

Step 1:

Assess Your Current Smile – A-List or D-List

“All the statistics in the world can’t measure the warmth of a smile.”

~ Chris Hart

You know that feeling you get when a really hot new movie comes out? Sometimes the movie trailer makes the hairs on the back of your arms stand up on end or your friends can’t stop talking about it or maybe the movie poster just makes your jaw drop or you read the book and loved it or your favorite star is in it. Whatever the reason, some movies are just meant to be on the A-List – others head straight to the bottom of the D-List.

Why is that? Why do some movies pop hot and others fall flat – like cold lead? Hollywood has been trying to figure it out for years, so if you think you’re going to find the answer in a book written by a dentist, you’re sadly mistaken. What I do know is that the recipe for every movie is pretty much the same: story, characters, plot, action, climax. So why doesn’t every movie perform the same each weekend?

Well, lots of variables go into making a movie. Some stories are more interesting than others; some characters are more intriguing. Maybe this climax was more climactic while that one was anticlimactic;

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maybe the two actors playing these intriguing characters just didn't have any chemistry. For whatever reason, even though all the same major elements are in every movie, not all movies are created equal.

Smiles are a lot like that. Just like every movie contains the basics of story, plot, character and action, every smile has the same basic elements: teeth, lips, gum, tongue and mouth. Look in a mirror right now and you'll see all five parties present and accounted for.

Don't stop there; walk around your office complex, neighborhood, shopping mall or bookstore and you'll see that everybody you encounter has the same basic tools to build an A-List Smile: teeth, lips, gum, tongue and mouth.

And yet, just like movies, not all smiles are created equal. Some smiles pop, bedazzle, thrill and energize; these are the A-List smiles, guaranteed to impress people at first glance. Other smiles are clean and bright but less than memorable; these are the B-List Smiles, good enough to pass muster under general inspection but not quite A-List or award-winning.

Some smiles are bland enough to be forgettable; we call these the C-List Smiles – not quite “best in show” but at least not last on our list, either. And, finally, there are those smiles that are memorable for all the wrong reasons; D-List Smiles that cry out for attention – *dental attention*.

Few people know what, exactly, makes the difference between an A-List Smile and one destined to go straight to the bottom of the D-List. You might say “crooked teeth” or “discoloration” or “red gums” or perhaps “an uneven mouth” might detract from your smile's A-List status, but you'd be wrong, technically speaking.

Check out any gossip mag or movie poster closely and you'll see that many of today's “hottest” A-List stars don't have the whitest or, for that matter, even the straightest teeth. Many stars, celebrities and even supermodels – if you broke their smile down, facet by facet – have less than perfect mouths but positively dazzling A-List smiles when the whole package comes together, with or without makeup. Likewise, someone with straight, white teeth, healthy gums and a perfectly symmetrical mouth can still have a D-List Smile – IF they haven't uncovered the secret to getting on the A-List.

Why is that? Well, as we've already learned, confidence has A LOT

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to do with how your smile is perceived. After all, what's the good of straight, white teeth if you're not confident enough to share them with the world?

Confidence plays a big part in any career, but particularly in the field of entertainment. Just ask rapper and movie star Common, who wore braces to correct some crooked teeth. "When I was young my bottom teeth were a little crooked and I got braces for both the top and the bottom," says the star of hit movies like *Street Kings* and *Wanted*. "Unfortunately, I wasn't too into the braces and I didn't go regularly to get them tightened. Eventually, I decided to let my friend take my braces off with his pliers. Hence in my young adult life I stood there with crooked teething wishing for straight ones."

Common discovered what so many of my patients do: don't try this at home! Eventually, he recognized the value of proper dental hygiene to his burgeoning music and movie career. "I started going to the dentist regularly because I always wanted to have a healthy set of teeth," he explains. "I was scared to get cavities because I had so many when I was a kid. For a while as an adult I would tell myself, 'I'm going to keep my teeth the way they are... a little crooked. That's natural.' Then at one point I saw my smile on the big screen and felt like I wanted it to be better."

As Common and so many of my other patients know, teeth and gums aren't all that go into an A-List Smile; how often you smile, how broadly, how genuine your smile is, its warmth and sincerity – these are all critical factors in getting, and keeping, an A-List Smile.

In this chapter I'll help you perform four critical tasks:

- 1.) Face Your Smile**
- 2.) Quiz Your Smile**
- 3.) Rate Your Smile**
- 4.) Test Your Smile**

All four are equally important; none can be done out of order. First, it's important to face your smile, own up to what you've got. Next you have to rate your smile, personally. How do YOU feel about it? We

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will quiz you on various aspects of your smile to see how your smile rates on our 4-star scale.

But it's just as important to test your smile out there, in the real world or, at the very least, for your friends and family during a private audience. How do THEY feel about your smile? Does it match how you, yourself, rated your own smile? Finally, after rating and testing your smile, if it's not exactly what you want you've got a whole book in which to find what's missing – and get it.

A-List Advice:

Few people know what, exactly, makes the difference between an A-List Smile and one destined to go straight on the D-List. Don't be afraid to face your smile; this task can change your life!

Face Your Smile:

The Mirror Test

If this suddenly feels like it will be a whole lot of work, relax; you're not alone. Many of my patients are surprised at how much work is involved in making the decision to alter their smile. But I don't want anyone making hasty decisions; it's important to really come face-to-face with your specific needs and how they relate to what might work – or not work – for you.

The first test is the ultimate challenge (for some): facing a mirror. Now it's time to see for ourselves what, exactly, your smile looks like; this way you can begin to rate it more accurately and be better prepared to face the rest of the book.

Here are the five steps to The Mirror Test:

- 1.) Look in the mirror:** Seems like a no-brainer, sure, but have you ever *really* looked into the mirror? Sure, we glance at it from time to time throughout the day, usually as we pass by, but it's the rare person indeed who actually looks deep into the mirror and sticks around for what comes next. Even when we comb our hair or apply our makeup or fix our ties, we are often merely spot-checking a very specific area of our head, face or neck; we don't really soak in the whole picture. So the first step

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of The Mirror Test is to stand in front of a well-lighted mirror and look, really look, at yourself.

- 2.) **Smile:** Okay, now look at yourself and – smile. That's it; just smile. Smile like you normally would; not too wide, not too thin. Smile like you mean it, hold it and look at it. That's all; just smile.
- 3.) **Close your eyes:** Now close your eyes; that's right – smile and then close your eyes. Think about what you just saw; think about your smile. Think about the smile itself, then your face, then your head, then all of you. Think about how your smile worked individually, in a vacuum, and then think about how it looked as an accessory or part of the whole package.
- 4.) **Smile again:** Now open your eyes and smile again. Repeat Step 2, from above, and this time really, really concentrate on not just how your smile looks but how it makes you feel. Check your gut reaction to tell whether you are pleased, disappointed, shocked, relieved – or a combination of all four.
- 5.) **Write down your first impression:** Be quick, be bold, be brave and, most of all, be HONEST. The last step of The Mirror Test is to write down exactly which of the four smile ratings you feel like you qualify for, quickly, instantly, upon looking away from the mirror: A-List, B-List, C-List or D-List.

The “Rate Your Smile” Quiz

Let’s face it; in our beauty-conscious society, one of the first things people notice about you is your smile. Now more than ever, with an economy spiraling downward and increased competition at work, a healthy, confident smile can be your calling card to success. You will see throughout this book how a strong, confident smile implies much more than personal hygiene; it truly radiates accomplishment, happiness, strength and success. All of these vital ingredients go to make a more successful, hardworking employee in the corporate workforce.

And let’s say work isn’t really your main focus when it comes to these sweeping changes when it comes to your appearance. What about romance? We all know it takes a lot of confidence to feel truly ourselves with someone we care about or, for that matter, to approach someone we’re attracted to from afar. A healthy, brighter, whiter smile can give you the confidence you need to truly feel good about yourself. And who isn’t attracted to a confident person?

So the next step on the road to that famous A-List Smile is to gauge your current smile using the “**Hollywood Smile Quiz**” below.

Take the Hollywood Smile Quiz

1. When you watch popular shows like *Americas Next Top Model* or *Project Runway*, what attracts you to the models' smiles?

2. Leading Actress Halle Berry is known for a confident, white, beautiful smile. How confident are you about your smile? On a scale of 1 through 10

Totally Unconfident **1**-----**5**-----**10** Very confident

What would you change?

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3. Actor Tom Cruise is known for his distinct and uninhibited laughter. Do you hide or cover your smile when you laugh? If so, why?

4. Rap Legend DJ Biz Markie is not only famous for making music with his mouth but is also recognized by his gummy smile and small teeth. The appearance of your gums can play a huge role in the overall appearance of your smile. How do you rate your gums? Are they even in height and well proportioned to your smile? What color are your gums: pink or red?

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5. For years, comedian Chris Rock never thought twice about the shape, size or position of his teeth. He admitted to Oprah Winfrey that when he finally realized that his teeth were not perfect, he immediately got veneers. How are your teeth shaped (too long, too short, too wide, too narrow)? Are your teeth misaligned?

6. Clients frequently ask me if they should close their gaps/spaces between their teeth, but superstar Madonna's trademark gap has been considered to be one of her sexiest traits. Do you have spaces? If so, how do you feel about them?

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7. Earlier in his career, rapper Nas was known for having a chipped front tooth. He later went on to repair this imperfection and now has a beautiful smile. Are there any chips in your teeth? Are they uneven at the biting edges due to grinding?

8. Celebs like Julia Roberts and Mathew McConaughey are consistently named by the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry as having the “most beautiful smiles” in Hollywood. Not only are their teeth beautiful, but they appear to be clean and cavity free. How clean are your teeth? Any signs of plaque, tartar or coffee/tea stain? Any signs of cavities?

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9. According to a foxnews.com report, several of Hollywood's leading men may not heat up the box offices if audiences could get a sniff of their bad breath! Having an A-List Smile means nothing if no one wants to get close to it because of halitosis. How confident are you about your breath? Do you have habits that contribute to bad breath? Do you constantly mask your breath with breath mints?

10. Next to teeth whitening and veneers, many celebs are flocking to remove unsightly silver fillings that often show on screen and in photos. Do you have silver fillings that are visible in your smile? Does the silver appearance bother you?

Use My Hollywood Ratings System

Hollywood is a place where everybody wants to be ranked somewhere, from the Best-Dressed List to World's Sexiest to Most Powerful Player. But what if you could rate your smile? Now you can with my simple Hollywood Ratings System:

1. **The “A-List” Smile (4 Stars – ****):** People with A-List smiles know it – and are not afraid to share with the world how confident and beautiful they feel. It's the smile worthy of the red carpet; the A-List Smile we're all shooting for when we wake up in the morning and pay such close attention to our appearance. This smile is marked by a wide range of positive characteristics, including:
 - **No visible cavities or fillings**
 - **Clean teeth (no evidence of plaque or tartar)**
 - **Straight teeth**
 - **Teeth in proportion to your mouth (not too big or too small; not too short or too long)**
 - **Healthy gums (pink in color)**
 - **White teeth with lack of discoloration (yellow, brown, gray or black)**
 - **Fresh, pleasant breath accompanied by confidence**
 - **Even, uniform and proportioned gum line and not “too gummy”**
2. **The “B-List” Smile (3 Stars – ***):** The B-List Smile has the same basic characteristics as the A-List Smile, only certain changes are developing to help it lose some of its natural luster and shape. These include:
 - **Moderately clean teeth (slightly visible evidence of bacterial plaque or tartar)**

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- **Mild yellowing (or other discoloration of teeth, such as brown, gray or black)**
- **Mild rotations, spaces or other misalignments**
- **Hesitance or reluctance to smile**
- **Minor flaws (chips; worn enamel)**
- **No visible cavities or fillings**
- **A semi-confident smile**
- **Fresh, pleasant breath**

3. The “C-List” Smile (2 Stars – **): Signs of the C-List Smile include:

- **Visible cavities (brown or black spots/discolorations)**
- **Visible old fillings or crowns (old silver fillings or old bondings becoming noticeable)**
- **Moderate buildup of plaque and tartar that is visible when you smile**
- **Moderate yellowing or other discolorations (brown, grey or black)**
- **Moderate flaws in alignments (moderately crooked; moderate spacing or gaps)**
- **More noticeable flaws (sizable chips, moderately worn enamel)**
- **Red, swollen gums**
- **An uneven gum line (or a “gummy” smile)**

4. The “D-List” Smile (1 Star – *): Here are the indicators of a D-List Smile:

- **Obvious neglect due to infrequent dental visits, accompanied by very little to no smiling**
- **Large, noticeable cavities**

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- **Visible old fillings or crowns**
- **Severe tartar buildup that is noticeably visible**
- **Severe yellowing or other discoloration**
- **Severe flaws in alignment**
- **Red, swollen gums**
- **Loose teeth**
- **Uneven gum line**
- **Accompanied by bad breath from lack of dental care**

The beauty of my 4-star rating system is that, just like an A-List Smile, it depends on who's doing the rating. My job is to help you understand the pros and cons of each type of smile – and what can be done to rectify your current smile **if you so desire**.

Remember, smiling is about a lot more than teeth and gums; how you *think* you look plays a big part in how you rate your smile – and how you rate your smile has a lot to do with how often, and how wide, you smile.

As you can see, the A-List Smile is perfect. Meanwhile, each smile has its own unique properties that help to give it a higher, or lower, ranking on my 4-Star scale. The good part about this chapter is that it's written just for YOU; no one has to know you ever took this test or, for that matter, what kind of smile you had at the very beginning of this process.

The beauty of change is that it's an evolution; none of my products, procedures, techniques or tips changes you overnight. Even if it's an "instant" procedure like teeth-whitening, the true change occurs over time as you truly begin to embrace and share your brighter, white teeth with the world at large.

Take this chapter, and this time, seriously; embrace this period in your life where you are about to embark on change and prepare yourself, mentally and physically, for the A-List Smile that awaits.

Remember that change is a process; there is no deadline or "expiration date" for any decision you make as a result of reading this book. These quizzes, tests and questionnaires are designed to help you get to know yourself better so you can be fully prepared to make the right decision for you – at the right time for you.

Test Your Smile:

From 4-Star to 1-Star

So, how did you do? A-List, B-List, C-List or D-List Smile? Didn't rate yourself? Go back and do it! Don't worry; I'll wait. I'm serious here, because this is very serious business. To know what you want to do with your smile you need to know how to rate your smile – and what rating it deserves.

Or maybe you rated yourself and came up short of your expectations. Don't worry; there's a light at the end of the tunnel. A smile is something many of us think about only when necessary – like those twice-yearly reminders we get from our friendly dentist's office. But something made you buy a book called *5 Steps to a Hollywood A-List Smile*, be it a nagging doubt from your childhood that your smile wasn't all it could be or a recent comment from someone you know and trust – or even a complete stranger – so I want you to get your money's worth. That's why our next step is to test your smile, and that means making a "test run" in front of some very special people.

The Audience Response:

Talking with Family, Friends, Coworkers and/or Classmates

Can you trust yourself to accurately rate your smile? Might you be rating it *too* harshly, putting yourself in the D-List category when you're actually more of a B-List Smile? Or maybe you're seeing your smile through rose-colored glasses and think you've got an A-List Smile when others might peg you as a C-List – or worse?

That is why I urge you to “test your smile” – out in the real world – by asking others to rate it as well. I think you'll agree that the following people can be very useful in helping you see yourself – and your smile – a LOT more clearly:

- **Family:** If there is one group of people you should be able to trust to tell it to you straight, it should be your family. Let them know your concerns about your current smile (they may already know), either one-on-one or as a small group, and speak to them openly, honestly and sincerely about your hopes, concerns, dreams and fears. Don't forget that genetics play a large part of how your mouth – including your teeth and gums – were formed. Ever heard someone tell a baby, “She has her mother's (or father's) smile?” That's genetics; take a look around the room as you talk to your family and rate their smiles; while you're at it, rate each other's. Discuss what you like and dislike

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about your smiles and, chances are, by the time you've passed the "family test" you will feel a whole lot better about your smile – no matter how you rated it yourself.

- **Friends:** Your friends can be an invaluable source of comfort and support when it comes to rating, then testing, your smile. Unlike family, with whom you share a different dynamic, I recommend testing your smile on friends during a one-on-one basis. Pick a casual setting and ask them to "rate" your smile; they don't need to know the Hollywood ratings system we use – 1 to 4 stars should work just fine. When they're done, tell them WHY they're rating your smile and see if the rating changes. Ask them to be open and honest; don't be afraid of what they may have to say and trust their friendship to guide them to be as straightforward and candid as possible.
- **Coworkers and/or Classmates:** I've combined the next two test groups – coworkers and/or classmates – into one group because they're different than the first two groups. In other words, they don't have the emotional attachment to you that family and friends do, so you can't always trust them to be perfectly honest. But what I really want you to do is to casually gauge how your coworkers and/or classmates respond to your smile. (If you're lucky, you may get an honest response as to how they feel about your smile.) If you're someone who doesn't often smile, start smiling more often and be mindful of the responses you get. Do people smile back without seeming to know why? Do people automatically look down at your smile and nod favorably – or cringe noticeably? With this particular group, you're looking for visual clues versus verbal clues; it's not what they say so much as how they look when they see you smile. Or maybe you're someone who smiles often but just as often takes smiling for granted, assuming that everyone is smiling back because of your warmth and sincerity. For the next few days pay attention to how people react to your smile; their faces, eyes and expressions may be telling you volumes!

A-List Advice:

Discuss what you like and dislike about your smile and, chances are, by the time you've passed the "family test" you will feel a whole lot better about your smile – no matter how you rated it.

A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words:

Perusing Old Photographs

Some of us are born with A-List smiles but gradually let them fade to B-List, then C-List Smiles until, finally, you wind up with a D-List Smile – and don't know why.

Some of us suspect we might know why our smiles aren't exactly A-List at the moment, but don't quite realize how our bad habits can contribute to less-than-A-List smiles. For instance, smoking isn't the only bad habit that can turn an A-List Smile into a frown; heavy coffee and tea drinkers can also lend a hand in discoloring their teeth.

Sugar, chocolate, soda and other junk foods can help deteriorate precious tooth enamel, and even just such little ticks as chewing ice or sucking on lemons can help contribute to a less-than-stellar smile. Here are 16 of the most frequent contributors to poor oral health and a D-List Smile:

1. Poor oral hygiene habits such as improper brushing and flossing techniques
2. Infrequent dental visits for checkups and maintenance
3. Genetic/family history of gum disease
4. Medical health conditions such as diabetes, HIV/AIDS and even pregnancy can affect your ability to heal from gum disease

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5. Poor diet/nutrition
6. Long-term intake of certain medications (like tetracycline) can affect the color of your smile
7. Stress can cause people to develop grinding and teeth clenching behaviors, which lead to chips and worn enamel
8. Poor brushing and flossing techniques, such as using a hard- or medium-bristled toothbrush, can remove enamel at the gum line and/or cause the gums to move up the tooth, causing root exposure or notches in the teeth. Not flossing properly can still leave hidden plaque below the gums, causing gum disease to form
9. Misuse of your teeth, such as using them to open bottles, chewing ice, chewing on bones, chewing pencils or pens or eating extremely hard foods or candy
10. Not immediately replacing teeth that have been pulled causes your teeth to shift and lean
11. Not wearing a retainer to maintain your smile after your parents paid for braces!
12. Daily consumption of foods and beverages that can stain your teeth (i.e. coffee, tea, dark berries and red wine, etc.)
13. Daily habits such as smoking can stain your teeth and ruin the color of your smile
14. Tongue rings are known to commonly hit the upper teeth and cause minor chips and major fractures
15. Eating disorders such as bulimia can erode the tooth's enamel
16. Exposing your teeth without a mouth guard during contact or extreme sports can put your smile at risk.

The good news is that every factor on the above list is reversible; we can help each other find a way to that coveted A-List Smile. In fact, did you know there is a handy little tool up in your attic or hiding in your closet that can give you an accurate timeline of just how your smile has looked over the decades? That's right; it's called the family photo

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album and this is your next step to getting an A-List Smile: perusing old photographs for a reminder as to how your smile has evolved.

Take it out now and start at the very beginning – with your baby pictures. Follow your development from childhood through the teen years, then college and beyond, up until your most recent photographs. Don't have any recent ones? That could be pretty telling evidence; people who don't like their smiles often avoid or downright refuse to have their pictures taken.

If you are a born ham and have plenty of current photos, examine them closely to see how they stack up to your more youthful snapshots. Has your smile gotten better over time, or worse? Is what you're seeing in all those side-by-side photo comparisons matching up with your own smile self-rating and what your family, friends, coworkers and/or classmates told you?

My patients find this to be a very useful exercise when I give them their "Photo Album Homework." Again, we're talking about change – this time for the good – and cultivating healthy habits to reinforce the change. Seeing how your smile, and even your overall appearance, has changed over time can help you stop making bad decisions and start making good ones again. And don't worry; no one will ever grade you – other than yourself, that is. What you're looking for here, of course, is threefold:

- 1.) Visual evidence of what kind of smile you had**
- 2.) How it's evolved over the years**
- 3.) And, finally, what it looks like today**

Think of these aspects of your smile as guideposts revealing changes that may have occurred in the evolution of your smile. By focusing on these three factors you can get a clearer picture of what your smile looks like now versus then.

A-List Advice:

Did you know there is a handy little tool up in your attic or hiding in your closet that can give you an accurate timeline of just how your smile has looked over the ages? That's right; it's called the family photo album. Take it out now; this is your next step to getting an A-List Smile.

Great Expectations:

Knowing What You Want Out of Your Smile

Shawn Kirkaldy grew up in Brooklyn, New York. Today he is a Physical Education teacher for Pre K-8th grades at a Catholic school in Harlem. Shawn considers himself a “happy camper,” but he didn’t always have a reason to smile. When he was a child, Shawn recalls, “I remember my smile was shattered when my brother tripped me in the street and I fell face first to the pavement and broke one of my two front teeth.”

Despite this D-List setback, Shawn continued to have an A-List outlook on life. “The majority of my photos [growing up] capture me smiling. I never knew how *not* to smile, and my mom smiled a lot, too. [I guess] I’m always smiling because I love life and God sent friends I share this journey with.”

For many years, Shawn took his chipped tooth in stride. “I never felt I needed to be ashamed or otherwise because of my chipped tooth when I was young,” he admits. But things started to change for Shawn when he got a little older. “I wished I had a nicer smile when I became a young adult while working for the NBA as an intern.”

Like many of my patients, Shawn had a very specific reason for feeling insecure about his smile and wanting to get it off the D-List. “I wanted to meet and date a more mature and polished lady,” he confessed.

I met Shawn recently and was able to take his smile from D-List to A-List with some very simple procedures. Afterward, Shawn was

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surprised by "...the fact that my new teeth looked so natural and real!" Shawn and I were both satisfied that his smile was red carpet worthy.

More importantly, however, Shawn gained a new sense of confidence in himself that he didn't even realize he was lacking. "What a life-altering experience," he says of the first time he looked in the mirror after getting his A-List Smile. "What a confidence booster to smile ever the more and the feeling that I had arrived fully as an adult. I felt like I was a rock star! I felt I could meet and greet any person and 'Wow' them with my smile and I did – and still do!"

How does Sean feel today? He says, "I feel blessed that my dentist, yes, my dentist single-handedly raised my level of acceptance in life and the overwhelming gravitation of the opposite sex."

What were the two biggest things Shawn's A-List Smile has done for him? "The most important thing my new smile has done for me," says Shawn, "is that my children and family members now realize the wonder [of] what a rock star smile does for an individual in the professional and personal area of his/her life. My smile often conjures the thought that I've lived a higher status life, since having good teeth and a smile is often synonymous with success and wealth.

"The second most important thing my smile has done for me is that it creates conversation and compliments that come at a rapid pace. The first thing women and men alike say to me is, 'Wow, you have a great smile!' With me being relatively young in age, having such a great smile is believed to [be] natural and not cosmetic, and my teeth look, feel and shine like natural teeth."

Finally, Shawn has an inspiring message to share with people who aren't happy with their smile: "I tell all of my friends, relatives and coworkers if they aren't happy with their smile, for a relatively small investment (no investment is too great if it enhances your life as having great teeth do) you can be just like me, with a rock star smile. Also, that they may go through some slight discomfort and mild pain, but the rewards are 1,000% worth every bit of it. Having a beautiful smile is as important as obtaining a college degree; you may be able to live, work and survive without one, but when you have one, the confidence to achieve what you set out to achieve is boundless!"

Fortunately for you, you've already got a leg up on Shawn; this book didn't exist when he got his A-List Smile. (No wonder he was

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so surprised with his results!) But you? You've had over 50-pages of preparation and insight to help you form your own expectations for an A-List Smile.

So, now that you've rated your smile, tested your smile and actually faced your smile, it's time for a little downtime. Turn away from the mirror, let the previous sections of this chapter germinate and start to think about what, exactly, it is that you want out of your smile – and the rest of this book.

Maybe you're a businessman who realizes his current smile is affecting sales (and not in a good way). Perhaps you're a student who sits in the back of the class and covers her face when she is called upon because you're so insecure about your smile. Maybe you're an actor or model who wants to complete your hip, suave look with that A-List Smile. Maybe you're a busy mom who simply needs a reason to smile.

Whatever your reasons for changing your smile, before we move on to Step 2, I want you to ask yourself the following two questions:

- **Is this just a cosmetic change – or a healthier change?** There is no “right” or “wrong” answer to this question, only a better understanding of why you're reading this book and what you hope to get out of it.
- **How far am I willing to go for change?** This is not some extreme adventure where you're going to be testing yourself to see how many products and procedures you can endure. You simply want to be aware, going forward, of your tolerance for things like multiple office visits, downtime while you recover, possible costs involved and/or how comfortable you are in the dentist's chair.

Knowing the answers to – or at least being aware of – these two questions now, as we move forward, will help you better understand and rate each product and procedure on your own personal scale of possibility.

A-List Advice:

*Turn away from the mirror, make time for yourself,
let the previous sections of this chapter germinate
and start to think bout what, exactly, it is that you
want out of your smile. If it helps, write it down
and save it for later; see if you met your goals once
you have your A-List Smile.*

Reflections of a Smile

Okay, so there you have it. You've tested, rated and faced your smile. How did you do? Not that easy, huh? But there's a method to my madness; my patients tell me that without Step 1 of getting their A-List Smile, they might not have been prepared for what came next. I don't want the same to happen to you.

The best part of what we've just accomplished is that now you know what your smile really looks like, how you feel about it, what people say about it, how it looks and even how it feels to look at it; believe it or not, this is priceless information.

With this information you can change your world forever. Maybe you realized that it won't take that much to get that A-List Smile; maybe you came to the realization that it's going to be harder than you thought. Either way, you KNOW; and knowledge is power.

This power is going to help you in future chapters as I introduce the various products and procedures on the market today to help you get your A-List Smile. If the opposite is true, and a whitening treatment or two just won't cut it at this point, at least the first time you're hearing this won't be in the dentist chair; you already KNOW what it is you need.

A-List Advice:

Now you know what your smile really looks like, how you feel about it, what people say about it, how it looks and even how it feels to look at it; believe it or not, this is priceless information. With this information, you can change your world forever!

“A beautiful smile warms people up to you. It gives you confidence, especially in the entertainment industry.”

~ Rhianna