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## ADA Code of Ethics (August 7 1884)

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# TRANSACTIONS

OF THE

# AMERICAN DENTAL ASSOCIATION

AT THE

TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL SESSION,

HELD AT SARATOGA SPRINGS,

COMMENCING ON THE 7TH OF AUGUST, 1884.

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PHILADELPHIA:

THE S. S. WHITE DENTAL MANUFACTURING CO.

1885.

## CODE OF DENTAL ETHICS.\*

### ARTICLE I.

#### THE DUTIES OF THE PROFESSION TO THEIR PATIENTS.

SECTION 1.—The dentist should be ever ready to respond to the wants of his patrons, and should fully recognize the obligations involved in the discharge of his duties toward them. As they are, in most cases, unable to correctly estimate the character of his operations, his own sense of right must guarantee faithfulness in their performance. His manner should be firm, yet kind and sympathizing, so as to gain the respect and confidence of his patients; and even the simplest case committed to his care should receive that attention which is due to any operation performed on living, sensitive tissue.

SEC. 2.—It is not to be expected that the patient will possess a very extended or a very accurate knowledge of professional matters. The dentist should make due allowance for this, patiently explaining many things which may seem quite clear to himself, thus endeavoring to educate the public mind so that it will properly appreciate the beneficent efforts of our profession. He should encourage no false hopes by promising success where, in the nature of the case, there is uncertainty.

SEC. 3.—The dentist should be temperate in all things, keeping both mind and body in the best possible health, that his patients may have the benefit of that clearness of judgment and skill which is their right.

### ARTICLE II.

#### MAINTAINING PROFESSIONAL CHARACTER.

SECTION 1.—A member of the dental profession is bound to maintain its honor, and to labor earnestly to extend its sphere of usefulness. He should avoid everything in language and conduct calculated to discredit or dishonor his profession, and should ever manifest a due respect for his brethren. The young should show special respect to their seniors; the aged special encouragement to their juniors.

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\*Adopted August, 1866.

SEC. 2.—The person and office arrangements of the dentist should indicate that he is a gentleman; and he should sustain a high-toned moral character.

SEC. 3.—It is unprofessional to resort to public advertisements, such as cards, hand-bills, posters, or signs calling attention to peculiar styles of work, prices for services, special modes of operating, or to claim superiority over neighboring practitioners; to publish reports of cases, or certificates in the public prints; to go from house to house soliciting or performing operations; to circulate or recommend nostrums, or to perform any other similar acts. But nothing in this section shall be so construed as to imply that it is unprofessional for dentists to announce in the public prints, or by card, simply their names, occupation, and place of business; or in the same manner, to announce their removal, absence from, or return to business; or to issue, to their patients, appointment cards having a fee bill for professional services thereon.

SEC. 4.—When consulted by the patient of another practitioner the dentist should guard against inquiries or hints disparaging to the family dentist, or calculated to weaken the patient's confidence in him; and, if the interests of the patient will not be endangered thereby, the case should be temporarily treated, and referred back to the family dentist.

SEC. 5.—When general rules shall have been adopted by members of the profession practicing in the same localities, in relation to fees, it is unprofessional and dishonorable to depart from these rules, except when variation of circumstances requires it. And it is ever to be regarded as unprofessional to warrant operations or work as an inducement to patronage.

### ARTICLE III.

#### THE RELATIVE DUTIES OF DENTISTS AND PHYSICIANS.

Dental surgery is a specialty in medical science. Physicians and dentists should both bear this in mind. The dentist is professionally limited to diseases of the dental organs and the mouth. With these he should be more familiar than the general practitioner is expected to be; and, while he recognizes the superiority of the physician in regard to diseases of the general system, the latter is under equal obligations to respect his higher attainments in his specialty. Where this principle governs, there can be no conflict, or even diversity, of professional interests.

## ARTICLE IV.

## THE MUTUAL DUTIES OF THE PROFESSION AND THE PUBLIC.

Dentists are frequent witnesses, and at the same time the best judges, of the impositions perpetrated by quacks, and it is their duty to enlighten and warn the public in regard to them. For this and the many other benefits conferred by the competent and honorable dentist, the profession is entitled to the confidence and respect of the public, who should always discriminate in favor of the true man of science and integrity, and against the empiric and impostor. The public has no right to tax the time and talents of the profession in examinations, prescriptions, or in any way, without proper remuneration.