

COLUMN

How virtual meetings are revealing smile concerns

Many of us are happy with the appearance of our smile for years until something makes us reevaluate it. Sometimes this can be brought to our attention by newer photos where we notice our smile has aged or isn't as bright and white as it used to be.



Dentally Speaking

by Jeffrey S. Haddad D.D.S.

Sometimes an innocent, but honest, comment from a child or grandchild can trigger this awareness of teeth that are worn down, yellowed, or not as attractive as you remembered. A lot of people are reevaluating their smiles now thanks to the proliferation of online video meetings via Zoom, Skype, Telehealth and other conferencing software.

Why has the increase of online meetings made so many people unhappy with their smiles?

• One of the simplest reasons is just that people spend more time looking at their smiles with video conferencing. That's because they often have a picture of themselves up alongside other people at the meeting. Then they see themselves smiling in greeting, acknowledgement, or amusement at others in the meeting. In addition, they watch themselves talk, which few of us do otherwise. This can reveal tooth problems that only show up when talking rather than simply when we smile, such as old metal fillings that have turned black. For many people, this is a surprise, as they might have thought some features like a missing tooth further back in the mouth just couldn't be seen.

• Video conferencing also gives you a different per-

spective on your smile. You see it from a different angle than you do when looking in the mirror. It can show you your smile more like the way other people see it, which can make you self-conscious. We've observed this for years with selfie culture, but we're

finding that an entirely different set of people are experiencing a new sense of what their smiles looks like.

Virtual meetings have been a driver in boosting demand for cosmetic dentistry. This continues to be true as patients are seeing themselves more often on a screen and, consequently, feel more conscious about their smiles. However, this phenomenon was just the tipping point for people to seek out cosmetic dental treatment they were already interested in. If you are unhappy with your smile in any way, there are numerous cosmetic dentistry procedures that can help you achieve a smile that can help with confidence on screen and in person. With the advances in technology, smile design expertise, and the natural appearance of cosmetic dentistry, anyone can have the smile of their dreams.

Jeffrey S. Haddad, DDS of Rochester Advanced Dentistry, completed his dental education at the University of Michigan in 2001. Dr. Haddad is a fellow of the prestigious Las Vegas Institute for Advanced Dental Studies. He lectures nationally on cosmetic dentistry, TMJ and sleep disorders and dental implants. For more information, visit www.rochesteradvanceddentistry.com.

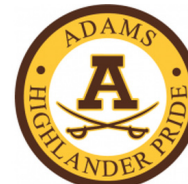
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