I love to travel and even do so as part of my professional career, lecturing and attending seminars and conferences to learn from “the best.”

When I go to a new city and look for restaurants, I look at the internet and search for “the best.” And even if I don’t go to the No. 1 choice, I try to go to one of the top choices. I’ll also ask people I know and trust — people who might have the same needs as me. And even if I don’t go to the No. 1 choice, I try to go to one of the top choices. I’ll also ask people I know and trust — people who might have the same needs as me.

“The best” is a relative term. What I like, you might not, and vice versa. I might like my steak cooked medium-rare. You might like yours well done. Or you might be vegan and prefer not to eat meat at all. Your “best” might be a veggie cutlet.

Just as our tastes might be different, our needs might be, too. Where one person might prefer a hot chocolate, another might prefer a cup of tea. One person might prefer a banana as a snack, while another might prefer an apple. And one person might prefer a salad as a main course, while another might prefer a steak.

Nowhere is this lack of uniformity more important than in health care. We’re complex individuals with different needs. The puzzle that makes up our overall health has many components, each affecting the other, often in subtle ways.

My mom was sick for nearly 25 years before she passed away. She saw many physicians. One of her criteria for “the best” was personality. For her, the doc could have been the most knowledgeable, had the best training, and the most gifted hands, but if she didn’t like his or her personality, they weren’t “the best” to her. And there are numerous studies that show that a patient’s perception of their health care provider’s skill and the strength of the doctor-patient relationship has a significant impact on therapeutic outcomes.

Yet, our system is trying to make everything as uniform as possible. Everyone with a certain score should take this medication. I don’t know about you, but I don’t want to be treated like a number, a score, or the average of anything. I want to be treated like the unique, complicated, and complex individual that I am. I want solutions designed for my specific needs.

I get asked seemingly innocent and simple questions all the time. “What’s the BEST toothpaste?” is just one example. When it comes to your health, there are no simple questions or answers. Even the toothpaste you use should fulfill the unique needs that you have.

Are you prone to cavities? Are you prone to or do you have gum disease? Do you have receded gums and exposed roots? Are your teeth sensitive? Do you take medications that dry your mouth out? Do you breathe through your nose or through your mouth?

The answers to these and other questions impact which toothpaste is best for you. In fact, we often recommend that a person use different toothpastes in the morning and at night. Each brushing time fulfills a different need.

“Simple” is not a word I want to hear when it comes to decisions about my health, and I won’t use it about yours either. “Simple” may be fine when it’s someone else on the receiving end, but not you. Individualized attention to detail should be the hallmark of excellent healthcare. It’s a standard I insist upon in my personal care and insist upon when Manhattan Dental Health cares for you.

THE BEST

Individualized attention to detail should be the hallmark of excellent healthcare.

To everyone’s good health and wellness,

Michael
STOP AND SMELL THE ROSES
Why Scent Memory is More Powerful Than Sight

When trying to remember sight-specific memories, our focus isn’t how we felt. Memories associated with smell are more powerful than visual, auditory, and tactile memories because those senses are directed to parts of the brain that don’t process feelings. This makes scent memories unique.

The science was further explored in a 2014 study published in Frontiers in Psychology. When researchers exposed study participants to scents, more brain activity was detected than when participants were shown the word it represented.

In recalling a story from your childhood or trying to remember a particularly important event, don’t just rely on your sense of sight to bring up memories. Associate more of your environment with pleasant smells to boost brain activity and memory function. And next time you’re walking your dog, do as he does and take a moment to smell the roses.

FOR A LIMITED TIME:

1. Put the romaine leaf on the cutting board. Use a spoon to spread the hummus on the leaf.
2. Lay the spinach on top of the hummus.
3. Add the tomato slices, then top with the avocado or guacamole.
4. Add the tomato slices, then top with the avocado or guacamole.
5. Sprinkle the brown rice on top with the avocado or guacamole.

Directions

Ingredients

• 1 tablespoon hummus
• 4 spinach leaves, washed and dried
• 1 tablespoon plain low-fat Greek yogurt
• 2 teaspoons sunflower or pumpkin seeds
• 2 thin tomato slices

The Cold, Hard Facts of Flossing

Whether it’s the scent of fresh-baked chocolate chip cookies or a spring morning’s dewy grass, triggering memories through scent is a science. When you catch a whiff of those cookies your mom baked for your afternoon snack, or those elementary school playground days, scents make their way from the outside to your olfactory bulb (the part of the brain that processes smells). The olfactory bulb is located near the amygdala (the brain’s emotion-processing center), one of the places it sends sensory information. The amygdala then parses odors, letting us recognize specific differences in scent. Here, the link between scent, emotion, and memory are made strong. These sensory relationships are important in how newborns interact with their mothers, or how pleasant scents positively reinforce an enjoyable experience.

Ana’s Story

I moved to New York alone from Seattle a year ago to chase two dreams. The first is to live in the greatest city on earth. The second is to finally finish school to become a dentist. I have worked for numerous dental practices in both dental assisting and administration for the past 10 years. I have always wanted to be a part of a team who not only did great work, but genuinely cared about the specific needs of each person. In the summer of 2015, I knew I hadn’t found my home, as the practices I continued to find not only failed to meet my standards of care, but prevented me from pursuing my dream. I was starting to lose hope and motivation until I was given the opportunity to come meet the team at MDH. I knew I found my new home! When accepting the position, I was welcomed as a family member — which is so important to me — and the Goldbergs never let me forget it. Dr. Goldberg highly supports the growth of his staff, and with his involvement at universities such as Columbia and Tufts, not only do I know I can reach my goals, but I have been inspired to reach higher.

Flossing helps prevent all of this and comes with a financial incentive — for both adults and children. The Children’s Dental Health Project found the dental costs of kids who received earlier checkups and flossed properly were 40 percent lower than that of their peers. Regularly flossing pays off!

As for the age-old question of whether to floss or brush first? The American Dental Association says it doesn’t matter — as long as you’re doing both.

The only side effects of gum disease. Severe cases can lead to tooth and bone loss, and bacteria growth that can spread to the rest of the body. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has found a connection between poor oral health and diabetes, respiratory illness, and even heart disease.

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