

Sleep Apnea,
Vitality and Beauty

By Arthur M. Strauss, DDS

Dentistry's impact upon what I will call "the well system theory", our "vital aliveness" and beauty, is based on what I refer to as the body's functional design to survive. Information in many articles I have written illustrates the following:

- Varying approaches to medicine show the sequence of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) of airway-breathing-circulation (ABC) reflects this functional design to survive.
- The posture, shape and position of the tongue in the throat controls our airway, its size and shape, whether it is clear, partially obstructed or blocked by the back of the tongue.
- This, in turn, is controlled by dental structures, namely the jaws, including, teeth, gums, muscles and nerves – their size, shape and three-dimensional positions.
- To survive our body has a balancing system, the autonomic nervous system, to maintain equilibrium or homeostasis.
This activates the sympathetic nervous system with the release of "adrenaline type" or stress hormones to fuel activity associated with action when the body is in threat of survival.
It inhibits the parasympathetic nervous system that manages resources for our body maintenance, healing, building and rebuilding during non-threat periods especially when we are in states of both active and inactive relaxation.
- Any threat to an ideal airway takes priority in initiating compensations to ensure adequate airflow. Compensations work as "robbing Peter to pay Paul" in that payback is required. There is a price to pay that detracts from our vital aliveness.
- Therefore, the more conducive the physical relationships of our dental structures are to functional stability of an unimpaired airway, the greater the ease (less stress) in swallowing, speaking and breathing.

Farrand Robson, DDS relates Oral Systemic Balance® (OSB) to the equilibrium of oral and other body functions via the autonomic nervous system to enhance "optimal vitality". By optimizing the oral system we reduce our body's need to compensate through the stress response, which we plainly refer to as stress, and which robs us of our vitality and inner peace, the reflection of which is our natural beauty.

Sleep apnea is a symptom of impaired oral function of a compromised oral system, which reflects jaw and tooth structures we inherit, and that we behaviorally and environmentally impact by our lifestyle, habits and dental interventions.

I believe that while the effect upon and management of this is not yet generally appreciated or well understood, pursuit of such knowledge and its application is focusing on Oral Systemic Balance® (OSB).