

YOUR DENTIST CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE

Staying mentally healthy in our modern world

By Dr. Gabrielle Cannick

There is no precedent for the wall-to-wall, 24-7 “plugged in” lifestyle we live today. Yes, of course, there are benefits that make our lives easier. However, medical research is discovering there are aspects to this that have an emotional downside.

Because of our practice’s focus on sleep issues, I am becoming more aware of these effects. It is reported that adults and even children have become dependent on technology to the point that letting go of it creates anxiety. Evidence suggests a link between handheld screen time and delayed speech development in young children, mobile device dependency and depression and anxiety in university students, and exposure to smartphone screens and poor quality of sleep.

Perhaps like me you are questioning how technology and constant exposure to the media – so much of which is negative rather than uplifting — is influencing your sense of well-



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being, that of your family, even the general population.

Interestingly, when it comes to cell phones mental health research is raising specific anxiety-producing caution flags. There is the constant checker. Do you find yourself constantly checking emails, texts and social media? Mental health professionals even have a name for it, the “fear of missing out” syndrome. There is also the “fear of being disconnected”. An alarm bell should go off when you see family and friends texting each other when they are all present in the same location. Increasingly mental health professionals are urging us to limit our technology usage. They recommend putting your phone away for short periods making it less accessible. Think

about it this way, just as certain foods are bad for us perhaps it is time to view technology in the same way.

It seems fair to say that as a society we are not doing all we can to protect our mental health. As a result, we are becoming more distressed. Reducing stress is vital. We know stress can lead to a host of health issues. How about this? Why not resolve to take a break from mindless, time-wasting entertainment mediums. Let’s pay attention to what the mental health professionals are telling us: Too many television shows, video games, and movies coupled with compulsive cell phone usage can indeed alter one’s mental state to a point where you are more likely to feel overwhelming emotional stress — thereby short-circuiting the chance to truly relax and enjoy family, friends, even life itself.

The issue of maintaining a healthy mental state is dear to my heart — given our practice emphasis on sleep issues. If you have questions, I invite

you to reach out to us. This is an important subject that can greatly affect everyone’s quality of life. Think of us as your hometown resource for guidance and support.

Dr. Gabrielle F. Cannick is the owner of Grand Oaks Dental, located at 3905 Liberty Highway in Anderson. A strong believer that dental fear and anxiety should not prevent any patient from receiving the highest quality dental care, Dr. Cannick has received extensive training in Sedation Dentistry and is a certified member of the Dental Organization for Conscious Sedation. She is also a member of the South Carolina Dental Association, the American Dental Association, the Academy of General Dentistry, and the American Academy of Dental Sleep Medicine. For more information about Grand Oaks Dental and the services provided, please call 864-224-0809, or click to grandoaksdental.com or visit us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/GrandOaksDental>.

Negotiations with bullies

By Mary-Catherine McClain Riner

Bullies are on the playground, in the workplace, and even found in political positions. Bullies often have difficulty communicating with others — making demands yet not wanting to collaborate or problem solve.

For targets facing bullying behavior, it may be difficult to know how to negotiate, resolve a dispute, and/or find common ground. Individuals may contemplate fighting back or giving in. Below represent a few recommendations for coping with bullies — whether in the workplace, at home, or in society.

Avoid Giving In

Bullies don’t negotiate; they make demands, threats, and eventually fight for them. Bullies are often at war with the world around them, which they constantly and repetitively attempt to dominate. Unfortunately, bullies never “win” and they always want more. What makes people happy and what leads to healthy relationships is partnership, teamwork, support, and open communication.

Win-Win Negotiations

Giving into bullies lowers confidence and decreases connection. Bullies think in terms of “win-lose” because they always have to win. Healthy relationships work best in win-win negotiations. To learn more about this process, read “Getting to Yes” by Roger Fisher



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and William Ury.

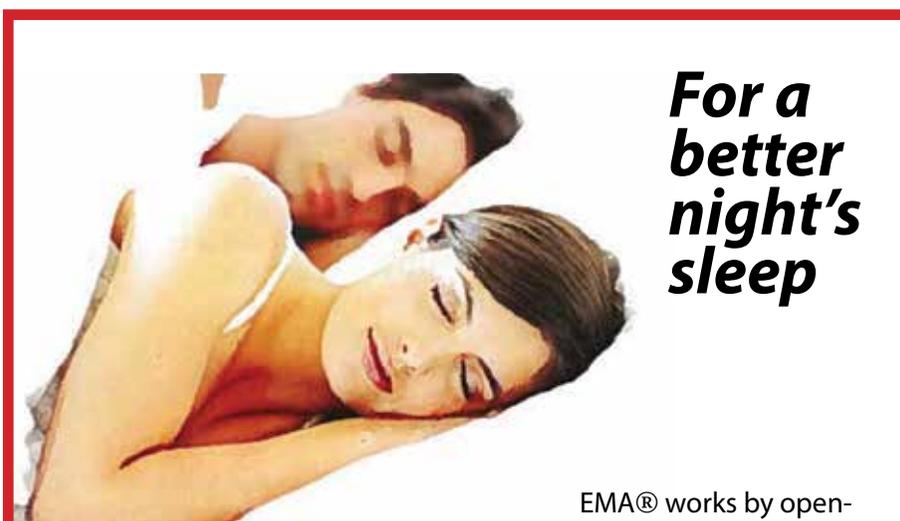
Appear Calm and Patient

Bullies, and high-conflict people in general, enjoy making someone emotional. Focus on the opposite action by staying calm and focused on what you want and need. High emotions lead to impulsive and rash decisions and they know that. Being very patient often leads to the best outcomes. Presenting as desperate or showing discomfort often leads to the bully being able to manipulate you and/or the situation. Bullies dislike delayed gratification, and therefore remaining calm, cool, collected, and confident will lead them to go “bother” someone else.

Bring in a Neutral Decision-Maker

Often, bullies do not like the idea of having or including another person because they will not be the most powerful person in the room. Likewise, it is difficult for a bully to argue with a neutral person. Remember, you do not have to face bullies alone.

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