

A PASSION FOR CHANGING PEOPLES LIVES  
THE MARRIAGE OF COSMETIC AND NEUROMUSCULAR DENTISTRY  
By Dr. Richard A. Stanley

This ain't daddy's Oldsmobile," read an old television commercial back in the 1900's. Somehow it still seems like centuries ago! A 13 year old guest of mine recently reminded her mom that the nineteen hundreds were only 4 years ago. And yet so much has changed. I remember walking with my father when he was in dental school, through the University of Indiana, Dental School. I remember the look, the smell and the feel of dentistry from 40 years ago.

I remember my own dental school just 20 years later at the University of Florida. Wow, had things changed! I look at it now and the changes in the 17 years I have practiced... Most of the procedures we do on a daily basis were not taught in the dental schools 17 years ago. The most advanced procedures are still only taught to and learned by the exceptionally motivated dentists who pursue a life long learning. Some of the technology we are currently using at The Smile Centre has only been taught to less than 1% of American dentists.

The overall objectives remain the same, keep healthy teeth, gums and bone for a lifetime. We like to call it "Healthy Smiles for a Lifetime". I think the 'smiles' part of the phrase is important as it illustrates that it is not with only the hard tooth that we are concerned, but the overall health of the mouth, the jaw bones, the muscles of the face and neck and even the spine. As 'the doctors of the mouth' we are increasingly aware of how interrelated the body is.

Many years ago we embraced the idea that we had to look at the mouth, jaws, TMJ (temporo-mandibular joint) and muscles as a

system. Now more than ever we realized that the muscles are the driving forces of the jaws and may have even greater importance in affecting the long term health of the teeth, jaws and even our overall posture. In fact it looks at this point that over 60% of headaches are caused by jaw and teeth related issues. People often look to stress as the causative factor. Stress certainly is a factor which does push us over the edge but only if we already have many other pathologic pieces of the pain puzzle in place. These chronic head and neck pains can often be resolved with in hours by addressing the position of the lower jaw and muscles,

Whenever we see worn teeth, multiple broken teeth, recession or bites where the upper front teeth cover most of the lower teeth (deep overbite) we can rest assured that there are has underlying bite and jaw muscle problems.

When we address these concerns we are able create absolutely spectacular smiles that are extremely durable and beautiful. Being able to provide this level of care for our guests and seeing the dramatic changes in their lives is what continues to drive our passion for learning and using the latest tools and procedures to provide cosmetic, restorative and neuromuscular dentistry.