



Pagosa Smiles

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Dentures -Why?

"I threw away my miserable old dentures..and now I look 15 years younger!"

"It's like my dentist gave me a FACE-LIFT! When I lost my teeth a few years ago, I finally had to admit to myself that I was old. I had neglected my teeth for years. I just never wanted to spend any money on my teeth even though I had secretly spent quite a bit on hair tinting. I would have died if any of my friends at the Senior center had found out that "Mr. Macho" colored his hair! When I lost all of my teeth I gave up and let the gray hang out!

My final act of cheapness was to get my dentures from the "discount dentist". I knew it would be hard to learn to eat and speak again with those uncomfortable pieces of plastic in my mouth, but I wasn't prepared for how old I looked. The teeth were straight and white, but my lips sank in and I had huge wrinkles at the corners of my mouth. OK, I had wrinkles all over my face, but I didn't need any new ones!

It turned out to be one of the best days of my life when I broke my lower denture trying to brush it! My heart sank when the plastic snapped in my hand. How long would I have to go toothless before I could get it fixed? I called a dentist (why hadn't I done that BEFORE I lost my teeth?!) and they got me right in that morning. I really like the dentist and his staff-They gave me hope. He said it was a good thing that I hadn't super glued my denture, because he might not have been able to fix it then. When my dentist gave me back my denture that afternoon, he said the repair came with a 100% guarantee. There was a

100% probability that it would break again! I asked how much a new set would be since I had never liked them anyway, and he checked both dentures in my mouth to see if new ones were really necessary. He said he could relin them to correct the poor fit, but that the lower would still be weak and the upper would be much thicker and heavier. I chose to have new ones made since they weren't as expensive as I had feared. When he took my impressions he astounded me by asking me to bring in a photograph showing my real teeth before I had lost them. He said this would allow him to set the new teeth more naturally to make them look real. That was when I realized that he really cared about ME and how I felt about myself.

A few days later I went in for a "wax try in" to see how my new teeth would look. He tried them in and handed me a mirror. I couldn't believe my eyes! I looked just like I had fifteen years ago. Well, the hair was grey, but my face had fewer wrinkles and the teeth looked natural. I hadn't realized how "fake" those straight teeth had looked until I saw the old (younger) me again! I said I loved them and he told me the new teeth would be back from the lab in two weeks. I almost hated to put my old ones back in my mouth for two long weeks.

The day finally arrived to get my new teeth and I was as excited as a boy with a new puppy! The Dr. made a couple of adjustments to the bite and then told me to go ahead and try them out, to eat some foods I hadn't been able to for years. I only got one sore spot which my dentist fixed by grinding the offending part of my new lower denture and I have been comfortable ever since.

A friend at the Senior Center told me I looked good and younger somehow. I didn't tell her why, but thanked her and thought that I felt that way too!"

This story is typical when the dentist cares enough to treat the whole person and not just "make teeth". Another patient tells a similar story, but a different problem to solve.

"I made an appointment with my daughter's dentist out of desperation. I didn't really think he could help; no other dentist had ever given me hope.

I had worn dentures for forty five years. At first I did OK with them, but for the last ten years I hadn't been able to eat my favorite foods. I love salads and fresh vegetables, but for years all I could eat was soft foods. Not getting my

beloved fresh "rabbit food", I had been gaining unwanted weight and my digestion was really messed up.

I've never had much trouble with my upper denture, but the bottom one would hardly stay in my mouth! When I tried to eat even semi-hard food my lower gums hurt terribly and I would just give up.

The dentist ordered an x-ray of my jaws and checked my mouth for possible cancers, then showed me why I was having so much trouble with my dentures. My lower jaw bone looked on the x-ray like a couple of pencils. He showed me an x-ray of a healthy jaw (if a jaw with no teeth can be called healthy) and the difference was HORRIFYING! I had about a fourth as much bone in my lower jaw! The doctor told me that a new denture would not help much since I didn't have any gum left to hold it in place. When he suggested implants I saw my life savings disappearing before my eyes. I had heard of people spending as much as a luxury car on implants (and I drove an old Chevrolet!). The doctor said a few implants would help hold my denture still and the cost was MUCH less than I had feared. Heck, my old Chevy was worth twice that much! I made my appointment that day, and I was in for my second surprise. There was NO PAIN! Not even a little! The doctor said there was usually a little discomfort involved, so I guess I was just lucky. He relined my old denture with a soft material, and they felt tighter already!

Two months later I was back in my dentists' office to get my new teeth made. Since the cost was so much less than I had expected, I had enough to get a new upper denture to go with the new lower since the doctor said my bite would be better that way.

My new teeth looked great and I think I even looked younger with my new smile (I do a lot of smiling now!). The new lower denture snapped into place and I couldn't believe how tight they felt! The last, and greatest surprise, came the first time I ate with my new teeth. I ate a huge salad without choking and it didn't even hurt!

My dentist said it was unusual, but I didn't even get any sore spots. This was a dream come true. I feel healthier and happier than I have in years! My digestion is great and I have even started to lose a few pounds. I try not to think of all those miserable years I spent trying to eat before my gums got so sore I

had to take my teeth out. Why didn't I see a dentist sooner and return to the human race?!"

If this sounds like you, why not make an appointment today for an examination and consultation about what can be done to make you comfortable and maybe younger looking too? Call 731-DOCS (3627) or go to our website. Pagosasmiles.com