

NEWSLETTER

I wanted to acquaint you with some information that has come my way recently – with regard to LOUPES. Don't forget to read the article I wrote on the subject in the Resources>Articles tab on this site – but this is even more interesting.

As I have indicated for many years – there is a strong tendency for loupe sales reps to sell loupes with LONG working distances. I speculated on WHY this is in the Article, and won't repeat it here. I really don't think that most reps are knowing that they are often suggesting loupes to students that will not work well for them – after all, the reps do not DO dentistry!

I asked a long-term rep in my office the other day WHY dentists wear loupes. He did not come up with the idea that the reason is that we need to SEE MORE!

For decades reps have suggested long working distances with the patient almost in the dentist's lap – requiring the bending of the neck. That the back is forced to be vertical was always thought to be the important “ergonomic” concept supporting long distances.

I have always thought that the bent neck would be the largest problem for the dentist but the reps just didn't see that. WELL NOW THEY DO! Now we have “ergo” loupes!

What IS an “ergo” loupe. The barrel of the loupe that holds the lenses and prisms is BENT at an angle. This way you can look downward WITHOUT BENDING THE NECK! This seems to me to be a tacit admission that bending the neck was ALWAYS a problem.

BUT – now you can keep your head raised AS IF you were looking at the horizon while you SEE downward – and can still have the patient in your lap.

The sales rep I talked with indicated that about 20% of the people that try these can't get used to them. A recent visitor to DOD that is in attendance at a school program now told me that the entering students were encouraged to buy bent “ergo” loupes, but that MOST of the students could not work with the loupes.

I have a student in my class now that told me her brother LOVES the bent loupes – and I was wondering what makes him different. Apparently he is an avid gamer – in fact at the highest national level. In gaming he ALWAYS looks at the monitor to see the action straight ahead at the same level as his eyes, while working with his hands on the controller in his lap, without seeing it! In this way – it is much like a dentist working with his hands while NOT looking at his hands while wearing the bent loupes.

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I would like to find out what percentage of the students that accommodate to the bent loupes are avid gamers!

But – this is not, of course, the whole story. As we DO preparations and change our chair position, mirror position, and direction of view so we can actually SEE what we need to for each of the steps of a preparation or procedure, the longer the working distance we are at, the more difficult the movement to get the desired view.

THIS is why I have always worked close at a shorter focal distance, with the patient positioned heart level, and lower power loupes. I SEE everything that must be seen to predict the longevity of the restoration and I and my patient are always comfortable.

To learn more about how to SEE what you NEED to see in dentistry, check out my Udemy course of that name:

<https://www.udemy.com/course/how-to-see-what-you-need-to-see-for-dental-students/?referralCode=013AA31B8E3AD9CD0DE0>

You will see that working at long distances compromises what you CAN see or how difficult it is to see it.

OK – bottom line. Loupe sales reps are still recommending long working distances, for whatever reason they do, but at least you won't injure your neck anymore – IF you can stand to NOT look directly at what your hands are doing. Personally, I could not get used to that – but they didn't have computer games when I was young (or computers for that matter). But there are some great Galilean loupes out there at reasonable prices that focus close. Try them out.

When you are a student at Duggan Oral Design, you will be able to try a variety of loupes from different manufacturers and discover what works the best for you by actually USING them for a variety of preps in all four quadrants. Make an informed decision by having this experience!

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