

A GUIDE FOR COSMETIC  
DENTISTS

# WHAT I WISH I'D KNOWN STARTING OUT

*The lessons behind 14,000 veneers - and why  
it's never too late to learn them*

## DR MANRINA RHODE

BDS · FOUNDER, DRMR ACADEMY  
FIRST DENTIST IN RESIDENCE, HARRODS  
& HARVEY NICHOLS

**14,000+**  
VENEERS

**24+**  
YEARS

**2,000+**  
DENTISTS IN  
DRMR  
ACADEMY  
COMMUNITY

DRMR · BE YOUR BEST YOU



# 01

CHAPTER ONE

## YOU DON'T HAVE TO CHOOSE BETWEEN ART AND DENTISTRY

**W**hen I was at school, I was certain I wanted to be an actress. My plan was to study theatre at university - to perform, to create, to express. I was passionate about art, about storytelling, about bringing something to life with my presence and my craft.

But my headmistress had other ideas. She called me aside one day and said something that would quietly change the course of my life. "You're very good at art," she told me, "but you're also very good at science. Did you know you could combine the two in dentistry?"

I wasn't particularly interested. Dentistry didn't feel glamorous. It didn't feel creative. It felt like a sensible, serious career - and that wasn't what I wanted at all. But I am, at heart, a rule follower. So I did what she suggested and went to shadow a dentist.

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*He was a cool guy. And for the first time, I could actually see myself in that job.*

I came back from that experience and changed my A-levels to maths, chemistry and biology. I had made my decision: I was going to become a dentist. Not because I had abandoned my love of art - but because I had realised, quietly and completely, that dentistry IS art. It is the perfect combination of science and art. And no one had ever told me that before.

What I know now - after 24 years and over 14,000 veneers - is that dentistry offers an extraordinary spectrum of creative possibility. Even at the most fundamental level, as a general dentist, there is artistry involved: mimicking nature, matching shade, restoring form. But as you move towards cosmetic dentistry, the art becomes everything.

As a cosmetic dentist, I am creating beautiful things with my hands every single day. I am emulating nature. I am sculpting confidence. And on my longest, most complex cases, I enter what I can only describe as a flow state - a kind of meditative art. The world outside disappears. There is only the work, the craft, and the absolute satisfaction of creating something beautiful that will change someone's life.

We are so fortunate in dentistry. We don't stare at screens all day. We use our hands. We talk to people. We create something tangible, in a controlled environment, that genuinely transforms lives. That is a beautiful way to spend your days.

#### THE LESSON

*There is also science at the heart of all of this - and it is a privilege to learn it. The science of smile design. The science of what is perceived as optimal beauty. As cosmetic dentists, we are trained to look at a smile and immediately understand what someone is unhappy about - even when they can't articulate it themselves.*

Which is why, as a cosmetic dentist, you attract your own tribe. Patients gravitate to dentists whose aesthetic sensibility resonates with them. Some cosmetic dentists love that bold, bright Hollywood smile. I have always been drawn to something different - a natural, luminous beauty that looks as though it was always there. So the patients who want that result find me. And that is exactly as it should be.

You don't have to choose between art and dentistry. You never did. The only question is: how far along that spectrum do you want to go?

A THOUGHT TO CARRY FORWARD

*"If you chose dentistry because you love science, you made a great choice. But if somewhere inside you there is also a creative soul - know that cosmetic dentistry is waiting for you. The canvas is just smaller than you imagined."*

## CONFIDENCE COMES **AFTER** THE WORK, NOT BEFORE IT

**T**wenty-four years ago, before I had done a single veneer, before I had built a practice, before any of it - a job was advertised for the first dentist at Harvey Nichols.

This was something entirely new. The very first luxury designer dental clinic to come to the UK. For me, it represented everything I wanted: beautiful work, exceptional patients, an environment that took dentistry seriously as a craft. I wanted that job with everything I had.

There was just one problem. I had only just graduated. I was in my training year. The position required someone considerably more experienced than me. By every reasonable measure, I was not ready.

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*I knew it was something I wanted. So I went for it with everything I could. I studied. I prepared. I made myself as ready as I possibly could for that interview. And somehow - I got the job.*

When I was offered the position, I told my new boss honestly: "I need to point out that I don't have the experience you asked for in the advert." His response has stayed with me ever since. "That's okay," he said. "You have the right attitude. I'll teach you the rest."

What followed was an apprenticeship in the truest sense. He checked my treatment plans. He checked my preparations, my impressions, my temporaries, my photography. Everything I did, he reviewed and helped me improve. I wasn't expected to be perfect. I was expected to learn, and to care, and to show up with the right attitude every single day.

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It wasn't imposter syndrome I was experiencing - it was simply reality. I didn't have the experience yet. But here is what I have learned: as long as you are honest with your employer, your mentors, the people training you, about where you are and what you need - there will always be people who want to help you get there.

I think about that now, every day, through my mentorship programme. I get to be for other dentists what my boss was for me. I don't gatekeep anything. Everything I know, I share. Every technique, every framework, every hard-won lesson - it is theirs. Because if we can be honest about what we need to improve, and if we have the right mentors to support us, there is no reason for imposter syndrome to hold us back.

#### THE LESSON

*There is something important I want to say about how we learn in dentistry - because I think we get this wrong, consistently, as a profession. As dentists, we tend to be perfectionists. We don't like mistakes. We are not natural risk-takers. And so when we learn a new technique - even on a course, even with excellent teaching - we often don't bring it into practice. We don't feel ready. We wait for a confidence that never quite arrives, because confidence doesn't come before the work. It comes after it.*

A YouTube video is not enough. A weekend course alone is often not enough either - not because the teaching is poor, but because when you return to your practice on Monday morning, alone, with a patient in the chair, there is no one there to catch you. No one to answer the question you didn't know you'd need to ask. And so the technique stays learned but unpractised. The confidence stays out of reach.

This is why mentorship changes everything. Not because a mentor does the work for you - but because they create the conditions in which you can actually do it yourself. With support. With someone to message. With the knowledge that you are not figuring this out alone.

We learn in dentistry by doing. That is the only way. And the sooner we accept that - and find the right people to support us while we do - the sooner confidence stops being something we wait for, and starts being something we build.

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A T H O U G H T T O C A R R Y F O R W A R D

*"Don't wait until you feel ready. Get the support in place, be honest about where you are, and begin. The confidence you're looking for is on the other side of the work - not before it."*

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## PATIENTS ARE NOT BUYING A TREATMENT. THEY ARE BUYING A TRANSFORMATION.

**T**his is perhaps the most important shift I have made in my entire career - and it took me twenty years to fully articulate it.

Nobody comes to my clinic wanting veneers. Nobody books a consultation because they have decided they need composite bonding, or Invisalign, or a smile makeover. They come because there is something in their life they cannot do fully. A smile they hide in photographs. A laugh they suppress in meetings. A version of themselves they have never quite been able to show the world.

Think about it this way. When someone buys a car, they are not buying four wheels and an engine. They are buying how that car makes them feel when they drive it - the freedom, the confidence, the joy of it. Nobody buys a car. They buy a feeling.

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*They are not buying a veneer. They are buying the confidence to show up fully - in every room, in every photograph, in every moment of their life.*

What we create, as cosmetic dentists, is confidence. That word gets overused in our industry - but it is overused precisely because it is true. We are confidence creators. The people who stand on stages and command rooms, the ones who are magnetic and charismatic and remembered - they smile. Freely, openly, without thinking. To be able to do that, you have to be proud of your smile. And when someone isn't, it holds them back in ways they may not even fully recognise.

THE LESSON

*when we change a smile - when we create something a patient can use to its full ability, rather than hide - we change everything. The ripple effect reaches into every corner of someone's life. Their relationships. Their career. Their sense of who they are. It is never about the veneer. It is about the life-changing outcome.*

The moment you understand this, everything about the way you consult, communicate and connect with patients changes. The clinical language is for us. The language of transformation is for them. In my consultations, I learned to ask different questions - not "what treatment are you interested in?" but "what would you love to be able to do that you can't do now?" Not "what don't you like about your smile?" but "how does your smile make you feel?"

Twenty years into my career, I realised I had always been a confidence creator. I just hadn't had the language for it yet. Now that I do, I give it to every dentist I mentor. Because once you understand what you are truly offering, everything - your consultations, your pricing, your patient relationships - finds its proper place.

A THOUGHT TO CARRY FORWARD

*"Ask yourself: what is my patient really buying? The answer is never the treatment. Find what it is - and speak to that instead."*

## YOUR PERSONAL BRAND IS YOUR REFERRAL SYSTEM

I built my entire luxury Knightsbridge clinic from Instagram. When people ask me what I would do if Instagram closed down tomorrow - I feel the weight of that question, because it is a real one. My patients come from all over the world. They choose me specifically. They have researched me, followed me, watched me work. And the vast majority found me through my Instagram page.

I want to say that clearly, because I think some dentists still believe that social media is optional. A nice-to-have. Something the younger generation does. It is not. It is the most powerful referral system that has ever existed - and we have access to it for free.

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Word of mouth is still, without question, the most valuable source of patients. I have over 14,000 veneers out in the world, on patients who are proud of their smiles and sending their friends to see me. That is powerful, and I never take it for granted. The next significant source of patients at my clinic is organic Instagram. And increasingly - something I find fascinating - referrals are arriving from AI platforms, which recommend me the way a trusted friend might: listing my experience, my approach, the reasons someone might choose me. The landscape is shifting quickly.

But here is what I told a dental student recently, when he said he would rather build his practice on excellence and word of mouth alone, without showing himself online: word of mouth will bring you patients. Instagram will bring you ten times that. Or a hundred times. Or a thousand. The principle is the same. The reach is incomparable.

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*Instagram doesn't replace word of mouth. It amplifies it - to a scale that is simply impossible without an online presence.*

We are living in the era of the personal brand. Think of Apple and Steve Jobs. The brand is powerful. But the person behind it gives it something no logo ever could - humanity, trust, a face you feel you know. As cosmetic dentists, we have that opportunity every single day. And most of us are not taking it.

The pages that work are not the ones showing pristine clinic interiors with no personality. The pages that attract patients - real patients, loyal patients, patients who have already decided they want you before they even pick up the phone - are the ones where you can feel the person behind the screen. Where you follow someone, and over weeks and months you come to know them. How they think. What they care about. What makes them laugh.

THE LESSON

*People buy people. They are not buying composite bonding - they are buying the right person to do their composite bonding. If they don't connect with you, it doesn't matter how excellent your work is. Show them who you are.*

I remember someone who works within a dental company contacting me to share a story. He had been at a pub in the countryside - nowhere near London - and overheard the women at the table next to him talking about me. One of them pulled out her phone and showed the others my Instagram page. "Her name's Dr Mannina Rhode," she said. "You should check her out." He thought he should let me know. That is what a personal brand does. It turns your portfolio into something your patients carry in their pocket and share with their friends.

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For dentists who feel nervous about showing themselves on camera - and that nervousness is entirely normal - I want to offer this: start with Stories. They disappear after 24 hours. No permanence, no pressure. Just you, talking to camera as if you were on FaceTime with a friend.

Think about your perfect patient. Really think about who they are. How old are they? What do they do? What question are they asking that you can answer right now? Talk to that person. Look at the camera and talk directly to them. That is how your best content will always be made.

It will feel awkward the first time. The tenth time, it will feel better. By the hundredth time, it will feel like breathing. I have watched dentists go from standing stiffly in front of a camera, barely able to speak, to running - genuinely running - building extraordinary presences and attracting the practices they always dreamed of. All they did was start.

You don't need to be glamorous. You don't need a sports car or a private jet. You need to be genuinely, authentically yourself. A picture of your morning coffee. A walk in the countryside at the weekend. Simple, honest, human moments. People find you relatable. They find you likeable. And likeable people attract patients.

In the words of Nike: just do it. Progress over perfection. Post it, and see what happens. If you ever feel uncomfortable, you can archive it. But if you don't start, you will never know what was possible.

*"Your personal brand is not about showing off. It is about showing up - consistently, authentically, as yourself. Do that, and your tribe will find you."*

05 CHAPTER FIVE

## UNDERCHARGING ATTRACTS THE WRONG PATIENTS

**I**t is very normal to feel nervous about talking about money. And as dentists, I think that nervousness runs particularly deep - because at some point in our careers, most of us have read an article or heard a story about a patient saying: "That dentist did unnecessary treatment on me because they wanted to make money." Or: "That dentist drives that car because they overcharged for everything."

That public narrative - even if it represents only a tiny fraction of patient experiences - quietly plants an insecurity in our minds. It makes us worry about how we come across when we discuss fees. It makes us soften our prices, apologise for our costs, or hand the conversation to our receptionist because we cannot bear to be the one who says the number out loud.

This is something I want to address directly: communication skills are one of the most important and most underdeveloped skills in dentistry. We spend years learning extraordinary clinical techniques - and rightly so. But we are rarely taught how to communicate confidently, how to present a treatment plan with conviction, or how to talk about money without feeling like we are doing something wrong. This gap holds so many talented dentists back.



*Charging for your expertise and your time is not something to be embarrassed about. It is something to be proud of.*

Think about what it actually takes to become a dentist. Nobody wakes up one morning and decides to be one by lunchtime. You need exceptional A-level grades - the kind that are genuinely difficult to achieve. You need the extracurricular evidence to show you are a well-rounded person. You sit through a five-year degree that is longer than almost every other degree programme. And then the real training begins - because everything that comes after that is down to you. Every course you attend, every mentorship programme you join, every weekend you give up to upskill - all of that time and investment eventually needs to be reflected in what you charge.

I find it helpful to think of it like hairdressers. When you book an appointment, you are asked whether you want to see the trainee, the intermediate stylist, the top stylist, or the celebrity hairdresser. Each has a different price. Nobody is offended by this - because it makes sense. You choose the level that suits where you are and what you want. Dentistry is exactly the same. There is a price structure for every level of expertise and experience, and your job is to make sure your fees honestly reflect the level you are operating at.

THE LESSON

*think of it like a flight from London to Dubai. The budget airline and the first class cabin leave at the same time and land at the same time. The destination is identical. But the experience - the environment, the service, the comfort, the quality of everything around you - is completely different. And depending on where you are in life and what matters to you, you will pay accordingly. Dentistry works the same way.*

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At DRMR, we are very deliberately at one end of that spectrum. We are not the cheapest in the country, and we are not trying to be. We see fewer patients. We do fewer cases. But we do the cases we want to do, with the materials we want to use, in the environment we have built, with a team that delivers the experience we have promised. Low volume. The right level of profit. And patients who are genuinely grateful for the quality they receive.

Other practices operate at the opposite end - high volume, competitive pricing, Invisalign offers designed to bring patients through the door, with the intention of converting them onto other treatments. That is a valid business model. It works for the dentists who choose it. There is room in dentistry for every model along that spectrum. What matters is that you choose yours consciously, and that you live up to it.

If you want to charge premium fees, you must deliver a premium experience. If you are going to charge mid-range, deliver something meaningfully better than the NHS. If you are going to charge at the lower end of private dentistry, be honest with yourself about why, and make sure that is genuinely where you want to be. The problem is never the price. The problem is when your fees and your offering are out of alignment - when you are charging more than you are delivering, or undercharging for work that deserves to be valued properly.

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Several dentists in my mentorship programme joined specifically to make this transition - from discounting and volume to premium positioning. And what I see, month after month, is that the shift is never just clinical. It is a mindset shift. One of my mentees was working across three practices - two fully private, one mixed NHS and private. After six months in the programme, surrounded by a community of dentists who think ambitiously, she made the decision to leave the mixed practice entirely and focus solely on her private cosmetic work. It was a scary change. It took her time to get there. But being in a growth environment gave her permission to do what she already knew she wanted.

If you want to make that transition, the formula is straightforward: choose your mentors aspirationally, based on where you want to be rather than where you are. Learn the blueprint from people who have already built what you want to build. Surround yourself with a community that expects more of you. Make sure your clinical skill set is ready for the next level. And when you are ready - go for it.

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A THOUGHT TO CARRY FORWARD

*"Choose your level. Live up to it. And never apologise for charging what your expertise, your time, and your training are genuinely worth."*

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## MINIMALLY INVASIVE IS THE FUTURE - AND THE ETHICAL CHOICE

**W**hen I graduated in 2002, veneers were a relatively new treatment in the UK. They had already become popular in the United States, but they had not yet fully made their way over here. Patients were asking for them. But it was not the commonplace treatment it is today.

I did the majority of my initial cosmetic dental education in America - between around 2004 and 2007, I was travelling back and forth regularly, studying the Aesthetic Advantage programme in New York and the occlusion programme at the Dawson Academy in Florida. I spent a significant amount of time and money making sure I was trained at the very highest level available anywhere in the world. The good news for dentists today is that you no longer need to cross the Atlantic to access that quality of teaching - those same principles and techniques are now available right here in the UK through DRMR Academy.

But back then, the methodology was very different from what we practise today. Pre-orthodontic alignment was not yet a standard part of smile design. Clear aligners existed - I attended one of the very first Invisalign courses in 2004 - but they were not yet widely used. And so when a patient came in wanting a smile makeover with crowded or misaligned teeth, the conversation went something like this: "You could have braces, but if you are not keen on that, then some of these teeth will likely need root canal treatment before we prepare them for veneers." Elective endodontics. We would consent the patient, explain the risks, and proceed.

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*It seems almost unthinkable now. But that was the standard of care at the time - and we were following it in good faith.*

The same was true of gum recontouring. The approach I was taught in America was to simply reposition the gum tissue where you needed it, trusting that the underlying bone would naturally adapt. We were aware of biological width - the principle that bone needs to sit approximately three millimetres from the gum margin - but the belief was that the bone would migrate downward in response to the soft tissue change, so surgical bone removal was rarely performed.

And for a while, it worked - or seemed to. I was doing ten to twenty veneers a day at the clinic where I worked, which had a television show called Ten Years Younger on Channel 4. Every Thursday night the programme aired, and every Friday morning there would be two hundred new patients trying to book appointments. My twenties were consumed by it. The veneer revolution was in full swing.

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But then the complications started showing up. Around one in ten patients whose gum tissue I had repositioned without surgical bone removal came back with inflammation. Persistent, frustrating, entirely avoidable inflammation. And I made a decision: this was not good enough. If I was going to spend my entire career doing this work, I needed to be able to trust my outcomes completely. I needed happy, comfortable patients - not patients managing ongoing problems from their treatment.

Around 2008, I learned how to perform surgical gum lifts properly. Supported again by a mentor who helped me through the transition, I began doing the procedure correctly - reflecting the tissue, removing bone to respect biological width, suturing everything back into its proper position. It looked more dramatic. I always told patients: do not watch this on YouTube. But the results were stable, predictable, and genuinely long-lasting. The complications disappeared.

#### THE LESSON

*Around the same time, clear aligner technology started to become genuinely accessible. By 2008, minimally invasive dentistry was beginning its revolution in the UK. Pre-orthodontic alignment before veneers became standard. Elective endodontics became a thing of the past - something that now seems, frankly, difficult to justify. Everything changed. And the change was entirely for the better.*

Today, everything I do is built around preserving natural tooth structure. The principle is simple: always recommend the least amount of treatment possible for the best result. If a tooth can be aligned first to reduce the preparation needed, we align it. If tissue can be preserved, we preserve it. If we can achieve a beautiful, long-lasting result while keeping as much natural tooth as possible, that is always the plan we will recommend.

This is not just the ethical choice - though it absolutely is that. It is also the smart business choice. My practice depends on patients who are comfortable, satisfied, and confident in their results for years to come. Complications cost time, reputation, and the trust you have worked so hard to build. Minimally invasive dentistry protects all of that.

If you are still preparing teeth more aggressively than necessary, I would ask you to look honestly at why. The techniques exist. The materials are available. The training is accessible. And your patients - their teeth, their long-term health, their trust in you - deserve the most conservative approach that will still deliver the result they came for. That is what great cosmetic dentistry looks like today.

A THOUGHT TO CARRY FORWARD

*"Always recommend the plan that involves the least amount of treatment for the best result. That is not compromise. That is excellence."*

CHAPTER SEVEN

## YOUR NETWORK IS YOUR NET WORTH

**I** was really fortunate in the first decade of my career. The principals I worked for were excellent clinicians who were genuinely invested in helping me achieve my goals.

They were willing to teach, and I was willing to learn. I was prepared to do whatever it took to be the best I could be - and I was determined not to disappoint the people who had believed in me.

That cycle is one of the most beautiful things about our profession. Most of us, at some point in our careers, have had someone who helped us along the way - someone we are genuinely grateful to. And then, as we gain experience, that same instinct to help others emerges naturally. It is part of human nature. We like to learn, and we like to teach. I feel that every single day through Manrina's Mentorship.



*Despite being surrounded by people all day, dentistry can be a profoundly lonely profession. And that loneliness, if left unaddressed, holds so many talented dentists back.*

We are lucky in dentistry. We are not sitting alone in front of a computer at home. We have our nurses, our patients, our reception teams, our coordinators. We get human interaction all day. And yet, when a difficult case arises - when you are sitting with a patient in the chair and you are genuinely unsure of the right way to proceed - that loneliness hits hard. In that moment, you wish desperately for someone to call. Someone who understands. Someone who has been there before. For dentists working in a single-surgery clinic on their own, that feeling can be constant.



So how do you build the network that will sustain you throughout your career? I think about it in three distinct areas.

The first is professional associations. Joining one is the baseline - it immediately connects you to a wider community of dentists who share your professional identity. From there, attending their networking events is the next step. But if you want to go deeper, consider joining a committee. You give your time voluntarily, yes - but you gain something far more valuable: relationships. Committee work leads to board work. I have sat on boards throughout the majority of my career, across various associations within our profession. Those regular meetings, over years, build genuine friendships and professional trust that are impossible to replicate any other way.

The second area is your personal black book. As a cosmetic dentist, you need to know your specialists - an endodontist, a periodontist, an orthodontist, an implant surgeon. Not just their names, but their faces. Meet them for coffee. Visit their clinics. Make sure you would feel genuinely comfortable referring your patients to them, and that they know who you are when you call. Beyond dentistry, build relationships with the people your patients are also seeing - a great rhinoplasty surgeon, a hair transplant surgeon, a dermatologist, a hairdresser, a nail salon you love. Cosmetic patients are looking for all of these services. If you can refer confidently to a network of trusted professionals, that network will refer back to you. Word-of-mouth flows in both directions.

#### THE LESSON

*The third area - and the one I believe makes the greatest difference - is mentorship. Find a programme with dentists who share your vision and your ambition. Not just the teaching, but the community. In Manrina's Mentorship, our quarterly face-to-face days are not optional extras - they are the foundation. Because however much you connect on WhatsApp or on our group calls, it is sitting in the same room as someone, understanding their journey, sharing your own, that builds the kind of relationships that genuinely sustain you.*

One final thought on networks and methodology: when you learn a technique from a specific teacher, stay within that tribe for your ongoing questions and support. If you follow my methodology for veneers and something goes wrong, I can help you immediately - because I know exactly how you prepped, what bond you used, how you cemented. But when someone messages me on Instagram with a veneer problem and I have no idea what technique they followed, I have so many questions I cannot even begin to help them efficiently. Find your teachers. Learn their methods. And then stay connected to the community they have built around those methods. That is how you get the support you actually need.

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A THOUGHT TO CARRY FORWARD

*"The dentists who thrive are rarely the ones who go it alone. Find your people - your mentors, your specialists, your community. And then show up for them the way you hope they will show up for you."*

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## THE TRANSFORMATION IS THE WHOLE POINT

I cannot point to a single case that changed my career. What I can tell you is that after 24 years and over 14,000 veneers, I have been a dentist for longer than I have not been one. And what never ceases to amaze me - what still moves me, every single day - is the way people transform after their smile makeover.

I may not always remember a patient's name. But I will remember their mouth. And when I see it, I will remember their story. They come to me sometimes lacking confidence. Sometimes visibly unhappy. Occasionally, even a little angry - carrying something heavy that they cannot quite name. And then, six months or a year later, they come back for their dental health check. And they have gone blonde. Or they have changed the way they dress. Or they have lost weight, or got that job, or left that difficult relationship, or found a wonderful new one. Whatever the change - it happened because the way they see themselves is different now. One thing was holding them back. And it is gone.

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*I love my job every day because I know the difference the work I am about to do will make to that person's life. I have seen it so many times that I never doubt it.*

This is what cosmetic dentistry gives you that general dentistry so rarely does. In general dentistry, patients come to you in pain, or reluctantly, or saying "I hate the dentist." In cosmetic dentistry, they have chosen to come to you. They have chosen this journey. They have chosen you. And that changes everything about how they show up - and how you show up for them.

I remind my team of this regularly, in our morning huddles and our team meetings. For us, it can feel like just another day at work. But for every single patient who walks through that door, this is a transformation they have chosen, saved for, and been looking forward to. It is an incredibly emotional and exciting time for them. We owe them our full presence, our best work, and our genuine joy in what we are doing together.

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Now - how do you turn one great case into many more? At DRMR, at the end of every smile makeover, we give our patients a complimentary consultation card for five of their friends. It is a gift - something exciting to share. "You have just been through this transformation - if you have five friends who would love the same experience, we would love you to give them the gift of a free consultation." Every great case has the potential to bring five more.

But if that case is also posted on Instagram - with the patient's consent and with beautiful photography - the reach multiplies exponentially. I cannot tell you how many times a patient has arrived at my clinic holding a screenshot of my own work from social media, saying: "I saw this and I want a smile like this." Your patients are your biggest advocates. Your photography is your most powerful marketing tool. And every great case, shared with care and permission, can bring you a multitude of others.

THE LESSON

*Even without social media consent, you can send your patient their before-and-after photographs as a gift. Let them share their own transformation with whoever they choose. Because patients very quickly forget what their smile used to look like - they adjust to their new reality within days. Give them the evidence of how far they have come. They will want to share it. And that sharing will bring people to you.*

A THOUGHT TO CARRY FORWARD

*"Every great case is a story waiting to be told. Document it. Share it. And never underestimate how far one beautiful result can travel."*

# SYSTEMS SET YOU FREE

I am very big on systems. My goal at DRMR is that every single person who comes into contact with our business - at any point, with any member of our team - receives exactly the same five-star experience. That does not happen by accident. It happens because we have clear, detailed Standard Operating Procedures for everything.

When you set up a new business, building those SOPs is intense work. You are essentially writing down your entire vision of how you want things to be done - the standard you expect, the experience you are committed to delivering, the detail that matters to you. It takes time. But once it is done, those systems become the foundation on which everything else is built. They evolve over time, as your practice grows and your standards develop. But you always have them. And they mean that your vision is not dependent on you being in the room.

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Alongside SOPs, the technology you use makes an enormous difference. At DRMR, we use a wide range of apps and tools to keep everything organised, and I share exactly what we use - and how we use it - within the resource section of Manrina's Mentorship, so that my mentees can implement the same systems in their own practices.

One of the simplest and most transformative tools we use is Trello. Every team member has a board with three columns: to do, doing, done. Tasks are assigned to specific people, given due dates, and visible to everyone. At any moment, I can log on to any team member's board and see exactly where they are with their tasks. No chasing. No wondering whether something has been done. No relying on memory or verbal reminders. The system holds it all.

THE LESSON

*Dentists tend to be overthinkers. We carry far too much in our heads - the ideas we need to action, the things we need to tell someone, the tasks we are worried will fall through the cracks. Getting all of that out of your head and into a system is not just good business practice. It is genuinely healthier. It frees up mental space. It reduces anxiety. It lets you be present for your patients and your family rather than running a to-do list in the back of your mind while you work.*

But the single piece of advice I give to every cosmetic dentist who wants to run a smoother, more protected, more rewarding practice is this: invest in dental photography. Learn it properly. Do a course. Buy the right equipment. And then make it a non-negotiable habit for every single patient, at every stage of their treatment journey.

Here is why. In my new patient consultation pro forma, one of the things we measure and document is black triangles - those small dark spaces between teeth at the gumline. We point them out to patients before we begin. And the reason is simple: I have learned, over 24 years, that if you tell a patient something was there before you started, you are an expert. If they tell you at the end of treatment, you are in trouble. Beautiful photography, taken before you touch a single tooth, means you can sit with a patient at any point and say: "Let us look at these pictures from your very first appointment. That triangle was always there." It protects you. It educates them. And it means the conversation you have is one of expertise, not defence.

Photography also gives patients something priceless: the ability to see how far they have come. Patients adjust to their new smile extraordinarily quickly - often within days of their temporaries being fitted, they have already forgotten what their teeth looked like before. A beautiful set of before-and-after images, even sent privately just to them, allows them to truly appreciate the transformation. And patients who appreciate their transformation become your most enthusiastic advocates.

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A T H O U G H T T O C A R R Y F O R W A R D

*"Build the systems once. Then let them do the work. The goal is a practice that delivers excellence consistently - whether you are in the room or not."*

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# 10

CHAPTER TEN

## YOU ARE ONLY AT THE BEGINNING

**T**he ten-year itch is a real thing in dentistry. I have seen it throughout my career - dentists who were excited, energised and growing in their first decade, who reach that ten-year mark and find that the treatments they once found thrilling have started to feel repetitive. The cases that used to keep them up at night with excitement have become routine. The spark has dimmed.

I understand this, because one of the fundamental principles of being human is that we need to keep learning. We need to keep growing. Our brains need stimulation - new challenges, new techniques, new problems to solve. Without that, even the most beautiful work becomes hollow.

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*I will never feel like I have made it and can stop. Not because I cannot see how far I have come - I can, and I am proud of it. But because there is always so much more ahead.*

For me, the answer has always been to keep adding. Whether that is a new treatment - facial aesthetics, implants, porcelain veneers, clear aligner systems, gum contouring - or new technology. At DRMR, we have AI X-rays, an intraoral scanner, a hard and soft tissue laser. Every time we bring in a new piece of equipment or a new treatment, the whole team feels it. There is a collective energy that returns. Something new to focus on. Something new to master. That stimulation matters - not just professionally, but personally.

I genuinely believe I am only at approximately ten percent of what I am capable of achieving in my career. That is not false modesty. It is how I experience my own potential when I look at everything still ahead - the online academy I am building, the book I am writing, the speaking I want to do, the dentists I want to reach through Manrina's Mentorship, and the wider change I want to be part of in raising the quality of cosmetic dentistry being practised across the world. There is so much still to create. And I love the process of creation more than almost anything.

THE LESSON

*The digital revolution in dentistry excites me enormously. AI, agentic technology, the changes coming in how we run our businesses and communicate with our patients - I am embracing all of it. Not because change is easy, but because growth is exciting. And the dentists who will thrive in the next decade are the ones who stay curious, stay hungry, and never mistake where they are now for where they could be.*

If you are reading this and you have been in dentistry for ten years, fifteen, twenty or more - and something in you has gone quiet that used to be loud - I want you to know that it does not have to stay that way. Find the thing that excites you again. A new treatment. A new community. A new ambition. There are dentists in Manrina's Mentorship who came to me exactly at that point - experienced, talented, successful by most measures, but quietly bored and disconnected from why they started. And watching them find that spark again is, honestly, one of the greatest privileges of my career.

You are not done. You are not even close to done. Keep learning. Keep growing. Keep pushing towards the version of your career that genuinely excites you.

The best is still ahead. For all of us.

A THOUGHT TO CARRY FORWARD

*"Never mistake where you are now for where you could be. Keep finding your passion. Keep grabbing it. Growth is not just professional - it is the whole point."*

CONTINUE THE JOURNEY

## **Ready to Go Further?**

If this eBook has resonated with you, Manrina's Mentorship was built for exactly this moment. Join a community of ambitious dentists learning, growing and building practices they are proud of.

————— MANRINA'S MENTORSHIP - DRMR ACADEMY —————