

An interview with

João Eduardo Gomes Filho

- » Graduated in Dentistry, Faculdade de Odontologia de Bauru — USP (1995)
- » Specialist in Endodontics, Faculdade de Odontologia de Bauru — USP (1997)
- » Master in Dental Clinic-Endodontics, Faculdade de Odontologia de Piracicaba — UNICAMP (1999)
- » PhD in Dental Clinic-Endodontics, Faculdade de Odontologia de Piracicaba — UNICAMP (2001)
- » Professor at Faculdade de Odontologia de Araçatuba — UNESP (2007)
- » Full Professor of the Discipline of Endodontics, Faculdade de Odontologia de Araçatuba — UNESP (2015)
- » Professor and Advisor of Master and Doctoral Degree in the Dental Science Graduate Program at Faculdade de Odontologia de Araçatuba — UNESP (since 2003)
- » Personal, Professional and Leader Coach by Sociedade Brasileira de Coaching (Brazilian Coaching Society) (2019)
- » CNPq Research Productivity Scholarship (2)



Interviewer

Murilo Priori Alcalde^{1,2,3}

¹ PhD, Master and dental surgeon, Universidade de São Paulo, Faculdade de Odontologia de Bauru (Bauru/SP, Brazil).

² Universidade do Sagrado Coração, área de Endodontia (Bauru/SP, Brazil).

³ Universidade de São Paulo, Faculdade de Odontologia de Bauru, área de Endodontia (Bauru/SP, Brazil).

What is your Educational and Endodontic Training?

I am the son of two teachers: my father, a math and social sciences teacher, and my mother, an elementary school teacher. I started elementary school in the Montessorian method in the city of São Paulo and finished in Itapetininga-SP. My father, tireless in the teaching of mathematics, was essential in my training as a thinker. My mother, a warrior, taught me a lot about resilience and passion for life. I finished high school in Avaré-SP using the Objetivo method (1990) as the best student of the year. As a result of the award, I went to São Paulo with a scholarship to take a college prep course at Objetivo Paulista, located in the TV Gazeta building. My initial goal was to pass in an entrance exam to Medical School, but, throughout the year, I realized that my skills were focused on Dentistry, contrary to my parents' wishes. At the end of that year, I enrolled in the main entrance exams for the Dentistry Colleges, in addition to Faculdade de Medicina de Marília (FAMEMA), because I could not tell my parents that I had chosen Dentistry because of my lack of competence to be admitted in Medical School. In early 1992, the results came out and I had been approved in all entrance exams. My choice was for Faculdade de Odontologia de Bauru-USP, considering the discovery of the professional vocation and for the excellent academic reputation of the institution. It was a very intense moment of transformation, as it should be for one who is still in the final stage of neurological training. I felt that learning had been shaped along with my own brain. Towards the end of the course, Professor Maria Fidela de Lima Navarro, my Scientific Research advisor, encouraged me to present the result of the work at the annual meeting of the International Association for Dental Research, which would take place in San Francisco in 1996. For that, there would be a need to deepen the language in relation to communication skills, since, until then, reading and writing were the only skills that I managed with a certain fluidity. But she told me very calmly that there would be time until the event (about four months). The time was too short to succeed, but after graduation and a short rest period, I started my intensive studies at Wizard school in Avaré-SP. For three months, I studied tightly, which resulted in a very satisfactory development during the event. There was still a need to pay for the expenses,

but my father firmly said that he would purchase a credit card so that I could make the trip. It was unforgettable and a game changer, as the language is no longer a barrier. During 1996, I studied the Endodontics Specialization at FOB-USP and, in the following year, I started the Masters Course in Dental Science at FOP-UNICAMP under the guidance of Prof. Francisco José de Souza Filho, who was also my advisor during the PhD course at the same institution, which was completed in 2001. I started my career as a professor at Universidade do Paraná (2001) and, the following year, I was approved as Assistant Professor of Endodontics at the Faculdade de Odontologia of Araçatuba, where I took the PhD course in Endodontics (2007) and was approved at Full Professor contest (2015). In 2019, I took a training course in Professional Coaching by Sociedade Brasileira de Coaching, when I incorporated many skills for behavioral management with a focus on neuroscience.

In which research area do you operate?

During the Scientific Research, I studied the fluoride release and reincorporation properties. The training with scientific methodology was fundamental to develop the criterion that I adopt until today. During the Master's degree and PhD course, I worked with biocompatibility of materials, the theme that I like the most. It was during this period that we improved a simple but very efficient technique for assessing tissue response in rats, using glycol methacrylate for inclusion during histological processing. With this method and others of application, we were able to evaluate various commercial materials and help in the development of others that are currently on the market. Throughout my career, I also worked with the interrelation of endodontic infection and systemic conditions, as I always believed that Dentistry was not seen as a health promotion profession in the same magnitude as Medicine, although they share the same physiological and etio-pathological foundations, differing often only by the specific technique to be adopted for the treatment. Another field I focus on is pulp regeneration. I started my studies with Professor Jacques Eduardo Nör, at University of Michigan (2011), and I have worked mainly with a doctorate and postdoctoral advisor, Professor Paulo Carvalho Tobias Duarte, who is a great scientific partner today.

Participated in University Management. In your opinion, what should be the Professor's profile to act in management?

I participated as deputy head of the Department of Restorative Dentistry, as a supervisor at the Dental Care Center for People with Disabilities (CAOE) and as deputy director of the Faculdade de Odontologia of Araçatuba. During my activity as a manager, I had the honor of sharing a unique learning moment by sharing the College's board with Professor Wilson Poi, who has a high degree of development for people management. Much of what I think about management today was experienced during this period. I think in public management there is a need for discipline, leadership and, above all, people management. The main difference between the Public University is its successful history of existence. Few companies in Brazil last that long and have international ranking standards. UNESP is one of those institutions, in particular the Dentistry courses. Certainly, you can only reach this level with a well-trained, qualified and engaged team. Human capital is undoubtedly the greatest value that the University has. Being able to manage it and motivate it to get the best out of it is not an easy task, especially when an international standard has already been reached and the aim is at least to keep it in a very competitive scenario. Fortunately, we have training courses in leadership and people management that can complement the training of professors to be successful in their careers, including in the management, not only of the University, but also of their office, their company, their family and personal life.

What are the pillars for the success of the University Professor?

According to Professor Martin Seligman, from University of Pennsylvania, success is linked to well-being, which is a more permanent state of contentment, different from the momentary happiness achieved when we receive a gift, buy a car or a house; it's even different from the ephemeral feeling we can feel when winning the lottery. Well-being has to do with at least three of the five pillars: engagement, optimism, sense, relationships and achievement. Synthetically, engagement means being really involved with what you want to accomplish; optimism is thinking rationally with a focus on solution and proactivity; sense refers to doing something that

goes beyond yourself, contemplating something bigger; relationship matches with your ability to connect with others at work, at home and with friends; achievement is in fact the goal achieved after energy demand. Many people lead their lives, including their professional lives, without the slightest planning. There is no goal to be achieved without it having been previously planned, otherwise we will simply get to where someone "pushes" us. Proactivity is what brings wealth, bonanza, professional success. However, before proactivity we need to clearly define where we want to go. The good thing is that everything can be learned.

How important is management resilience?

Resilience can be simplified to the ability to overcome challenges. Imagine we set a very high goal and put a ladder to reach it. Each step of this ladder is a small goal that we have to accomplish in order to reach the final goal. Along the way, many challenges that were not even thought of, especially since planning is far from the application, they will appear and could bring us down the stairs. Resilience is the ability to withstand challenges. It includes the certainty that failures are not an end point, but moments of reflection and learning to reach a higher point on the ladder towards the goal. With that thought, we have the possibility to get out of the victim position and become proactive. Resilience helps the manager, since it is only achieved with a minimum of self-knowledge. After empowering themselves with this knowledge, managers manage to help their team to overcome their professional and personal difficulties that influence their work. For a good practice of resilience, it is necessary to understand that thinking often acts by creating real traps, culminating in and over-dimensioning the difficulty and consequently the emotional reaction. Thought is very much related to our beliefs; some are superficial, others deeper, and the deeper, the greater the potential for emotional reactivity. A good strategy to deal with our thoughts is to criticize it, bringing lucidity and less emotion. University management needs more rational decisions, more proactivity and less reactivity.

How does stress affect the quality of management?

Stress is a biological condition that has kept us alive until today. Our fight or flight system made us resist

saber-toothed tigers, floods, glaciers. It was the stimuli (stressors) that put us on alert so that we could defend ourselves by fighting or fleeing. However, the permanent state of alert is not healthy. The stressors we face today can range from food, pollution, noise, traumatic events to conflicts of beliefs and values. When events are extreme, our body goes to exhaustion and we lose the quality of sleep, concentration and we can develop serious illnesses. In the work environment, measures to combat stress, such as physical exercise, healthy eating and relaxation activities, such as praying, yoga and meditation, are very useful. In addition, training to react with less emotional and more rational responses to everyday events is essential for a modern world in constant transformation.

What is the relationship of Discipline in career management?

Many may say that one is successful because one has a natural talent, but one is probably ignoring the discipline and degree of training that was required to achieve the goal. Anyone who has a certain talent, but does not develop it, will probably come to a common place. However, someone without a gift apparently related to the proposed objective can be acclaimed if they have discipline and determination. Career success

is related to the person one becomes. Those who are successful in career, family life, health, financial situation, is because they developed skills based on self-discipline. If there is still no success, it may be necessary to reflect on what is hindering your discipline. There is no success without effort.

What are your suggestions for those who are starting their careers?

There is no cake recipe for this question. Each human being is unique, with their values, their beliefs and their goals. However, if it is possible to align the values with the goal, the path may become easier. Imagine that someone is going to read, in a large auditorium full of friends, relatives and colleagues, a sincere tribute to you because of everything you have done throughout your career. What would you like them to read? You can probably identify your values with this answer. It is based on them that you will be able to set goals that will bring you well-being while climbing your ladder. From there, define your goals, motivate yourself to achieve them (think about how important it is to you), plan how you will reach each step of the ladder (how and when to acquire the necessary skills) and take action immediately, always monitoring and celebrating the results in an ongoing process.

References

1. Achor S. O jeito Harvard de ser feliz. São Paulo: Saraiva; 2012.
2. Consolaro A. O Ser Professor. Arte e Ciência no Ensinar e Aprender. Maringá: Dental Press; 2011
3. Estrela C. Metodologia Científica: Ciência, Ensino, Pesquisa. São Paulo: Artes Médicas; 2018.
4. Seligman M. Florescer: uma nova compreensão da Felicidade e do Bem-Estar. São Paulo: Objetiva; 2011.
5. Tracy B. No Excuses!: The Power of Self-Discipline. [S.L.]: Vanguard Press; 2011.
6. Tracy B. O ciclo do sucesso. Caieiras: Gente; 2012.