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Creating More Smiles Than One

The AACD Charitable Foundation's Give Back A Smile™ (GBAS) program, in cooperation with the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, restores the smiles of domestic violence survivors at no cost.

We have received many success stories and thanks from GBAS volunteers and recipients. This section shares the triumphs of the GBAS program.

"Connie," who had found our office through the AACD's Give Back A Smile program and recommendations from some of her friends, came to us hoping that we could help her to smile again. Connie told me a little about herself and that she had been with a man who had abused her regularly, both physically and emotionally. She did not smile during our conversation, and spent most of the time looking down at the floor or covering her face. She also explained that through her efforts, her abuser was now in jail for what he had done to her. There was a sense of relief in her voice as she told me this, as if a chapter in her life had been put to rest. Connie was now trying to put her life back together and, knowing how difficult it must have been for her just to take those initial steps through our door, I could tell that she had a definite inner strength.

During the initial examination, we took all the necessary records, including radiographs, study models, photographs, periodontal recordings, temporomandibular joint assessment, and occlusal assessment (Figs 1-3). After the initial visit and examination, however, I was not sure how to proceed in terms of giving Connie a smile again. I knew that she deserved more than

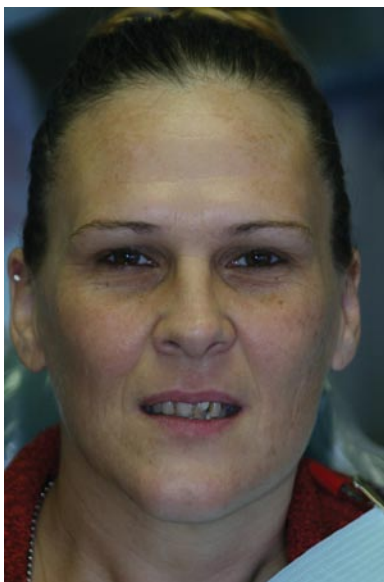


Figure 1: Full face, before.



Figure 2: Full smile, before.

just to have her front teeth restored, so I called some of my colleagues to ask for their help; my goal was to give her back a complete smile. This would entail a complete maxillary arch rehabilitation from ##2-13; restorative treatment on ##22-27; and a new mandibular partial denture to replace missing ##19-21 and ##28-30.

It is a great feeling when you know your colleagues' hearts are also in the right place. They graciously and unhesitatingly donated their services to help give Connie her smile back. We made arrangements for Connie to see oral surgeon Dr. David Rainero (Walnut Creek, CA) to have the broken remnants of #1, #3, #9, #11, #19, #21, #28, #30, #31, and #32 extracted. Connie then scheduled endodontic work with Dr. Brian Feiger (Walnut Creek, CA), who performed root canal therapy on #2, #9, #10, #23, and #25.

After Connie had successfully completed these treatments and there had been appropriate healing time, we scheduled her restorative appointment. I could tell she was both nervous and excited when she arrived. We proceeded with the initial preparation appointment to completely restore her maxillary arch. This consisted of a five-unit ceramic-layered-to-metal bridge from #2-6, individual ceramic-layered-to-metal crowns on #7 and #8, a four-unit ceramic-layered-to-metal bridge from #9-12, and a single-unit ceramic-layered-to-metal crown on #13. We chose a B1 shade progression for the final restorations and a "softened" smile catalog profile.¹ Shade B1 Bisacryl-composite temporaries (Luxa-temp, Zenith/DMG; Hamburg, Germany) were custom-fabricated for teeth ##2-13 and the occlusion adjusted to give Connie a comfortable bite. Connie, whose eyes welled up

with tears, could not believe that she had a smile again

At Connie's appointment to cement the final restorations, we cemented the Dentsply Ceramco (York, PA) layered-to-metal crown and bridge restorations at ##2-13 (fabricated by Chuck Paganetti, C.D.T., Cardinal Dental Laboratory, Inc.; Walnut Creek, CA) with RelyX luting cement (3M ESPE; St. Paul, MN) (Figs 4 & 5). Connie couldn't wait to see them in the mirror. When our appointment was finished I don't know who was happier, Connie or everyone else in our office. I think we were all pretty emotional.

Connie has since returned to complete restorative work on her lower anterior teeth, and a mandibular partial denture to replace her posterior missing teeth is in the final stages of fabrication (by Barbara Pironi, C.D.T., Lafayette Denture Lab. Inc., Concord, CA). She now en-



Figure 3: Retracted view, before.



Figure 4: Full smile, after.

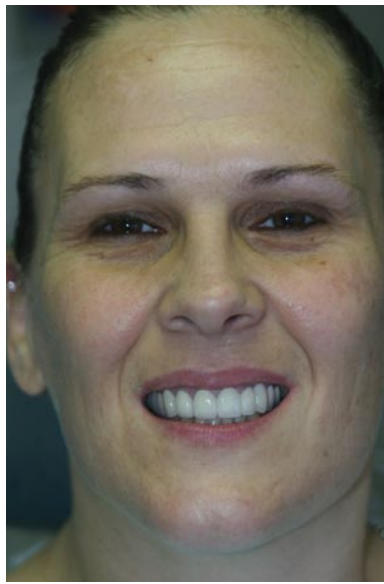


Figure 5: Full face, after.

ters our office with a lovely smile, a smile that I believe is noticed everywhere she goes. During her last visit she explained that, as a preschool teacher, she is continually interacting with children and their parents, and that she finds it so much easier now that she has a smile and the confidence that comes with it. It is a wonderful experience watching someone blossom.

I believe it is events like this that make all our dedication and hard work truly worthwhile. I want to thank my colleagues once again for all the support and generosity they showed in helping Connie to smile again. I feel very fortunate to be a volunteer for the GBAS program and urge everyone to take that next step. There are women all across the country who need our help. I urge you to become a GBAS volunteer today!

Reference

1. Dickerson W. *The Smile Catalog Determining the Shape of Your Ideal Smile: A Patient and Laboratory Communication Guide for the Esthetic Dentist*. Las Vegas, NV: Las Vegas Institute for Advanced Dental Studies; 1997. *Ad*

