

A DENTIST'S LIFE

I get up at 6.30 am – 6 am if we are running a course – shower and have scrambled eggs with toast and a homemade fruit smoothie for breakfast. I take the Underground to work which takes about an hour door to door.

I practise dentistry in a boutique private practice in Notting Hill. I am particularly interested in aesthetic and restorative dentistry; my week is varied and no two weeks are the same, which is great. I spend two days in practice, one day a week teaching on our courses (venues include LonDec, the Eastman and St George's Hospital) and the remaining days running Aspire Dental Academy.

I graduated BDS in 2010 from King's four-year graduate programme. I initially did a degree in Biomedical Sciences as science was my favourite subject and fascinated me the most. During that degree I started taking an interest in dentistry and looked into it as a career. I did several work experience placements and met many members of the profession. I soon realised that dentistry was an artistic delivery of a scientific subject and I was sold.

King's was an amazing place to study; I had a great time, met some amazing people and fell in love with the place. I have always been a keen student and try to do everything to the best of my ability, and was lucky enough to receive a number of awards during my studies and during vocational training. In my final year at King's I was also published for the first time and since then have undertaken several pieces of research and been published four more times.

My desire for continued education and learning led me to undertake a DF2 post at Guy's Hospital where I worked in the oral surgery and restorative departments for a year. This was an amazing year and some amazing people taught me.

I realised very quickly in my

MAKING THE HARD WORK WORTH IT

Raheel Malik, 29, is a dentist at Pembridge Dental, a private practice in Notting Hill, and Founder and Programme Director of Aspire Dental Academy (aspiredentalacademy.com). Raheel married Mitra Qayoom, a qualified physiotherapist now studying dental hygiene and therapy, four months ago. They live in Harrow, London.



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career the type of dentistry I wanted to perform. I wanted it to be gold standard and wherever possible minimally destructive. Dental school doesn't teach you everything and I had to invest in courses in order to further my skill set and career. I attended several and after doing them felt rather deflated. Dentistry is a hands-on subject but the courses mostly involved sitting in a lecture and not a lot of chance to practise the skills being taught.

One course that did inspire me was straight after VT, run by restorative specialist Richard Porter. This was three days and properly hands-on. I learnt a lot and the course confirmed for me that I could do ethical, good quality dentistry.

Between 2011 and 2014 I worked at dental practices in Harrow and Shepherd's Bush before taking my current post in Notting Hill. I continued to undertake short courses but thought that there was demand for a good hands-on restorative dental course, organised and taught well.

Every dentist is essentially an aesthetic dentist, as all dentistry should ideally be aesthetic, ie if you are doing a crown or a filling for someone you want it to look like how nature had intended it. However, you need a certain skill set to make fillings and crowns invisible. And I wanted to teach that skill set.

My aim wasn't to compete with the well-established courses already out there but just to teach an amazing hands-on course and pass on what I have learnt myself and the journey I have been on.

I approached Richard Porter, as I knew he was the man to help me deliver the course I wanted. Fortunately, he loved the idea and loved teaching as much as I did, and we decided to set up the Aspire Dental Academy.

In the space of two years with no advertising, just through word of mouth, we have expanded to offering four courses. We have put our blood, sweat and tears into setting up and running the academy: if you know what working eight days a week is, that's what we were doing. It has all been worth it as we have had excellent feedback from delegates and we have seen dentists' lives change as a result of our courses, which makes all the hard work worth it.

I have always been quite enterprising and the idea of running my own business has always enticed me. I also love being educated and educating others, so the academy really fits in well with what I enjoy.

Although I work hard I also play hard: life is about balance. If we are running a course then I get home

around 6.30 pm; the two days I work in practice I finish at 8 pm so get home for 9–9.30 pm. My wife is an amazing cook and we often have themed cook nights at home, but we also enjoy eating out. I am a big fan of chicken but do have a soft spot for desserts. I also enjoy going to the gym and am very much into a healthy lifestyle.

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I really enjoy spending time with friends and family and some evenings I will meet friends for food or go to the cinema. I am currently learning to play the guitar as well and practise Krav Maga, a martial art. I play five-a-side football once a week and often make trips to Anfield to watch Liverpool play.

Saturday is what my wife and I call ‘Fun Day’, where we like to plan something fun to do. We have a rule that we are not allowed to answer any emails, any work related calls or look at any work related things. We may go shopping, to the theatre, cinema, visit an exhibition or look for something unique to do in London. I love constantly being productive and being out and about; I can’t sit around watching TV, unless Liverpool are playing.

On a good day I am usually in bed by midnight. I honestly don’t remember the last time I was in bed before then. Before bed I like to make a list of all the things that need to be achieved in the following day and tasks that need to be completed.

INTERVIEW BY KATE QUINLAN

CHILDREN'S FOOD HEROES AND ZEROES OF 2014

The following is an end of year round-up from the Children’s Food Campaign recently posted on the Faculty of Public Health website. It was produced by Malcolm Clark, Coordinator of the Children’s Food Campaign, and shared with the *BDJ*.

The Children’s Food Campaign (<http://www.sustainweb.org/childrensfoodcampaign/>) aims to improve young people’s health and well-being through good food and real food education in every school, protecting children from junk food marketing, and clear food labelling that everyone including children can understand. The Campaign believes that these ideas will help to solve the current crisis in children’s diets.

Children's food heroes

School Food Plan and the Department for Education
For the second year in a row, the School Food Plan comes at the top of the tree. Credit is also given to the Department of Education for ‘Super September’. Revised school food standards, cooking skills and food education are all back on the curriculum for Key Stages 1-3, and universal infant free school meals have been introduced.

British Dietetic Association's Dietitians in Obesity Management Specialist Group

One of the most significant changes on the high street in 2014 was the removal of sweets and chocolates from the tills of leading supermarkets – including Lidl, Tesco and Aldi. Dietitians have been helping to lead the ‘Junk Free Checkouts’ campaign with additional support from Slimming World and the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health.

British Heart Foundation

Over 35,000 people signed a petition promoted by the British Heart Foundation to close loopholes allowing the marketing of junk food to children, calling for the introduction of a 9 pm watershed for junk food TV ads and tightening regulations around online marketing.

Emma Boyland, Rosa Whalen and Brendan Collins (University of Liverpool)

Emma and Rose conducted the research that exposed how family TV shows are saturated with junk food ads. Brendan did the number-crunching that enabled the Children’s Food Campaign to announce the health impact a sugary drinks duty would have.

Barbara Goldberg, Maria Mantzorou, Jennifer Parker, James Thorneycroft and Tom Venner Woodcock
2014 Children’s Food Campaign volunteers.

Children's food zeroes

Committee of Advertising Practice and the Advertising Standards Authority

These are the two organisations that make and adjudicate on marketing rules. Progress on the bigger picture, to better protect children from junk food marketing, has been slow.



Coca-Cola

Coca-Cola Life, launched in 2014, is still a product that contains over four teaspoons of sugar per 330 ml can. The company also still sponsors sports events and promotes physical activity to try and ‘offset’ the damage of their products and pretend they are part of the solution. They have, however, signed up to the new front-of-pack nutrition labelling scheme.

The Responsibility Deal

This was the year that the Department of Health’s Responsibility Deal had the chance to redeem itself, but instead fell further into disrepute. A pledge on food promotion had long been talked about, including by ministers. But the food industry wouldn’t even agree to a lowest common denominator set of options and the idea was shelved. The same occurred in Scotland.

Party Health Spokespeople

With less than five months until the General Election, the Children’s Food Campaign remains unconvinced that any of the political parties are going to be offering the bold policies needed to effectively tackle the obesogenic environment.

