



PHOTO: MICHAEL PRICE

Dr. Gerard Lemongello
and Dr. Jay Lerner *are...*

Worth Asking

by Michael Price

Michael: ARE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS USUALLY CORRECT?

Dr. Lerner: I would say so. When it comes to people, I think I'm a pretty good judge of character.

Dr. Lemongello: Most of the time. I tend to see the good side of people first.

Michael: LAST TIME YOU HAD TO "BITE YOUR TONGUE"?

Dr. Lerner: Can't remember as I tend to be very open and upfront... maybe to a fault. I wear my feelings on my sleeve, so if I try to bite my tongue, I probably would bite it off.

Dr. Lemongello: Today! My mother always said, "if you can't say something nice then say nothing at all." There is a time and place to speak your mind.

Michael: YOUR PROUDEST ACCOMPLISHMENT?

Dr. Lerner: On the personal side, it is my family... my wife and I have 2 beautiful daughters who are very bright, ambitious and independent. We are very proud of all their accomplishments and the fact that they are growing up with good values. On the professional side, I'm very proud to have maintained a private practice for 27 years in the same location and to have gained the respect and trust not only of my patients, but also of my colleagues. I have also been involved in teaching the last 14 years and to be able to affect the lives of younger dentists in a positive way has also been a source of great satisfaction.

Dr. Lemongello: I could say having the opportunity to change peoples lives everyday by giving them the gift of a beautiful smile and allowing them to feel good about themselves. But! Being an active participating father to my 3 sons and building a legacy for the future in them, is my greatest accomplishment.

Michael: WHEN NOT IN THE OFFICE, YOU CAN USUALLY BE FOUND...?

Dr. Lerner: At the gym — either working out or practicing martial arts.

Dr. Lemongello: Somewhere around town either at a son's band concert, a Lacrosse game or Boy Scout meeting. If I'm lucky, I'll be home watching Florida football!

Michael: DO YOU REMEMBER THAT SCENE IN "MARATHON MAN" WHEN DUSTIN HOFFMAN IS HAVING HIS TOOTH DRILLED BY LAURENCE OLIVIER WHILE BEING ASKED, "IS IT SAFE, IS IT SAFE"?

Dr. Lerner: Yes I do, and that scene alone probably did more harm to the perception of dentistry than anything else. With modern techniques, going to the dentist is very safe and painless.

Dr. Lemongello: Unfortunately I do. The films portrayal of a dentist and dentistry used as an instrument of torture was not a shining moment for the profession. Instead the medias fascination with portraying dental situations as torture and dental situations as being unpleasant only continues to hinder the public's perception of dentistry and dental health.

Michael: IF YOU WERE COMEDIANS INSTEAD OF DENTISTS, WHO WOULD BE DEAN MARTIN AND WHO WOULD BE JERRY LEWIS?

Dr. Lemongello: I think we both would be Dean Martin. Neither of us is more the slapstick, class clown type. I am however more often the serious one and less comedic. I am often the straight man.

Michael: THE COMMENT YOU HEAR MOST OFTEN FROM YOUR PATIENTS?

Dr. Lerner: That was so easy, I don't know why I waited so long to do this.

Dr. Lemongello: Wow! That was easy and quick. I can't believe it is actually fun to come a dental office. There is so much positive energy here. Everyone is great and always having a good time. Can I just come and hang out?

Michael: THE MOST POPULAR TOPIC OF CONVERSATION AMONGST YOUR STAFF ON MONDAY MORNINGS?

Dr. Lerner: We have a great staff that really enjoys each other so they are always gabbing about something they did on the weekends

Dr. Lemongello: Men! I often wonder if there is anything else they talk about.

Michael: THE BIGGEST MISCONCEPTION ABOUT RESTORATIVE DENTISTRY?

Dr. Lerner: That it is painful and takes a long time to do.

Dr. Lemongello: It takes a long time and is an unpleasant experience. We pride ourselves on providing a warm, comfortable, pleasant environment. We are very efficient and nothing is left to chance. This leads to consistent predictable results.

Michael: MORE LIKELY TO BE READING "GLOBAL DENTAL JOURNAL" OR THE LATEST JAMES PATTERSON NOVEL WHILE ON VACATION?

Dr. Lerner: On vacation, I enjoy reading non-fiction, usually history or current events... I save the dental journal reading for the plane trips I'm taking to lecture somewhere.

Dr. Lemongello: I hate to admit it, most likely the "Dental Journal." That is not a bad thing. It's part of my perfectionist mentality of staying current on the most up to date materials and techniques providing the highest level of care and expertise.

Michael: SO YOUR CHILDREN BRUSH AND FLOSS THREE TIMES A DAY?

Dr. Lerner: They are 25 and 21, so I have little control over them now, but I sure hope so... they have been cavity free up to this point in their life

Dr. Lemongello: Of course, with three different types of motorized, ultrasonic and manual tooth brushes from 3 different manufacturers. They never eat junk food, candy or drink soda either. Lets not forget they only eat all natural foods grown in our environmentally controlled home garden.

Michael: JUDGING BY YOUR OFFICE, YOU BOTH SEEM TO HAVE A SENSE OF FENG SHUI?

Dr. Lerner: I know we both have a good eye for aesthetics, but as far as the decor of the office, we pretty much left that up to the decorator and my wife.

Dr. Lemongello: It is a reflection of the creative artistic side of being a dentist. We often have a sense of symmetry and balance with shape and color, which is not only expressed in the smiles we create, but our surroundings as well.

Michael: WHO DECIDES WHAT MAGAZINES YOU SUBSCRIBE TO FOR THE WAITING ROOM?

Dr. Lerner: We both decided to get various subscriptions that we felt touches on the interests of the population of patients we treat. I tend more toward the sports, golf in particular while Gerard likes the car enthusiast magazines.

Michael: IS IT TRUE IT TAKES LESS MUSCLES TO SMILE THAN TO FROWN?

Dr. Lerner: Actually it takes one more muscle to smile than to frown, but it may expend less energy as people tend to smile more than frown so the muscles are in better shape.

Michael: WHAT'S WORSE THAN A ROOT CANAL?

Dr. Lerner: As a die-hard Giants football fan the worst for me is sitting through a game when they are getting blown out.

Dr. Lemongello: Just about anything else. Root canals are one of the most misunderstood procedures. Having a root canal is as painless and quick as having a filling.

Michael: TELL US ABOUT "GIVE BACK A SMILE" AND YOUR INVOLVEMENT WITH THAT ORGANIZATION?

Dr. Lerner: This a wonderful program sponsored through the Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry to help the victims of domestic violence get their lives back on track. Being able to help a young woman regain her self confidence with a beautiful new smile was very gratifying. Providing pro-bono treatment through this organization allows us to give back to the community and our profession.

Dr. Lemongello: This is the Charitable Foundation of the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry. In this program volunteer dentists donate their time and talent to restore the smiles of victims of domestic violence at no cost. This year we restored the smile of a 26-year-old mother of 2, who had lost, through physical and psychological abuse many of her front teeth. Restoring her smile was life-changing for her and our office.

Michael: ANY FINAL WORDS OF "WISDOM"?

Dr. Lerner: A smile on your face can make others around you feel better so keep yours healthy and looking great

Dr. Lemongello: Imagine a facelift with no surgery no down time and no recovery time all completed in a few hours. A beautiful youthful smile has the most profound affect on your appearance more so than any other procedure you can have done and will make you look 5 to 10 years younger instantly. You wear your smile everyday and it is the only accessory you take with you everywhere you go. A smile makeover and a beautiful can change your life. Smile more! Sharing a smile with someone costs nothing but pays huge returns.