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# Forever a student of orthodontics

Those of you who know me, or have heard me lecture, know that I have been a lifelong student of orthodontics. The goal to continually improve treatment techniques and final results is what keeps me excited and passionate about our wonderful profession. In fact, I can honestly say that in the past few months, I have worked harder than ever critically evaluating not only where we have been over the past 20 years but carefully analyzing where we need to go to keep improving the Damon System.

In February 2013, it was very gratifying to host the 12th Annual Damon Forum in Orlando, which has become the largest privately sponsored orthodontic event in the world. The take-away from my presentation and others was encouraging clinicians to 1) keep it simple by utilizing "torquing couples" in each bracket/archwire interface that gives the clinician true straightwire with three-dimensional control, 2) focus on improving the quality of final results, and 3) to truly have fun. The significance of selecting "torquing couples" on each anterior tooth allows the clinician to gain first, second, and third order control with improved force management, increased patient comfort, and in many situations decrease treatment time for the patient. Today, we all live in a very complicated and busy world. I encourage clinicians to strive to have more fun running their businesses through improved clinical efficiencies and effectiveness.

As a profession, we have often evaluated clinical proficiency based on final tooth position and how teeth fit together. Often we hear the comment, "show me the plaster on the table." With technologies available today, I strongly encourage clinicians to also include treatment planning, clinical case management, and impact on bone and tissue during and after treatment when critically evaluating clinical proficiency. Simply put: straight teeth should not come at a long-term high cost to the periodontium.

For highest quality results, clinicians must keep abreast of today's latest technologies. Unfortunately, it is often human nature to resist and fall into the trap of saying that you are for progress but in reality fear change! My advice: don't let fear hold you back from cutting-edge treatment mechanics. With the right education, training, mentors, and a proper treatment planning, you can enhance the quality of your patient results while minimizing stress on your clinical life.

Lastly, set a goal to have more fun running your business in 2013. It is so much more enjoyable for everyone to be part of a practice and business that strives to create a special, positive environment for patients and staff. The energy and excitement you convey to your patients will have a positive impact on their desire to come in for appointments and also to refer other potential patients. Worldwide, I have observed that happy and energetic offices are usually very busy.

I have always been impressed with orthodontists who have passion to continue improving. As you strive to make your practice more successful, continue to expand your knowledge, inspire growth within your staff, and diligently work towards better and better final results. Remember: keep it simple. Focus on quality results. Have fun!



Dwight Damon, DDS, MSD, developer of the Damon System, is an industry-leading orthodontist with an office in Spokane, Washington. Widely known for his development of the Damon System — a passive self-ligation braces system that allows for low-friction, low-force orthodontic treatment — Dr. Damon is a pioneer in the field whose passion has been to improve orthodontic patient care worldwide. Dr. Damon has received numerous awards and professional honors including the 2009 Washington State University Regents' Distinguished Alumnus Award, the highest honor the university confers upon its alumni. He was also elected as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Surgeons of Edinburgh. [www.damon-smiles.com](http://www.damon-smiles.com).