Functional & Cosmetic Excellence: Revitalization of a Proven Treatment Philosophy

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Functional and Cosmetic Excellence (FACE Tx™) is an approach to orthodontics treatment that establishes measurable treatment goals for six elements that form the basis of comprehensive, interdisciplinary, high-quality orthodontic care:

- Functional occlusion
- TMD health
- Facial balance
- Optimal dento-gingival esthetics (smile design)
- Periodontal health
- Stability

For each of these goals, the originators of the FACE Tx™ discipline have defined specific elements that create a framework for the systematic evaluation of the esthetic and functional needs of each patient and a method to assess treatment results. These treatment goals are supported by reputable studies published in well-respected, peer-reviewed journals. Sharing these goals and the means to achieve them with an interdisciplinary team—the orthodontist, the dentist and/or other specialist(s)—provides you, the orthodontist, an opportunity to work with esteemed colleagues to create outstanding results for beauty, health, and function.

Building successful practices is an important side benefit of this approach. Developing the skill sets required to manage and function within FACE Tx interdisciplinary treatment teams increases the complexity of cases one can treat. The collaborative interaction with experts in their respective fields (prosthodontists, periodontists, cosmetic and general dentists and surgeons), who ascribe to the same principles of tooth positioning and jaw function, creates a knowledge base to treat to predictable, on-time, optimal results while meeting and/or exceeding patients’ expectations. As a result, one’s referral network expands with resultant practice growth.

Worldwide Program of Instruction FACE Tx offers one of the world’s only postgraduate interdisciplinary continuing educational programs. Offered in numerous countries to university-trained orthodontists, it provides didactic instruction and hands-on experience. Through a series of 5 to 7 one-week sessions, a team of established educators and practitioners convey this unique curriculum. The associated FACE Tx fraternity incorporates a lifetime learning forum for thousands of doctors who have adapted FACE Tx principles to their practices.

The FACE Tx teaching staff builds on each participating clinician’s knowledge base. The full-time faculty—Drs. Jorge Ayala (Santiago, Chile), Renato Cocconi (Parma, Italy), L. Douglas Knight (Kentucky, USA), Domingo Martin (San Sebastian, Spain), Jeffrey McLendon (New York, USA), Straty Righellis (California, USA), and Carl Roy (Virginia, USA)—all manage active private practices and have extensive educational and clinical experience. The teaching faculty combines considerable years of skills and knowledge to formulate the FACE Tx approach to diagnosis, treatment planning and execution.
While functional occlusion serves as the foundation for the FACE Tx approach, the discipline further differentiates itself by integrating facial balance with dento-gingival esthetics for a comprehensive approach to diagnosis, treatment planning and execution. Dr. Renato Cocconi and surgeon, Dr. Miro Rafaini, have analyzed the standards for optimal facial balance and dento-gingival esthetics and have quantified the relationship of the inclination of the upper incisors with the alar base and the pedestal of the nose. These elements are important diagnostic findings for the development of specific treatment goals and metrics to assess the esthetic quality of treatment results. Dr. Jorge Ayala has quantified the relationship of specific treatment goals and specific assessment measurements, or the visualization of treatment outcomes for tooth and jaw joint positions and key aspects of facial balance and pleasing smile design; 5) Utilizing skillfully engineered and exactly manufactured orthodontic appliances and develop efficient mechanical systems—from bracket placement to debonding—that require minimal patient cooperation, foster good hygiene and result in less chairtime (Figure 2); 4) Undertake a never-ending quest for continued improvement in practice efficiency. Finishing on time with predictable outcomes allows one to provide optimal results and meet or exceed patients’ expectations.

**Conclusion**

The FACE Tx philosophy incorporates comprehensive diagnosis and treatment planning, efficient treatment mechanics and the latest orthodontic advancements for treating each patient’s dental, facial and gnathological systems. Its aim is a collaboration between the goals of orthodontics and comprehensive dentistry that incorporates interdisciplinary coordination. This approach expands the network of professionals who share principles of tooth positioning and jaw function. Such collaboration greatly strengthens one’s referral base as these colleagues understand the value of the orthodontic specialty and the specific value of FACE Tx. It promotes the viability of the orthodontic specialty through the development and maintenance of viable practices that combine function with beauty. The ultimate aim of FACE Tx is to foster excellence in orthodontic patient care and treatment through education, research and collaboration.

**About the Authors**

Dr. Righellis graduated from UCLA Dental School and received his orthodontic specialty certification from University of California, San Francisco. He maintains a private practice and serves as an associate clinical professor at the University of the Pacific and University of California, San Francisco. Dr. Righellis is a diplomate of the American Board of Orthodontics, is on the editorial review board for the American Journal of Orthodontics and lectures domestically and internationally on excellence in clinical orthodontics.

Dr. Knight received his dental degree from the University of Kentucky and was awarded a certificate in orthodontics and dento-facial orthopedics from New York University. Dr. Knight completed a comprehensive two-year clinical program in occlusion and orthodontics at the Roth-Williams Center for Functional Occlusion. In private practice, Dr. Knight is a diplomate of the American Board of Orthodontics, a fellow of the Academy of General Dentistry, an active member of the American Association of Orthodontists, and lectures domestically and internationally on new orthodontic techniques and interdisciplinary dentistry.

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