

SPEAR STUDY CLUBS: A New Class of Dentistry

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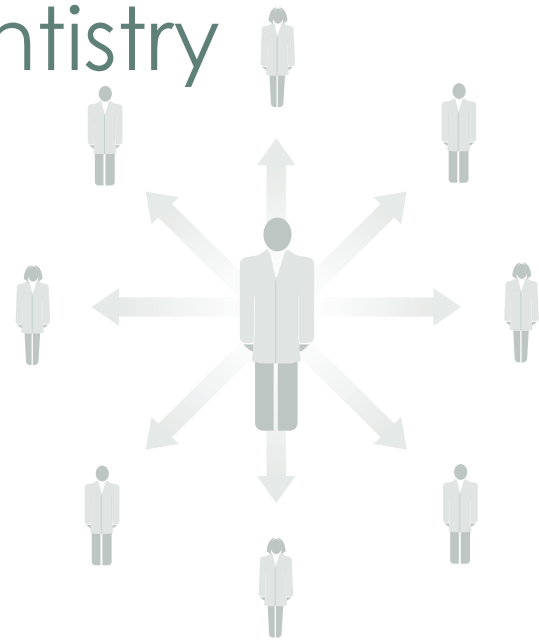
When I think about the times when I am most challenged, most fulfilled, and experience the most professional growth, it is not when I am learning on my own, but rather when I am part of a group. We

each possess our own unique skills and aptitudes, and we can always learn from and share our knowledge with others. By functioning as a team, our experiences begin to overlap; we acquire proficiencies we didn't have, hone techniques we already possess, and generally enlarge our expertise and abilities.

This philosophy of the whole being more than the sum of its parts, combined with Frank's and my intense involvement in establishing and facilitating study clubs around the world, led to the Spear Study Club initiative. For years, Frank and I have seen first-hand the positive results that come from interactive group learning. So the decision to implement Spear Study Clubs was one that was based on thorough research, proven experience and real-world results.

How do Spear Study Clubs work? A group of dedicated, like-minded doctors including one specialist and a minimum of five general practitioners agree to form a study club. To kick-off the learning experience, the group attends a Spear seminar together, building the foundation for an enriching shared learning experience. The specialist leads the group through a series of case studies in a year-long journey toward advanced treatment planning and total case management. Working together on interdisciplinary cases over time, all study club members:

- Develop higher-level clinical, diagnostic, treatment planning and case presentation skills
- Strengthen existing relationships and forge new ones
- Build a network of doctors for trusted interdisciplinary case treatment
- Consistently function at higher levels, performing more complex dentistry
- Discover a resource for answers, tips and support
- Create a more profitable practice through more comprehensive dentistry



Spear Study Clubs are ideal for doctors who want to be challenged, are committed to excellence in interdisciplinary dentistry, want to provide more comprehensive care to patients, and ultimately wish to see more thriving practices. I personally don't know any dentists who would be averse to seeing these changes in their practices!

Group education has been a powerful force in my career, motivating me, deepening my alliances, and propelling me well beyond my educational and practice boundaries and expectations. It is my privilege, and my passion, to be affiliated with Spear Study Clubs in our ongoing quest to push the envelope of learning and effect changes in our great profession of dentistry.

Dr. Ratcliff is passionate about helping dentists reach their goals, and facilitates small groups through a combination of clinical examples, interactive discussion and the use of photography in fostering patient understanding. He lectures internationally on interdisciplinary care, occlusion, and esthetic and restorative dentistry.

