



## Cosmetic Dentists

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# Joyce Bassett

**Age:** 49  
**Specialty:** Cosmetic/restorative dentistry  
**City of practice:** Scottsdale  
**Duration of practice:** 26 years

### Why cosmetic dentistry?

I was drawn to cosmetic [dentistry] because all my friends were gorgeous and models, and my family is [full of] models. I've always been looking in magazines, looking at bodies, looking at shapes and different forms, and once cosmetics came out, I was like, "That's Joyce. I can do that. I can make somebody look good."

### How has cosmetic dentistry evolved in the past 26 years?

It's more expertise, it's more experience and I would say that... all of us dentists have gone through failures of using cosmetics and not looking at the function as much. Now we look at function and the aesthetics for each patient.

### What made you want to get into dentistry?

Because I didn't listen to my dad I had fillings, and now I have crowns on my back molars. I raced a triathlon when I was growing up and I fell, and my front teeth had to have two root canals. I woke up and they were black, and it gave me a value for them. Dentists said, "You could lose your front tooth." It really made me go, "Hey, I've got to make that look good."

### What's the difference between a perfect smile and a natural smile?

It depends on the patient. People are judging the doctors on the look, when their patient chose the look. My choice is to choose that for a patient. But while I'm working with a patient, I give them a beautiful smile and they come back and say, "I want them lighter, I want them longer, I want them fuller." I'm not going to tell them not to do that because I did that once and then

I just cut them off and made them longer, and they didn't look good. They looked better when I did them, not when they did them - but that's not my job.

### What challenges do you face in your field?

I think the biggest challenge is for people to have a value for their teeth. Sometimes they don't realize that they're not buying a commodity, they are paying for a transformation. And the expertise that it takes to get all of the variables done to perfection and to an excellent level - it takes a lot to do that.

### What sets your practice apart from others?

Passion. Perfectionism. I give 150 percent, and my whole life has been dedicated to the art and science of cosmetic dentistry. I publish, I teach. I think that helps me look at my work, because my work is always up on the screen, and I can see what I could've done to improve it. So I'm constantly re-evaluating everything.

### What's your favorite part about being a cosmetic and restorative dentist?

When they're all done - three to four months post-op. After [patients] are done, they come back again and they say, "It was worth every penny I paid, my smile is the best I've ever had, it changes the way I think about myself, it changes my relationship with other people, I see through different eyes, in a different way, and I wish I would've done it sooner." That's what makes me really, really, really happy.

— Interviewed by Lauren Misak

