INTERVIEW  
with — Dr. Didier Dietschi

During the Clinical Masters™ Program in Esthetic and Restorative Dentistry session in Geneva, Switzerland, in May 2017, Christiane Ferret spoke with presenter Dr. Didier Dietschi about the use of composite and the importance of dental photography.

Q: Dr. Dietschi, in your experience, what are some of the most common problems that dentists run into with direct restoration, and how can these issues be addressed?
A: The problem is that it seems that there is less focus on and less effort in teaching and learning composites, which leads to general practitioners being less comfortable working with composites. Probably one of the main problems is obtaining proper anatomy, proper finishing, when it comes to posterior restoration, handling the thickness of the layers and selecting the right material for anterior restorations. According to the situation, we need to determine the right protocol. What is confusing for dentists is the number of new materials, so in the program, we focus on how to select a reliable shading system and universal composite system. We then clarify the use of the different protocols suitable for every indication, and we simplify the number of products and options. We want dentists to gain confidence in the area of direct and indirect adhesive procedures to apply them successfully in a broad range of indications. Simplification is definitely important for success.

Q: How important is it to have a hands-on component in a program like this?
A: Half of the time we spend on lectures to illustrate indications and to introduce the concepts that are essential for the clinical protocol. In the afternoon, we practice everything, step by step. The first two days deal with different techniques for different cavity sizes in the posterior region. The next two days deal with anterior techniques, like Class 4 and direct veneers. We demonstrate every step and try to work together with the whole group and learn from everyone’s work. For this session, we have a mixed group of participants from all over the world and many have travelled far to join this program.
“If one wants to be a better dentist, one first has to become a better photographer”

Q: What is the importance of being able to take accurate and engaging dental photographs?
A: Dental photography is central in dentistry. If one wants to be a better dentist, one first has to become a better photographer. The best way to progress is to first document all of the steps that one has followed. At the end of the day, one checks one’s material of the cases over a coffee to learn from one’s successes and mistakes. The problem in dentistry is that the patient is eager to leave after treatment, so the time to analyze and to make a mental image of one’s work is just a few seconds.

There is no way one can memorize everything one has done. One would lose the teaching value of one’s own work, so that’s why dental photography is one of the best ways to improve one’s skills, next to teaching and publications. There are then many reasons to document our work on a regular basis.

Q: How has patient demand for improved esthetics, coupled with a generally slow economy, affected the choice of treatment options?
A: The world economy may be in a recession, but that doesn’t prevent people dreaming about a better smile. In this regard, composite is a great material because it can be used alone and in combination with ceramics to improve the smile’s appearance. Doing everything with ceramics might be a little more expensive financially and in terms of tissue preservation; improving forms, proportions or color with composite for some teeth certainly is a way to obtain a better esthetic result.

And there are many patients who can benefit from composite as an additional material. The time when we only used composite or only ceramics is over. I think it is a great opportunity today to learn more about composite and what it can do for esthetics.