

# Elevating Dentistry: Insights from Dr. Michael Sonick on Patient Care, Mentorship, and Personal Growth

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*A Candid Conversation Highlights a Holistic Approach to the Practice of Dentistry*

In a recent engaging discussion, Michael Sonick, DMD, an AAID member and renowned periodontist, speaker, and now author, shared his profound insights on the art and science of dentistry. The conversation, brimming with wisdom gleaned from years of experience, touched upon crucial aspects of patient care, the invaluable role of mentorship, and the significance of personal growth in achieving professional success.



Dr. Sonick eloquently articulated his philosophy that transcends mere technical expertise. Drawing parallels from his diverse background, including experiences in the hospitality industry, he underscored the paramount importance of creating a welcoming and hospitable environment for patients. He believes that providing exceptional service and treating individuals with genuine care are fundamental to building a thriving practice.

"Patients judge us on their entire experience," Dr. Sonick emphasized, highlighting factors beyond clinical skills such as cleanliness, punctuality, and positive staff interactions. This holistic approach, reminiscent of Dr. Bob Barkley's collaborative dentistry model, forms the bedrock of Dr. Sonick's practice and is a central theme in his new book, penned during the COVID-19 pandemic. His core message advocates for a shift in healthcare delivery, where prioritizing the patient experience alongside technical proficiency





leads to enhanced healing outcomes and overall business success.

A significant portion of the discussion revolved around the power of mentorship and the benefits of a supportive professional network. Dr. Sonick passionately shared his personal experiences with mentors across various fields, including dentistry, entrepreneurship, and health, emphasizing their pivotal role in his personal and professional development. He also lauded the impact of his 20-year involvement in a mastermind group, citing it as a catalyst for continuous growth.

Furthermore, Dr. Sonick highlighted the reciprocal nature of mentorship, emphasizing the importance of not only having mentors but also being a mentor

to others. He shared his commitment to improving the lives of those he encounters and his pride in mentoring numerous individuals who have achieved remarkable success.

Intriguingly, the conversation also explored the potential application of stoic principles in daily interactions with patients. Dr. Sonick suggested his book, written as a series of insightful parables, as a valuable resource for understanding and implementing these principles. He also extended an invitation to his study club, a gathering of around 300 professionals, underscoring the importance of continuous learning and shared knowledge within the dental community.

The discussion also touched upon the success of Dr. Sonick's book, which has

resonated with many in the field. There was even a suggestion to consider its distribution to dental schools, recognizing its potential to shape the next generation of dentists.

In closing, the conversation affirmed Dr. Sonick's unwavering commitment to teaching his unique and patient-centered approach to dental practice. His insights serve as a powerful reminder that true success in dentistry extends beyond clinical excellence to encompass genuine human connection, continuous learning, and a dedication to both personal and professional growth. For members of the Academy, Dr. Sonick's message offers valuable perspectives on elevating their practices and fostering deeper connections with their patients.