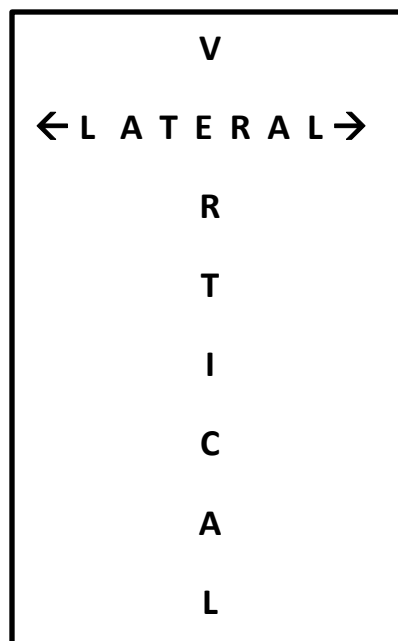


## Institutitis: Are You Infected?

As we have strived over the years, and continue to do so, to be the best clinicians that we possibly can, no doubt we have taken multiple CE Programs. Some of these CE Programs may have come in the form of structured offerings provided by non-accredited organizations or individuals, i.e. not formal accredited university degree based didactic/clinical training. These non-accredited organizations go by such names as Learning Centres, Educational Centres, or more commonly, Institutes. These non-accredited learning opportunities provide structured learning experiences which can be specific or part of a continuum. Non-accredited organizations can be found worldwide.

Edward de Bono is a clinical psychologist that has been instrumental in bringing to light the concept of lateral thinking.



We all initially learn concepts vertically, e.g. since primary school we have learned concepts “vertically” in a step-by-step sequence. Our undergraduate dental school training was no different. But when an individual truly “learns” a subject, is when they take their vertically acquired knowledge and expand or enlighten that base by objectively adding related knowledge and experiences to their subject milieu. In other words, we do not want to be just (vertical) clones but rather “thinking dentists”.

I have noticed over the years as I lecture nationally and internationally, as well as providing group and individual hands-on training experiences, a condition that I call “Institutitis”, and I am sorry to say that it has infected many of our dental colleagues. Institutitis has two variations, the noun-variation and the verb-variation. The noun-variation is the non-accredited organization vertical learning that dental practitioners do, myself included. This is OK, how else are we going to, in our post-graduate years, learn and improve our abilities to provide optimal, proficient, exceptional care for our patients? When there is a problem, or Institutitis becomes an insidious infection, is when the verb-variation kicks in. It is like the

“gift that keeps on giving”, as dental practitioners can become so indoctrinated with the mantra of the Learning/Educational Centre or Institute, that it becomes, or ends up being, their dogma. A dental practitioner’s infection can therefore become chronic, with increased difficulty over time to reverse or cure the process, with the potential of an epidemic always looming; intervention being excruciatingly challenging, to say the least.

So then I ask, are you infected? Noun- or verb-variation? Acute or chronic? Not sure? Do you wish clarification? There is no time like the present to ratify, align, and alter your status quo. I encourage you to do so!