefits of membership in the IACA we are really preaching to the choir here if you are reading this. You have wisely chosen to join the IACA. However, with joining comes a responsibility. Participation and leadership are responsibilities also. As members we have a responsibility to hold a standard up for others to wish to attain. We must lead by example. Continual learning and openness to new ideas is how we can keep the standard elevated. Our organization is not one that is exclusive to dentists or even just to dentistry related professionals. The IACA is also open to other professionals such as ENT's, Chiropractors, Neurologists, and Plastic Surgeons who are still involved in some of the healing methods that are used in various dental healing treatments. This may include reconstruction. But, it also can include treatments for head and neck pain utilizing various treatment philosophies.

While the communication over the Internet is very useful for acquiring new knowledge there is still no substitute for physically getting together with your fellow clinicians and support teams. While a convention is very important to enable us to obtain more knowledge, it is also important to give us all support in our treatment philosophies. With the reassurance of colleagues that what we are doing actually works we can practice our profession of healing and pain relief with more confidence. We do not need to feel like a bunch of quacks. With going to the Chicago meeting you will see and hear from the lectures the success stories and even some failure stories. From the failure stories we learn to avoid the same pitfalls. From the success stories we are able to give our patients hope.

We hope that all of you, along with many of your friends are able to come to the Chicago meeting. While there are many historic places and places of learning around Chicago you will find the best place for comprehensive learning of cosmetic dentistry will be at the IACA annual meeting.

WEBINAR SERIES

FROM GOOD TO GREAT

William G. Dickerson, DDS, LVIM

Wednesday

May 2, 2007 5pm Pacific

Members: Free Non-Members: \$95

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2007 Conference

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*special offers are good through 4/30/2007

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Meet Fellow Member: Dr. Brad

Dr. Brad Durham practices Neuromuscular and Reconstruction Cosmetic Dentistry in Savannah, Georgia. I have heard stories of his unique "niche" practice from other IACA members. I once heard Brad speak about his practice where he screens his patients as to whether they will even be accepted as a patient by him and provides an appreciated top of the line cosmetic reconstruction service. I thought it would be interesting to ask him some questions. He kindly agreed to this interview.

Brad thanks for doing this interview; I know you are busy and the IACA appreciates your agreeing to help other members of the IACA to know more about you and your journey.

IACA: I know in your office your production is many times more than the average general dentist in the U.S.A. yet you maintain a small team with a relaxed schedule. What were the circumstances that made you decide to go on the journey of creating such a unique practice?

Brad: For me, average has never been enough. Taking courses at the Las Vegas Institute for Advanced Dental Studies provided me with the clinical skills and motivation to develop a unique practice, *the niche*. The niche practice model allows the individual dentist to express his own individuality in his practice. When you think about it, it is pretty inefficient to learn "niche" techniques, (cosmetic and neuromuscular services), and expect to provide much of these type of services in a random general practice setting. I tried it and it was frustrating. I want to have a practice full of patients who appreciate my services; even demand them. I hate selling dentistry. I would prefer to just present a few options and have them say, "How soon can we get started!"

IACA: Have you experienced jealousies from other dentists because of how you went about creating this type of practice?

Brad: Sure! Dentists tend to get nervous and jealous when they see the bar getting raised. You get the objections in different forms, but at the root core it is either jealousy or an unwillingness to embrace change.

IACA: How did you deal with their jealousies?

Brad: Sometimes it is hard, but that is the price you pay to be a leader. Omer Read told me that you are always able to recognize the pioneer, as he is the one with the arrows in his back. I have had my fair share. But in the end, the pioneer always wins, and the average Joes get left in the dust. Do I sound jaded, sure, but that comes with the experience of having a large collection of arrows with my blood type on them! Usually, I smile and say to myself that one day they will understand, but it will be too late for them as the train will have already have left the station without them.

IACA: Since you seemed to have developed your own system in the midst of the traditional general practice models around you; what would you have done differently that you now think would have made things easier to build your niche type of practice?

Brad: I would have done it faster and looked harder for a model to implement. It is much easier to copy or modify what already exists. Omer Reed helped me immensely, but I could have listened closer to his advice.

IACA: That is understandable that building an ideal practice would require primarily working with patients who are looking for what you have to provide. Of course now you teach a course on "Creating the Niche Practice". I'm sure that is helping more dentists accomplish a niche practice too. Have you found that your students have been able to accomplish what you have?

Brad: Teaching courses has been a real eye opener. Most courses I go to are simple cheerleading sessions. In other words, after a few weeks everything is back to normal. Ours is all meat and potatoes, and because of that many dentists come to the course, get convicted, and go home and really make some substantial and positive changes in their practice. It takes real guts but once they see that it can be done, they go for it.

IACA: Could you share an example?

Brad: We have been working with one practice for several years. They have gone from a staff of 30 in an office of approx 14,000 square feet, (huge overhead), to a smaller team of eight in a new office of 3500 square feet. During the transition the practice income increased slightly. However, their overhead dropped significantly while their net income rose significantly. Personal stress has greatly improved and they now have control of their practice. Was it easy for them? No! But neither was the "bigger is better" model they left behind. We have hundreds of happy participants who now see a new way to practice and are now doing the dentistry they have always wanted to do.

IACA: That is so encouraging to hear that this concept is something that other dentists who really want to make a change in their practices can do. Is there anything that you are still planning on implementing in your practice in the future?

Brad: Presently I am taking on a partner. His role is to bring on new services, expand our hours slightly, but keep the practice philosophy alive. I am excited to be able to reinvent ourselves yet again, and also for the patients and the practice to benefit from it.

IACA: So you're going to transition to another new concept within your own already superb practice? Would you say the "Niche" course is equally effective for a "start up" niche practice as it is for a "transition" practice?

Brad: The course is equally effective for both. There are faster results with a transition practice, but for the new practice it would allow a faster start up with fewer mistakes to correct later on in the transition.

IACA: What course of action would you recommend for dentists to take regarding management courses or to best implement your management style?

Brad: Get the basics covered with basic systems and team development. Then go on to the Niche course. If a practice is fairly progressive already, then start with the Niche at the beginning. We have seen it done both ways effectively.

IACA: What would you think of the idea of selling one's high GP practice and starting over with a new team and run them through team building courses while starting up the new office?

Brad: I think it is better to transition what you have. If it is worth selling, it is worth more to keep and transition.

IACA: With all of your success, why do you feel it is important for you to belong to and participate with the IACA?

Brad: I am not sure I am all that successful, but thanks for the compliment. My strengths are not in reinventing the wheel, but to take existing concepts and ideas and simply make the wheel better. I do not know if it is a blessing or a curse, but I see things differently than most, and I simply must be around stimulating people. The IACA simply has the best dentistry has to offer in both leadership and raw talent. I can go to one meeting and gather enough ideas to keep me going for an entire year. Without this stimulation I could be just another average Joe dentist working for the insurance companies - what a waste! And, I have not even mentioned the technical benefits. Any dentist who aspires to be even the least bit exceptional can't afford to not be a member!

It is our hope that this information will encourage you to have the hope and develop your plan to achieve your practice goals and dreams. If you wish to look at Brad's web site or contact him the site is: www.braddurhamdmd.com or www.nichepractice.com