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True Hero: Dr. Leslie Elfenbein

By Matt on November 2, 2009 at 2:00 am

The idea to add the new CageChatter Hero section to the existing CageChatter Prick Pick page was all Gan's idea. I was extremely impressed with his desire to recognize our fellow man for the good they do and take a little time off from pointing out the completely inconsiderate set of people that we share our planet with. However, I was concerned that we would have a hard time finding people worthy of the distinction. So after Gan submitted his first CC Hero I was taken a back by the choice and considering the parameters he set I was concerned that finding other heroes would be difficult. I figured that when picking our CageChatter Hero we would have to wait for something amazing to occur, some Superman type stuff, my idea of hero is sensational and flashy. Our first CageChatter Hero allowed me to open up my eyes to what true heroism is, Mokhairul Islam's actions gave his people the opportunity to provide for their survival and that was monumental and completely worthy of notice. The CageChatter Hero was taking shape before my eyes.

A Hero by definition [and there are a lot of different ones] runs the gamut from man with superhuman strength right out of classical mythology, a person who shows great bravery or is by nature brave, a person who shows great courage and a person who gains praise and admiration for great achievements. I personally do not have the privilege of meeting someone who shows the aforementioned qualities that often. I come across pricks daily and it is not a pleasure. Well last week at my most desperate hour and right when all I could think of was how bad I hurt, I observed some serious heroic behavior in action. Enter my newest man-crush and our second CageChatter Hero, the honorable Dr. Leslie Elfenbein from Clifton Endodontics. Dr. Elfenbein is an Endodontics specialist that pulled me from a proverbial burning building and saved my life. My road to the Doctors door was a painful one and here is my story.

The last few weeks have rocked my own little bubble with earth shattering implications. No CageChatter posts, no work being done, I had no desire to shout out against injustice and no energy to discuss the greatest combat event the Ultimate Fighting Championship, it was a dark several weeks. This whole madness began when I went for a routine dental bridge that I had been putting off for well over a year, to repair a missing molar. The molar in question had been worked on, fallen out, and repaired several times over many years. The standard procedure, apparently, is to shave down the outside two teeth with the missing tooth (my molar) in the middle to be bridged. So I was fitted for a permanent bridge, and then supplied a temporary bridge and I headed home. I was informed that I would be a little uncomfortable for a day and have some sensitivity to cold; I was instructed to take some Advil, wait a week and return when the bridge is ready to complete the job. Well, after the numbing agent of choice wore off the shaved down teeth in question; began

sending the most tremendous wave of hurt into my receptors, I had no idea of the pain that would come.

Later that evening I was balled up in a fetal position pleading for my wife to end it, I returned to the dentist for an emergency root canal that had become infected and after three appointments with pain growing exponentially and the promised relief of the Vicodin making me feel like an idiot. My stomach was in knots from the “always great for the insides” Advil. I was still wailing like a child, so my dentist after calling me at home and realizing that my demise was imminent and even the “Amoxicillin was not Killin em” acted swiftly and sent me to the waiting hands of my savior.

Dr. Leslie Elfenbein, my Hero, has a tremendous level of compassion health care professionals worldwide need to take notice of and study him like Yoda. Dr. Elfenbein repaired my problem tooth that had caused me over two weeks of misery and I had two glorious pain free days. Then the second support tooth for the bridge, the cuspid, let me know late Sunday night that my ordeal was not yet over. I called in to [Clifton Endodontics](#) in agony once again early the next morning, a busy Monday at 8am and I was praying for relief. Well I spoke with Andrea, who treated me like I was the only patient she had to deal with, and without hesitation informed me Dr. Elfenbein was due in at Noon and I should arrive at the same time to meet him. Let me review that last sentence, I call a dental specialist and was treated like I just rolled into my favorite drinking establishment and when I opened the door was greeted with “NORM” cheers. I barely know the staff of professionals at Clifton Endodontics but within three hours of my call, and complete VIP treatment, I am sitting back in the chair and they are anxious to help me and just as friendly as the first time. Millie, one of the great ladies who work at Clifton Endodontics, is sympathetic to my plight and offers some relief with a head pillow for comfort and listens to my problem intently. She informs the Doctor of the happenings, I can feel relief is near, he orders an X-ray from the other room. The great Doctor greets me again with a huge smile and a concerned look as he checks out the new problem. The prognosis is that a second Root Canal is needed, and he informs me that if I want to take care of this he is going to handle this problem right now, in one appointment, so I can be done with my pain once and for all. I agree with a “please” and “thank you” and “you are superman”, or something like that... I was still in the sky loopy from the Vicodin, (that stuff will rot your brain but you won't know it because you are like weeeeeeeeeee....)

An hour later Dr. Elfenbein, with the help of his assistant Noel and student (I assume student because he was explaining to his whole staff how to do things the right way and doing it damn politely) Dr. Elfenbein completed my second root canal and eighth dental appointment in a little over two weeks and with that my pain would end. The whole procedure was impressive, Dr. Elfenbein works with a calm and cool demeanor that is only matched by his compassion for his patients and his highly skilled and gentle touch. He called me three times to check on me and on the weekend. (I am still baffled by that.) As soon as Dr. Elfenbein began small talk with me a calm came over my body, as I somehow knew I was going to be okay. “This guy is the man” is all I could think and I hope he is Okay with taking a picture with me....