



Dr. Kelvin Mah

From Smile Stress to Picture Perfect

It's said that "a picture is worth 1000 words." But when that picture is one of you, are you truly happy with those 1000 words? Or do you feel that your pictures fail to portray the confident smile and vibrant image that you long to project?

If so, then rest assured: you're not alone! As a skilled artisan dentist who has had the privilege of helping numerous people experience the smile of their dreams, I can tell you that this is quite common. I can also share that what's typically underlying this unhappiness is the misalignment between a person's self image, and the image portrayed by their picture. As a result, people who aren't happy with their smile will – often without knowing – compensate by consciously or unconsciously avoiding situations where they have to smile; because deep inside, they feel that something's "wrong." Tragically, these people don't live up to their full potential, nor do they reap the rewards of a smile-filled life, which studies indicate includes a greater likelihood of career success, good health, strong relationships and overall happiness.

It's also my experience that, despite this widespread "smile stress," relatively few people take steps to solve the problem. Why is this? Surprisingly, it's because most people just don't know where to start! That is, most people know that something in their smile needs to be fixed – such as a crooked tooth, a "gummy" smile, stained or discoloured teeth, or any other issue – but they don't know how to fix it. They still believe that dentists are the people you go to when you have a toothache, or to have your teeth cleaned a couple of times a year. They just aren't aware of the remarkable possibilities offered by modern dentistry. And just as interesting and important to note is that this phenomenon applies to people at all stages of success and

from walks of life -- even, as you'll discover in a moment, those aspiring to be the next Miss Universe® Canada.

As a Miss Universe® Canada contestant, Jocelyn Lernout is beautiful – in fact, she radiates. And a big part of that comes from the fact that she's so down to earth, approachable and intelligent; traits which, no doubt, will serve her well as she pursues a filmmaking career. However, despite the fact that many people would assume that, in the smile department, Jocelyn "had it all," from the moment we met I instantly detected from her stance, body language, and overall "vibe" that something was amiss. It was an impression that she quickly confirmed.

In Jocelyn's view, the smile that would show up in her pictures was missing something. In her words, it lacked "pop, sparkle and something special." She also felt (and so did I) that she was compensating for this perception by smiling less than she wanted to. In other words, she was suppressing her vibrant, inner sparkle because of her insecurity, and this was holding her back personally and professionally.

So that's what brought Jocelyn to Smile City Square Dental. But like many of my patients, she didn't know how to solve her problem. She just knew that she needed both an artist and a clinical expert to overcome this obstacle, and take her smile to the next level -- one that would allow her personality and authentic radiant nature to shine through in her pictures. At the same time she was insistent on a solution that would look 100% natural, and be achieved with minimum intervention. Since both of these expectations are core hallmarks of my work at Smile City Square Dental, I knew that Jocelyn had come to the right place. And better than that, I knew what we needed to do, too!

Jocelyn had two issues undermining her smile: it was dull, and her right front tooth was out of alignment with her gums and the shape of her other teeth. I started with a customized personal tooth whitening program, which rapidly created a shade that was natural, blended perfectly with Jocelyn's skin tone and complexion, and caught the light in a very "camera-friendly" way. Then I subtly altered her right front tooth by carefully and delicately applying layers of porcelain composite material. My vision was to shape and style it so that it matched her left front tooth, aligned perfectly with her gum line, and created a faithful structure, translucence, and fluorescence -- all of which were critical to catching the light and reflecting a natural perfection.

Creating Jocelyn's new smile was a swift, comfortable and fun experience. And as you can see from her "after" picture, the result was and remains remarkably transformative. And while pictures "say 1000 words," I believe that Jocelyn's own words are the most powerful and appropriate ones to share right now:

"I can't believe the result that Dr. Mah was able to achieve. For the first time in my life, the smile that I've always felt inside is projected authentically and accurately in my pictures. I honestly feel that a huge weight has been taken off of my shoulders, and that I can flash my biggest, brightest, smile for the camera without hesitation, insecurity or awkwardness. And it's not just the camera that is capturing this transformation. People are telling me that there's more sparkle and magic in my smile. Thank you Dr. Mah for helping me find and express the REAL me!"

Jocelyn's experience is an inspiring and heart-warming illustration of the "magic" awaiting patients who connect with a skilled artisan dentist; one who has the ideal blend of clinical expertise and interpersonal insight, and who will give them the results – and pictures – they dream about.



before



after



after