

Better Every Day...

My old ball coach used to tell us that things never stay the same. A man can either work hard and get better or coast along and get worse. Life presents the paths and we all have to decide each day which one we're going to head down. Not a bad piece of advice to tape to the bathroom mirror.

I'll be the first to admit that I could do things a little differently each day. I often lay in bed at night and recount just the right thing to say at just the right time. Only problem is, the right time occurred at the office eight hours ago. Just like the golfer who takes an occasional second tee shot (after his first has gone into the river) and hits it long and straight down the fairway; we're all usually a little better the second time around.

I suppose that would be called experience.

We have been involved in the practice of dentistry for a relatively short time. In ten years, the way we treat patients has changed dramatically. Much of the science and technology we learned in school has already changed. In dentistry, as in life, you get better or you get worse.

My goal in writing each week is to help people help themselves. For those of us with healthy teeth, we often take our ability to eat, speak, and smile for granted. There are those who are not as fortunate. Teeth are a commodity generally underappreciated until a problem occurs.

To that end, here are a few things I wish I'd known ten years ago.

Unhealthy teeth and gums can lead to an unhealthy body. Gum disease can lead to heart disease, strokes, diabetic problems, and other systemic infections. Your mouth is often a window into your overall health.

A bad bite can cause headaches and chronic pain. We see people every week who have endeared years of medicines, problems, and pains, caused by a compromised bite. Often, this chronic pain can be fixed by a well trained dentist.

Sleep apnea can kill you. There are millions of people worldwide who have health problems secondary to obstructive sleep apnea. In many cases, a dental appliance can help to treat this deadly disease.

Loose, ugly dentures should be a thing of the past. People who lose their natural teeth do not have to settle for hunks of plastic that chew poorly and constantly fall out. Teeth can be made to snap into place on implants. Dentures can now look good and chew well.

Anything is possible. We see patients every week who feel hopeless and frustrated with their dental health. For every problem, there are multiple solutions. With enough time, you can have a healthy set of teeth and a beautiful smile.

I could go on all day. Until next week, keep smiling.

-Please send comments to Drs. Parrish at www.ParrishDental.com.