

Going to a Conference!

| BY LISA LASH, FAADOM

AADOM Newbie? No Worries! Going to an AADOM conference without your doctor or team can be very intimidating. Traveling, staying in your hotel room, attending meetings, and eating alone. Let me tell you that you are not alone when you come to the AADOM conference. Here's what to do.

CONNECT WITH A CHAPTER

If you are not already a chapter member, look for a local chapter. Join it before the conference if you can. You might be able to make friends before you go. In doing this, you might even find a new friend to travel with and share a room. If there is not a local chapter, post a comment on the AADOM Facebook page that you are attending the conference for the first time and that you are looking for a travel buddy. I promise you; there will be someone from your area attending the conference - maybe even their first time as well.

GET THE LAY OF THE LAND

When you arrive at the conference, get your badge and tour the

conference area. Familiarize yourself with the area. Where is your first class? Where are the bathrooms? Smile and say "hi" to everyone you pass. There are so many people who arrive early for the conference, you are bound to connect with someone.

NEWCOMERS MEETING

Next, attend the "newcomers" meeting on day one. I know it is early but well worth your time! This is also a great way to meet others in your situation. If they are in that meeting, they are newbies too.

I met my awesome AADOM sister, Leah, at this event. We compared our class schedules and found that we had booked many of the same classes. Now, we look forward to seeing each other every year at the event! We are in the dental business; we like meeting new people and interacting with others. You will never meet a more welcoming group of women and men.

MEALTIMES

When you're in the ballroom area having a meal, introduce yourself to all at the table. Have a list of questions to get the conversation started. Here are a few to start you off: "Where are you from?", "How large is your office?", "Is your team here with you or are you traveling alone?", "Are you a general or specialty practice?", etc. On a more personal side, "Do you have children?", "Did you bring them here with you?", "What are they doing while you are in meetings?" I think you get the idea.

DOWNTIME AND BETWEEN CLASSES

If you see someone who looks lost or seems shy, go out of your way to make them feel welcome. They might be without their team and could be nervous about interacting. Trust me; they will be thankful.

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**MEMBER
FEATURE**
PEER-TO-PEER ARTICLE

...CONFERENCE CONTINUED

You should also prepare yourself for classroom time. Read about the speaker. Take a pen and paper or iPad with you to take notes. Talk to people in your class. Ask what they are doing in the evening: Are they attending the AADOM social event?

PRE-PLANNED EVENTS

I strongly encourage you to go to the social events hosted by

AADOM. They are way more fun than you think they are going to be! If it is a themed event, dress the part. AADOM does a great job of letting us know what events are planned prior to arrival. Many times there is a volunteer event to join and give back. Your inner self will thank you. You will also meet another group of people that may have similar interests outside of dentistry.

NETWORK

Lastly, bring your business cards. You will make so many wonderful connections. The best part is these dental professionals will become your friends outside the office too! Smile and Have Fun! See you at the conference (or maybe even at the pool)! ■



MEET THE MEMBER

Lisa Lash, FAADOM is the Practice Manager with Associates in Family Dentistry in Aurora, CO, and has worked in dentistry for over 25 years. She is a lifetime member of AADOM and a member of the local Denver, Colorado Chapter. In 2018, Lisa achieved her fellowship designation, (FAADOM) and is currently completing the requirements for the mastership, (MAADOM) program, looking to be inducted in 2023. She enjoys traveling each year to the AADOM conference to see the “tribe” of wonderful members she has met along the way. Away from work, Lisa has always been a “team mom” for her two children’s sports teams. When Lisa is not in the office, you may find her and her husband of 24 years traveling to watch their son play college lacrosse.

ARE YOU IN THIS TOGETHER?

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