

Saba Haggagi

D200 Mon 8-9:40 a.m

10/30/19

A Golden Surprise



(Gedda's Dentures)

This experience is one that I can never forget. It has changed my perspective greatly on the ways I can influence someone of Senior age . I chose to conduct this service with a relative that is a Senior. This relative is my grandmother, who goes by the name Gedda, which just means grandmother in Arabic. I had visited a facility and questioned about conducting this service but they seemed not interested due to having alternative methods of Oral Hygiene representatives. However, I feel that my experience with my grandmother was very fulfilling. My Gedda is probably the most stubborn person I know, so I knew changing her habits on oral hygiene would be difficult. I honestly have never seen her brush her teeth since I was a child, I always saw her rinse but that was it. Also I realized that there never was a toothbrush dedicated to her in the bathroom, which made me question if she even used a toothbrush. Many thoughts started to come to my head but I knew I had to be careful on how I approached this situation with her because any slight comment would get her offended.

I know my grandmother is never interested in learning anything new, she is really stuck to doing things her own way so keeping her interested would be difficult. I chose to try and

conduct this service during the hour of the day that I knew she would not be doing anything in order to hold her interest for as long as I could. As I began to explain to her the importance of oral hygiene I could see that she was not interested and just wanted to sit and smoke her pipe and wanted me to stop as soon as possible. She seemed to just nod her head but I'm sure she was pretending to care just because I was her granddaughter. I took out my typodont while I spoke to her and used a toothbrush to explain to her the Bass method technique of brushing. I know my grandmother is old but her health is unbelievable for someone who has been smoking a pipe for over 50 years. She is very active and I knew that she didn't need any special method of brushing to accommodate her needs, that is why I chose to teach her that method. I was not very nervous thankfully because she is my relative, although, I did feel as though I was not getting through to her. Also I was being very careful on how I worded things or asked questions about her oral hygiene due to not wanting to offend her. I knew if I did she would just tell me to go away and get very upset.

Upon conducting the lesson on flossing I had tried to explain to her how important it was to floss around her crowns. I always saw gold teeth in her mouth and I knew she had crowns that were not being flossed properly due to the amount of tartar build up that I noticed. I tried to show her how important it is to get around the gingival margin with a toothbrush and floss and even offered to get a really good toothbrush. She did not respond to that and just nodded her head the whole time, so I proceeded with a lesson on how susceptible one can be to interproximal caries if they did not floss. As I said this, I noticed she started to smile and I figured she was really starting to enjoy the lesson and might even have begun to become interested. But then she told me to stop and sit down next to her and be quiet.

As confused as I was I decided to stop and sit down and wait for her to speak. I waited about 3 minutes and watched her put her hand to her mouth and pull her lips away from her teeth exposing to me that she in fact had dentures for both upper and lower. This truly was a surprise to me, I had no clue all these years that she had dentures. I have never seen her take them out and place them in any solution at night and I have spent many nights sleeping by her side. Also her dentures were not like any I have seen growing up, they really looked like naturally aged teeth. The gold teeth were definitely not crowns to my surprise. Apparently, it was just a style back in her days to get to choose from for any prosthesis. She explained to me how she was advised by the dentist not to take her dentures out and that she did not need to brush them or place them in any solution. I quickly changed my approach with her and started explaining that she really needed to visit a dentist, realizing how much she really needed this educational service.

I had the opportunity of cleaning her dentures as best as I could when she asked me to clean them for her, she had no clue the tartar could be cleaned off. It was very difficult, though I had brushed as hard as I could but only got a little bit of the tartar off. She was still very thankful and even explained how they did in fact hurt her when she used them but never decided to see any care for her mouth due to the strict instructions given to her by the dentist when they were made. Thankfully, she is now going to get new dentures made and even started to put her dentures to soak at night. She is very grateful to me and wished me and my professors many blessings.

In conclusion, I saw how valuable it was to get the chance to conduct this service. I did not expect the outcome I got at all. I started off feeling like there would be no effect on my grandmother knowing how stubborn she was, but throughout this I slowly started to feel how

amazingly important it is to advise everyone no matter what, and we can always make a great impact in someone's life. I would love to get the chance to do this again with other Seniors, hopefully. I really believed going into this that someone of Senior status would naturally be very difficult to advise on certain habits such as everyday toothbrushing. This experience has really shown me how wrong I was to judge anyone old or young, stubborn or not.