

Thoughts on Our Orthodontic Profession

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30 years have passed since I started my journey in Orthodontics, 25 of which working alone in my office. My wife and my daughter (yes, they are dentist too) share with me my fears and struggles now, comforting me with their presence and energy. Like every other passionate orthodontist, I'm still eager to test my knowledge and update on new trends and issues. I'm constantly in touch with my colleagues and other young dentists that in one way or another have been at my courses or are part of the master's program where I teach. I gather opinions and watch out to be updated on new tendencies. I got to see TAD's coming, NiTi and oral scanners just to name a few. I lived through several treatment modalities with aligners and miracle treatments on a weekly basis. Some have disappeared and probably we will never be remembered. Some could very well last and become part of our profession.

Defining what a profession is, is not an easy task. It's a job of course, a craft also. The expertise within should be the result of several components: an orthodontic professional is most certainly driven from a good shovel of vocational beliefs as well as love for the profession itself. A pro should look like a pro, talk like a pro and be wise like a pro. Is that it? Probably not. There is something missing here, and I will try to tell you what it's about.

Let's take a look at what's going on in orthodontics in general. First of all, I would like to express my sincere disgust on a new trend that's taking place all over the world: the superfast treatment 3-3, upper lower or both. Are we really going in the direction of a new sort of "professional" figure, the cosmetic orthodontist? Second, again I would like to express my sincere doubts on the new trend sagittal first for the treatment of Class II. This concept represents the milestone of ignorance in orthodontic diagnosis and treatment that crushes crowds of young orthodontists and leads them classify a Class II only as a sagittal problem. Class II is and remains a vertical problem. There is something going on here that is well beyond professionalism. The people that guide all this cannot be so ignorant, I will not accept that, but I can accept that they have lost the most important thing a great leader should have, honesty. They know exactly what they are doing, they are feeding that hungry crowd of what they want most, fast easy and money-making results. Who cares if several patients develop TMD, malocclusion has nothing to do with TMD! (again, I'm disgusted).

My last words must focus on something positive, especially after this darn Covid thing. There are orthodontists out there who are leaders in the field and really do their best to guide and change the world. It's like I'm saying there are some good guys out there that do merit continuous ovations for their effort that appears genuine and separated from the trends I just talked about. You don't really have to believe in them 100% and embrace their philosophy and interpretation of orthodontics, but I assure you that if you keep your perspective wide and take a look at what they are saying (shouting sometimes) you will be somewhat surprised. I'm going to give you a list of suggested readings and I certainly know that the choice is yours. I know that you will read the list for sure, and I know that some of you will be curious enough to buy a book or click on a website. My greatest effort here is not this suggested reading stuff (even though I wish you would read it), it's a more deepened message that I hope you get: beware of detractors. Never in these 30 years have I seen such disregard for the Orthodontic Profession. Never in these 30 years I have felt the attack coming from orthodontic companies like in these days. They

promote their products through illegitimate orthodontists that have sold their souls for money and promote their pseudoscience with purchased publications.

Suggested Readings

- 1) Jaws, the story of a hidden epidemic, by Sandra Kahn and Paul R. Ehrlich.
- 2) Buteyko: Close Your Mouth: Buteyko Clinic Handbook for Perfect Health, by Patrick McKeown and Paul Metcalfe.
- 3) And don't forget this website on Orthotropics of my friend Mike Mew: <https://orthotropics.com/orthotropics-thinking-beyond-teeth/>

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