

Leadership Training

September 2026



Your Emotions Are Real, But They're Not the Leader

Self-Control Isn't Suppression

Stress Reveals Systems

The Discipline of the Reset



Today...
**Choose to Be
Extraordinary!**

Your Emotions Are Real, But They're Not the Leader

Emotions are not weaknesses, they are signals. Frustration signals expectation; anxiety signals uncertainty; anger signals perceived injustice; disappointment signals unmet hope.

Ignoring emotions does not make you strong, but allowing them to lead rarely makes you wise. In dentistry, emotions move quickly. Think about what you feel when there is a schedule disruption, a broken instrument, a dissatisfied patient, or a miscommunication with a teammate.

An emotional response is immediate, however, the disciplined response is chosen.

Now, emotional discipline does not mean suppression, it means acknowledgment without surrender:

- “I feel frustrated.”
- “I feel pressure.”
- “I feel irritated.”

Naming the emotion gives you space from it, and without that space, reaction becomes automatic.

When these types of emotions lead unchecked, tone shifts, decisions narrow, and patience shortens. Trust can weaken in mere moments, and sometimes feel like it evaporates altogether. But when emotions are recognized and steadied, something powerful happens:

- Clarity returns.
- Perspective widens.
- Leadership strengthens.

You cannot control every situation, but you can control your response to it, and that response shapes culture more than the circumstance ever will.

A Connected Team Experience depends on emotional steadiness; a Connected Patient Experience depends on emotional control.

Sometimes (many times) people may not understand the situation, yet, they will feel your response. Emotions are real, they are valuable, they simply were not designed to sit in the driver's seat.

Practical Application:

When a strong emotion surfaces this week, pause and name it privately before responding. Create space between feeling and action.

Reflection Question:

Do my emotions inform my response, or direct it?

Self-Control Isn't Suppression

There is a difference between composure and avoidance. Self-control is not pretending everything is fine; it is choosing how and when something is addressed.

Think of it this way: suppression buries emotion, while self-control channels it.

A telltale sign of suppression is that it springs leaks later on. That could be through sarcasm, tone, withdrawal, and subtle resentment. Self-control, on the other hand, acknowledges emotion and chooses a mature expression. For example:

- Instead of reacting sharply in the moment, you schedule a conversation.
- Instead of venting to the wrong person, you bring it to the right one.
- Instead of allowing irritation to shape tone, you reset before continuing.

This is not weakness; it is strength under your own authority. In high-performing practices, emotional maturity like this becomes highly visible over time.

Team members don't explode, but they don't internalize everything either. They address concerns clearly and calmly, and know that self-control is for the good of all. This level of predictability builds trust, safety, and encourages people to relax; this posture allows people to engage more freely, speak more honestly, and grow more confidently.

However, when emotional reactions are unpredictable, others begin "managing" around them. When you find yourself drained of energy and feeling less connected, it's often the subtle creep of "managing" chipping away at your Connected Team Experience.

So instead, choose self-control that protects everyone's energy, prioritizes clarity, and preserves your culture. This allows correction without chaos, and over time, becomes an invaluable asset.

Practical Application:

Notice where you tend to suppress rather than address. Choose one situation this week to handle directly instead of storing it.

Reflection Question:

Is my emotional control strengthening trust, or masking unresolved tension?

Stress Reveals Systems

Stress does not create character; it reveals preparation.

It is a fact that when pressure rises, we tend to default to systems and patterns. Though it is nice to imagine that, especially in the high-stakes moments, we would ascend to the level of our aspirations, often, we return to our repeated behaviors; not new ones.

Consider this: if communication breaks down under stress, do you and your team have a clear communication system where you can reconnect? (Example: huddle.) If tension escalates quickly, is there a predetermined pathway for people to emotionally reset? If the schedule collapses into chaos, how do you intentionally regain clarity?

If you feel helpless or drained, or notice your own practiced patterns just from reading that last paragraph, you're not alone.

That's because stress is diagnostic; it exposes where discipline is strong and where it is thin. In dentistry, stress is not occasional; it is cyclical, and that's why this is so important. Busy seasons, staffing shifts, unexpected complications, you name it, it never stops.

So instead of focusing on "stopping" all the noise, consider "starting" ways that can disarm the tension. That's acceptance rooted in action triumphing over resistance rooted in reactivity. All you need is a little emotional discipline backed by the strength of systems that support you:

- Morning huddles that clarify expectations.
- Defined handoff processes.
- Clear financial conversations.
- Private correction protocols.

Systems reduce emotional strain because they reduce uncertainty. It's that simple. When uncertainty drops, reactivity drops. And when reactivity drops, proactivity can fill the vacuum.

Strong cultures are not built on good intentions; they are built on reliable systems that reinforce good behavior. Remember that, and keep it simple by being prepared and all on the same page.

Stress does not have to fracture teams; it can refine them. And if stress reveals a weakness, that is not failure. No, it is feedback, immensely valuable feedback that invites improvement.

Consider this message your next invitation.

Practical Application:

Identify one recurring stress point in your practice and determine if it is an emotional issue or a systems issue. Adjust the system where possible.

Reflection Question:

When pressure rises, what does it consistently reveal about how we, how I, operate?

The Discipline of the Reset

Even steady people drift; even disciplined teams feel tension accumulate; even strong cultures experience moments where tone tightens, patience shortens, and clarity fades.

Emotional discipline is not about never feeling pressure. It is about knowing how to reset when you do.

Your days move quickly, and disruption can sneak in unnoticed: it could be one difficult interaction that bleeds into the next appointment, or one frustrating moment that skews the next conversation.

Here's the thing to remember: without intention, emotion carries forward. And when it carries forward unchecked, it compounds. The discipline of the reset interrupts that pattern.

A reset is simple: it is a pause between moments, and it is choosing not to let the last interaction define the next one.

A reset sounds like this:

- “That moment is over.”
- “This next patient deserves my best.”
- “I will not carry that tone forward.”

It may take ten seconds, one deep breath, or a brief step aside to regain perspective. No matter how big or small a form it takes for you, it matters!

Because patients should not inherit the frustration of a previous appointment. Teammates should not absorb tension that wasn't theirs. And you should not allow one moment to define your entire day. Let this sink in: emotional discipline matures when recovery becomes quicker—not perfect—quicker. Quickness means...

- Instead of replaying the irritation, you recalibrate.
- Instead of escalating, you stabilize.
- Instead of withdrawing, you re-engage with intention.

This protects culture, connection, and most importantly, your own inner peace.

So, strong teams are not defined by the absence of hard moments; they are defined by how quickly they return to steadiness.

That is true leadership and a mature resilience.

It communicates that one moment does not control you. And over time, such resilience strengthens trust in ways few people can name or recognize, but everyone can feel.

Practical Application:

The next time tension rises this week, intentionally reset before entering the next interaction. Do not carry forward what does not belong there.

Reflection Question:

How quickly do I return to steadiness after a difficult moment?