

# From darkness to VISION:

Unafraid to do things his way, **Sandeep Rupra** discusses rediscovering his mojo, the importance of showing appreciation and renovating a practice

**S**andy was delighted to inherit a healthy legacy and robust patient base when he purchased Honeyfields Dental, a private practice in Rhuddlan, north Wales. He recalls: 'The previous owner had done some exquisite clinical dentistry, and I felt blessed that we had a good foundation to continue his work and create a practice we could be proud of.'

Acquiring the business was a meaningful step forward, offering Sandy a happier new chapter – significant for a man whose career has been defined by challenging experiences.

A seasoned cosmetic dentist of 15-plus years, his journey has involved a huge commitment to developing his clinical skills. But he has also had more than his fair share of dark days, which has required some tough self-love.

## LOSING SIGHT

Sandy began his career as a dental technician, completing training in 2002. Qualifying as a dentist from Cardiff University in 2007, he completed his VT in the city and stayed in south Wales for 12 years, landing his first associate role at a mixed practice in 2010. But the treadmill soon began to take its toll, and dentistry became mentally and physically exhausting.

The clinical environment grew 'quite toxic' when his workplace dynamics took a turn for the worse.

In a podcast last year, he recalls: 'I was five days a week, full time and absolutely knackered. Then, there was a turning point where the practice

had a bit of a change in infrastructure, and the dynamic changed, where more responsibility was put on my shoulders as the associate... there was more pressure. I almost forgot what kind of person I was.'

Long story short, he lost himself. 'I was 36, and I had lost my mojo. Someone else was dictating my career, things were slipping, and I yearned to be the master of my own destiny.'

He was on the verge of giving up his career. But having exhausted himself trying to navigate the complexities of mixed practice dental delivery, his setbacks only fuelled his determination.

## REIGNITING THE SPARK

He is forever grateful for the support from his wife, Amber, a practice manager who understood the inherent challenges of the profession. And who, he says, was a driving force in getting him back on track.

'I was forced to decide – do I continue to work in this environment and remain comfortable with being uncomfortable, or do I change everything? So, I took some time out from dentistry.'

'Amber has been my saving grace. She ignites the spark. The



*Step inside...*

**THE PRACTICE**  
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## PRACTICE DESIGN

experience taught me patience and the confidence to knock on the right doors. But it took me five or six years to reach that point.'

Adversity often serves as a catalyst for positive change. Sandy began mapping out his journey, writing down the courses he wanted to embark on to widen his experience and add to his skill set to be the dentist he always wanted to be.

'I worked hard to develop my skills until I felt ready to become a practice owner. One day, I happened upon a practice prospectus I had been sent by a broker sticking out of a pile of paperwork.' The rest, as they say, is history.

'At that moment, Amber and I could see how we could develop the business and how the skill set I'd developed would come together. Sadly, we all spend far too much time failing to focus on "self", but that break away from dentistry allowed us both to switch off the noise around us to focus on what we needed.'

## GOING ORGANIC

Refreshed with renewed confidence, Sandy and Amber relocated to Chester and purchased the practice in November 2022. A year on and with Amber as practice manager, front of house and new patient liaison lead, they have added to patient numbers thanks primarily to word of mouth and have expanded quicker than planned.

'Initially, I was sharing a surgery with the hygienist, so having a second surgery, which we developed in an unused bedroom upstairs, has allowed me to work clinically full-time.'

The room has been transformed into a clean clinical space. They also renovated a waiting room with a 'mother nature' feature wall that blends seamlessly with the practice's existing natural, earthy tones.

The turnkey refurbishment project, undertaken by McKillop Dental, showcases thoughtful design and meticulous attention to detail. Installing a Belmont Eurus S1 treatment centre in luxurious upholstery, complete with the advanced Belmont Phot X touch and Cattani micro innovative technologies, marks a leap forward.

Bespoke cabinets, a feature ceiling and a built-in Bluetooth sound system elevate the aesthetics and enhance the patient experience, creating an atmosphere of comfort and relaxation.

'The practice had a nice vibe, and we have kept with its organic branding. For me, dentistry is all about how we make patients feel. I want them to take away a good memory of coming here.'

'We wanted to develop the practice to expand a new surgery build in the practice. The team at McKillop were fantastic and worked with us closely on the brief. We are so happy with our new surgery. Our patients always comment on how relaxing it is. We were really pleased with the service they provided and the super quick turnaround times.'

Sandy combines sitting and standing postures to treat his patients and needed a chair that met his personal requirements and offered patients a comfortable dental experience.



'The Belmont Eurus S1 chair with its swivel arm best suited my delivery method. The Eurus S1 has many additional

functions, such as the touchscreen control panel, which is very easy to use. The design is comfortable, ergonomic and efficient. Belmont has always been a reputable company, and their chairs are bomb-proof – good quality that lasts a long time.'

## TAKING SHAPE

Having created a new surgery, they have just appointed an associate.

'His ethos and values align perfectly with ours, so the fit was good.' Undoubtedly, the experience will be worlds apart from the challenging times he endured.

'We aim to keep it simple without over-complicating things,' he says. 'All the staff remained with us. You must surround yourself with the right people to drive you to become a better person and dentist. I always envisaged owning a practice and have stuck to that trajectory.'

'My focus is to provide safe and predictable evidence-based dentistry, and my goal is to turn Honeyfields into an epicentre of high-quality dentistry.'

With a background in cosmetic dentistry and a postgraduate certificate in advanced restorative and aesthetic dentistry, Sandy is now working towards an MSc in dental implantology at Bristol University.

As the doors open on this next phase, his story serves as a reminder of how aspiration, resilience and hard work all help to shape a career. Arguably, however, the most significant factor for Sandy was having the courage to set aside time for introspection – just when he needed it most.