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Peruse any non-fiction bestsellers list and you can see that personal development and growth is a money-making industry. Often this bombardment of how-to-be-a-better-you works against itself by overwhelming us and making us feel even less successful as human beings. Everyone knows from experience that there is no magic formula. Often our personal growth comes from change and the opportunities that present themselves as a result. We just need to recognize them and make the most of them. What did Horace once say? Carpe diem!

In this Issue

- ▶ [Personal Growth Assessment](#)
- ▶ [New Hands-on Workshops for Study Clubs](#)
- ▶ [Balancing Act: Tips from CEOs](#)

PERSONAL GROWTH ASSESSMENT



What are some of the personal growth challenges for dentists? One constant is the need to balance the challenges, satisfactions and joys of a practice with those in the rest of your life. Beyond that, the issues are as individual as you are; these change with your age, family needs, practice growth and direction, community and perhaps your personal health. PIES (Physical, Intellectual, Emotional, Spiritual) is a personal assessment tool to help you identify opportunities for personal growth.

[Full Story](#)

[Return to Top](#)

What do YOU think?



Do you feel intellectually stimulated inside and outside the office? Share some of the ways you stay intellectually stimulated.

[Respond Now](#)

Hot Button

NEW HANDS-ON WORKSHOPS FOR STUDY CLUBS



The Center for Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning (CELL) provides positive learning experiences for all. Clinical hands-on workshops are new this fall and offer experiential learning for dentists. These programs are designed to enhance technical skills, enabling the dentist to apply new technologies in their practice setting. And, a hands-on financial workshop has been added to enhance skills for the dentist as CEO.

[Full Story](#)

[Return to Top](#)

[Disaster Planning & Recovery: New on ADA.org](#)

[Health and Wellness Topic Expanded on ADA.org](#)

[Free Estate Planning Seminar at Annual Session](#)

[ADA Annual Session: An Opportunity for Personal and Professional Growth](#)

[Is Money the True Measure of Wealth?](#)

[Check This Out: Ideas from the ADA Library Staff](#)

[Webinar Available: How To Talk to Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime](#)

BALANCING ACT: TIPS FROM CEOS



Before you can grow personally, you need to achieve a certain level of equilibrium between the existing elements of your life. A chapter in the ADA's upcoming book, *CEO Crash Course: A Dentist's Guide to Practice Leadership*, explores the art of balancing work with the rest of one's life by drawing inspiration from business leaders. Successful CEOs can provide edifying examples for dentists in terms of setting priorities, managing one's personal life and understanding one's own strengths, all of which lay a foundation for personal development.

[Full Story](#)

[Return to Top](#)

[Change your e-mail address](#)



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ADA Community Brief

September, 2006

This Issue

- [Personal Growth Assessment](#)
- [New Hands-on Workshops for Study Clubs](#)
- [Balancing Act: Tips from CEOs](#)
- [Disaster Planning & Recovery: New on ADA.org](#)
- [Health and Wellness Topic Expanded on ADA.org](#)
- [Free Estate Planning Seminar at Annual Session](#)
- [ADA Annual Session: An Opportunity for Personal and Professional Growth](#)
- [Is Money the True Measure of Wealth?](#)
- [Check This Out: Ideas from the ADA Library Staff](#)
- [Web Seminar Available: How To Talk to Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime](#)
- [What do you think?](#)

Introduction

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Personal Growth Assessment

What are some of the personal growth challenges for dentists? One constant is the need to balance the challenges, satisfactions and joys of a practice with those in the rest of your life. Beyond that, the issues are as individual as you are; these change with your age, family needs, practice growth and direction, community and perhaps your personal health. PIES (Physical, Intellectual, Emotional, Spiritual) is a personal assessment tool to help you identify opportunities for personal growth:

Physical

- Are there health issues you need to address?
- How's your physical fitness?
- Are there aches and pains that are trying to get your attention?
- Do you get enough sleep?
- Are you the example of healthy living that you want your patients to see?
- Is your alcohol use a concern to you or anyone else?
- Do you eat enough fruits and vegetables?

Intellectual

- Do you feel mentally alive?
- Have you learned something new in the last month that isn't related to dentistry?
- Are the arts a part of your life?
- Do you feel intellectually stimulated inside and outside the office?
- How long has it been since you read a book—for fun or to learn something?
- Do you read dental journals and take advantage of CE opportunities?

Emotional

- How happy are you with your work and your life?
- What are your current joys and sorrows? Your fears and angers?
- Can you acknowledge your real feelings to yourself? Can you share them with someone else?
- Are your stress management strategies working for you?
- Do you give yourself enough time to feel emotionally recharged?
- Are your finances managed in such a way that you don't have to worry about them?

Spiritual

- Do you feel a sense of connection to someone or something greater than yourself?
- Does your life have a sense of purpose and direction?
- Are you living in a way that is consistent with your personal values?
- Do you find times and places to experience awe, wonder and gratitude?
- Is there a community you feel a part of?
- How do you feel about your relationships with those people who are most dear to you?
- These aren't all-inclusive questions, just suggestions so you can begin to assess your personal well-being.

Find Out More

Online: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/stress-relief/SR00035> 

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/working-life/WL99999> 

[Return to Top](#)

New Hands-on Workshops for Study Clubs

The Center for Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning (CELL) provides positive learning experiences for all. Clinical hands-on workshops are new this fall and offer experiential learning for dentists. These programs are designed to enhance technical skills, enabling the dentist to apply new technologies in their practice setting. And, a hands-on financial workshop has been added to enhance skills for the dentist as CEO.

Support this formal training with a comprehensive in-office training program for new staff members with online courses available through the ADA. Consider sessions on infection control, patient management, patient relations, communication, team building, practice management and practice marketing. Make continuing education (CE) seminars a priority for your study club or practice.

Find Out More

Call: 800-621-8099 x2908

Online: CELL Seminar Series, <http://www.ada.org/members/ed/seminar/index.asp>

Online CE, <http://www.ada.org/ceonline>

[Return to Top](#)

Balancing Act: Tips from CEOs

Before you can grow personally, you need to achieve a certain level of equilibrium between the existing elements of your life. A chapter in the ADA's upcoming book, *CEO Crash Course: A Dentist's Guide to Practice Leadership*, explores the art of balancing work with the rest of one's life by drawing inspiration from business leaders. Successful CEOs can provide edifying examples for dentists in terms of setting priorities, managing one's personal life and understanding one's own strengths, all of which lay a foundation for personal development.

The CEO model

In his popular book *Good to Great*, researcher and business teacher Jim Collins observes that many successful business heads do more by doing less:

"Most of us lead busy but undisciplined lives. We have ever-expanding 'to do' lists, trying to build momentum by doing, doing, doing—and doing more. And it rarely works. Those who built the good-to-great companies, however, made as much use of 'stop doing' lists as 'to do' lists. They displayed a remarkable discipline to unplug all sorts of extraneous junk." (Collins J. *Good to Great*. New York: HarperCollins; 2001.)

Part of personal growth is getting rid of that junk and expending your energies where they can reap the greatest benefits for you, whether coaching a daughter's soccer team, making time for a favorite hobby or getting away for the weekend with a spouse. Focus on your big-picture responsibilities and those things that can't be done by anyone else. *What would you put on your own "stop-doing" list?*

Health and wellness

Corporations make huge investments of trust and resources in their CEOs. They recognize how critical it is that their top leaders be mentally and physically at the top of their game, not only able to withstand the rigors of their positions but to thrive on those challenges. The dentist is as integral to the success of a practice as a CEO is to the company he or she leads. In fact, the single most valuable asset in any dental practice is the dentist. Commitment to optimal health and work-life balance isn't the buzzword of the week or a touchy-feely luxury; rather it is the essential maintenance of the person(s) without whom the practice would cease to exist.

Do you treat yourself like you—body, mind, and spirit—are the most valuable asset in your practice? In addition to tending to the "physical" category of the PIES (Physical, Intellectual, Emotional, Spiritual) life model, keep in mind that CEO-level thinking requires the ability to zoom out away from the details to see the big picture of strategy and goals, and community and market analysis. Corporate CEOs often do this work in retreat settings with boards of directors and other top leaders. You can follow this example and hold an off-site retreat with your team and regularly make time for your own constructive reflection.

Mental recharging

Physical time away from the office won't accomplish much if your mind is still there. Whether you think of your relationship to your business as "CEO" or "proprietor," there is the occupational hazard of thinking about the business 24/7. Much of the work of a CEO involves *thinking* about the business, and that is hard to turn off.

However, creativity and vision don't spring forth from tired, overworked or burned-out brains. Nor do they arise from a single-minded focus on all-dentistry-all-the-time. Find ways to get distance from your professional life and mentally recharge. The work-intense nature of life as a business leader means many CEOs risk early burnout.

For more tips on striking a work-life balance and other aspects of leading a practice, order *CEO Crash Course*, **available starting October 1 from the ADA Catalog**. Both the book (item J712) and downloadable e-Book (J712D) are priced at \$39.95 for members, \$59.95 for nonmembers.

Find Out More

Online: [ADA Product Catalog](#) 

Call: 800-947-4746

[Return to Top](#)

Hot Button

Disaster Planning & Recovery: New on ADA.org

For any small business owner, a disaster can destroy a lifetime of work. Disasters usually are unexpected, happening quickly with little warning. They range from family illnesses or tragedies to wide-ranging devastation to property and loss of life brought about by natural causes, terrorism or epidemics. It's human nature to think bad things happen to other people—not us. But thinking ahead to the possible is an important part of managing a crisis if—and when—it does occur.

You, your family and staff can better cope during or after a disaster by creating a plan to implement and having a few safety nets in place. Planning is essential, because in the midst of a crisis it's not likely you'll do your best thinking. That's why we've created a new area on ADA.org to help you plan for, react during and recover from a disaster. Thank you to the Florida Dental Association and Florida Dental Health Foundation for significant contributions to this information, with encouraging partnership from the American Dental Association Foundation.

Find Out More

Online: <http://www.ada.org/goto/disaster>

[Return to Top](#)

Health and Wellness Topic Expanded on ADA.org

"Dentist Health and Wellness" is now an expanded topic area on ada.org. You'll find resources (and

links to other resources) on crisis management, disaster preparedness, support for disabled dentists, ergonomics in dental practice, infected providers, stress, work balance and mental health, substance use disorders and more.

Find Out More

Online: <http://www.ada.org/prof/prac/wellness/index.asp>

[Return to Top](#)

Free Estate Planning Seminar at Annual Session

As Congress continues to debate the estate tax, dentists should consider the potential impact of taxes on their estates. “Just don’t allow tax concerns alone to drive your estate planning decisions,” says Stephen Rickles, a Denver-based attorney who will lead a free estate planning seminar at this year’s Annual Session. “**Your Estate Plan: Is the Tail Wagging the Dog?**” will take place on Wednesday, October 18, in Las Vegas. All ADA members and their spouses are invited to attend; advance registration is required although the course is free.

“Think of the seminar as continuing education for your personal life,” Rickles says. “We’ll quickly review some fundamentals, and then turn our focus to the **most important aspect of estate planning: your priorities, and the people and causes you care about.**” The seminar provides 2.5 continuing education units.

Regarding taxes, Rickles explains that current law allows an estate holder who dies in 2006 to pass \$2 million tax-free to heirs. In 2009, the amount goes up to \$3.5 million; in 2010 there is a one-year repeal of the tax; and by 2011 the exemption reverts back to \$1 million. “But Congress could change these rules at any time, which underscores the importance of looking beyond taxes when doing estate planning,” he notes.

During the seminar, Rickles will share case studies and offer pointers for tailoring your estate plan to your personal values. He will explore:

- Motivations for estate planning decisions
- Basic tax rules
- Titling assets
- IRAs
- Beneficiary designations
- Wills
- Advance directives
- Insurance
- Trusts

While at the seminar, pick up a **free Estate Planning Kit** (or call 888-463-4545 to request one if you won’t be at Annual Session). The kit includes a brochure with tips on selecting an estate planning attorney and a 24-page Personal Estate Planner workbook. Both the seminar and kit are sponsored by the ADA Insurance Plans, underwritten and administered by Great-West Life and Annuity Insurance Company. Representatives from Great-West will be on site at Annual Session to meet members and answer your insurance questions; look for the Great-West booth in the ADA Pavilion.

Editor's note: This article does not constitute legal or financial advice. Please seek professional input appropriate to your situation.

Find Out More

Online: ADA Insurance Plans, <http://www.insurance.ada.org> ☎ Call: ADA Insurance Plans, 888-463-4545

[Return to Top](#)

ADA Annual Session: An Opportunity for Personal and Professional Growth

The ADA Annual Session is a yearly opportunity for ADA members and other dental professionals to come together for unparalleled continuing education opportunities presented by experts in the fields of oral health and practice management. Advance planning will help Annual Session attendees maximize their opportunities for personal growth through education, networking and social activities.

- The low ADA member registration fee includes access to almost everything the Annual Session has to offer, including more than 75% of the 300+ continuing education programs.
- An online speaker search function by speaker name, topic or day makes it easy to select continuing education programs meaningful for your career and your life
- An online listing of related dental groups meeting during the Annual Session helps you to make the most of your networking
- New for 2006, the ADA Community Network invites ADA members and dental students to log on and contact old friends, make new acquaintances and network with others with similar interests
- The ADA Marketplace Exhibition offers attendees an excellent opportunity to expand their knowledge of dentistry as a whole. It's open for three full days and includes two hours each day
- In addition, no other programming is taking place. Conveniences that help make learning easy include food concessions, short-duration CE programs, a WiFi lounge, entertainment and prize giveaways
- The ADA Table Clinics give ADA members a forum in which to present their research, so attendees can learn from the unique, cutting-edge research of their peers
- The Satellite Symposia on Sunday afternoon offer attendees the opportunity to get complete information on a number of products, direct from the companies that created them.

Here are some of the available programs that support personal growth:

- Staff Communication and Management, #5346, Monday 10/16, 1:45–4:15pm
- Humor and Peak Performance in the Dental Office, #6327, Tuesday 10/17, 2:30–5pm
- Life Is Not a Stress Rehearsal, #7116, Wednesday 10/18, 2:45–5:15pm
- The Fitness Prescription: Your Body, Your Family and Your Career, #8325 or #8350, Thursday 10/19, 9:15–11:45am; or 2:30–5pm

Combined with outstanding hands-on educational opportunities for the dental practice at the ADA Marketplace Exhibition, team-building experiences at a top travel destination and the chance to relax and have fun, the ADA Annual Session is designed to refresh and recharge dental professionals.

[Return to Top](#)


Is Money the True Measure of Wealth?

We live in a very consumption-oriented society where the mainstream messages say that more is better and having the right stuff—addresses, clothes, cars, club memberships, private schools for our kids—is critical to our worth. Would you be happier if you were richer?

Most dentists eventually have above-average incomes and can enjoy comfortable lifestyles. Some dentists have incomes that put them in the wealthy category. Definitions of wealth usually have something to do with money and material possessions, and often it's about having more than someone else. And we know that wealth is relative, a subsistence farmer in the American South is wealthy compared to a subsistence farmer in the Sudan but strikingly poor when compared to the minimum U.S. standard of living.

Is money the true measure of wealth? The origin of the word actually has to do with health and well-being. And, ironically, once basic needs for food, shelter and health care are met, more money doesn't necessarily make people happier. High levels of consumption burden us with more things to keep track of, to store, to insure and to maintain. Anxiety about "keeping up" can rob us of gratitude for what we have and keep us awake at night.

Find Out More

Online: *Would you be happier if you were richer? A focusing illusion*,
<http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/abstract/312/5782/1908> 

If I were a rich man, <http://www.psychologymatters.org/happiness.html> 

Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability, <http://www.lohas.com> 

[Return to Top](#)

Check This Out: Ideas from the ADA Library Staff

The ADA library can help study group leaders and participants. Leaders can obtain background information on a topic by requesting a reference package from the library for an upcoming discussion, or send a list of citations to be photocopied. Study group participants (even those who can't attend the discussion) could choose to purchase the reference package before or after the meeting. A reference package of 5–7 articles costs \$25.00, the average cost of a single article from a document delivery system. Articles requested by citation are copied at a charge of \$5.00 each.

Bonus

Humor is a great way to enjoy life, both at work and at home. The ADA Library has three recent books aimed at tickling the dentist's funny bone:

The Best of Dental Humor: A Collection of Articles, Essays, Poetry, and Cartoons Published In the Dental Literature, compiled and edited by Stephen T. Sonis, 1997.

Call Number: D041 B464 1997

The Dental Patient's Little Book of History, Humor and Trivia: A Lighthearted Romp Through

Dental History—Set in 366 Daily Rhymes—Designed to Delight and Inform Dental Teams and Patients Everywhere, by Don Dible; illustrated by Richard Golueke, 2006.

Call Number: D041 D545d 2006

Limericks with A Smile: Dental, Oral and Facial Limericks of Yesterday and Today, by Joan A. Christen and Arden G. Christen, 2005.

Call Number: D041 C462 2005

Feeling stressed? Type the words "[dental jokes](#)"  into any Web search engine. Or type "librarian jokes." E-mail your g-rated favorites to library@ada.org! Librarians need to laugh too.

Find Out More

Call for Assistance: 312-440-2653 or 800-621-8099, x2653

Library Services and Fees: <http://www.ada.org/members/library/feesum.asp>

Online Library Catalog: <http://www.ada.org/prof/resources/library/catalog.asp>

[Return to Top](#)

Webinar Available: How To Talk to Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime

The Committee on the New Dentist hosted a recent web seminar "**How to Talk to Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime**" with Ms. Mary Byers. Ms. Byers offered tips from pros about how to organize a presentation and also discussed secrets for captivating an audience and capitalizing on the power of persuasion. View and listen to this free archived session online now through November 7, 2006.

Find Out More

Online: [Web Seminar Archived Version](#) 

[Return to Top](#)

What do you think?

Question: Do you feel intellectually stimulated inside and outside the office? Share some of the ways you stay intellectually stimulated.

[Respond Now](#) 

Responses to Last Issue's Question

What are you doing in your community or state to help enhance access to oral health care for vulnerable populations—low-income families, low-income elderly people, people with disabilities and individuals with complex medical conditions?

- Providing free or greatly reduced cost dental care to selected individuals in my practice and volunteering at our local Christian Dental Clinic by serving on the Board of Directors and providing free care one afternoon per month at the clinic.
- I work full-time in a public health clinic, where we have a sliding scale to \$20 per visit.

- We volunteer to perform oral health screening for Headstart children and oral examinations at nursing homes for the Medicaid patients that most dentists won't see. I also perform dental work for the local VA nursing home, I see individuals with disabilities that are on Medicaid in our practice and at the hospital. We also volunteer dental education for the low-income families in our low-income schools and Jeremiah house.
- I volunteer quarterly for half a day on a community dental van that is supported by Northwest Community Hospital in the Chicagoland area. I see four patients per visit and complete as much dental care as possible. Patients are screened, have gone through an intact process and have received oral hygiene before they reach the dentist. Patients have been very grateful for the care they receive.
- I accept children with Medicaid. Our greatest resource is our children and they are the ones we neglect the most. I opened a new practice in April 2002 and began accepting all types of insurance. Because of the problems dealing with the insurance companies and the patients who paid their premiums, we terminated all insurance companies and switched our practice to Medicaid and children with Healthy Kids in July 2004. These two groups comprise 95% of our practice. I realize that Medicaid in Florida pays about 30 cents on the dollar but we have an unending supply of children. There is never down time and our 5 operatories are always filled. We are having more fun practicing dentistry than we did with the insurance and cash patients. Do you realize how it feels to know that your patients will not be missing school because of a toothache? Maybe to you that's an insignificant factor but to that child it's the whole world. I polled our local dental society and discovered that none of our officers or directors accepted Medicaid and only one accepted Healthy Kids. It really irks me when our local dental society dentists open their doors for ONE day a year to treat the poor. What a joke. Only 2 or 3 dentists in the entire Orlando area volunteer at the local homeless shelter. Although I belong to organized dentistry, I don't spend a lot of time with it because I'm too busy organizing my own dentistry as we approach our 10,000 patient mark. If the ADA wants to help the disadvantaged I suggest it start with our children. Help develop a better national Medicaid program to protect our greatest resource. Encourage its members to participate in the Medicaid program by applying for a provider number. If each member treated 5 Medicaid patients per week we would guarantee the survival of our country by providing us with healthy children. After all, dentistry is what we do.
- Four people from our dental office volunteer monthly at Health Right in Charleston, West Virginia. It is a nonprofit organization that serves low-income people who are not covered by Medicaid. It provides aid with prescription drugs, prevention programs, smoking cessation programs, illness management, direct medical care, and has a fully functioning dental clinic staffed with one full time dental clinic coordinator and one full time dental assistant. Many dentists and doctors in the Charleston area volunteer on a regular basis, and others accept Health Right patients in their private offices for treatment. We have volunteer assistants and dental hygienists as well. Health Right treats low-income adults and people with complex medical conditions. We love it!
- I have created a foundation that raises money to help low-income people, kids and adults, pay for much needed dental care in our area. We cover a five county area. We write grants, ask for donations, operate a Thrift Store, have fundraisers and raise money any way we can to accomplish our mission. We are the only foundation that I have found dedicated to oral health. We are located in Southern Illinois: www.casdf.net
- Well let's see, since I must accept insurance in my practice (therefore I do a lot of free dentistry) not much— that's the answer. It's just not economically feasible for me to do any more free dentistry
- Providing oral hygiene to frail elderly patients presents formidable challenges to direct care nursing staff in long-term care. St. Joseph Health Center, SSM hospital, started a senior dental program in September 2001. The hue and cry was that the senior residents living in LTC/SNF/RCFacilities in St .Charles, Warren and Lincoln counties couldn't get dental care. This challenge was met by the Senior Dir. at that time and the dental community to initiate a

dental program in the hospital. This is a hospital-based dental service which is part of the senior department. During the four-plus years that the program has been in operation, we have had over 7,000 patient visits. During 2004 there were 3,324 procedures performed on 1,145 patient visits; 3,369 procedures performed on 1,410 patient visits in 2005. So far in 2006 there have been 591 patient visits at SJHC in St. Charles with 1,140 procedures performed. Roughly, we have had close to 8,000 patient visits with 8,337 procedures performed. These services have been provided with the Medicaid fee schedule and a sliding scale fee schedule with those not on Medicaid. This has been accomplished with an average of eleven (11) volunteer dentists and one staff hygienist and a clinical director. Our long-term goal is to expand the program to four chairs and initiate an AEGD program to educate the young graduate dentist in geriatric care along with the other disciplines of dentistry. St. Charles County has become a community of older adults with the average age approaching 65 yrs. and over. It is estimated that by the year 2050, there will be 1 million citizens who are centenarians in the U.S.A. They will require, among other things, the continual care of their dentition along with the maintenance and treatment of degenerative diseases that accompany old age.

- I am currently accepting state medical coupons for children under 18. This may not seem like a lot but I seem to be one of the few in my area, and they reimburse about 35%. This helps to fill and overfill the schedule, but as I add more insurance that will go down. Then they won't have anywhere to go.
- This is a great opportunity for the ADA to develop community-based and community subsidized general practice residency programs throughout the U.S. The educational and clinical training of newly graduate dentists is horrific. It should be incumbent upon us to correct these deficiencies before those dentists are allowed to practice in the community
- I have offered to see patients who are referred to me by a volunteer service that attempts to find services for those who have not been able to access them. These patients are generally on disability or are single mothers who are going to school and working only part time, or medically compromised patients other dentists are not willing to work on. I relieve pain, improve appearance and provide partials/dentures for the lab fees or pro bono depending on their ability to pay. I even have an orthodontist who will do certain cases pro bono. I see them after hours and one of my assistants volunteers some days. It's very distressing that there is so little access for people with limited means. Their lives are stressed further with pain, reduced nutrition and poor self-image that affects their ability to gain employment. We have attempted to organize a free clinic at a local community college that has a dental assisting school, but did not have enough funds to get materials or volunteers to staff it. I can't do much as one dentist, but I can do something.
- I have agreed to take one DDS patient/year.