



TIMELESS TIPS FOR CATARACT SURGERY AND MORE

This issue of *CRST Global | Europe Edition* features the winners of the publication's Timeless Tips for Cataract Surgery video contest. Thanks to talented colleagues from all over the world, we can learn from these wonderful videos and, in the process, achieve better outcomes and reduce complications.

According to the Cambridge dictionary, a *tip* is a useful piece of information, especially about how to do something. Collecting and sharing useful information is undoubtedly beneficial for cataract surgery, but it is also important for our practices and lives. Here are four of my favorite timeless tips for life and work.

► **Tip No. 1: Write yourself a letter.** We're just a couple of months into 2023, and for some, New Year's resolutions may already have fallen by the wayside. If that's the case for you, don't be too hard on yourself. Resolutions can be made mainly out of a feeling of social obligation. Instead of making a New Year's resolution, try writing a letter or email to yourself—at any time of the year—about where you want your life to be 12 months from then. It could be a personal or professional milestone (or both). This practice often helps people take control of the trajectory of their year and keeps them on course.

► **Tip No. 2: Schedule time to think.** Modern life leads us to think less for ourselves. Devices such as computers, smartphones, and tablets use algorithms to make predictions and think for us, and modern nomograms do much of the thinking that surgeons were responsible for in the past. To counteract any negative effects of thinking less, each week I schedule time—a few minutes daily or a longer period once per week—to think. There must be no interruptions or technology present, only a pen and paper. The scheduled time can feel challenging at first, and nothing much might happen initially. With practice, however, the time becomes productive. Simply jot down what comes to mind and watch your thoughts gain structure.

► **Tip No. 3: Reach out.** We've all heard the saying, "no regrets." Many believe the best way to approach life is to minimize regrets. Multi-bestselling author Dan Pink offers a different perspective in *The Power of Regret*.¹ He believes focusing on regrets can be useful. His research indicates that reaching out to someone is the single greatest thing you can do to learn from your regrets.

► **Tip No. 4: Provide an excellent patient experience.** Modern medicine and its technological advances allow us to provide better outcomes more safely and consistently than ever. As a result, patients undergoing refractive surgery also have higher expectations than ever. Managing expectations preoperatively is crucial. Make it clear to patients that refractive surgery carries the risk of complications that could lead to a suboptimal outcome, no matter how rare the complication may be. If you are enjoying a meal in a highly acclaimed restaurant that has received many positive reviews, you are entitled to expect an excellent meal. These base-level expectations are called *hygiene factors*—the aspects of an experience that provide no additional satisfaction but the absence of which creates dissatisfaction.² All good ophthalmology practices succeed at the level of these hygiene factors. Going above and beyond the patient's expectations with state-of-the-art technology, consistently good outcomes, and positive patient reviews is therefore crucial.

The patient experience is one key area where practices can excel. Consider reading *Beyond Bedside Manner* by Shareef Mahdavi.³ The book provides tips on how to create an excellent patient experience in your practice. It is an easy read packed with gems and practical advice. I have no financial interest in this book except that implementing these tips has benefited my practice significantly.

I hope your patient experience profits from the tips shared in the Timeless Tips videos and articles and this editorial. I wish you continued success with cataract surgery and your practice for the remainder of 2023 and beyond. As the title suggests, these tips are meant to be timeless. ■

1. Pink DH. *The Power of Regret: How Looking Backward Moves Us Forward*. Riverhead Books; 2022.

2. Teong D. Herzberg's two factor theory and workplace satisfaction. LinkedIn. January 25, 2018. Accessed January 20, 2023. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/herzbergs-two-factor-theory-workplace-satisfaction-damien-teong>

3. Mahdavi S. *Beyond Bedside Manner: Insights on Perfecting the Patient Experience*. Story Seven; 2020.



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