

Empowering Women Dentists: The Alchemy of Dentistry
Continuing Dental Education
Syllabus 2022

Course Description

This course will address women dentists' overall wellbeing and mental and physical wellness. Just because dentistry has a certain reputation, and the historical systems of dental education and dental practice need updating, does not mean you cannot find fulfillment in your career and life starting now. This realistic and thorough course is designed to help dentists learn about the nuances of Impostor Phenomenon (IP) in dentistry, conquer self-doubt and the fear of failure, and practice evidence-based methods to address stress, anxiety and burnout. Participants will recognize where they can make changes to improve their wellbeing and be provided the tools to make these tangible improvements to both their personal and professional lives. The goal is to have participants leave not only with better self-awareness, but actionable steps to make use of this awareness and the confidence that they have the power to do so.

This group coaching program will include scheduled lecture content delivered live (virtually). Lectures will contain interactive seminar content delivery, guided group and individual exercises and an opportunity to network and share with other participants in a safe and collaborative environment. The live lectures are designed to deliver content and practice techniques, but also to build a community between women dentists and inspire them to foster these types of relationships in the communities they already belong to. The program will also offer 1-on-1 office hours with Dr. Jessica to provide participants the opportunity for more individual coaching as they progress through the course objectives.

Learning Objectives

1. Identify impostor phenomenon and impostor types
2. Learn tangible skills to break down self-doubt and self-sabotaging behaviours
3. Rewrite the inner narrative to boost self-confidence
4. Define and examine the differences between 'good' and 'bad' perfectionism
5. List at least three cognitive distortions and at least three safety behaviours
6. Define and acknowledge worry, stress and anxiety
7. Classify components of burnout and establish self-compassion
8. Gain an understanding of how to identify and prevent burnout
9. Create healthy habits and generate healthy boundaries that reinforce mental and physical wellbeing

To ultimately:

1. Identify self-doubt to redefine perfection, embrace learning opportunities and harness strengths,
2. Explore dental stressors to prevent burnout at work, and
3. Design a work/life blueprint that defines boundaries, improves self-care and finds fulfillment in all facets of life to rediscover motivation and happiness in life and work

Faculty

Dr. Jessica Metcalfe, DMD

Founder of *The Alchemist Dentist*

International Speaker | Life and Business Coach | Dentist to Oncology Patients

Location

Virtual

Annual Membership

Sign up by emailing info@drjessicametcalfe.com

Target Audience

Women dentists (participants are eligible to receive 24 CE credits for the year)

Professional Gaps to be Addressed

One foundational study shows that being a dentist increases the risk of suicidality by 564%, and that is without considering differences between males and females [1]. Continuing research into dentists' and dental students' wellbeing describes a rising tide of healthcare professionals feeling distressed, with the strongest predictors being IP and perfectionism [2]. This culture of stress and burnout in dentistry is certainly damaging for dentists, but also the patients they seek to serve. Dentists wrestling with chronic stress, compassion and decision fatigue, and cycles of burnout cannot deliver to their fullest potential or pursue the full capacity of their careers.

There is an even greater need to provide education about IP, perfectionism and burnout for women dentists, when recent studies show that more females are afflicted by IP than males in a given cohort, and females with IP are more likely to develop burnout and experience physical and emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and decreased confidence [3, 4]. Though it is promising that more research seeks to characterize IP and burnout in populations of dentists and other healthcare providers, there is a clear gap between documenting IP and burnout and the paradigm shift that is required to start informing and arming women dentists with the tools they need to manage IP, perfectionism, stress and anxiety, and burnout. This course seeks to be a catalyst for this movement in dental education and in practice.

If given the appropriate education, via the most effective methods, to foster meaningful self-awareness and practice evidence-based methods to confront IP and prevent burnout, women dentists can take back control in parts of their lives they thought it lost and improve their overall wellbeing (which will, in turn, improve their motivation and passion for their careers and lives). Despite the circumstances today, or perhaps because of them, building communities and fostering supportive relationships is more important than ever to interrupt cycles of burnout in work (and life). This program will encourage female dentists to do just that, by reducing the apprehension to so within the program structure itself.

This program also seeks to leverage the benefit of professional coaching for healthcare professionals. In only 3.5 hours of professional coaching over a period of six months, overall rates of burnout and levels of emotional exhaustion were significantly decreased [5]. The professional coaching was led by a non-doctor, so imagine what a program run by dentists for

dentists will accomplish. This program combines an invaluable opportunity for community-building via group coaching and the individualized attention of 1-on-1 coaching, to not only educate women dentists but to give them the confidence and ability to use that knowledge to its greatest benefit. Participants will leave changed, and with personalized action plans that will allow them to continue to pivot and evolve into the dental career and future that most fulfills them.

There is no pre-existing CE program of this kind. This program is an opportunity to drive systemic change in the practice of dentistry, by empowering women dentists in their careers and encouraging them to foster local and national communities that do the same. The mentality in dentistry that has brought the culture to this point is not sustainable, it is time to change it and make it so.

Accreditation

This program has been organized and implemented in accordance with the accreditation requirements of the Program Approval for Continuing Education (PACE) by the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD) as provided by *The Alchemist Dentist*.

Designation

The Alchemist Dentist designates this live activity for a maximum of 24 CE credits. Each dentist should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activities of the program.

Non-AGD members also have the opportunity to earn 24 CE credits by completing this program. It is the responsibility of non-AGD participants to seek approval from their respective colleges. *The Alchemist Dentist* will provide proof of completion along with this syllabus.

References

1. Stack S. Suicide risk among dentists: A multivariate analysis. *Deviant Behav.* 1996;17(1):107-17.
2. Henning K, Ey S, Shaw D. Perfectionism, the impostor phenomenon and psychological adjustment in medical, dental, nursing and pharmacy students. *Med Educ.* 1998;32(5):456-64.
3. Villwock JA, Sobin LB, Koester LA, Harris TM. Impostor syndrome and burnout among American medical students: A pilot study. *International journal of medical education.* 2016;7:364.
4. Holliday AM, Gheihman G, Cooper C, Sullivan A, Ohyama H, Leaf DE, et al. High prevalence of imposterism among female Harvard medical and dental students. *Journal of general internal medicine.* 2020;35(8):2499-501.
5. Dyrbye LN, Shanafelt TD, Gill PR, Satele DV, West CP. Effect of a professional coaching intervention on the well-being and distress of physicians: A pilot randomized clinical trial. *JAMA internal medicine.* 2019;179(10):1406-14.