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A SPECIAL REPORT:

WHY DOES YOUR MAKEOVER HAVE TO BE EXTREME?

WHAT EVERY PERSON CONSIDERING COSMETIC DENTISTRY SHOULD KNOW

Think about it. When it comes to your smile you're dealing with a very sensitive and intricate part of the body. Changing your smile should be a thoughtful, caring and respectful process. If you had a heart problem would you look for an Extreme Cardiologist? Of course not. So why get caught up in hype, over marketing and sensationalizing of the "makeover". And besides, when not carefully done cosmetic dentistry can complicate or initiate previously undetected problems.

Beauty: "a reflection of nature, an expression of the spirit and a glimpse into the soul"

As noted restorative dentist Dr. Greg Tarantola states: "it is alarming and sad how much of our practice is now about retreating recently done (within the last five years) dentistry. I am noticing that fully 50% of my practice is now dedicated to this type of care. It is absolutely tragic for the patient." This is our experience as well. Too often do we hear our patient say "I wish I had talked to you first". Few things we hear make us feel as badly for our new patients. How can you avoid this? So where do you start?

A thoughtful caring process:

Changing your smile is not like changing hair but doing so poorly is equally as noticeable. Hair is not as functional a body part and I'm living proof you can live well with very little. Not infrequently we see porcelain added to the teeth that over contours teeth or is placed in an unstable bite, creating enormous problems (to avoid this read on) not to mention they look unnaturally big and white.

We've all seen smiles that, like a bad hairpiece, they scream out "FAKE". Interestingly when asked the question, most patients tell us they would like a brighter smile but one that is natural and beautiful, one that fits with their features and personality, one that enhances their own innate beauty. Of course how would the dentist know that unless they took the time to know their patients and care for them like family? It is this level of concern for the patient where the dentist is helping them to discover the best outcome for their own objectives and circumstances.

To accomplish this we believe it is imperative that the practitioner completely understands the function of each and every curve, dimple, point, space and edge on every tooth. Even more important they also have to know how this all fits with the gum tissue (which is like the mat that frames the teeth), the other teeth in the mouth, the muscles that control the movements and the jaws and jaw joints. Without harmony in all these components the risks of treatment failure grow higher and higher. Oh yeah they look good for now but what about 5,10,15 years from now???? Far too often we see the focus placed on the front 6 teeth with disregard for the rest---surely a recipe for disaster!

Creating Natural Beauty

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A comprehensive approach:

The process has to begin with the *25-point Comprehensive Evaluation*. All the elements of this evaluation have been carefully designed to listen to you, help you define your desired outcome, gather every important detail and consult with you about the optimal way to achieve the smile of your dreams. There's a big difference between cosmetic and naturally beautiful esthetic dentistry—contact us to find out the difference!

Working with the best:

Obviously not all dentists or dental ceramists have equivalent talent in esthetics. So how do you decide? First, do some research. Sure you can ask friends and family but the real question is not just who they recommend but why? What special training do they have? Is training current? Is their training done at a recognized and respected center of advanced learning such as the *Pankey Institute*? Do they teach other dentists? Dentists who teach and show your smile at the size of a billboard to other dentists hold themselves to a higher standard. What component societies do they belong to? What awards, recognitions, fellowships, and faculty positions have they garnered? Most importantly, what is their *philosophy of practice - the foundational principles they operate from* (and it should be written and available and known to all members of the staff). Do they allow their ceramists the appropriate time to create beautiful artistic work?

These are questions you can ask others or the dentist and their staff. This brings us to the next step --- **Interview!** You wouldn't hire someone to mow your grass without first meeting them so why would you blindly commit to any health practitioner without interviewing them? Most patient-centered esthetic practices welcome this approach and allow you the time and opportunity to visit with no obligation. They know and respect the value of a relationship with you and are with you for the long term. Call the office you're considering and ask for a complimentary tour and consultation. They should welcome it and you with open arms

Look for Substance:

This may be the most important yet hardest quality to identify. Dentistry, like many professions, has become saturated with over-marketing. Whitening toothpastes, brand name Veneers, even some Institutes that try to convince you their dentists are better. Dentists also like to hype their gadgets, tools and technology. Don't get me wrong; you have to work with the very best materials, techniques and tools available. The truth is the best are frequently not the newest and the latest. Much of what you hear in their type of marketing is over promised, some is ineffective and some is downright wrong and risky.

Just because you have a fancy hammer, it doesn't make you a better carpenter. The same goes in Esthetic (or any) Dentistry. You need someone who uses the technical and artistic sides of their brain to produce outstanding results. Fortunately, you can *call or email us* any time if you have a specific question about any product, device technique and we will be glad to give you our opinion.

The path to a beautiful smile starts with you and someone to help you decide what's in your best interests. It continues with a combination of experience, expertise and a constant dedication to excellence. Though the dental practices with all these qualities are not the average why would you settle for average treating something this important.

Yours for beautiful, healthy smiles,

Jim Otten

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