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Editor-in-chief

Teaching is not changing, it's already changed!

Education has changed and it will never be the same. Just the other day, I caught myself thinking about how was my first contact with the education that drastically changed my life. Many moments came to my mind, but I could not pick one in special. I am a son to a couple of teachers, who have always offered me guidance; still, I had to put a lot of effort to remember something, although I failed to do so. I kept wondering why I was struck by this specific lack of memory. After a couple of days, back and forth to thoughts and musings, I remembered my “lyceum” teacher explaining to us where Mesopotamia was in a printed world map that hung above the black board, as well as the reason for that region being one of the cradles of civilization. A lot of talent and practice were needed to explain that over a map and still engage young students’ attention and imagination. Soon after that recollection, I opened Google Earth on the 4k speed 22-inch computer and at the same time, almost simultaneously, I also opened the History Channel to watch about Mesopotamia. It would

be impossible, even to the best futurologist, to ever glimpse that the world of information and education would go through so dramatic changes in such a short period of time. The world is big, wealth is ill distributed, wars and violence continue to scourge us, but there is no way back from this change.

A school-age child of today is completely different from the one of my generation, forty years ago. Different in the sense that, when a child goes to school, he/she already had contact with TV, computer, tablets, games, and other items unimaginable in past decades. More often than not, I can spot posts and publications that go like this:

- » Our childhood was the one...
- » Our schools would teach for real...
- » Youth nowadays is completely lost...

But the heart of the matter is that this is expected in the development of knowledge. Every change creates some discomfort.

When we say that, we refer to the 40 years during which technological breakthroughs and data

generation capacity have reached such startling speeds that state-of-the-art machines and computers can barely process it. And today's children dwell in this very world.... And so do dentists!

Therefore, the way to teach Dentistry ought to change! Not a before and after post on social media channels, or expensive ads about programs and workshops; masterclasses on that or that other...but rather a well-structured digital standard educational framework for clinics and programs, customized to both the current world and the one still to come!

I am an educator and I work with professional continued education and post-graduation programs, aside to my private practice. My feeling is that the change should hit all levels. To start with, most of the recently graduated professionals lack decent training on indispensable items to any areas. Dentistry has a wide area of impact: public services, private practices or third parties, the "academic world", among others. However, in general, teachings on business and people management are scarce, if part of the syllabus at all. Another weakness is the timid exposure to digital technology since undergraduate years.

Digital technology does not mean to have PCs at the university. Digital technology in education means to teach students how to use data in an applicable manner to their professions. This investment should pay off from the financial stand point, and be ethical and predictable from the clinical and lab perspectives. I often see people mistakenly taking technology for state of the art smart phones, tablets and so on. Yes, this is the means to reach education! But the efficient management of such means is what really makes the difference.

Although journals and text books are important as the "bibles" of dentistry knowledge, we have to go further changing formats, adjusting trends, adding real content to the under-graduate and graduate programs. Otherwise, we'll find ourselves teaching Geography and History from a world map hanging from

the black board. This change is taking place in other fields of knowledge at a faster or slower speed. In some of them, the overwhelming rhythm makes it hard for one to follow or understand those changes. For instance, in the Silicon Valley, in California (USA), there is a computer software development program without faculty or formal syllabus, founded solely by entrepreneurs owning state-of-the-art companies of present times, with a completely different proposal: University 42 (<https://www.42.us.org>) is a unique innovation to the educational process and there are other formats and media in many places around the world.

So we, from the dentistry field, must learn and understand that things have changed. Schools, faculty, dental lab technicians, Dentistry pharmaceutical companies, all of them are indeed working. The way I see it, nevertheless, tells me that dentistry should change and become more digitally integrated, using processes such as lab and intra-oral scanning procedures, 3D printing, integrated communication about treatment plan development with X-Ray services and a multitude of new tools, some of them seldom used or applied. A whole new world is opened to dentistry in a completely different fashion and we will have to adjust ourselves and rediscover our fields of action.

In face of such a wide range of possibilities, I would like to express in this editorial piece how incredibly enriching was the experience of acting as the editor-in-chief of this Journal, aside to great names and to an ever visionary publishing house. From now on, due to my own free will, I shall no longer act as editor-in-chief but rather dedicate myself to other educational projects. I shall however, be always around with the firm belief that a great journal is essential to the development of any dental professional.

Wish you all a great reading and a lot of success!

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