

Dental celebrity on tour

Interview by Stephen Hancocks

The *BDJ* was fortunate to catch up with lecturer, swami and life-coach Travis Locklove as he started on his world tour at a Best Western hotel just outside Halifax.

Recent years have seen the emergence of something of a cult of management gurus and mentors each of whom claims to have the holy grail of an answer to building and maintaining the perfect practice. What makes Travis so sure he has the best advice?

'It has to be about confidence, I think.'

Travis strikes an imposing figure wearing his monogrammed Ted Baker espadrilles as he settles down in a wicker armchair for the interview. 'Running a successful business in any walk of life means having commitment for acknowledging the bigger picture, local knowledge, compassion and a love for fine detail. It's a feel thing.'

It's the 'feel thing' that has put Travis where he is today as creator and pioneer of the Patient Textured Partnership, the practice-central empathy algorithm that converts individual characteristics into bespoke patient-centric metrics. 'The essential brilliance of PTP is its complex simplicity', he explains, toying with the cherry in his third banana daiquiri, 'asking the questions on the PTP life inventory mode opens the door to metaphorically stroking each patient's unique texture and in turn applying the most appropriate care assurity coding. For example, if your patient was a colour what would it be? A month, which one? A herb, what essence would it reveal? Do you want a practice full of green April parsley or brown November turmeric? – it's as deliciously easy as that.'

At somewhere in his mid-forties Travis' roots are in the Fens where he had an unremarkable but happy childhood. His parents still live there, albeit in a new unit on a mobile home park which Travis leased for them with the proceeds from his previous national lecturing tour. He got into the dental world through an unexpected route following the tragic death of his wife Mimi J.

Doricberg DDS, founder and owner of the Doricberg Cosmetic Dental Corporation of Minnesota. After meeting on a Caribbean cruise liner where Travis worked as a steward, it was clearly instant love. But tragedy struck just two hours into their honeymoon when a freak wave swept the new Mrs Locklove off the deck, a fatal accident which had reverbera-

smile-givers whose lives she had enriched.'

Travis travels with an entourage of assistants; Michael his personal manager is as Travis describes him 'his right hand'. 'Michael is quite simply the secret behind the success of PTP but I highly value all my team members, especially my podiatrist. During any given tour I do a lot of walking, from aircraft to executive lounge and sometimes limousine to hotel reception on the same day. Our feet are our salvation don't you think?'

While I ponder that question I throw him another. How does he see dentistry developing in the next five to ten years? 'The team concept is key-critical and evolving roles pivotal to PTP. Take the so-called career escalator, which I view as more of a stair-lift of opportunity. Dental nurse to consultant maxillofacial surgeon, specialist restorative dentist to hygienist. Malleable



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tions through the Midwest dental community for several minutes between patients.

'Mimi was a huge inspiration to me for the short time we had together,' muses Travis, obviously now less troubled by the trauma of nearly a decade ago. 'Inheriting her multimillion dollar dental business was a mountainous challenge, especially the legal battle with her children from her first marriage, but one that I felt I had a duty to rise to for the sake of all the

professionals make marketable propositions.'

Michael signals that our time is up and as I leave Travis to the ministrations of his make-up artiste and hairstylist in preparation for the evening's presentation the delegates begin to trickle in and register. Something of a mixed bag I suspect, from a mauve January coriander to a bright orange August mint. Practice management has a new diversity all of its own. ■