Why orthodontics?

In a profession dedicated to the tiniest of movements, it seems as if orthodontics is in constant motion. There is always something new to catch the eye and capture the imagination: new brackets and bands, new techniques and treatments, new ways to treat and diagnose patients. Even when we reread classic orthodontic books or articles, we are able to pick up some new tidbit or detail that we weren’t prepared to understand the first time we went through them. It never ceases to amaze me how much there is to learn once we graduate from school.

As orthodontists, we typically perform full-mouth rehabilitation cases every day. Canines and molars in Class I, a correct overbite and overjet and the completion of the six keys of occlusion are typically our main goal.

In a perfect world, every case would conclude with picture-perfect results. Unfortunately, there are times when the result doesn’t look as beautiful as we hoped it would. As clinical beings, we need to ask ourselves what is the problem in these cases, and how can we eliminate these problems in the future.

To me, the answer starts with this: a multidisciplinary knowledge is essential from the beginning of our treatments. Just like a sculptor, we must have a comprehensive understanding of facial proportions and how these proportions relate to the teeth.

Just as important, we also need the cooperation and input of an esthetic dental specialist to customize each smile. Working in conjunction, these two elements will help us elevate our results so that they attain more than just average results, and achieve a natural smile that reflects the beauty of our patient’s personality.

So getting back to the overriding question that we started with: why orthodontics? For me, the answer comes down to a single word — joy. Because in orthodontics as in life, the final destination is important, but how we get there is what makes life worth living.

Best Regards,
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