

1 **Salvador Gaytan:** It's time, ladies and gentlemen! SmileTalk is on the air featuring  
2 the latest news and developments in dental health, as well as other  
3 fascinating topics that make people smile. I'm Salvador Gaytan,  
4 and I'm here with?  
5  
6 **Dr. John Chao:** Dr. John Chao, hi everybody.  
7  
8 **Salvador Gaytan:** What's going on, Dr. John? We just wrapped up a four segment  
9 interview with **Dr. Avishai Sadan, the dean at the Ostrow**  
10 **School of Dentistry of USC.** It was fascinating, wasn't it, Dr.  
11 John?  
12  
13 **Dr. John Chao:** Yes, I really, really enjoyed it. I want to talk about why we spent  
14 four sessions on that.  
15  
16 **Salvador Gaytan:** Okay, excellent.  
17  
18 **Dr. John Chao:** Just as a background, there have been different shows, particularly  
19 TV shows talking about medicine, how medical students are  
20 trained and what happened to the residents, and how they are  
21 trained by the physicians who achieve residency and so on. And  
22 you can remember some shows...  
23  
24 **Salvador Gaytan:** Marcus Welby, M.D.  
25  
26 **Dr. John Chao:** Yeah, Dr. Kildare.  
27  
28 **Salvador Gaytan:** Dr. Kildare, yes.  
29  
30 **Dr. John Chao:** Dr. Casey.  
31  
32 **Salvador Gaytan:** Now, ER.  
33  
34 **Dr. John Chao:** ER and Dr. House. Let's talk about...  
35  
36 **Salvador Gaytan:** Doogie Howser.  
37  
38 **Dr. John Chao:** What?  
39  
40 **Salvador Gaytan:** Wasn't there a Dr. Doogie Howser, the little kid M.D. or the 14  
41 year old M.D. on some show, I think it was Doogie Howser M.D.  
42  
43 **Dr. John Chao:** I haven't seen that.  
44  
45 **Salvador Gaytan:** Yeah, that's right.  
46

47 **Dr. John Chao:** That's good. Okay, but where is there a show that talks about how  
48 dental students are trained and how dentists are training, how the  
49 dentists are trained and how a dentist is made? What's being a  
50 dental student like?

51  
52 **Salvador Gaytan:** Behind the scenes.

53  
54 **Dr. John Chao:** And what happens? What's required for your dentist in your  
55 neighborhood to be able to be there for you and take care of you in  
56 the way that dentistry has been practiced in America. And this, it  
57 did not just materialize out of nothing. It's hundreds of years of  
58 dentistry progressing in terms of dental education.

59  
60 **Dental education** produces the dentists that you see everyday, and  
61 like Dr. Sadan has said, it's a comprehensive training. It's not just  
62 learning how to fill a tooth. It's learning about the body. It's  
63 learning how the body interacts with the oral cavity and vice versa,  
64 and how you can take care of a patient who's ill or who's not ill,  
65 and what is the impact of teeth, gums and other structures of the  
66 mouth, and saliva, on general health.

67  
68 **Salvador Gaytan:** That's right, and he did cover a lot of fascinating topics about that  
69 as far as how the dentists at USC are trained, as well as how they  
70 raise the money to train the dentists.

71  
72 **Dr. John Chao:** Yes, and it's not just about USC, I want to hasten to say that. In the  
73 future we will have the deans hopefully of the other dental schools,  
74 such as Loma Linda, UCLA, and the new one in Pomona to come  
75 and talk to us about dentistry. But USC is featured as a way for the  
76 general public to understand, generally speaking, how a dental  
77 student is trained, what is behind the making of a dentist? There  
78 are so many fascinating issues to that.

79  
80 **Salvador Gaytan:** Now, what would you pick as the number one element that makes  
81 a great dentist?

82  
83 **Dr. John Chao:** What makes a great dentist is a combination of many things. What  
84 makes a great plastic surgeon, what makes a good general surgeon,  
85 what makes a brain surgeon, it's not just the skill, it's understanding  
86 of the human body, it's understanding of the impact of that  
87 particular condition on the human body, it's ability to diagnose, it's  
88 ability to relate to the patient, it's ability to follow up on treatment.

89  
90 It's the facility that the doctor working, it's the training personnel  
91 that assist him, whether it's the technician that takes the MRI or the  
92 CAT scan, whether it's a surgical nurse that helps him. All those

93 elements together, when it's put together correctly and efficiently,  
94 and given enough experience to working together, makes for the  
95 good result that a great surgeon gets when he does something.  
96  
97 So, it's not just one element. Of course, it's his training. It's his  
98 training, it's his own talent that comes to play, it's his own  
99 predilection, it's his own personality, it's intensively what he went  
100 through to be a surgeon.  
101  
102 And analogously the same thing goes into the training of a dentist,  
103 it's the facility, it's the experience, it's the tradition. It's how he  
104 absorbs or she absorbs the training and how he or she comes  
105 together later on in a practice environment and bringing about the  
106 facilities, the high technology, the current technology that are  
107 available, and how the staff is trained, and his or hers experience in  
108 training.  
109  
110 So, it's many, many elements, but that's a good question. What is  
111 one scale that can be preeminent? I don't really know. I think it's  
112 clinical skill, I think it's also just as importantly his ability to  
113 understand the human body and understand the human psyche, and  
114 understand himself, so not only is he using or she using her skills,  
115 but using it in the context of a doctor-patient relationship.  
116  
117 **Salvador Gaytan:** That's right. And for anyone just tuning in, you're listening to  
118 SmileTalk with Dr. John Chao, spelled C-H-A-O. You can reach  
119 Dr. John at [AlhambraDental.com](http://AlhambraDental.com) to listen to any previous shows or  
120 submit questions, or 626-308-9104.  
121  
122 **Dr. John Chao:** Or if you want to find me, and you can't remember anything that  
123 Sal has just said, remember **Chao Radio**.  
124  
125 **Salvador Gaytan:** That's right. Type that into the World Wide Web, and you'll pull up  
126 Dr. John's website.  
127  
128 **Dr. John Chao:** Yes, you'll be able to see Sal and me and the pictures of all the  
129 other guests, on the web.  
130  
131 **Salvador Gaytan:** Fantastic. Now, getting back to your point of what -- well, I asked  
132 the question and you were making the point of what makes a great  
133 dentist. And my personal observation from actually being in the  
134 chair and hearing you, and also dealing with other doctors is, I  
135 think what makes a great doctor or a dentist is the ability to listen  
136 to their patient's needs.  
137

138 And I've heard you do it in a couple of instances. We're going to  
139 talk about that. But a doctor that listens and then says, "Okay, I  
140 hear what the patient is saying," and they prescribe the remedies  
141 that the patient is expecting.  
142

143 **Dr. John Chao:** Or it could be the diagnosis based on physical findings, but is  
144 presented in a way or is treated in a different way depending on the  
145 preferences of that patient. You're making a very excellent point,  
146 it's the doctor needs to listen to the patient, that's very basic. In  
147 fact, that's exactly what I teach at the USC School of Dentistry.  
148

149 I teach in the Behavioral Science Department, where we train the  
150 student doctors to listen to the patients, in particular when it has to  
151 do with anxiety. But the listening skill and the ability to then  
152 verbalize your diagnosis and be able to relate to the patient is one  
153 of the most important qualities of a great doctor.  
154

155 **Salvador Gaytan:** Yes. Now, just wrapping up, getting back to -- we did four  
156 segments with Dr. Sadan, who is the dean of the Ostrow School of  
157 Dentistry at USC, and just to wrap up a few impressions, I was  
158 very impressed with his demeanor. I can see why USC chose him  
159 as the dean.  
160

161 He's very forthright, very intelligent in what his vision is for USC,  
162 and he also talked about how they raise money and how the  
163 research they do, the charitable work they do. So, I was very  
164 impressed, and I think it validated why we did four shows.  
165

166 **Dr. John Chao:** Yes, and one of his important qualities is that he can bring about a  
167 vision for that particular institution, given the elements which are  
168 there already. I like the fact he is able to bring together the strong  
169 desire on the part of supporters of the School of Dentistry for  
170 clinical excellence.  
171

172 I'm a strong believer in that, as you have heard over many, many  
173 shows, and how we also need to have -- and every dental school  
174 needs to have that, the ability for the aspiring doctor, the student  
175 doctor and the graduate doctors to be able to critically diagnose the  
176 situation, to use critical thinking including listening skills in order  
177 to be able to successfully help their patients in the new century,  
178 The university and the school of dentistry need to be in the  
179 forefront of scientific research and bring about science into the art  
180 of the practice of dentistry, and bring more art into dentistry at the  
181 same time.  
182

183 And then also teach the moral, ethical aspects of professional  
184 responsibility in reaching those people who cannot have access to  
185 dentistry and they cannot afford to do so. So, Dr. Sadan has  
186 brought those three elements together; clinical excellence,  
187 scientific research and access to dental care together in one vision  
188 that's very inspiring for me, and this is why I have decided to  
189 support the work at USC in a more active way than before.  
190  
191 **Salvador Gaytan:** That's right. Now, so we've kind of wrapped that up. Now, moving  
192 along, we're not going to have our Rapid Fire Five today. We're  
193 just going to have a few different topics that we're going to discuss  
194 and go over, and we're coming very close to our anniversary show,  
195 it will be our next show.  
196  
197 And we're going to have a special for the anniversary show. I don't  
198 mind unveiling it right now, because it's so important, and that is in  
199 how you specialize in dealing with cowards and people that have  
200 high anxieties.  
201  
202 I think we might as well just do it right now. There's a fascinating  
203 story about a fireman patient of yours, who I actually saw a few  
204 minutes of a video that he did.  
205  
206 **Dr. John Chao:** Oh, you did see it?  
207  
208 **Salvador Gaytan:** I did see it, yeah.  
209  
210 **Dr. John Chao:** Okay, great.  
211  
212 **Salvador Gaytan:** I did see few minutes of the video, and his -- I'm going to let you  
213 give the details, but basically his background was he is a fireman,  
214 big, buff, burly guy, strong guy, confident guy, and in the  
215 interview he talked about though how he's gone 20 years with pain,  
216 because he was afraid to see the dentist. And tell us why he was  
217 afraid, Dr. John.  
218  
219 **Dr. John Chao:** Well, first of all, I made the video because I wanted to show the  
220 students in my class at USC, how we do it at the office in a  
221 practice situation.  
222  
223 **Salvador Gaytan:** Because you teach at USC.  
224  
225 **Dr. John Chao:** I teach at USC on the subject of anxiety control. We call that  
226 **iatrosedation**; we'll come to that later. And I wanted the students  
227 to be able to see a real life situation. When I videotaped him with  
228 his permission, I had no idea where this case was going to go. So,

229 it was a genuine case, and I videotaped it and then I took him  
230 through the different steps to where he became comfortable and we  
231 treated him successfully.  
232  
233 He's totally recovered and he's just one different man. But anyway,  
234 to start with, he was a fireman; he was actually a fire captain. And  
235 he did many things after that, but he had this one debilitating  
236 mental disadvantage, it's that he's very afraid of the dentist.  
237  
238 **Salvador Gaytan:** Now, why was he -- so, this is a guy that can go into burning  
239 buildings, not afraid of fire or heat or smoke, but he is afraid of the  
240 little it'sy, bitsy dentist, but tell him why though. He has a good  
241 reason.  
242  
243 **Dr. John Chao:** Yeah, well beyond that, he was actually a medic.  
244  
245 **Salvador Gaytan:** A medic, wow.  
246  
247 **Dr. John Chao:** You don't become a fireman without being a paramedic and go  
248 through different life threatening situations and save people, but  
249 for himself he was unable to overcome this particular problem.  
250 And the reason he became that way is the reason millions and  
251 millions of adults in America have the same -- it's in that -- this  
252 condition, **this dental phobia, this high anxiety towards**  
253 **dentistry is not congenital.**  
254  
255 **You are not born with it, but you have people who think that**  
256 **it's something they need to be ashamed of,** they cannot discuss  
257 it. It's just something that is a personal blemish that they try to hide  
258 and run away from. And that's not actually true, because this  
259 **feeling of anxiety is actually acquired.** It's acquired from past  
260 experiences.  
261  
262 **Salvador Gaytan:** And tell them, what happened, the traumatic experience happened  
263 to the fireman as a kid?  
264  
265 **Dr. John Chao:** As a kid -- did you see him relate to that?  
266  
267 **Salvador Gaytan:** I saw it, yeah.  
268  
269 **Dr. John Chao:** Did you see his facial expression?  
270  
271 **Salvador Gaytan:** I saw his facial expressions.  
272  
273 **Dr. John Chao:** What did it look like?  
274

275 **Salvador Gaytan:** To me, a grown man, and he was reliving the fear he had as a boy,  
276 and I could see that in his facial expressions, his voice. He was  
277 going back there, and do you want to tell them what happened?  
278

279 **Dr. John Chao:** Yeah, what happened to him was, the dentist, accidentally  
280 somebody bumped his arm, and the needle instead of going into his  
281 mouth, poked through his cheek and entered his gum when he was  
282 a little boy.  
283

284 And I think it's more than just an accident. From the way he  
285 described it, it's that he was helpless, he was held down.  
286 Something made him feel like he had no control over the situation.  
287

288 The helplessness and the pain, and the experience itself made for  
289 this anxiety. In other words, if it's just pain, under the right  
290 circumstances, a patient or a person can get over it. But if it's  
291 helplessness, there's nothing you can do, and this can happen again  
292 and you can be helpless again, I think there's elements that create  
293 this phobia.  
294

295 **Salvador Gaytan:** Well, especially as a child, you experience that; I can see why  
296 you'd never want to go back. So, he lived with pain for 20 years, he  
297 said, because he would not go back to the dentist.  
298

299 **Dr. John Chao:** Yeah, he had other experiences too that added to that. He related  
300 how -- in fact we have his permission to actually talk about it. But  
301 he said that the last time he went to the dentist, he was so sweating  
302 -- he was so wet with sweat, that the dentist felt sorry for him and  
303 said, "Why don't you just go and come back later? Because when  
304 you feel better, I'll take care of you." So, he didn't have...  
305

306 **Salvador Gaytan:** That was not the right thing for the dentist to do, was it?  
307

308 **Dr. John Chao:** Well, I don't want to be critical, because...  
309

310 **Salvador Gaytan:** Well, you wouldn't do that.  
311

312 **Dr. John Chao:** Well, I wouldn't do that, because I have specialized my office to  
313 take care of people like that. And I am not setup to where I need to  
314 see a certain number of patients in an efficient, sequential manner  
315 and without the ability to actually interrupt my schedule to take  
316 care of special patients with special needs. So, every dentist  
317 practices differently.  
318

319 And if you're not equipped or have the special desire for highly  
320 anxious patients, it's probably better off that you refer the patients

321 somewhere else and maybe treat the patient another time or use  
322 medication, use gas, use oral medication or even use IV sedation.  
323 So, I wouldn't be critical, but there are patients who need special  
324 care.  
325  
326 **Salvador Gaytan:** Patients need special care, and they need it now, not a day later, a  
327 week later. I mean the guy probably didn't come back. You know  
328 what I mean? Once he sent him home, who's going to want to  
329 come back?  
330  
331 **Dr. John Chao:** Yeah, and so this particular gentleman had this experience, and we  
332 were able to take him through it. He was able to understand that  
333 this attitude, this mental state is something he acquired from a past  
334 experience, that with new experiences, which are pleasant and  
335 warm and supportive without the helplessness, and of course  
336 without the pain...  
337  
338 **Salvador Gaytan:** Pain free.  
339  
340 **Dr. John Chao:** It'd be pain free, that he will be better and he will do much, much  
341 better.  
342  
343 **Salvador Gaytan:** So, it has a happy ending, and...  
344  
345 **Dr. John Chao:** Happy ending, yeah. He had a tooth that needed to be extracted,  
346 and I was able to show him that I accept the fact that he is very  
347 highly anxious and phobic, that it's okay for him to be that way,  
348 and that I know what bothers him, which is not getting numb or  
349 which is the experience of getting numb and having a problem.  
350  
351 And I was able to show him that it was totally painless in the way  
352 that I define painlessness, and that he was able to tolerate the  
353 experience without actually blinking an eye. It took us a while. We  
354 had to really nurse him through it, but when he was done, he was  
355 very happy. Did you hear the last part of it?  
356  
357 **Salvador Gaytan:** I did not hear the final. I saw the first half of the interview.  
358  
359 **Dr. John Chao:** Yeah, and he was very happy, and then he came to me the next day  
360 actually and saw the hygienists were cleaning. And he was very  
361 thankful, he was a different man.  
362  
363 **Salvador Gaytan:** Different man, smiling, happy.  
364  
365 **Dr. John Chao:** What I didn't tell you was that yesterday when you were there, he  
366 actually came later, and we didn't recognize him. Remember he



367 had a kind of a beanie hat on? He looked like he wasn't really up to  
368 anything, but he came in yesterday, we hardly recognized him.  
369 This is one good looking, cool dude.  
370  
371 **Salvador Gaytan:** Wow.  
372  
373 **Dr. John Chao:** He did his hair different, and we almost didn't recognize the guy.  
374 His life is changed.  
375  
376 **Salvador Gaytan:** Well, we've talked about that on different shows that when people  
377 have pain in their mouth or discomfort in their mouth, they don't  
378 smile. It affects their whole demeanor.  
379  
380 **Dr. John Chao:** Yes, that's a good point. I'm glad you brought it up, Sal. However,  
381 what's really, really exciting, and it happened in his case and many  
382 other cases, almost every case. I'm not a psychologist, but I see  
383 time and again, when a patient overcomes, is relieved of this  
384 phobia, their lives actually change, because now they've gotten rid  
385 of a big monkey off their back.  
386  
387 It's a burden that they carry around, 40 pounds, 50 pounds, 100  
388 pounds, they're carrying it on their back that they're unable to  
389 overcome and now it's gone. I don't care what it is, it's gone, and  
390 all of a sudden they're more empowered, would be the word. He  
391 used the word; he feels that's been an emotional cleansing.  
392  
393 **Salvador Gaytan:** Wow.  
394  
395 **Dr. John Chao:** He used those terms. I was very struck by the...  
396  
397 **Salvador Gaytan:** It's almost spiritual nature.  
398  
399 **Dr. John Chao:** This is a very intelligent man. He feels spiritually cleansed, he  
400 feels different, and this is a different man yesterday that I saw. So,  
401 it's very, very gratifying for myself and especially my staff.  
402  
403 **Salvador Gaytan:** Absolutely. And for anyone tuning in, you're listening to  
404 SmileTalk with Dr. John Chao, spelled C-H-A-O. You can reach  
405 Dr. John at his website [AlhambraDental.com](http://AlhambraDental.com) to listen to any  
406 shows, submit questions or you can contact Dr. John at 626-308-  
407 9104. He does specialize in people who have high anxieties or if  
408 you want to term yourself a coward, there's no shame in that.  
409  
410 **Dr. John Chao:** It's okay to be a coward. It's okay to be scared of dentists, and we  
411 have very, very normal, apparently very, very healthy people such

412 as our last patient, and he by experience happened to be very, very  
413 anxious [crosstalk] dentistry.

414  
415 **Salvador Gaytan:** That is right, and I can say that too, because I am a patient. I've  
416 been a patient for many years, so I'm having my own things taken  
417 care of, which hasn't been a lot, but I've had a few shots, and you  
418 know what? It's no big deal to me.

419  
420 But I know other people, they have more anxieties, and I'm very  
421 impressed with the way that your office has handled them, so I'm  
422 very impressed with that.

423  
424 **Dr. John Chao:** It's not just the injection. It's actually how you make it pleasant.  
425 Remember on the last show we said that pain is caused by an  
426 unpleasant sensation. It is the role of the dentist to make it as  
427 pleasant as possible.

428  
429 So, the dentist who treats patients with high anxieties, generally  
430 have a very pleasant, warm, supportive environment with staff that  
431 are very, very caring and attentive to the special needs of the  
432 patient. And a doctor who is also knowledgeable as to that  
433 particular condition, and can use the right words, use the right  
434 demeanor to alleviate and help the patient to overcome that.

435  
436 So, in this formula of unpleasant sensation, you can make it  
437 pleasant and you can feel a little bit of sensation, it would not be  
438 painful. You can also make it totally without sensation, and then of  
439 course if it still is a little bit unpleasant, it's not that intolerable.

440  
441 **Salvador Gaytan:** Right. Well, that's what I've been impressed with, because I've had  
442 times where I ask you or one of your assistants, "Okay, well if  
443 you're going to do this, then what's going to happen or what does  
444 that mean?"

445  
446 I've heard you with other patients, and it comes to my point about  
447 listening, because if a patient is asking questions, if you don't give  
448 them the answers, then they have uncertainty in their mind of how  
449 the process is going to work out. So, I'm very impressed with the  
450 way you and your staff explain the process and then carry out the  
451 procedures.

452  
453 **Dr. John Chao:** And it's the same thing with the very anxious patients, I need to  
454 know what is the concern of this patient. If this patient is very  
455 anxious about certain aspects of dentistry, **we need to listen to it**  
456 **and make sure that he understands that we accept it.**

457

458 It's not judged, it's okay for me to have that, to recognize he has  
459 that and help him accept it, help him understand the process and  
460 how he could be so called -- have his circuits reprogrammed, so  
461 the anxiety path is not there, and new pathways within the brain  
462 takes over, that makes it pleasant and makes him feel okay to come  
463 back.  
464  
465 **Salvador Gaytan:** Absolutely, absolutely. Well, we're coming down to the last minute  
466 or so of our show, Dr. John. Our next show is going to be our  
467 anniversary show, and you have a special -- I guess it's a special  
468 offer that you're going to be offering for the anniversary show, and  
469 we're going to go over some of our moments we've had and some  
470 different stories. So, that's upcoming. But this has been a great  
471 show today, Dr. John, it went fast.  
472  
473 **Dr. John Chao:** Yes, I enjoy it more and more. I have to say.  
474  
475 **Salvador Gaytan:** More and more?  
476  
477 **Dr. John Chao:** Yeah, it's really fun. I hope that the audience feels the same thing.  
478 What do you think?  
479  
480 **Salvador Gaytan:** I think it's been fantastic. And again, for the audience, if you have  
481 questions for Dr. John that you want answered on the show, you  
482 can submit them at [AlhambraDental.com](http://AlhambraDental.com) or you can reach Dr.  
483 John Chao, spelled C-H-A-O at 626-308-9104 or they can find you  
484 on the web, how Dr. John?  
485  
486 **Dr. John Chao:** Type in Chao and Radio.  
487  
488 **Salvador Gaytan:** That will get you.  
489  
490 **Dr. John Chao:** I found it the other day myself. So, that works, Chao Radio.  
491  
492 **Salvador Gaytan:** Different ways to get in contact with Dr. John, the friendly dentist.  
493 I guess that's a wrap for today, Dr. John.  
494  
495 **Dr. John Chao:** Yes, goodbye everybody, see you next week.  
496  
497 **Salvador Gaytan:** Goodbye.  
498  
499 [END OF AUDIO]