

# DENTITE

JUL'24



ASHLEY FAGAN, DDS

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A LUXURIOUS TWIST  
ON DENTISTRY

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The Original Reusable  
Toothpick  
Le cure-dent réutilisable  
Original

stimmie

are  
succio-dentaires



# Table Of CONTENTS

07 EDITOR'S LETTER

08 CONTRIBUTORS

10 THE IMPERATIVE OF INTEGRATING  
MEDICAL AND DENTAL CARE:  
SYNERGISTIC CARE, THE FUTURE OF  
HEALTH THROUGH MEDICAL-  
DENTAL INTEGRATION.

Dentistry is already integrated with medicine in some regions of Canada and the United States. However, despite these advancements, the division between medicine and dentistry remains deeply rooted, necessitating enhanced collaboration, particularly for patients with oral health comorbidities such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, rheumatologic conditions and others. We cannot continue to operate as an isolated branch of healthcare. A more collaborative approach to patient treatment is essential.

14 HOLD YOUR HORSES:  
IMPORTANT ASPECTS TO  
CONSIDER BEFORE TAKING A  
NON-CLINICAL ROLE

Ready to transition from clinical to non-clinical? Good. The non-clinical world will be intimidating at first, but it's full of new and exciting possibilities. You just have to be prepared when the opportunity arises. Let's dive into what you should keep in mind as you start this new adventure.

18 MASTERING PRODUCTIVITY AS A  
DENTAL PROFESSIONAL: LESSONS OF  
FORMING GOOD HABITS FROM ATOMIC  
HABITS BY JAMES CLEAR

In this fast-paced world, mastering productivity and maintaining control over your daily tasks can feel like a daunting challenge. The key to overcoming this challenge lies in the power of creating and sustaining good habits. Drawing on the principles from James Clear's bestselling book, Atomic Habits, let's explore how forming positive habits can lead to a more productive and controlled professional life.

22 WOMEN SHAPING DENTISTRY  
TOMORROW: A DOCUMENTARY  
WORTH WATCHING

The documentary Women Shaping Dentistry Tomorrow offers an inspiring look into the lives and careers of remarkable women in the field of dentistry. At its heart is the story of dentist Sharon Parsons, whose journey from a small town in Ohio to becoming a trailblazer in her profession is quite simply inspiring and empowering.



56 THE LINK BETWEEN VITAMIN  
D DEFICIENCY AND ORAL  
HEALTH

As children, we've all been told to drink our milk to build strong bones and teeth. We later learn that it's the calcium in milk that's so essential, making calcium the go-to mineral for healthy bones and teeth. However, we often overlook the other vital nutrients necessary for bone and dental health, one of which is vitamin D.

# Table Of CONTENTS



30

## **THE POWER OF NETWORKING: STRATEGIES FOR DENTAL PROFESSIONALS**

Networking is essential for any dental professional looking to grow their practice, build their personal brand, or expand their business. For young professionals, connecting with peers, mentors, and industry leaders can be the key to unlocking new opportunities and staying ahead in a competitive field.

34

## **COMPANY SPOTLIGHT: THE SMILE ZONE**

The inception of TheSmileZone is rooted in a deep passion for dentistry and a profound desire to help others. The journey began years ago when the founder was part of another Dental Outreach Team. The experience was not only fulfilling but also therapeutic. Their passion for dentistry has always been driven by a desire to make a difference in people's lives.

40

## **THE POWER OF PERSONAL BRANDING IN THE DENTAL INDUSTRY**

In the ever-evolving world of dentistry, personal branding is no longer a mere option; it's a necessity. Whether you are a practice owner, a dental supplier, or a DSO executive, establishing a strong personal brand can significantly impact your career and business growth. But what does personal branding entail, and why is it so vital in the dental industry?

# Table Of CONTENTS



## 44 COVER FEATURE: DR. ASHLEY FAGAN

Dr. Fagan's story is one of passion, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to transforming the dental experience. From a young age, her love for math, science, and helping others laid the foundation for a career that seamlessly blends expertise with empathy. Raised in a family dedicated to education and service, Dr. Fagan was inspired by her father's military and dental background. This upbringing instilled in her a discipline and drive to make a meaningful impact, which she found in the field of dentistry.



## EDITOR'S LETTER

As we transition into the summer months, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who supported our last issue. Your enthusiasm and engagement are what make this journey so rewarding. Each month, we strive to bring you content that not only informs but also inspires you to reach new heights in your dental career.

This July issue marks an exciting phase in our shared journey—a theme centered around transitioning into new phases of your career as a dental professional. Whether you're just starting, seeking to expand your network, or contemplating a shift into non-clinical roles, this issue has something for you.

Our articles delve into the importance of networking, building a personal brand, and exploring opportunities beyond traditional clinical roles. We also emphasize the power of organization as a tool for success in any phase of your career.

I'm particularly thrilled to spotlight The SmileZone, a remarkable organization bringing smiles to underserved communities. Their work exemplifies the impact that dedication and passion can have in making a difference in the world.

Our cover feature is on the extraordinary Dr. Ashley Fagan, who has redefined the dental experience with a touch of luxury. Dr. Fagan's story is one of passion, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. From her early love of math and science to her upbringing in a family devoted to education and service, she has seamlessly blended expertise with empathy to transform the field of dentistry.

As you read through this issue, I hope you find inspiration in the stories and insights shared. Whether you are looking to pivot, grow, or simply refine your path, remember that your journey is uniquely yours, and the possibilities are limitless.

Thank you for being part of the Dente community. I look forward to continuing this journey with you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Adams".

## ARTICLE CONTRIBUTORS



**Andrea Lorena Basualdo  
Allende**

DDS, Quality Healthcare,  
MBA Public Health, Digital  
Health



**Sarah Ruberg**  
*Chief Executive Officer  
Our Thrive Tribe*



**Kiara Stent**  
Founder  
Coligro Network



**Ellie Halabian**  
CREATOR AND PODCAST  
HOST | TEETH MATTER



**Rhodene Leydekkers**  
*Registered Dietitian (SA)*



**Allison Norris**  
Founder and CEO of  
Dentele Group, LLC



Impact on Performance: The study highlighted that poor oral health could impair athletic performance due to factors such as pain, systemic inflammation, and a reduction in self-confidence and quality of life. Athletes often have poor oral health due to frequent carbohydrate intake, reduced immune function from intensive training, and lack of awareness about the importance of oral health ([UCL](#)).



By Andrea Lorena Basualdo Allende, DDS



The Imperative of Integrating Medical and  
Dental Care: Synergistic Care, The Future  
of Health through Medical-Dental  
Integration.

Dentistry is already integrated with medicine in some regions of Canada and the United States. However, despite these advancements, the division between medicine and dentistry remains deeply rooted, necessitating enhanced collaboration, particularly for patients with oral health comorbidities such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, rheumatologic conditions, and others. We cannot continue to operate as an isolated branch of healthcare. A more collaborative approach to patient treatment is essential.<sup>7,8</sup>

The integration of medical and dental care within dental settings offers unique opportunities to bridge gaps in medical care, including the provision of immunizations and laboratory tests, compared to traditional non-integrated settings. The Medical-Dental Integration (MDI) model emphasizes coordinated communication between oral and systemic health environments, ensuring a patient's entire holistic care. Through systematic and sustained collaboration, dental and medical professionals can identify disease precursors and underlying conditions, adhering to a patient-centered model of care. MDI-focused clinics have developed the capacity to diagnose and refer for chronic disease management, aiding vulnerable populations, including the elderly, children, and patients with non-communicable diseases.<sup>1,2</sup>

Systemic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and dementia are associated with poor oral health outcomes, highlighting the bi-directional relationship between systemic and oral health. Poor oral health can shed light on eating disorders and nutritional intake, especially in teenagers and children in older adults, tooth loss is linked to cognitive decline, socialization issues, mental health problems, and a decreased quality of life. Also, a good oral examination can give a lot of signs of drug abuse or sexual abuse, in children.<sup>1,2,12,13</sup>

Effective medical-dental integration requires interprofessional training and practice on both sides. Emerging trends such as telehealth and teledentistry can assist in treating complex patients and closing the referral loop. However, the main barriers to MDI include the integration of Electronic Health Records (EHR) and resistance in the organizational culture.<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>

One MDI model is the co-location model, where dental services are physically co-located with medical services. This model improves access to oral health care and dental referrals while increasing oral health education and preventive procedures. For example, periodontal interventions in individuals with type 2 diabetes are associated with lower overall healthcare costs and type 2 diabetes-related medical costs.<sup>2</sup>

Value-based care models are essential to MDI implementation. Dental settings can promote preventive health and effectively close care gaps among older adults, providing a relatively low-cost way to improve health outcomes for this population. Preventive oral health programs have been shown to be cost-effective, reducing additional payments for hospital visits related to systemic health conditions, that is why, integrating periodontal disease surveillance with systemic health monitoring is crucial.<sup>1,3,4</sup>



Integrating oral health care and primary care is a promising strategy to enhance social justice, supported by evidence of the synergistic relationship between oral health and general health. Integrating health screenings for chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, obesity, and tobacco usage into dental visits can significantly benefit patients and the overall healthcare system.<sup>5,6,9</sup>

Oral cancer risk assessment tools are available, with electronic versions utilized in dental schools. Systematic risk screening approaches using these tools are likely underutilized, limiting the ability to prevent oral and oropharyngeal cancers. Addressing tobacco use, alcohol/substance use, and HPV vaccination status through quality measures can advance oral/oropharyngeal cancer prevention and can be in the hands of a dentist to help in Public Health outcomes.<sup>10</sup>

There are around 36 contact points between medical and dental care that can be valuable for patient care or research. <sup>11</sup> Integrating medical and dental care, supported by informatics and quality tracking, delivers high-quality care at reduced costs, improving healthcare outcomes, patient safety, and satisfaction is a must. Dentistry must move beyond traditional isolation and embrace a collaborative approach with medicine to benefit patients and the healthcare system, in a holistic way.





**Hold Your Horses:  
Important Aspects to  
Consider Before Taking a  
Non-Clinical Role**

**By Allison Norris**

Ready to transition from clinical to non-clinical? Good. The non-clinical world will be intimidating at first, but it's full of new and exciting possibilities. You just have to be prepared when the opportunity arises. Let's dive into what you should keep in mind as you start this new adventure.

### **Do Your Homework**

Before you sign on the dotted line to accept a new position, it's important to dig deep and do some research on the company. Forget their cool website, their branding, and their logo—what's their real story? Research and find out details regarding their reputation, their values and goals, and their company culture. Ask specific questions about their future growth opportunities and have them explain what work-life balance means to them. Reach out to current and former employees for the inside scoop. Does their mission align with your goals and values? If not, it's time to reassess and move on to the next.

### **Set Boundaries**

Starting a new role is a rollercoaster of emotions, but you have to establish clear boundaries from the start. Do you have hard stops about the hours you can work or specific responsibilities that you refuse to do? Don't be afraid to share those details. It's best if you lay it all out on the table during your interviews. Clear expectations now mean much smoother sailing, which will help you steer clear of unnecessary drama in the future. Establishing boundaries is crucial for maintaining a healthy work-life balance and ensuring long-term job satisfaction.

### **Know Your Value**

Getting a new job will make you feel on top of the world, but don't forget your worth. You have to be confident in yourself and recognize the skills and experience you bring to the table. Do not, I repeat, do not settle for a role that undervalues you. Be your own advocate throughout the entire journey. Make sure your efforts are acknowledged. Back-and-forth salary and benefits discussions are common when hiring—your value, however, is not up for negotiation. Understanding your value not only boosts your confidence but also ensures you are compensated fairly for your contributions.

### **Embrace the Change**

Transitioning to a non-clinical role can be a significant shift, and it's essential to embrace the change with an open mind. The skills you've acquired in your clinical career are invaluable and transferable to non-clinical positions. Be ready to adapt and learn new skills that are relevant to your new role. This flexibility will make the transition smoother and help you thrive in your new environment. Embracing change also means being open to new experiences and opportunities that can further your professional growth.

### **Build a Support Network**

Moving into a non-clinical role can sometimes feel isolating, especially if you're used to the camaraderie of a clinical setting. Building a support network is crucial. Connect with colleagues in your new field, join professional organizations, and seek out mentors who can provide guidance and support. Having a strong support system will help you navigate challenges and celebrate successes in your new role. Networking can also open doors to future opportunities and collaborations.

### **Stay Enthusiastic and Eager**

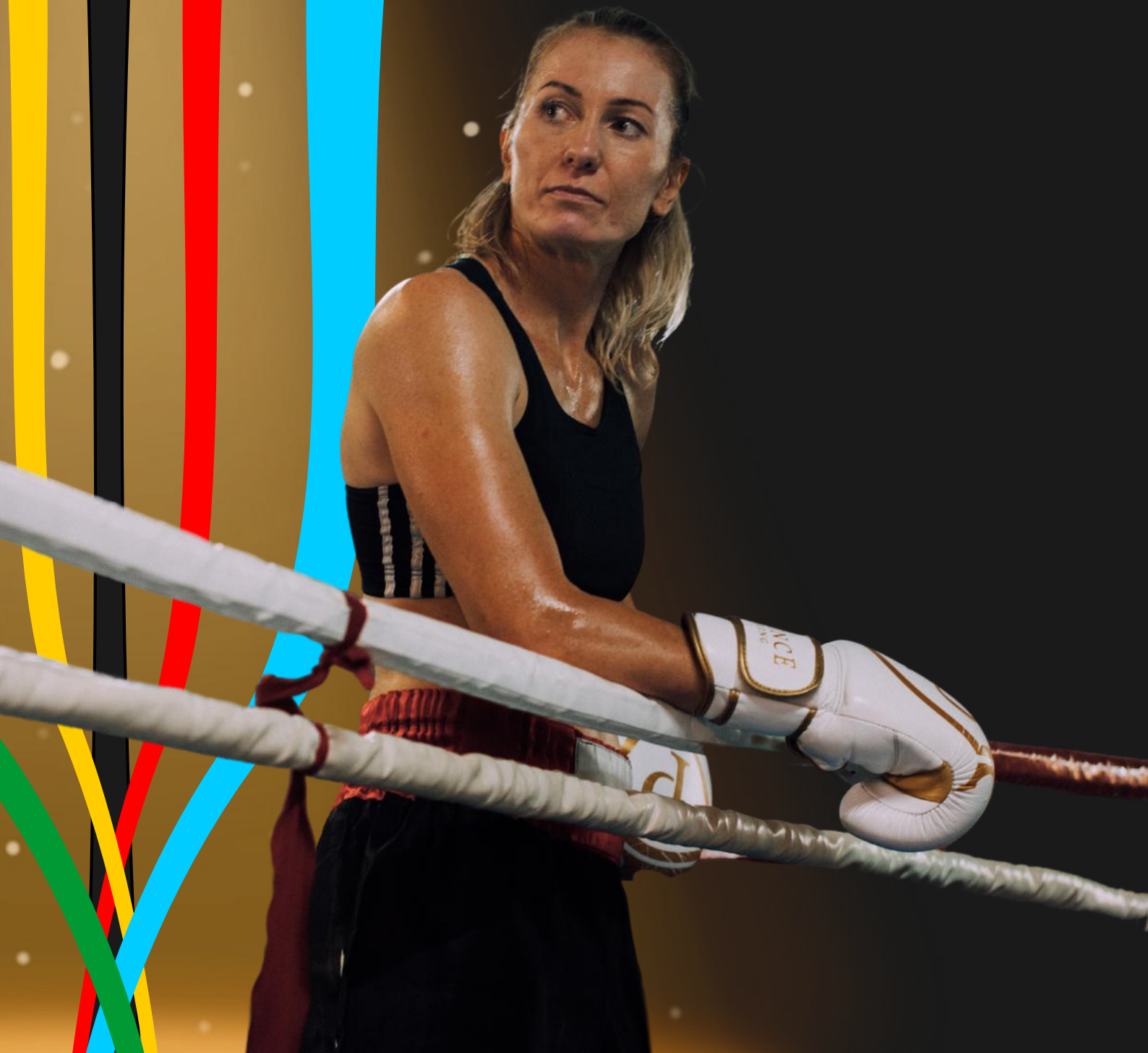
Your enthusiasm and eagerness to succeed in your new career are your greatest assets. Approach each day with a positive attitude and a willingness to learn. This mindset will not only help you excel in your role but also make you a valuable team member. Stay curious, seek feedback, and continuously strive to improve. Your passion and dedication will set you apart and ensure your success in the non-clinical world.



**You are going to kill it in your new career, but you have to be strategic in this life change you're embarking on. Be enthusiastic and eager but keep your eyes wide open. Your non-clinical adventure awaits. Dive right in and stay awesome!**



Athens 2004 and Beijing 2008:  
Similar findings were noted in  
earlier Olympics. During the Athens  
2004 Olympics, athletes also faced  
significant dental issues, and a study  
of dental services at the 2008 Beijing  
Olympics revealed that oral health  
problems were prevalent among  
competitors



Mastering Productivity as A Dental  
Professional: Lessons of forming good habits  
from Atomic Habits by James Clear  
By Ellie Halabian, DDS



In this fast-paced world, mastering productivity and maintaining control over your daily tasks can feel like a daunting challenge. The key to overcoming this challenge lies in the power of creating and sustaining good habits. Drawing on the principles from James Clear's bestselling book, *Atomic Habits*, let's explore how forming positive habits can lead to a more productive and controlled professional life.

### Why Good Habits Matter

Good habits are the foundation of success in any field, and dentistry is no exception. As dental professionals, your day is filled with patient appointments, procedures, paperwork, and continuous learning. Implementing effective habits can streamline these tasks, reduce stress, and enhance your overall productivity.

Clear's principles emphasize that habits are the compound interest of self-improvement. Small, consistent actions accumulate over time, leading to significant improvements. For dental professionals, this means that small changes in your daily routine can lead to enhanced efficiency and better patient care.

### The Principles of Habit Formation

1. **Cue:** The trigger that initiates the habit. E.g. For example, setting an alarm as a reminder to review patient notes before appointments.
2. **Craving:** The desire or motivation behind the habit. E.g. A change in mindset is necessary to understand that being well-prepared for appointments reduces stress and increases confidence.
3. **Response:** The actual habit or routine. E.g. In this case, spending 10 minutes each morning reviewing patient notes.
4. **Reward:** The benefit gained from the habit. E.g. Experiencing smoother appointments and more satisfied patients.

By focusing on these principles, you can develop habits that lead to greater control and productivity in your daily professional life.

### Practical Habits for Dental Professionals

1. **Morning Preparation:** Start your day with a brief planning session. Review your schedule, set priorities, and prepare mentally for the day ahead. This habit helps you approach your work with clarity and focus.
2. **Efficient Charting:** Develop a habit of completing patient charts immediately after appointments. This reduces the backlog of paperwork and ensures that your records are accurate and up-to-date.
3. **Continuous Learning:** Dedicate a fixed time each week to stay updated with the latest advancements in dental techniques and technologies. This habit not only keeps you informed but also enhances your professional growth.
4. **Patient Interaction:** Make it a habit to communicate clearly and empathetically with your patients. Building strong patient relationships fosters trust and satisfaction, leading to better treatment outcomes.
5. **Self-Care:** Incorporate habits that promote your well-being. Regular breaks, exercise, and mindfulness practices can help you manage stress and maintain a healthy work-life balance.

### Implementing New Habits

To think we are going to implement a drastic change overnight is very optimistic. Start with small, manageable changes. Instead of overhauling your entire routine, focus on one habit at a time. For example, if you want to improve your morning preparation, begin by spending just five minutes planning your day. Gradually increase this time as the habit becomes ingrained.

...the thing you ask people, Annie, believe me. There are some things you shouldn't ask her. There are some things you just put away at the back of your mind.

...her grandmother said with enormous relief.

...the parents of Brian's friends came to collect their sons.

...while the boys played and pummelled on, tiring themselves out for bedtime. Annie watched her mother and father stand there in the centre of the group, passing a tray of wine and little smoked salmon sandwiches. Dad's head was against Mam's shoulder a lot of the time. Ria knew from the girls at school that parents still want to be with each other and make love and all that, even when they didn't want children. It seemed such an unlikely thing to want to do. Horrible even.

There was much sympathy about the grazed knee, and when she went to bed, Mam came into her room. She sat in Annie's big chair, moving the furry toy animals out of the way.

You've been very quiet all afternoon and evening, Annie. Are those knees all right?

Fine, Mam, don't fuss.

I'm not fussing, I'm just sorry for your poor old knees and your elbow too. Like you would be if I fell.

I know, Mam. Sorry. You weren't fussing, but I'm fine.

And how did it happen?

I was running, I told you.

It's not like you to fall, you're such a graceful girl. When Miken and I were your age we were falling all the time, but you never do. I think it's because your dad calls you a princess now. Decided to behave like one.

Her mother's look was so fond and warm that Annie reached out for her hand. Thanks, Mam, she said, eyes full.

I was so exhausted out there today, Annie, with those children. Honestly they're like young bullocks how bustling and noisy and like children at all. When I think what we can do, always there to have your friends, but that's the difference between us and the you. Would you like a hot drink? You've had a hot drink today.

What do you mean? Annie's eyes were warm.

The fall, it jars the system even at your age.

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Consistency is crucial. Habits are formed through repetition, so commit to your new routine every day. To this end, Tracking your progress can also be motivating. Consider using a habit tracker such as a calendar to monitor your consistency and celebrate your successes. For each day that you perform the task, make an “X” on the calendar. By the end of the week, you should see seven “X’s” and this visual cue serves as encouragement to keep going.

The importance of creating good habits cannot be overstated. By implementing small, positive changes in your daily routine, you can gain more control over your work and significantly boost your productivity. Embrace the principles from James Clear's Atomic Habits, and watch as these small changes lead to substantial improvements in your professional and personal life.

In the words of James Clear, “You do not rise to the level of your goals. You fall to the level of your systems.” By building effective habits, you create a system that supports your success, making you a more efficient, effective, and satisfied dental professional.



# Women Shaping Dentistry Tomorrow: A Documentary Worth Watching

By Carl Demadema, BOHSc

The documentary *Women Shaping Dentistry Tomorrow* offers an inspiring look into the lives and careers of remarkable women in the field of dentistry. At its heart is the story of dentist Sharon Parsons, whose journey from a small town in Ohio to becoming a trailblazer in her profession is quite simply inspiring and empowering.

Parsons' narrative is one of resilience. Growing up in the 1960s, she was surrounded by traditional gender roles, where most women worked as nurses, teachers, or secretaries. Dentistry was not even on her radar until her orthodontist mentioned it, sparking a revelation that shattered her preconceived notions of what women could achieve. Despite facing skepticism and discrimination, Parsons pursued her dream with unwavering resolve.

The documentary captures Parsons' pivotal moments, from her struggles to secure funding for dental school to the challenges she faced as one of the few women in her field highlighting the systemic barriers that women encountered in dentistry, from quotas limiting their admission to the prejudices of their male peers and instructors.

However, Parsons' story is not of victimhood but of triumph. She defied expectations and carved out her place in a male-dominated profession through sheer grit and perseverance. Her journey shines a spotlight on the power of mentorship and community support, as she credits her orthodontist and other female mentors for guiding her along the way.

Parsons' advocacy for women in dentistry extends beyond her career. She recognizes the importance of representation and support networks for aspiring female dentists, acknowledging the challenges they face in a profession still grappling with gender inequality.

The documentary also features other trailblazing women in dentistry, such as Anne Duffy, Hazel Glasper, Sonia Chopra, Katherine Eitel Belt, and Fiona Chambers. Like Parsons', their stories reflect the diversity of experiences and challenges women face in the field, from breaking into male-dominated spaces to overcoming self-doubt and imposter syndrome.

What makes *Women Shaping Dentistry Tomorrow* compelling is its celebration of resilience and triumph in the face of adversity. It's not just a story about dentistry; it's a call to action for viewers to challenge stereotypes, support women in male-dominated fields, and create more inclusive environments where everyone can thrive.

### **The Inspiration Behind the Documentary**

Joanna Scott, the Business Development Director for Studio EightyEight and an advocate for authentic storytelling shares the inspiration behind the documentary. Scott's engagement in numerous conversations, podcasts, and discussions with women who have boldly taken their place at the table and assumed leadership roles left a lasting impression on her. These remarkable individuals, with their unwavering resolve and steadfast determination, inspired Scott to explore why more women are entering the dental profession at unprecedented rates.

Through the creation of the documentary, Scott was profoundly moved by the stories of struggles, obstacles, and mountains that Dr. Sharon Parsons and other women had to overcome to succeed in dentistry and thrive in their professional roles. These women are resilient and a testament to the progress that comes when someone stops to "dig the well" first.

Scott wants viewers to take away from the documentary the understanding that dentistry is hard, full of challenges from the moment you begin your clinical years in school to starting your own practice or practicing professionally in whatever capacity. The profession can feel very isolating, but by bringing everyone together to spotlight these stories, the community can become a catalyst for change.

The response from the dental community has been overwhelmingly positive. The documentary continues to receive messages from women and men who share it with new audiences. The stories of resilience, determination, and triumph have resonated deeply, inspiring viewers to support and champion women in male-dominated fields.

*Women Shaping Dentistry Tomorrow* is a must-watch documentary that offers a compelling glimpse into the lives and careers of extraordinary women in dentistry. Through their stories of resilience, determination, and triumph, viewers are not only entertained but also inspired to support and champion women in male-dominated fields. It's a powerful reminder that diversity and inclusion are not just buzzwords but essential principles for building a better, more equitable world.

These women are not just shaping the profession; they are redefining it, paving the way for future generations of female dentists to follow in their footsteps. Their stories inspire hope and courage, reminding us that with determination and support, anything is possible.

To watch and share the *Women Shaping Dentistry Tomorrow* documentary, or catch the recorded LIVE Watch Party with all the cast members, visit

[s8e8.com/wsdtd](https://s8e8.com/wsdtd)(<https://s8e8.com/wsdtd>).

### **About the Director**

Joanna Scott serves as the Business Development Director for Studio EightyEight, dentistry's story-driven marketing agency. An advocate for authentic storytelling, Joanna is the host of *The Story Project* podcast, a video-driven show putting the spotlight on the incredible stories of women leaders in dentistry. Married to her high school best friend Josh Scott for 27 years and a momma to two teenagers and a mini-golden doodle, Joanna is dedicated to helping grow a dental marketing agency that "speaks human."

Follow Joanna on Instagram: [@joannafscott](https://www.instagram.com/joannafscott) [@studio8e8](https://www.instagram.com/studio8e8)



By Rhodene Leydekkers

## The Link Between Vitamin D Deficiency and Oral Health



As children, we've all been told to drink our milk to build strong bones and teeth. We later learn that it's the calcium in milk that's so essential, making calcium the go-to mineral for healthy bones and teeth. However, we often overlook the other vital nutrients necessary for bone and dental health, one of which is vitamin D. Vitamin D plays a crucial role in bone health and immune function, but its importance also extends to oral health. A deficiency in vitamin D can lead to various dental issues, affecting the overall health of your mouth. This article explores the connection between vitamin D deficiency and oral health problems, highlighting how this vital nutrient supports healthy teeth and gums.

### **Vitamin D in the body**

Vitamin D, often known as the "sunshine vitamin," is produced by the body in response to sunlight exposure and can also be obtained from certain foods and supplements. This fat-soluble vitamin is crucial for several bodily functions. It promotes calcium absorption, maintains adequate serum calcium and phosphate levels for normal bone mineralization, and is essential for bone growth and remodeling. Additionally, vitamin D supports the immune system and even has anti-inflammatory properties.

### **Vitamin D and Oral Health**

It's clear that vitamin D is an important nutrient with numerous functions in the body, but how does it specifically relate to oral health? Here are some key ways vitamin D impacts the health of your teeth and gums:

#### **1. *Tooth Development and Maintenance***

Vitamin D is critical for the development and maintenance of healthy teeth. It helps regulate the levels of calcium and phosphate in the body, which are necessary for forming and maintaining tooth enamel and dentin. A deficiency in vitamin D can lead to underdeveloped or poorly mineralized teeth, making them more susceptible to decay and cavities.

#### **2. *Gum Health***

Vitamin D also plays a role in maintaining healthy gums. As mentioned, Vitamin D has anti-inflammatory properties that can help reduce the risk of gum diseases such as gingivitis and periodontitis. These conditions, if left untreated, can lead to tooth loss and other severe oral health issues. Studies have shown that individuals with adequate vitamin D levels have a lower risk of developing gum disease.

### **3. *Bone Health and Tooth Support***

The jawbone, which supports the teeth, is also affected by vitamin D levels. Adequate vitamin D is necessary for maintaining the density and strength of the jawbone. A deficiency can lead to bone loss, increasing the risk of tooth loss and other dental issues. Osteoporosis, a condition characterized by weak and brittle bones, can also affect the jawbone, leading to loose teeth and other oral health problems.

### **Signs of Vitamin D Deficiency**

People can develop a vitamin D deficiency when their intake consistently falls below recommended levels, their sunlight exposure is limited, their kidneys are unable to convert vitamin D to its active form, or their digestive system inadequately absorbs the nutrient. Recognizing the signs of vitamin D deficiency is vital for preventing its negative impact on the body and oral health.

Some groups might be more at risk for developing a Vitamin D deficiency. These groups include breastfed babies, older adults, people who have limited exposure to the sun, people with a darker skin, and people with conditions limiting fat absorption (as Vitamin D is a fat-soluble vitamin). If you are concerned about a deficiency, it's important to consult your healthcare professional for testing.

### **Common symptoms include:**

- Fatigue and general tiredness
- Bone pain and muscle weakness
- Mood changes, such as depression
- Frequent infections
- Slow wound healing

In the context of oral health, specific signs of vitamin D deficiency may include:

- Increased susceptibility to tooth decay
- Gum inflammation and bleeding
- Tooth sensitivity
- Loose teeth



## **Preventing and Addressing Vitamin D Deficiency**

To maintain optimal oral health, it's essential to ensure that your body is receiving adequate vitamin D levels. Here are some strategies to ensure you are on the right track to sufficient Vitamin D levels:

### **1. Sun Exposure**

The body produces vitamin D in response to sunlight. Spending about 10-30 minutes in the sun several times a week can help maintain adequate vitamin D levels (and the fresh air will definitely do you good). However, the amount of sun exposure needed can vary based on skin type, location, and time of year. It's essential to balance sun exposure with skin cancer prevention measures, such as using sunscreen and avoiding excessive sun exposure.

### **2. Dietary Sources**

Foods naturally high in Vitamin D is limited, but there are some options. Incorporating vitamin D-rich foods into your diet can be a great way to boost your levels. Some dietary sources of vitamin D include:

- Fatty fish (salmon, mackerel, sardines)
- Cod liver oil
- Fortified dairy products and plant-based milk
- Egg yolks
- Beef liver
- Mushrooms that have been exposed to UV
- Fortified cereals

### **3. Supplements**

In cases where adequate sun exposure and dietary intake are insufficient, vitamin D supplements can help maintain optimal levels. It's important to consult with a healthcare provider before starting any supplement regimen to determine the appropriate dosage.

### **4. Regular Dental Check-ups**

Regular dental check-ups can help identify early signs of vitamin D deficiency and its impact on oral health. Dentists can provide personalized recommendations for maintaining optimal oral health and addressing any deficiencies.

There is no denying that Vitamin D plays an important role in maintaining healthy teeth and gums. A deficiency in this essential nutrient can lead to various oral health issues, including tooth decay, gum disease, and bone loss. Ensuring adequate vitamin D levels through sun exposure, diet, and supplements can help support overall oral health and prevent these problems. Regular dental check-ups and a proactive approach to maintaining vitamin D levels are essential for a healthy, confident smile



L'ATELIER FORTE





London 2012 Study: A significant study conducted during the London 2012 Olympics revealed that many athletes suffered from poor oral health. The research involved 302 athletes from 25 different sports and found that 55% had dental caries, 76% had gingivitis, and 15% had periodontitis. Furthermore, 42% of athletes reported being "bothered by oral health" issues, with 18% acknowledging that it negatively impacted their performance (PubMed) (UCL).



# The Power of Networking: Strategies for Dental Professionals

By Kiara Stent

Networking is essential for any dental professional looking to grow their practice, build their personal brand, or expand their business. For young professionals, connecting with peers, mentors, and industry leaders can be the key to unlocking new opportunities and staying ahead in a competitive field.

Here are a few effective strategies to help you build your network and establish valuable relationships in the industry.

### 1. *Develop a Personal Brand*

#### a. *Be authentic*

Building your brand is about showcasing the real you. It's figuring out what makes you unique. Your brand should reflect your values and goals, guiding everything you do. For example – if you're great with anxious patients or you love using the latest tech create and share content that showcases that side of you.

#### b. *“Dress to impress”*

Looking at the part matters too. Dress in a way that says "I'm a pro, but I'm approachable." Your body language and how you communicate are just as important as your words. The key is to come across as confident, caring, and easy to talk to.

#### c. *Focus on building relationships with your clients*

Strong relationships with your patients are at the heart of your practice. Listen to them, tailor your approach to each person, and follow up after treatments. Ask for feedback – it shows you care and helps you get better. Your practice likely sees a diverse range of patients. Each interaction is a chance to expand your network. A friendly conversation could lead to unexpected opportunities, whether it's a referral to a specialist or an invitation to speak at a local event. The key is to be genuinely curious and open to the possibilities that come your way. Remember, your brand is about building trust and making people feel valued.

### 2. *Find a Mentor*

A mentor provides guidance, support, and valuable insights that can help navigate the complexities of the industry. They offer advice based on their experiences, helping mentees avoid common mistakes and make informed decisions.

#### a. *“Meet for Coffee”*

Try reaching out to someone that you want to learn from. Ask them out for a coffee or to shadow them for a day. Asking as many questions as possible is the best way to learn from someone experienced and well-known.

#### b. *“Where can I find one?”*

Put yourself in spaces where you can meet the people you would like to have as mentors. Attending industry events, and conferences or joining professional associations are a good

place to start if you don't already know someone. Engage actively in these environments, express your career goals, and find opportunities to build relationships with potential mentors.

#### c. *Digital, of course*

Leveraging social media platforms like LinkedIn can connect you with seasoned professionals willing to share their knowledge and expertise.

### 3. *Network within your practice*

Your team is your direct and most powerful network. Each person, from dental hygienists to receptionists, brings their unique insights and connections.

Chat with your colleagues during lunch breaks or after hours. Share your aspirations and listen to theirs. You might discover shared interests or complementary skills that could lead to exciting collaborations. Don't be afraid to learn from the more experienced members of your team – their wisdom is priceless.

### 4. *Join Professional Associations*

Membership in organizations such as the American Dental Association (ADA) or the British Dental Association (BDA) provides access to a wealth of resources, including continuing education courses, industry publications, and networking events. These associations offer a platform to connect with peers, mentors, and industry leaders, facilitating the exchange of knowledge and best practices. Actively participating in association activities, such as attending conferences, volunteering for committees, or contributing to publications, can significantly boost your professional visibility and credibility.

These memberships often come with exclusive benefits like access to the latest research, discounts on professional services, and opportunities for professional recognition and awards. Joining professional associations helps personal growth and enhances practice by staying informed about advancements and fostering a community of collaborative professionals.

### 5. *Collaborate with Other Healthcare Professionals*

#### a. *Better diagnoses = better client relationships*

Building relationships with specialists such as orthodontists, periodontists, and hygienists allows for comprehensive care that addresses a broader range of patient needs. This interdisciplinary approach can lead to more accurate diagnoses, better treatment outcomes, and increased patient satisfaction. This builds trust with your patients and creates a more sustainable relationship with them.

#### b. *Supportive Professional Communities*

Establishing a network of trusted colleagues also facilitates referrals, which can help attract new patients and grow your practice. Regular communication and case discussions with other healthcare providers can provide valuable insights and learning opportunities, helping you stay updated with the latest advancements and techniques in dental and general healthcare. Collaborating with other healthcare professionals fosters a supportive professional community and opens doors to new opportunities.





## 6. *Engage in Community Activities*

This is a powerful way to build your practice's reputation, connect with potential patients, and demonstrate your commitment to public health. Participating in local health fairs, school presentations, and charity events allows you to share your expertise and educate the community about the importance of oral health. These activities help raise awareness and position you as a trusted and caring professional in the eyes of the community.

Volunteering at free dental clinics or organizing educational workshops can provide valuable outreach and support to those who may not have regular access to dental care. Engaging in community events also offers networking opportunities with other local healthcare providers and businesses, fostering collaborations that can benefit your practice.

These events often attract media attention, providing additional exposure and enhancing your brand's visibility. By actively participating in community events, you can make a meaningful impact while strengthening your practice's ties with the community.

## 7. *Attend Conferences and Seminars*

This is a valuable strategy for any dental professional looking to stay at the forefront of industry advancements and expand their professional network. These events provide access to the latest research, innovative technologies, and emerging trends in dentistry, ensuring that you remain knowledgeable and competitive in your field.

By participating in workshops and panel discussions, you can gain practical insights and hands-on experience that can be directly applied to your practice. You have access to direct Networking opportunities at these events, enabling you to connect with industry leaders, peers, and potential mentors. These connections can lead to collaborations, referrals, and new career opportunities.

Presenting your original research or case studies at conferences can boost your professional standing and establish you as a leader in the dental community.

## 8. *Use online platforms like social media*

If you want to increase your visibility, engage with a broader audience, and build your brand, this is probably the most attainable way to do it. A study done by the South African Dental Journal found that "89.8% of dental students and professionals agreed that a social media presence within their dental practice increased their patient base and worked as an effective marketing tool."

LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook provide unique opportunities to share your expertise, connect with peers, and attract new patients.

- On LinkedIn, you can join professional groups, participate in discussions, and share industry-related content to establish yourself as a thought leader.

- Instagram allows you to showcase your work through before-and-after photos, educational videos, and patient testimonials, helping to build trust and rapport with your audience.

- Facebook groups and pages can serve as forums for sharing insights, answering questions, and engaging with your community.

By consistently posting valuable content and engaging with your community, you can increase your reach and influence. Social media allows you to have an online presence and foster connections that can lead to valuable relationships.

It's important to note that many of these strategies are interconnected and have a ripple effect on your personal brand, your practice, the relationships you build, and the knowledge you gain. One common thread across all industries is the significance of relationships. Implementing these strategies will help you build sustainable professional relationships.



# THE SMILE ZONE

SMILE FOR A CAUSE  
PUTS FORG & PROSPER  
CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

DELIVERING SMILES  
SMILES ACROSS AMERICA  
THE SMILE ZONE

HOW TO USE  
SMILE ZONE

grin!  
kids

grin! kids

BIG BAGS

# THE SMILE ZONE

## Key Figures



### Dora Pesqueda President and Chief Executive Officer

Dora Pena Pesqueda is the Founder, President, and Chief Executive Officer of TheSmileZone. Her journey began as a single mother of four, navigating the challenges of balancing work and her children's healthcare appointments. With a background in the pediatric dental field, Dora recognized the critical importance of dental care for children, often overlooked and postponed by many. Her experience working in a dental outreach program inspired her to create a solution for her own community, combining education with comprehensive healthcare services, including dental care. Understanding the obstacles parents face, such as work and school commitments, Dora established TheSmileZone to ensure children receive regular dental visits without parents having to choose between preventive care and providing for their families. Driven by her passion for children's health, Dora is dedicated to bridging the gap in access to dental care for underserved communities.



### Raymond Pesqueda Vice President and Executive Assistant

Raymond Pesqueda is a Founder, Board Member, and Executive Assistant for TheSmileZone. The organization began with a simple yet profound question: "How can we help the children and families that cannot come into a brick-and-mortar office?" Inspired by his wife Dora's extensive career and undeniable passion for dental care, Raymond became deeply involved in addressing the need for dental accessibility. Moved by the stories Dora shared about parents canceling appointments due to work commitments, school obligations, and financial strain, Raymond empathized with the struggle of choosing between providing for one's family and addressing "minor" health needs that could escalate into more significant issues. Recognizing the broader impact on overall health and family stability, Raymond and Dora founded TheSmileZone to bridge this gap. Their dedication to making a lasting difference in the lives of families and children in Arizona drives their mission, reflecting their commitment to ensuring dental care accessibility for all.



### Andres Cano Director of Philanthropy and Creative Direction

Andres Cano, sits on the board of TheSmileZone and is one of the co-founders. He is responsible for the creative direction and philanthropy for TheSmileZone focusing on donor and sponsor relationships. I started my journey with nonprofit work independently working with close friends and for profit organizations who focused their time on raising money for nonprofit organizations. I would partner with these organizations to help in toy drives, back to school drives, and other event coordination to help families in Arizona. I've always had a passion for helping others, and I crossed paths with Dora and Raymond through our Arizona Cardinal football tailgates and they asked me to join them on their journey with TheSmileZone. It's inspiring seeing the faces of happy families, children, and communities when you give back through the work we are doing at TheSmileZone. I love being in nonprofit because you get to understand the needs of the community, and collaborate with others to bring so much change in such a selfless way. I love spending time with family, friends, my two fur babies, my partner, and truly enjoy food and traveling which is another way we learn about each other. Excited to continue this journey, and see what TheSmileZone does or goes next.



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# The Smile Zone: Bridging the Gap in Dental Care for Underserved Communities

## Our History

The inception of TheSmileZone is rooted in a deep passion for dentistry and a profound desire to help others. The journey began years ago when Dora was part of another Dental Outreach Team. The experience was not only fulfilling but also therapeutic. Her passion for dentistry has always been driven by a desire to make a difference in people's lives.

In 2019, while promoting a dental office in Texas, Dora engaged with school nurses, administrators, and parents, quickly encountering a significant barrier: getting children and families into a dental office for care amidst their busy lives. A conversation with a teacher profoundly impacted the founder. The teacher shared the struggle of not being able to take her daughter to the dentist due to work commitments. This encounter sparked an idea: What if a dental outreach program could be brought to the schools? The teacher's enthusiastic response confirmed the need, and thus, TheSmileZone was born.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the development of TheSmileZone. This journey taught the founder two invaluable lessons: a love for the rewarding nature of this work and a strong desire to bring TheSmileZone to her home state of Arizona. During a dental event in June 2023, Dora shared her vision with event coordinators who offered their support. With their encouragement, TheSmileZone was officially founded in Arizona in June 2023.

## Evolution of TheSmileZone

While TheSmileZone is only one year old in Arizona, it has been operating in the mobile dental space since 2019. Its mission is to provide accessible and quality dental care, education, and hygiene supplies to children in Arizona, improving their overall well-being and empowering them to lead healthier lives. TheSmileZone believes in providing equal opportunities for children to receive top-notch dental care, irrespective of their background or socioeconomic status. Access to care is their number one priority, ensuring no child in Arizona suffers from preventable dental issues.

## Mission, Vision, and Core Focus

The core mission of TheSmileZone is to provide accessible and quality dental care, education, and hygiene supplies to children in Arizona. By addressing the oral health needs of underserved youth, the organization aims to improve their overall well-being and empower them to lead healthier lives. Their vision is to ensure that every child, regardless of their background, has access to top-notch dental care.

### *The core focus areas are:*

**Accessibility:** The primary goal is to make dental care accessible to underserved communities. By bringing dental services directly to schools and community centers through their mobile dental program, they aim to remove barriers such as financial constraints and transportation challenges.

**Community Impact:** TheSmileZone strives to make a positive impact on the communities they serve. Through partnerships with schools, local organizations, and healthcare providers, they enhance dental health education and promote preventive care practices.

**Preventative Dental Care:** Beyond providing dental care, they emphasize overall well-being. This includes dental education, dental hygiene supplies, and referrals to additional healthcare resources when needed.

## Impact on Underserved/Rural Communities

Identifying and selecting the communities served is a critical aspect of TheSmileZone's work. They assess the need throughout Arizona and rely on community engagement and partnerships for collaboration. Their needs-based approach has fostered multiple collaboration opportunities with other organizations. The goal is to reach areas where children and families face challenges in accessing preventative dental care.

TheSmileZone has encountered several challenges in bringing dental care to underserved and rural communities, including limited funding and language barriers. To overcome these challenges, they host several fundraising events throughout the year, continuously seek grants and donations, and have invested in a translator device for their outreach team.

THE SMILE ZONE



One impactful story that stands out involves a teacher who visited TheSmileZone during a school outreach program. She thanked the team for seeing her daughter earlier that morning and providing a prescription for an active infection. The teacher shared how work commitments prevented her from taking her daughter to the dentist. This encounter underscored the significance of TheSmileZone's work and motivated the team to ensure access to dental care for underserved communities.

### **Accomplishments, Accolades, and Growth**

Over the past year, TheSmileZone has been featured on various news channels and podcasts, including AZ BIG Media, where the founder was a Healthcare Leader of the Year Finalist for the 2024 Champions of Change Awards. TheSmileZone was selected as a Healthcare Company of the Year in 2024 for the Champions of Change Awards.

The organization secured a prestigious grant from Delta Dental Arizona Foundation, a significant achievement for their young nonprofit. They hosted their 1st Annual SMILEZOOM, a 400m run for children, which received positive feedback from the community. Their next event is the 1st Annual Smile FORE a Cause, PUTT FORE a Purpose Charity Golf Event on September 7th, 2024. They are also planning a November 3rd, 2024 - Dia De Los Muertos, Celebrating Life in Business event.

In their first year, TheSmileZone provided dental care, education, and supplies at 27 health fairs, community events, and schools, impacting 375 smiles. Their impact goal is 1500 for 2024.

### **Growth and Team Expansion**

TheSmileZone continues to grow with additional outreach events and services. Since 2019, they have been driven by a core team of six. In mid-August 2023, they welcomed an additional board member and co-founder, Andres Cano, Director of Philanthropy. Andres has significantly contributed to the organization's growth, helping rebrand in Arizona, develop their website, establish marketing collateral, and create a comprehensive marketing plan and strategy. Andres has significantly contributed to the organization's growth through his visionary approach, helping rebrand in Arizona, establishing a robust partner network, developing its website and direction, establishing marketing collateral, creating a media and PR strategy through his vast network, and strategically creating a comprehensive marketing plan and strategy.

### **Dental Outreach Program and Education**

TheSmileZone provides quality dental care, oral health education, and oral hygiene supplies. They ensure that children and families receive verbal instructions and pamphlets with tips on brushing and flossing at home.

They engage and educate the community through separate oral hygiene days at schools, providing nutritional fun facts and interactive activities to highlight the importance of dental care.

### **Hope for the Future**

In the next five to ten years, TheSmileZone aspires to operate at full capacity, making a daily impact on as many lives as possible. Their goal is to increase access to dental care for children and reduce the likelihood of preventable dental issues in Arizona.

They are excited about their upcoming events, including the Smile FORE a Cause Charity Golf Event on September 7th, 2024, and the November 3, 2024 Dia De Los Muertos, Celebrating Life in Business event.

### **Community Involvement**

The best way to get involved is to follow TheSmileZone on their social media platforms and website, [www.thesmilezone.org](http://www.thesmilezone.org). Potential supporters can contribute through donations, attending events, volunteering, and sharing posts on social media. They welcome collaborations with Head Starts, elementary schools, middle and high schools, and community organizations.

### **Personal Motivation and Leadership**

Passion drives the founder's commitment to this mission. Dentistry doesn't feel like work; it's a passion that continues to help those in need. Challenges are a part of life, but they won't hold TheSmileZone back from their mission.

As a Board Member, Founder, President, and CEO, Dora's vision and extensive experience in the dental industry guide TheSmileZone. Raymond Pesqueda, Vice President, brings his leadership experience, team leadership and growth, his Spanish bi-lingual skills supporting the Spanish-speaking community, and his creative and analytical outside-the-box thinking talent. Andres Cano has helped the organization grow through his 18 years of global enterprise corporate experience in business development, technology sales, strategy, business foundational growth, and dedication to philanthropic growth.

### **Message to Families**


To families hesitant to seek dental care for their children due to financial or logistical barriers: Access to dental care is here. Look for TheSmileZone at an event near you. Their preventative dental care is free, and they may be able to help direct you to additional resources if needed. Reach out to TheSmileZone; they look forward to hearing from you.

# The Power of Personal Branding in the Dental Industry

By Sarah Ruberg







In the ever-evolving world of dentistry, personal branding is no longer a mere option; it's a necessity. Whether you are a practice owner, a dental supplier, or a DSO executive, establishing a strong personal brand can significantly impact your career and business growth. But what does personal branding entail, and why is it so vital in the dental industry?

### Understanding Personal Branding

Personal branding is about presenting yourself and your career as a brand. It's more than just a polished LinkedIn profile or a catchy tagline; it's the unique value you offer, your professional journey, the way you interact with others, and the experiences that make you, you. Your personal brand is your professional identity—authentic and distinctly yours.

#### *Why Personal Branding Matters in Dentistry*

The dental industry is competitive and deeply relational. Here's why personal branding can be a game-changer:

- 1. Building Trust and Credibility:** A well-defined personal brand positions you as a thought leader in the dental field. It builds trust and credibility among peers, partners, and potential clients, making you a go-to resource.
- 2. Increasing Visibility:** In a crowded marketplace, standing out is essential. Your personal brand makes you more visible and memorable. It distinguishes you from the competition.
- 3. Expanding Your Network:** A robust personal brand opens doors to new connections and opportunities. People are more likely to engage with and remember someone with a clear, compelling brand.
- 4. Driving Career Growth:** Whether you're looking to advance within your current organization or explore new opportunities, a solid personal brand paves the way for career progression.

### Overcoming the Reluctance to Self-Promote

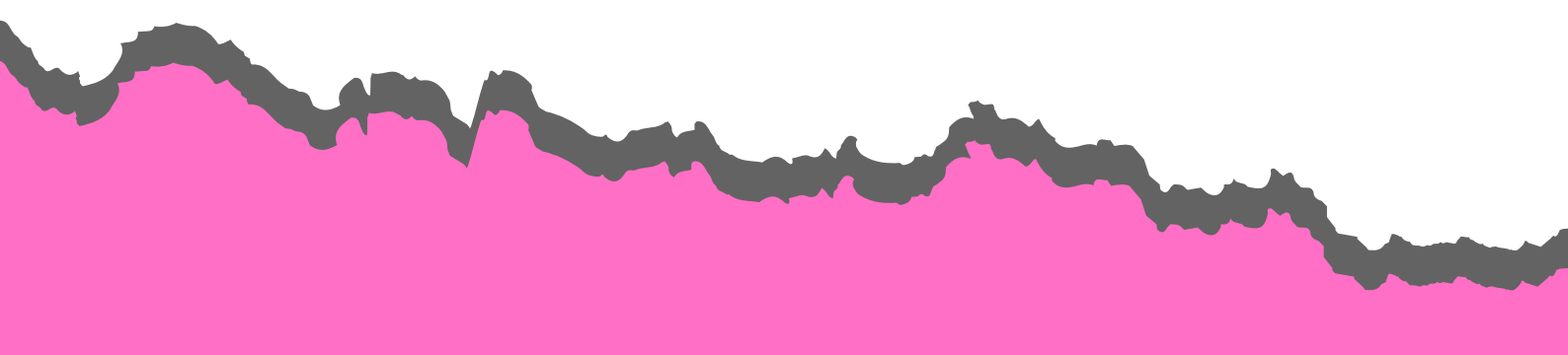
Many dental professionals hesitate to engage in personal branding, fearing they might appear boastful. However, personal branding is not about self-promotion in a superficial sense; it's about sharing your expertise and experiences to add value to your professional community.

Consider this: you possess a wealth of knowledge and experience that can benefit others. By sharing these insights, you're not just promoting yourself; you're contributing to the broader dental industry. Personal branding allows you to position yourself as a valuable resource, someone others can turn to for advice and leadership.

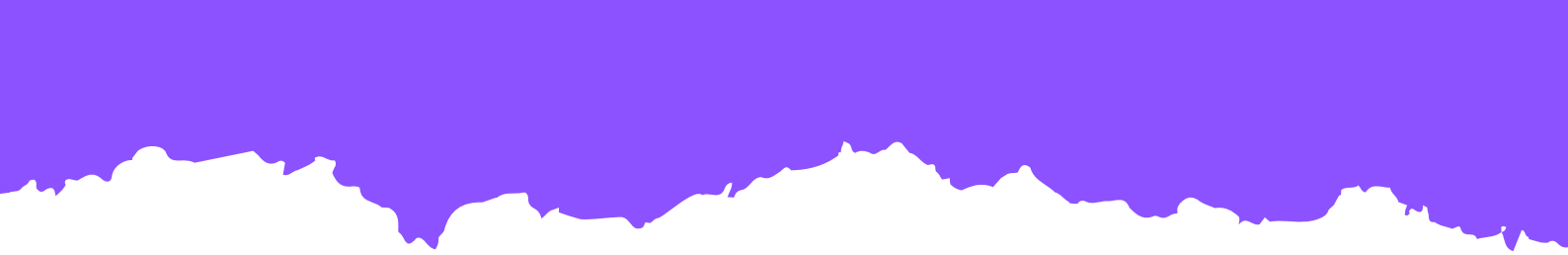
### Steps to Define Your Personal Brand

Defining your personal brand might seem daunting, but it can be broken down into manageable steps:

- 1. Reflect on Your Strengths and Values:** Identify your strengths, values, and passions. What are you known for? What do you enjoy doing? What are your professional goals?
- 2. Seek Feedback:** Ask colleagues, mentors, and friends for feedback. Often, others can identify qualities in you that you might overlook.
- 3. Define Your Unique Value Proposition:** Determine what sets you apart from others. This could be a combination of skills, experiences, and personal traits. This is one of the toughest things I watch people and businesses go through. If you get stuck, ask friends and colleagues, you may be surprised at their responses!







## Building and Communicating Your Brand

Once you've identified your personal brand, it's time to build and communicate it effectively. Here are some practical steps:

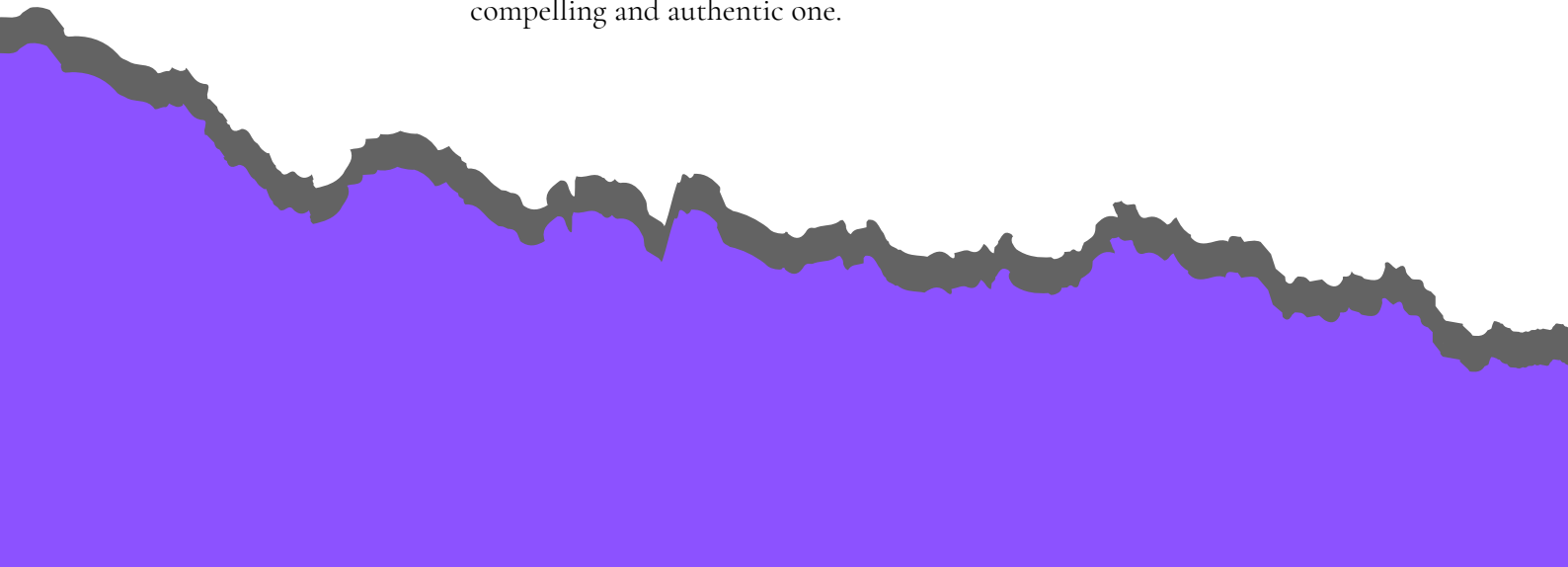
- 1. Enhance Your Online Presence:** Ensure your LinkedIn profile and other professional platforms reflect your brand accurately.
- 2. Create Valuable Content:** Share your insights and knowledge through articles, blog posts, or videos. Consistently producing valuable content establishes you as a thought leader.
- 3. Engage with the Community:** Participate in industry events, join professional groups, and engage in discussions both online and offline.
- 4. Be Authentic:** Authenticity is the cornerstone of personal branding. People want to work with those they know, like, and trust. Being genuine in your interactions is key.

## Personal Branding in Action

When I founded Our Thrive Tribe, I leveraged my background and connections in the dental industry to build a unique brand. By focusing on personal branding and authentic relationships, we differentiated ourselves from other agencies, built trust, and attracted the right clients.

In the dental industry, personal branding is more than a buzzword; it's a powerful tool for professional growth. By taking the time to define and communicate your brand, you can enhance your professional presence, build meaningful connections, and achieve your career goals.

Your personal brand is your story. Make it a compelling and authentic one.



## Cover Feature



Dr. Fagan's story is one of passion, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to transforming the dental experience. From a young age, her love for math, science, and helping others laid the foundation for a career that seamlessly blends expertise with empathy. Raised in a family dedicated to education and service, Dr. Fagan was inspired by her father's military and dental background. This upbringing instilled in her a discipline and drive to make a meaningful impact, which she found in the field of dentistry.

# Cover Feature

## Early Inspirations and Diverse Experiences

### *A Foundation in Service and Education*

"My journey into dentistry began at a young age. I always had interest in maths and sciences as well as an innate desire to help others. Growing up in a family with a strong emphasis on education and service, particularly with my father's military and dental background, instilled in me a sense of discipline and a drive to make a difference. Dentistry appealed to me because of the work-life balance vs working in the hospital. It also allows me to improve people's health and smiles, which can significantly impact their confidence and overall quality of life."

### *Embracing Cultural Diversity*

Growing up in various places due to her father's military career, Dr. Fagan was exposed to diverse cultures and communities. These experiences taught her the importance of adaptability and understanding different perspectives, which are crucial in patient care. She developed a deep appreciation for personalized care and the need to cater to each patient's unique background and needs. These experiences shaped her approach to dentistry, emphasizing empathy, cultural sensitivity, and a commitment to providing the best possible care for all patients.

## The Birth of La Luxe Dental

### *Innovating the Dental Experience*

The inspiration behind La Luxe Dental came from Dr. Fagan's desire to positively change the dental experience. She envisioned a space where patients could feel relaxed and pampered while receiving top-notch dental care. By combining luxury and spa-like treatments, she aimed to reduce the anxiety and stress often associated with dental visits. Her vision was to offer comprehensive dentistry, where comfort and patient well-being are paramount, making dental care a positive and enjoyable experience.

### *Autonomy and Patient-Centered Care*

Autonomy in patient care is essential to Dr. Fagan because it allows her to tailor treatments specifically to each patient's needs without external constraints. This autonomy ensures that she can uphold the highest standards of care and create an atmosphere that reflects her values and philosophy. By having control over the environment and patient interactions, she can foster a welcoming, supportive, and stress-free experience, ultimately leading to better patient outcomes and satisfaction.



## **Unique Elements of La Luxe Dental**

### *A Blend of High-Quality Care and Spa-Like Amenities*

La Luxe Dental stands out due to its unique blend of high-quality dental care and spa-like amenities. The office offers a comfort menu featuring essential oils, calming music, and weighted blankets to enhance the patient experience. State-of-the-art technology ensures precision and efficiency in treatments. Additionally, the personalized care and attention each patient receives, combined with the serene office environment, create an unparalleled dental experience.

## **Overcoming Challenges**

### *Navigating the COVID-19 Pandemic*

Navigating the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic required resilience, adaptability, and meticulous planning. Despite the uncertainties, Dr. Fagan remained committed to her vision and used the time to design the office, refine services, enhance safety protocols, and prepare her team to deliver exceptional care. She focused on ensuring the safety of future patients and team members by implementing infection control measures and staying updated with the latest health guidelines.

### *Staying Motivated*

"My unwavering belief in God kept me motivated. The positive feedback and support from my family and friends reinforced my decision. Lastly, I have always believed that when I put my mind to something, I work hard to achieve it. This determination and perseverance fueled my drive to make La Luxe Dental a reality, despite the uncertainties."

## **Enhancing Patient Experience**

### *Creating a Welcoming Atmosphere*

To ensure a positive and calming experience, La Luxe Dental focuses on creating a welcoming and serene atmosphere from the moment patients walk in. The team is trained to provide compassionate and attentive care, addressing any concerns and making patients feel comfortable. Personalized touches like a weighted blanket and neck pillow help patients relax and enjoy their visit.

### *The Role of Essential Oils and Calming Music*

Essential oils and calming music help create a soothing environment that eases anxiety and promotes relaxation. The comfort menu, which includes options like weighted blankets, neck pillows, and noise-canceling headphones, allows patients to customize their experience to their preferences. These elements work together to transform a routine dental visit into a peaceful and rejuvenating experience, enhancing overall patient satisfaction.

## **Representation and Advocacy**

### *Breaking Barriers and Challenging Stereotypes*

Being a Black female dentist is a source of pride and responsibility for Dr. Fagan. Personally, it means breaking barriers and challenging stereotypes, showing that diversity in the dental field is not only possible but essential. Professionally, it drives her to provide excellent care and serve as a role model for aspiring dentists from under-represented backgrounds. It's an opportunity to inspire and empower others, contributing to a more inclusive and diverse profession.









## ***Community Engagement***

### ***Supporting Girls On the Run DC***

La Luxe Dental sponsors a girl for Girls On the Run DC for every new patient. Supporting this program aligns with Dr. Fagan's commitment to empowerment and community engagement. The program promotes physical fitness, self-confidence, and leadership skills in young girls and ends with a 5K run. Running has been a release for Dr. Fagan and helped her sort through many feelings and decisions with opening the office during the pandemic. She wishes she had a program like Girls On the Run – DC available to her when she was their age.

### ***Impact on the Community***

Our involvement with Girls On the Run DC aims to positively impact the community by providing young girls with the tools and confidence they need to succeed. By supporting this program, we're investing in the future and helping to create a generation of strong, confident, and capable women.

### ***Personal Insights***

#### **The Influence of Running**

Running has significantly influenced Dr. Fagan's approach to dentistry by teaching her discipline, perseverance, and the importance of setting and achieving goals. The mental and physical stamina required for marathon training translates into her professional life, where she applies the same principles to overcome challenges and strive for excellence. Running also provides a healthy outlet for stress relief, helping her maintain a balanced and focused mindset.

#### ***Maintaining Work-Life Balance***

In addition to running, Dr. Fagan enjoys reading, spending time with friends and family, and traveling. Reading allows her to continuously learn and grow, both personally and professionally.

*Traveling provides new experiences and perspectives, helping her recharge and relax. Spending time with family and friends is essential for Dr. Fagan, as their support and companionship are invaluable, and these moments together bring joy and balance to her life.*

## ***Future Goals and Advice***

### ***Long-Term Vision for La Luxe Dental***

Dr. Fagan's long-term goals for La Luxe Dental include expanding services and reach while maintaining a commitment to personalized, high-quality care. This includes incorporating the latest advancements in dental technology, expanding the team of skilled professionals, and continuing to enhance the patient experience.

### ***Inspiring the Next Generation***

"My advice to young women, especially those from underrepresented backgrounds, is to believe in yourself and your potential. Don't let societal barriers or stereotypes deter you from pursuing your dreams. Seek out mentors and role models who can provide guidance and support along your journey. Work hard, stay focused, and be resilient in the face of challenges. Remember that your unique perspective and experiences are valuable assets in the field of dentistry; representation matters."

### ***Final Thoughts***

Dr. Fagan is not only transforming the dental experience but also paving the way for future generations of dentists. Her dedication to excellence, patient care, and community engagement sets a new standard in the dental industry. And for those looking for a fulfilling career with a commitment to quality care.

***And oh, La Luxe Dental is hiring.***

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