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## FROM THE BEATEN PATH TO BREATHTAKING VIEWS

### The Best Hikes in the United States

**A**cross our great nation is a vast array of diverse national parks and wilderness areas filled with thousands of miles of hiking trails to enjoy. Here are a few of those breathtaking trails that are fun for the whole family. This list is far from exhaustive, but maybe it will get you thinking about the kind of scenery you want to see on your next outdoor adventure!

#### NUGGET FALLS TRAIL, TONGASS NATIONAL FOREST

Alaska is full of natural beauty, and Tongass National Forest showcases that just as much as Denali. In the state's lower archipelago, visitors can see sockeye salmon, bald eagles, black bear cubs, and more. Plus, the easy two-mile Nugget Falls Trail will give you and your family incredible views of waterfalls and glaciers unlike anywhere else in the U.S.

#### CHARLIES BUNION HIKE, GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

No list of incredible hiking trails would be complete without mentioning the Appalachian Trail, as it meanders through the ancient mountains, old-growth forests, and waterfalls. The hike to Charlies Bunion, a mountain with a rare, bare rock summit, is sure to impress anyone who makes the trek with spectacular views.



#### RIM TRAIL, BRYCE CANYON NATIONAL PARK

Much like the Grand Canyon, Bryce Canyon National Park in Utah dazzles viewers with miles of incredible red rock facades but with its own unique twist. Along the Rim Trail, visitors can see hoodoos: skinny, towering rock formations that have become synonymous with that area of the United States. It's a hike that feels truly otherworldly.

#### AWA'AWAPUHI TRAIL, KOKE'E STATE PARK

If you want to see the famous coastal cliffs of Na Pali, it might be hard without a boat — unless you take the Awa'awapuhi Trail. It's accessible for any level of hiker at just three miles long, and from it, you get to see cliffs and ocean views that hikers on the mainland can only dream of.

Some honorable mentions for this list include Burroughs Mountain Trail in Mount Rainier National Park, the South Rim of the Grand Canyon, the Highline Trails in Glacier National Park, and many more. So, find a trail that gets you where you want to be this spring!

# IT'S NOT JUST PRIZES

## Running a Successful Contest Is a Fun, Exciting Experience!

In the last edition of this newsletter, I talked about a video I sent to our members in my February Practice Pearl, giving them free access to a surefire method for boosting a dental practice's Facebook presence by 5,000 "likes" in just a few days — something I've done myself. I've been thinking a lot about social media and how best to use that larger presence and encourage people to interact with your practice's page. Contests are a great way to do this, and that got me thinking about referral contests. They are, in fact, the subject of my "March Practice Pearl." I want to touch on contests in this letter and show you how — and why — your practice should do them.

With any contest, you need to know exactly what you're trying to achieve. When your goal is to boost your newly increased Facebook presence, the target audience is the people who "like" the practice's page. Many will be patients, but some will be members of the community who aren't patients (yet!). This contest is a good way to increase patient loyalty and may even cause followers who are not yet patients to look you up, but remember, the primary goal is to get the practice's Facebook page buzzing. That activity does a lot of things, not least of which is increasing the business's search ranking in Google. You don't have to focus on SEO all the time and obsess over ranking with your blogs. The best strategy is to focus on your patients and have fun!

I like the "Photo Challenge" contest model for this, where you specify a fun kind of photo and ask people to post them on the practice's page. Then, they get their own friends to come and "like" their photo. At the end of the contest, whoever's photo has the most "likes" wins! As for the kind of photo, it should change every time. For March, you might ask for "A cute picture of your kids feeling IRISH in the photo." Other contests might be Easter or Fourth of July themed, with the requirements and props reflecting that theme. You can do these contests as often as you like, but I find that

one per month is a sweet spot. You could even have a "Photo Corner" in your office with your LOGO / practice name prominently displayed where they can do a photo right therein your office and Mom can post it. You can provide some inexpensive items from a dollar store or online that the kids can use and then take with them as their "prize".

Make sure your page is "Public" so people can post to it, although it might be a good idea to moderate the photos so you can approve them before they are visible to everyone else. You'll need to check often and give those approvals as quickly as possible. Some people won't want to post publicly and might offer to send photos to the practice's page via Messenger instead. But that won't work because the winners have to get "likes" to get the prize. The parent or guardian must be the person who posts, and have them post when they are not on the practice's internet access. Make sure you play up the contest with lots of email blasts or your email newsletter to get lots of entries. Make sure the prize is something everyone would enjoy!

But what if you have a different goal? As I mentioned, my "March Practice Pearl" is all about referral contests. I highly recommend you learn how to do those, as well. These contests can be for your top referring patient families as well as your top referring professional offices — both dental and medical. The goal is to get those practices that refer patients to you to keep it up and encourage other practices to do the same.

Make a list of all the practices that give you referrals. Then, send out a cool form to each of those companies using paper with decorated border that displays the "theme" of the contest. They'll put their company name at the top and a list of all their employees below. Your practice puts all of those names in a hat and does a random drawing for the winners. This is fun because everybody has a chance of winning, and



it's an affordable, exciting way to reward referrers. I recommend a theme for these, too. Right now, you could do "Spring-Cleaning," and winners get a house cleaning or steam carpet cleaning. For summer, "mani-pedi to get your feet sandal-ready!" is a great theme. And nothing says "back to school" like a massage voucher!

How many winners you draw is up to you. For your big referrers, I recommend that you do a drawing only from within that practice. Say you have two pediatricians' offices that send lots of patients your way. You'd do one drawing for each office and then a third drawing for all of your lesser referring offices combined. You may or may not want to let that information be widely known.

This brings us full circle because there's no better place to publicize contest winners than your Facebook page. I hope this discussion of contests and how they can work for you is useful, and be sure to look out for the PDTA Practice Pearls I'm sending, which always contain must-have info for people in the pediatric dental industry.

*Rhea*  
Rhea M. Haugseth, D.M.D.



“Like our content? Use the provided articles in your company blog or Facebook posts!”

## IMPROVE PATIENCE AND REDUCE STRESS WITH THESE 4 TIPS

In this fast-paced world, it can be easy to grow impatient. Things as small as waiting for a slow website to load or waiting in a long line for coffee can sometimes leave people feeling frustrated and anxious. Practicing patience helps reduce stress and helps you realize it's okay if something takes a few extra minutes. If you find yourself feeling impatient, here are a few helpful tips.

### BREATHE DEEPLY

When you feel stressed, your breathing gets shallow, which amplifies anxiety. Practicing deep breathing can help reduce stress and frustration by relaxing your body and mind. This is as simple as taking a few quiet moments to inhale through the nose, drawing your breath into the belly and lungs. Count to four to help you focus as you inhale. Then exhale slowly through your mouth. After a few repetitions, you will find that your mind and body feel calmer.

### SWITCH FOCUS

When agitated, it's common for our thoughts to center on the irritant. Though it may feel difficult to do when you're stressed out, switching your focus will help you calm down and be more patient. For instance, if you find yourself growing more and more

frustrated by hitting red lights as you drive, try focusing on green instead. Looking for passing cars, signs, trees, or anything that is green will help break that hyper-focus and shift it from negative to positive. Soon, those red lights will be less bothersome.

### MEDITATE

A great way to increase your patience is by meditating, a combination of the first two tips — focus and breathing. Meditation helps people constructively manage thoughts by allowing them to practice observing their thoughts from a neutral perspective. Regular meditation can reduce stress and improve patience throughout the day. Even just 5–10 minutes of daily practice can have a tremendous impact over time.

### PRACTICE ACCEPTANCE

While the above tips can help you improve your patience, sometimes you must simply accept that some things can't be rushed. There will be times when we cannot control the outcome: A red light will change to green when it changes and no sooner. Learning to accept that can help people let go of their frustration, become more understanding of their situation, and greatly improve their patience.

## WORK OUT LIKE SERENA WILLIAMS GET FIT AND HAVE FUN LIKE A TENNIS PRO!

With 23 Grand Slam titles to her name alone and a total of 39 titles including mixed doubles, Serena Williams is one of the best — if not *the* best — tennis players of this era. However, she wasn't born with this success, nor does she coast on what she's already done.

Williams is known for having a thorough fitness routine organized by coach Patrick Mouratoglou, but unlike other athletes who swear by fad diets and complex routines, Williams keeps it simple. And you can try her routine in just three steps!

### 1: ADD VARIETY!

Williams' workout routine is centered on mixing it up. One day may have her running sprints to improve her speed, while other days are spent swimming to improve her lung capacity. Williams also incorporates

dancing and bodyweight moves for a regimen that can be done in an apartment, hotel, or backyard! To mimic Williams, try a bunch of different routines. Find a few that you enjoy and switch it up!

### 2: FIND FOCUS.

As a tennis player, there are certain areas of her body Williams must keep in top shape. Strong, powerful legs help her lunge toward difficult volleys, and nimble agility moves ensure she doesn't trip. In order to achieve this, Williams has designated regimens that target specific areas of her body. Mixed cardio is great to get you moving, but try to incorporate leg, abdominal, and arm-centric days into your weekly routine. The shake-up with mixed cardio will be a welcome change of pace, and your body will reap the benefits of a targeted approach.



### 3: DO WHAT YOU NEED AND DON'T GIVE UP.

Notice how there isn't a list of Serena Williams-verified workouts? That's because the tennis pro doesn't like to be confined by a societal expectation of what she "should be" doing. Instead, Williams listens to her body. She modifies her workouts when she's injured, and she tailors her eating to her intensity level and needs. It took a lot of trial and error to discover which moves worked best for her body and how to incorporate them into her routine. So, try new things, find what works, and don't give up!

## SITUATION OF THE MONTH

Dear PDTA Pro,

*When you talk about how important "systems" are for a practice, I feel like you're talking directly to me! It seems like every time we go to do something, there are three different opinions on how we should do it, especially if our dentist isn't here to direct. Making matters worse, we've had a bunch of new hires since the pandemic started, and everyone has just been kinda doing things the way they did at their old dental offices. Sometimes that's okay, but it seems like we rehash the same discussions a lot. I know you've got great advanced tips for making systems and SOPs really hum along — but what about those of us without any SOPs in the first place?!*

Sincerely,

*—No Systems Are Go*

Dear No Systems Are Go,

The answer is simple: Develop a Standard Operating Procedures Manual (SOP Manual) as a team. For a month or so, whenever someone does something, they should write down the steps they're taking to do it. Doing a composite restoration? Write at the top of the page "Composite restoration SOP" and document the process, from taking the child back from the waiting room to completing their checkout. Where appropriate, add pictures. Do the same for cleanings, extractions, and so on.

Do the same thing for non-clinical work. How are you responding to emails? How long do you wait to follow up with patients, and how does their procedure change the way you do so? Over the course of 30 days, each person writes down their work.

Then, have people look at it. Try to spot missed steps — "Oh, we forgot to say to sterilize here" — and resolve disagreements if possible. One great resource is our own training videos on the PDTA website "Members' Section." You can use them for the baseline on how to do things and tweak them to your own needs.

The final say, of course, goes to the doctor. Once they've gone through it, you now have an SOP manual, and you can take full advantage of my other advice, including the advice in April's Practice Pearl on SOPs. That manual is now your "practice bible," and that is how everyone in your practice does things from now on, no matter what they did in the past. Since everyone got a say, it should cut down on the back-and-forth!

Good luck to you. Your timing is excellent: Now is a great period to do this, as things slow down before school lets out for the summer.

All the Best,  
—Pediatric Pro

## HAVE A LAUGH



**NOT EVEN I WOULD EAT THIS HOMEWORK**



## TASTY THAI FRIED RICE

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 8 oz baby bella mushrooms, sliced
- 4 cups broccoli, chopped to bite-size pieces
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 5 cups jasmine rice, cooked and cooled
- ½ cup peanuts, chopped
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- Toppings of choice for serving (sliced green onions, sliced cucumber, chopped peanuts, lime wedges, Sriracha, etc.)

### DIRECTIONS

1. In a large nonstick skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion and cook for 2–3 minutes, until softened.
2. Add the mushrooms and broccoli. Cook for 5–7 minutes, until the broccoli is tender.
3. Add the garlic and cook for 30 seconds, until fragrant.
4. Finally, add the rice and cook, stirring constantly, for 3–4 minutes.
5. Remove skillet from the heat and stir in the peanuts and soy sauce.
6. Serve garnished with your toppings.

Inspired by OhMyVeggies.com