

COFFEE STAINS & PRACTICE VISION



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WELCOME!

This workbook covers a variety of topics designed to promote wellness for you and your dental practice. You will find practical, implementable, step-by-step strategies to learn how to avoid the failures, achieve the successes and *be better*.

Thank you for your time and participation today. I welcome and encourage you to continue the conversation with me at the contact information below.

Be happy, be healthy, and be better,

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Thank you.

PART 1

ASSIGNMENT: LIST YOUR COFFEE STAINS

On the next page of this workbook, list out any and all of the “little things” that you encounter in your office, on a regular basis, that create:

INEFFICIENCY

FRUSTRATION

RESENTMENT

GROSSNESS

**A BARRIER TO
YOUR LONG-TERM
VISION FOR YOUR
LIFE/PRACTICE**

THE COFFEE STAIN RULE:

Every item you list *must* be specific and solution-oriented.

FOR EXAMPLE:

BEFORE

"We need to have better teamwork with sterilization."

AFTER

"Let's create a downtime checklist, where the very first thing listed is 'checking sterilization cassettes.'"

Below is a sampling of the coffee stains that were compiled in my own office, the last time we did this exercise:

The ceiling tile in the employee lounge has water damage.

Can we have a stockpile of syringes and basics in every op?

Can we have a better system of cleaning out the fridge in the lounge?

There are a lot of framed photos that include employees that no longer work here. Can we do another photo shoot?

Rooms 5 and 6 have to "share" the intra-oral camera - can't we just get another one?

When a patient needs an appointment for crown seat, denture step, or other lab work, can't you just schedule them in the op, rather than sending them up to the front? You all (clinical peeps) have a better idea of the lab turnaround time stuff than we (front desk peeps) do.

The other two assistants know a lot more about implants than I do. Can I get a crash course?

PART 2

TEAM MEETING: SHARE COFFEE STAINS

Now it is time for everyone on the team to share their coffee stains.

STEP 1

Elect a recorder who is responsible for taking every coffee stain, and putting it onto a master list.

As a team, you do have the right to exclude a particular coffee stain from the master list if it is:

UNREALISTIC

TOO VAGUE

**IMPOSSIBLE
TO SOLVE**

REMEMBER:

The point of this assignment is to start pro-actively identifying and **eliminating** the small things in the office that create negativity and frustration. It would be counterproductive if this meeting itself creates negativity.

For this reason, it is up to the leaders of the office to maintain the ground rules.

STEP 2

Once everyone has had the chance to share their coffee stains, the next step is to **identify the one to start with**. Here are the rules:

**YOU MUST ONLY
CHOOSE ONE**

**IT CANNOT BE VERY
DIFFICULT OR
EXPENSIVE TO
SOLVE**

**IF IT ISN'T FUN,
DON'T DO IT**

STEP 3

Once the first coffee stain has been identified:

- Choose a point person who will lead its implementation
- Determine what resources will be needed for complete implementation
- Determine the budget needed
- Establish a timeline and a deadline

ONLY ONCE THIS FIRST COFFEE STAIN HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY AND SUSTAINABLY ELIMINATED CAN YOU MOVE ON TO THE NEXT COFFEE STAINS.

PART 3

BEWARE: MILO THE MONKEY

As time goes on, your team will become excited about the autonomy you will be giving them, along with your commitment towards long-term practice improvement.

CONGRATULATIONS!

The drawback is that you will be introducing Milo the monkey to your already busy life.

HERE'S WHAT HAPPENS:

You are already busy. You're the boss. You have a family, a house, your own commitments, and you also run a dental office. By itself, you already have a lot of small monkeys on your back.

But then, your team members, feeling empowered with your newfound commitment towards practice improvement, might call you over to have a conversation:

Hygienist: *Hey, do you have a second?*

You: *Yeah, what's up?*

Hygienist: *I'm noticing a coffee stain.*

You: *Really, what's going on?*

Hygienist: *Well, we give the same take-home packet to our DSRP patients as we do with our regular prophylaxis patients. I feel like the take-home packet for DSRP patients should be more special and comprehensive. Don't you think?*

You: *You really have a good point there.*

Hygienist: *Greeeeeeeeat! Now, let me just take Milo, who has been weighing me down... hoist him off my back... and put him directly on yours.*

Now, you have to think about what goes in the new packet, from what vendors. You have to develop new paperwork for your DSRP patients. One of three things will happen:

- #1 You are just too bogged down with your own responsibilities, and you just don't ever get around to doing the new packets
- #2 You do the new packets, but they are nothing like what your hygienist had in mind
- #3 You put Milo back onto your hygienist's shoulders

ALWAYS CHOOSE #3

Choice #3 is the preferred method to create lasting positive change in your office. You do this by telling your hygienist that he/she is responsible for the following:

- How are we going to accomplish this?
- Who is going to take charge of this?
- What amount of time do you need?
- What other resources do you need?
- Whose help will you need to enlist?
- How will the new thing affect our team? Our patients?
- **You will be expected to present at a future team meeting**