

Dana 0:26

Welcome back to another episode of DH Basics. I'm your host Dana. Today we're going to discuss is a career in dental hygiene right for you a lot of you may be considering is dental hygiene, the career path that I should be going on, you know that you're going to have to take prerequisites that you're going to have to apply to dental hygiene school and that you're going to spend a certain amount of your time depending on what program you go to up to two years of your life, just training to become a dental hygienist. And before you walk down that path, you do want to make sure that it's right for you. Sometimes students get into dental hygiene school, and then all of a sudden they realize this is not what I want to do and they end up dropping out. You don't want to spend money and time and also take someone spot who really really wants to be a dental hygienist. So before you go down that road, make sure that you consider these reasons for becoming a dental hygienist.

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Dental Hygiene is such an incredible profession. It offers a unique blend of science, patient care, and community impact. And so let's dive into the top reasons why you would consider becoming a dental hygienist and the first one is to make a difference in people's lives. One of the most gratifying aspects of being a dental hygienist is the opportunity to positively impact the lives of your patients. We provide preventive oral care, we educate our patients, and you will become a big part of their overall well-being and you kind of become like family to them, as well. Even though you think, "oh we see these people once every 3-4-6 months." You'd be surprised by the connections that you'll make taking care of your patients and they're going to trust you to be the one who helps keep them healthy. And that's a huge part of what we do as dental hygienists. Our job is like being Batman but with a toothbrush instead of a cape. So if you've ever dreamed of donning a superhero mask and keeping mouths healthy, then dental hygiene is definitely your calling. You can wear a superhero mask but they might look like your special magnifying glasses called loupes instead.

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Now let's move on to Reason number two that you might want to become a dental hygienist. Dental Hygiene is constantly evolving. So this field is changing day in and day out. And so as a dental hygienist you have to be on the cutting edge of new discoveries and technologies in our field. Some of these new technologies are lasers, digital imaging, if you love learning new things and constantly advancing your skills then dental hygiene is a perfect place for you.

Dana 2:45

Now let's talk about Reason number three that you might want to become a dental hygienist and this is because of workplace flexibility. Sure, of course you can go work the typical eight to five job, Monday through Friday, as a dental hygienist working in a dental practice. But there are also other opportunities out there as well. Maybe that's just that you work part time or full time or that you work as a temp where you just go in when they call you. There's also opportunities to work in dental offices, public health clinics, research labs, educational settings, sales, marketing, there's so many different avenues that you can take as a dental hygienist. And so it's good to listen to this podcast because a lot of our hygienist will have different backgrounds, different

career paths as a dental hygienist, you can start to think about what does life look like after hygiene school.

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Now Reason number four and this is a big reason: job stability and demand for dental hygienist is very high. With an increasing emphasis on preventive care and oral health awareness, the demand for dental hygienist is on the rise. Oral health is an integral part of overall health. We're starting to see a lot of collaboration between the medical field and the dental field which is fantastic because as you all know the mouth is connected to the entire body. So we should treat it as a part of the entire body. Job stability in dental hygiene is reassuring. You can feel confident knowing that your skills will always be in demand. And you'll have numerous opportunities for professional growth like we discussed about with reason number three. Again, it's not always just about clinical dental hygiene. There are other avenues that you can pursue after you've gotten your dental hygiene degree as well.

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And the fifth reason is that you can build meaningful relationships. You're not only going to build meaningful relationships with your patients, but also your co workers, your teammates who are helping you day in and day out. So dental hygiene is definitely a people-oriented profession. And that means you are going to be talking with people all day, every day. You might think I'm shy. I don't know if I can do that. But I promise I used to be shy myself. I had to learn how to discuss things with patients and how to control the environment in my room to make it the best experience for the patient. And just remember most of the time your hands are in their mouth so you don't necessarily have to be talking to them. But there is a level of conversation that has to happen to ensure that you're taking the best care of your patient. If you develop good rapport with your patients, you can make a significant impact on their overall experience and their willingness to maintain regular dental visits. You want your patients coming back to see you...that's not only good for you, it's good for your job. It's good for your pocketbook, right? Because if you don't have patients seeing you, you're not going to be making money. The connections you form with patients can be incredibly rewarding and that helps to create a sense of fulfillment in your daily work. I can definitely attest to that. I've moved into education and now my students are my life. But before my patients were such a huge part of my life, I really truly cared about them and the hardest part of leaving private practice to go into education was leaving my patients behind.

Dana 5:29

Now I want to get away from some of the "Googler" answers that you might find if you're trying to decide should I become a dental hygienist and I want to talk about why you should become a dental hygienist from my perspective. Again, this is totally just me, based on my personality, what I think, so let's just dive into that for a minute.

Dana 5:47

The first reason why I think that you should become a dental hygienist is because you have a passion for it. Now maybe you don't understand why you have a passion for it. And let me break

that down a little bit. When I was a kid, I was obsessed with my baby teeth. I loved to look at them and fawn over them. It's weird. I know. I don't know why. I should have known then that I should have gone into a career in dentistry. Okay, I did not connect the dots until later. If you enjoy going to the dentist. If you have curiosity about the dental field. If you're looking in your mouth or you're Googling pictures of people's mouth, or if you're watching Tic tok videos or YouTube videos of people getting their teeth cleaned. I think that you have an interest in dentistry.

Dana 6:26

Some other things to consider. Do you like working with people? Do you like helping people? Do you want to make a difference in someone's life? Do you want to make connections and help educate people on dental hygiene? These are all things that are very important for a dental hygienist. And so it's some things to keep in mind when you're considering this job field.

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Another thing is do you like to work with your hands? And are you okay with blood and spit being on your hands? Also maybe sometimes on your face? Because spit flies and so does blood. So I have had calculus, which is basically hardened plaque, fly off and hit me in the forehead. And yeah, you know what? It wasn't great, but it didn't bother me because that's the job. That's what I signed up for. So you want to consider those things because you are going to be playing with blood and spit and having your hands in people's mouths. You might get bit right. So you want to kind of think about those things. Are you okay with all of that? I think you should be because it's an amazing job field.

Dana 7:25

The beauty of dental hygiene is that you get to work with your hands. You get to implement science and research and evidence based practices. You get to be a big part of healthcare and the healthcare industry. You make great money depending on what type of dental field you're working on. If you're a private practice, especially right now after COVID They're making exceptional money. So there's a lot of great reasons to become a dental hygienist. But again, it will boils down to... is that your passion? Maybe you don't even realize it yet. If you're not sure, you need to get out there and get some experience in the dental field. Do some shadowing... shadow your hygienist, shadow people in periodontist offices, shadow people in pediatric dental hygiene, and geriatric dental hygiene, whatever it is that you can get some experience and see what the day to day life is like for a dental hygienist. That's going to really help you understand if it's something you're interested in or not. So keep that in mind that the more exposure you can get, the better you're going to be able to determine if this is the right field for you.

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And finally, one of the last things that I would say is the beauty of dentistry is that, especially dental hygiene, is that at the end of the day, you know that you did a job well done. If you're working in private practice and your job is to take care of your patients. clean their teeth.... You know and all the other things that dental hygienist have to do... keep their ops clean, inventory, sterilization, all that stuff. At the end of the day, you know that you got your job done. There's

nothing hanging over your head. Your work is done at the end of the day. And you can always pat yourself on the back and know that you did a job well done. And that's one thing that I love about dentistry. I hope that you found this podcast helpful. if you have any other questions you can always reach out to us at Dhbasics@protonmail.com.

Dana 9:19

If this has you soaring higher than a flying toothbrush, then it's time for you to go to dental hygiene school. Keep listening to our podcast to figure out the best tips and tricks for how to get into dental hygiene school and succeed once you get there. Thank you so much for listening. That's another episode of the DH basics podcast. We'll see you next time.

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