

Choosing to think out of the box

Opinion

Although this is not a topic which you have suggested, it is a thought dear to my heart, Please let me explain. As a young cowboy growing up in the back country of San Diego County in the 1930s., we were always having to think how we might repair a barn, a home or a fence or whatever, and without any cost. It meant we needed to always be thinking out of the box for some new and inexpensive way, at the same time I was drawn toward dentistry from a very early age since my father was a dentist in NYC and died when I was only 30 months old. I had a younger sister who became a nurse and an older brother who became a civil engineer. It became the time of WWII and I joined the Navy. My path opened up for me to finally become an oral and maxillofacial surgeon. I was called back into active service as a Navy oral and maxillofacial surgeon in 1950 to be stationed with the Marines during the Korean War. I was in charge of that specialty at the US Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego and was finally discharged in 1952. At that time I decided to open a private surgery practice in Pasadena, California, the year was the fall of 1952. I was on some 17 hospital staffs in the area around Los Angeles and Pasadena and was appointed adjunct professor of oral and maxillofacial surgery at the medical school attached to U.C. Irvine. This was neither a time before any TMJ reconstructive Implants had been innovated nor any dental implants. So, I guess the Lord was just waiting for me. I'm kidding, but when I saw a need to reconstruct a degenerating temporomandibular joint for a young Catholic Sister in 1960, I just went about designing, innovating and making such an implant. It worked out great and I received the world's first U.S. Patent for such a device. A Prime Time TV program on Channel 13 was produced showing me performing live TMJ reconstructive surgery on another patient and it was shown in the Southern California region and was titled **Surgery 64**. It was seen by more than 100,000 subscribers at that showing. Starting at this same time of early 1960s I innovated patented and surgically placed

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the world's earliest three different dental implants. All were very successful and my third one, the Endosseous Dental Implant is the one the world copied for most all of today's implants. I had produced surgical motion picture films of each of these techniques and actual surgeries. They showed at dental meetings across the U.S. at that time, thus starting today's dental implant industry around the world. The point I wish to make for this short article is to be open to pursuing even a different direction for your life than you or even others might have thought possible. That is my thought. God bless.

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Conflicts of interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.