

» Have You Met TED?

by Thomas Giacobbi, DDS, FAGD, Editorial Director, *Dentaltown Magazine*

Many readers are familiar in some way with TED Talks or the TED Conferences that have become so ubiquitous that they are often listed number-one among video podcasts in the App Store. A bit of background that you may find interesting: TED is an acronym for technology, entertainment and design, and it started as a one-time event in 1984. In 1990 the conferences became an annual event and the organization has grown exponentially ever since. The trademark feature is the fact that all speakers are limited to a maximum of 18 minutes to present their thoughts and concepts. This unique requirement leads to very information-rich presentations and the ability to enjoy multiple presentations in the span of an hour.

Searching for any talks that are related to dentistry, I did find a presentation by Christina Warinner, an archeological geneticist who studies the microbial DNA in fossilized dental plaque (we call it calculus). You will be impressed with the quantity of data that can be harvested from calculus attached to the teeth of a skeleton. If you would prefer to enjoy one of the most watched TED talks of all time, search for “Ken Robinson says schools kill creativity.” This video, viewed more than 13 million times, is funny and educational. Mr. Robinson makes a great case for his claim that schools teach us to be good workers rather than creative thinkers. My favorite quote from his talk: “If you are not prepared to be wrong, you will never come up with anything original.” Finally, if you would like pure entertainment, search for “Rives: The 4 a.m. mystery,” a humorous look at the multiple references to four in the morning. No doubt, this could also be a time you have received an after-hours call from one of your patients.

To date, there have been more than 1,400 TED Talks and none that I could find that were given by dentists – until now. I am very pleased to announce that we will have this successful format as an integral part of the 2013 Townie Meeting in Las Vegas. Dubbed “Townie Talks,” we will have many of our afternoon speakers providing short format talks during our morning sessions on Thursday and Friday. This will provide a fast-paced learning environment in the morning with the added benefit of getting a preview of the long-form afternoon courses.

Townie Talks speakers include: Dr. Howard Farran, Dr. Joe Steven, Dr. Steve Buchanan, Garrett Gundersen, Trisha O’Hehir, Dr. Mark Murphy, Dr. Mark Trolio, Dr. Sameer Puri, Dr. Tarun Agarwal, Fred Joyal, Dr. Lee Ann Brady and Dr. Michael DiTolla. For lecture descriptions, check out page 47.

While we are on the topic of Townie Meeting 2013, I would like to offer my passionate appeal for your attendance at this one-of-a-kind dental event. This may be the closest you can get to a dental version of Burning Man, Woodstock or Mardi Gras – take your pick. We often describe this educational event as one part dental CE, one part party and a pinch of family reunion. This is an event that you must experience to appreciate and once you attend, you will want to come back. See you in Vegas! ■

