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## Smile Makeover

A Smile Is a Little Curve that Straightens Everything Out!

*by Dr. Susan Maples*

Q: My 40 year old brother recently had a “smile makeover” and he seems like a different person all together—so positive and fun to be with. Is that unusual?

A: Not unusual at all. Isn't that a wonderful phenomenon to witness? Aside from the personality change you have noticed, I have also watched some adults dramatically change their life circumstances in the year or two that follows a smile makeover. It seems the profound boost of confidence gives people courage to get a promotion, improve personal relationships, achieve a higher level of fitness, and/or increase their personal energy. As a team, we are curious about how that works because these “before and after” stories are incredible! In our country we place a high value on an esthetically pleasing smile. Brighter, straighter, stronger looking teeth are a symbol of health and success.

A person who has small, discolored, crowded or misshapen teeth often develops a poor self concept of their smile during adolescence. He or she “learns” how to hide their teeth, either with their lips, or a hand. Let's think about the implications of reversing that. First, imagine how flashing a full-blown smile, after years of ‘not’ creates a boost of the body's natural endorphins. Second, we all know that a big bright smile is irresistible to others—even strangers have to smile back! So imagine how much friendlier the world around you would seem, when at last you are beaming in every direction.

Imagine further that as others respond to you more warmly, your confidence climbs another notch. Suddenly you find yourself taking risks you have always dreamed of: asking for a promotion, for a date, or giving a front-of-the-room presentation.

Third, we are amazed how often enhancing a smile inspires other health changes such as improved fitness, nutrition, and personal energy. It can be the impetus for someone to quit smoking or improve personal and oral hygiene. And finally, this transformation inspires others. When friends and family members witness such overwhelmingly positive changes they often begin to wonder what's possible for themselves.

Congratulations to your brother, what a wonderful gift to himself!