

Resolution for the new year: to learn more!



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At the end of a year and beginning of another, all of us think over what we have done and lived, what has been left behind us and especially what we aim at achieving in the next year just around the corner.

Losing weight, getting fit, meeting new people and avoiding others, making and keeping friends, working less and earning more! However, such an equation is not always feasible. As classical proverbs say: “Success comes from hard work” or “Success comes before work only in the dictionary”.

The best New Year resolution is to learn more, not only to increase technical and scientific knowledge, but also to broaden our understanding of culture and citizenship. Hence, we will become better professionals, in addition to treating our patients in the best way possible, yielding effective results and improving as human beings. This is because, in order to become successful, we have to be engaged in an ongoing quest to broaden our minds and learn new things.

I have recently read an article published by the well-known North American blogger Claire Diaz-Ortiz (search her profile at LinkedIn or Google) about “Five ways to learn from others”. The author comments on practical ways to learn which we share as educators and editors of this journal.

I would like to share with our readers the practical and useful ideas presented by Claire Diaz-Ortiz:

1. **Read a book:** I certainly am qualified to make this statement. Reading about a variety of subjects has always been my passion. Even when faced with time constraints, we should always try to read a good book about an interesting topic. After all, reading is the best way to learn something new which has been written by someone who has something to teach us: new ideas, experiences and knowledge. Reading and subscribing a scientific journal also counts!

2. **Find or ask someone to be your mentor:** This is a tough one, but one worth mentioning because of its great value when it works. Asking someone to be our mentor is a great way to potentially develop a great connection with someone who can share significant knowledge and experience with us. I have always had the luck to find great mentors and the opportunity to learn with the more experienced ones.

3. **Go to a conference or congress:** Learning a skill or understanding an idea can happen with great success during a conference or congress. Most of the best and enduring

How to cite this editorial:
Polido WD. Resolution for
the new year: to learn more!
Dental Press Implantol. 2014
Oct-Dec;8(4):6-7. DOI: [http://
dx.doi.org/10.14436/2237-
650X.8.4.006-007.edt](http://dx.doi.org/10.14436/2237-650X.8.4.006-007.edt)

knowledge I have acquired I did so in a conference or lecture environment where themes of great interest were well led and presented. Nevertheless, when attending a conference or congress, we need an objective plan to avoid wasting time! I will further explore this theme in editorials to come!

4. **Take an online course:** Think of an online course (via Internet) as a conference without the benefit of networking and social time, but also without the hassle and expense of travel. The number of online courses on Implantodontics has increased exponentially, whether on ongoing education websites (ITI Online Academy, GIDE, among others) or by video (You Tube, Vimeo) or other tools. I recommend TED (Ideas Worth Spreading), app or website, as a general-knowledge resource. It counts on a number of speakers lecturing about a variety of interesting themes. A good way to learn is following material of your own interest, and checking the most recommended ones while finding new ones. Much more fruitful than chatting on Facebook...

5. **Take a real life course:** Taking a real life course is like taking online classes, but with the advantage of having people around! We can interact and discuss different subject matters. It is also similar to a conference, but more targeted to a particular theme, such as learning a given technique (as we do during Dental Press Excellence courses or ITI themed courses), wine tasting or learning how to cook.

The key to all these methods is to mix and mingle them all. Real life courses are time-consuming, and yet online courses prevent us from meeting people and having a social life! Just like everything else in life, to win, we have to find a balance of all activities and learning environments, and seek a blend that best works for us.

I wish you all a Happy 2015 with balance of activities, ongoing learning and personal as well as professional development!