



# WAZ UP DOC?

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**Therapeutic Diagnosis, a new phenomenon in orthodontics** - As the Germans say, “If you don’t have the answer, sleep on it for a night and the answer would reveal itself”. There are circumstances in the practice of orthodontics that no “clear cut” treatment plan is available. This might be due to the complexity of the problem or that several equally good (or not so good) treatment options are available. For example, in a borderline extraction case, one with severe crowding of an adult dentition, the orthodontist may be tempted to start treatment without extracting teeth in order to determine the patient’s biological response to the least invasive treatment. After a few months, the conditions are reevaluated for any favorable or unfavorable changes. If the plan appears to be working well, it will be continued to completion. On the other hand, the plan may have produced a few undesirable effects. The teeth may have moved too far forward causing the lips to stick out. The periodontium (bone, tissues, and teeth) may have been stretched to the max. If the patient and orthodontist reach the consensus that plan A is not working they can discontinue and follow the plan B involving extraction of some teeth.

Cases with missing teeth also pose challenging treatment decisions for the team of orthodontist and restorative dentist. They have to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of opening the spaces for implant restorations or closing the spaces to avoid unnecessary, costly or risky surgeries. In the following case, we started the treatment without making a definitive plan about the missing tooth # 6 (upper right eye tooth), which had been removed in childhood. One year into the treatment, the patient and the doctors agreed that ideal facial aesthetics required opening of the space and replacement of the missing tooth.

Therapeutic diagnosis is, in a way, a professional admission of the fact that in spite of all of the advances in diagnostic tools and methods, nothing resembles the variability or adaptability of human body; that there are situations that a method has to be actually tried before we know if it would work or not. About 5% of patients qualify for therapeutic diagnosis. In such complex treatments open-mindedness and good doctor patient communication are the keys to success.



Pre-treatment  
Upper midline deviated to the right



Upper and lower midlines are centered  
Implant is in place



Post-treatment  
Completion of orthodontic and restorative treatment

**A Blast from the Past** - The following are excerpts taken from an article in the last year of “Trident, Pacific orthodontic alumni association newsletter”. The faculty interview of Dr. Cameron Mashouf [CM] was conducted by one of his residents, Dr. Reem Salahuddin’08 [RS].

RS: *Tell me about your childhood?*

CM: I was born in Tehran, Iran. I grew up there and attended elementary and high school in Tehran.

RS: *What made you decide to choose the dental profession?*

CM: Quite frankly, dentistry was not my primary choice. My father, brother and uncle were physicians and I was also planning to go into medicine. Unfortunately, my scores were not high enough for medical school. I decided to start dental school and prepare myself to apply again. After six months in the dental program, I started to like it more and more and decided to stick with it.

RS: *Do you have any regrets that you did not get into medicine?*

CM: Oh No! I am glad I didn’t. There is a lot more freedom in dentistry. I am very happy with my decision.

RS: *When did you decide that you wanted to become an orthodontist?*

CM: When I was in the third year of my dental school, one of my professors, who was an oral surgeon, asked me if I was interested in orthodontics. My reply to him was “not really”. I did not know much about the specialty at the time. He encouraged me to look more into it. He was thinking about forming a group practice and could use a young orthodontist.

In the summer of 1969 I applied to 40 orthodontic graduate programs and received 40 rejection letters!!! I was disheartened but not ready to give up. I have to admit my dental school grades could have been better if I hadn’t been “goofing around” so much!! In May 1970, I received an unexpected phone call from the Loyola University of Chicago. The Orthodontic Department Secretary was asking me if I was still interested to attend their program. I had to be there in a month for the program that would start in July. They had one position opened which was originally given to a student from Egypt. But the war in the Suez Canal had prevented the Egyptian student to leave the country and I was the next person on the list. For me, this was the unbelievable break that I needed, the once in a lifetime opportunity and I took full advantage of it.

RS: *How did you like Chicago?*

CM: I loved it, except for the bone-piercing cold winters of Chicago. I had an old Volvo that did not turn on half of the time and forced me to walk miles to the dental school in sub-zero temperatures. Fortunately, around Christmas of 1970, an angel appeared in my life. A seventy-some year old grandma rented me a room in her house which was about half a mile from the school for \$160 per month. Grandma Marks was half Irish and half Cherokee Indian. Her Indian mother had died giving birth to her and her dad had taken off leaving her at an orphanage. For the next 4 years, she practically adopted me. She took care of me, inspired me, and encouraged me to keep studying. After completion of my specialty in orthodontics, I had an offer from the chairman of program Dr. Donald Hilgers to work in his office. I went on and enrolled in a Master’s program at the University of Illinois and from there I got into a fellowship at the University of Chicago.

RS: *When did you stop your education?*

CM: In 1974. I then took Grandma Marks on a trip. We traveled the entire East Coast of the United States and then drove on to Canada. We even traveled to Europe and the Middle East. She spent a whole summer with my family in Iran. She loved it. She had never been past the states of Illinois and Michigan.



*Loyola University, Chicago 1970*

RS: *When did you come to California?*

CM: In the summer of 1976. I had taught and practiced orthodontics for two years in Iran. For that entire time I felt restless. I guess I had gotten too used to the western lifestyle. I started my first practice in Greenbrae, Marin County.

RS: *Did you see Grandma again?*

CM: Of course. She came to California several times. In 1981, I saw her for the last time in a Chicago hospital. She was dying but had not lost her amazing sense of humor and kept on joking and laughing. She lighted a flame in me that is still burning.

RS: *What happened next?*

CM: The rest happened by coincidence. I moved to San Jose in 1990 from Marin County and I am still here.

RS: *Did you continue teaching this entire time?*

CM: Pretty much. However, because of the extra responsibilities in the practice and for my family, I have cut it back to a couple of Fridays a month. Dr. Kouvaris and I share the task as a team and alternate the teaching days.



With Grandma Marks

## OFFICE NEWS

**Spring Training** - Dr. Kouvaris is looking forward to the beginning of baseball season...already counting down the days. He has his tickets in hand to see his two favorite teams, the Oakland A's & the San Francisco Giants for spring training. Traveling to Arizona for pre-season preparations has become a tradition for Dr. K and his family.



**Holiday traveling** - Dr. Mashouf and family spent the holidays in Egypt touring Cairo, the pyramids, Alexandria and on board the Nile cruise visiting the tombs of many Pharaohs. A word of advice from him "Try to avoid international flights during Christmas holidays. They are a mess."



< Dr. Mashouf with his family in Egypt



Egypt's high-tech transportation>

With the staff at the PCSO meeting in Palm Springs for continuing education

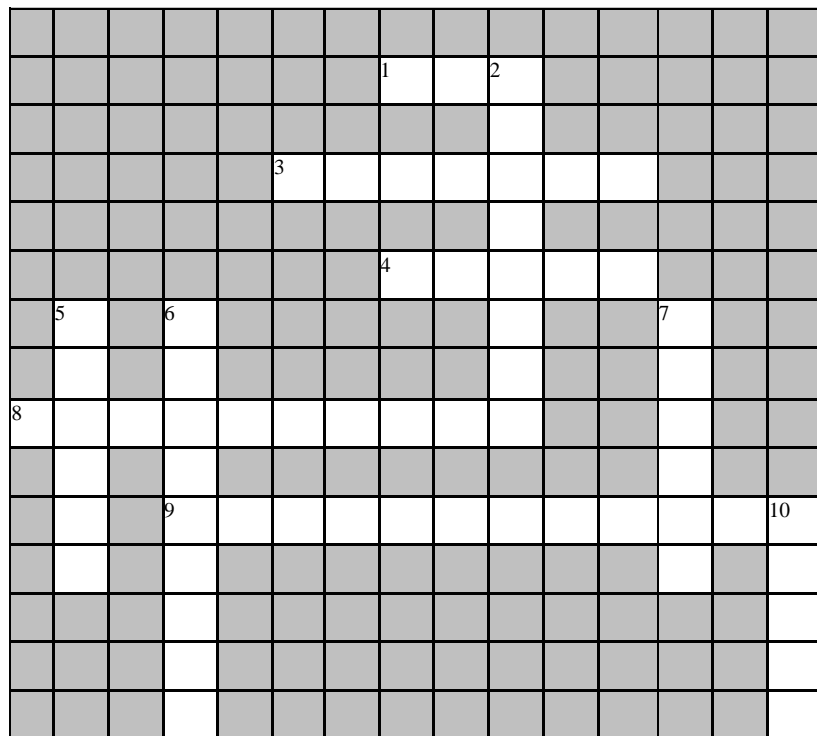


Halloween 2008



## KIDS KORNER

Complete our dental crossword puzzle and send it to our office or email it to [info@drmashouf.com](mailto:info@drmashouf.com) and you may be the lucky winner in our drawing for \$30 cash!



### Down

- 2. Type of doctor who straightens teeth
- 5. Tooth named after a dog
- 6. Number of permanent teeth an adult has (2 words)
- 7. A hole in your tooth
- 10. Too much of this gives you cavities

### Across

- 1. Minimum times a day you should brush
- 3. Fruits and vegetables keep teeth ...
- 4. Cleans in between teeth
- 8. Straightens teeth without being seen
- 9. Recommended brushing time (2 words)

## LOST AND FOUND

Are you missing anything? We have some items in our lost and found. If you are missing a pair of sunglasses, gloves, a sweater, beverage container, or a book (school text book, library book, or regular book), we may have it! Please contact our office if you think we may have something of yours! Any unclaimed items will be donated to Goodwill after March 1, 2009.

## A FEW WORDS OF APPRECIATION

We thank all of you for referring so many of your family members and friends to us. We also thank the dental community for referring their patients to us. Your vote of confidence is sincerely appreciated. It allows us to grow more and give more.

Please email your comments to [cameron@drmashouf.com](mailto:cameron@drmashouf.com)