Meg Soper has worked as a healthcare professional, stand-up comic and keynote speaker, all while also raising a family. Along the way she learned many powerful lessons about the importance of life balance. Today, drawing on those insights enables her to work effectively as a motivator and life-balance coach. In her presentations, she blends her unique insights with a just-as-unique brand of humour to help people develop practical strategies for keeping their professional and personal lives in balance.

Soper provides easy-to-duplicate tips on effective communication, managing conflict and dealing with different personalities and age groups in the workplace.

She describes her intent as being to help people achieve a better understanding of each other’s challenges and an appreciation for their unique qualities – by providing practical, relevant strategies that help create a more positive and productive workplace.

Speaking at the Pacific Dental Conference for the third year in a row, the always-popular Soper presents “Wit, Fit and Balance ... Strategies for Success” this afternoon with a repeat on Friday. The session runs from 1:30 to 4 p.m. on both days.

Soper spoke with Dental Tribune prior to the conference to provide additional details on what attendees can expect from the session.

**Who should attend your presentation?**

Anyone in the dental industry: dentists, dental hygienists, office managers, the entire staff. I speak about things that would apply to your personal as well as your professional life.

My goal is to have an engaging, enlightening, humourous presentation that deals with issues such as stress. Stress comes into all of our lives, so...
I provide dental professionals with some possible approaches to juggling it all while also managing a successful practice.

What are some of the main issues that you focus on?
The presentation is filled with strategies for keeping your staff happy and engaged — and looking for ways that you can keep doing that.

Part of the presentation deals with focusing on stress. And then part of the presentation deals with different personalities that you typically cross paths with in your practice. That gets into generational differences: How do we engage Gen X and Gen Y? That’s really the paramount question these days, because today the work culture is shifting.

Today’s workplace is top heavy with boomers. But tomorrow’s workforce is going to be lean and populated with Gen X and Gen Y individuals who have an entirely different outlook on the way work and life should interact.

How do you address generational differences?
I compare the different generations and talk about their values. What are we challenged by? And if you could see anything differently, what would you change? What would you switch out? It’s all about shifting our perspectives and looking at ways of doing things better. Because we can always do it better.

How would you sum up your core message?
I touch on four key points during the two and one-half hour session:

1) Be good at what you do.
2) Be a good communicator because you are in the business of building relationships with your colleagues, your team and your patients.
3) Live in balance because the better you are at managing stress levels, the more productive you will be.
4) Draw on humour and different perspectives. You need to be able to shift your perspective when life dares you to complain. I weave humour throughout the presentation, keeping everybody engaged with laughter and stories. I come from a background of having been a registered nurse.

I worked for two and a half decades in the operating room, so I come from an experience where it’s very important to have positive rapport and good teamwork.

How much do you draw on your operating-room background?
I talk about everything from life balance to positive communication. It’s not rocket science by any means. But it’s packaged in a lighthearted way that keeps people laughing.

My stories are from the heart, and they’re all true experiences from the OR, from life, from raising two teenagers — and from being married for 22 years.

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Who shouldn’t attend your session?
That’s funny. I guess people who don’t have a sense of humour. They might want to just go and have a bite to eat instead. Or, if you don’t have a sense of humour, I don’t know, maybe go and get one and then come back. Really I can’t think of anybody who shouldn’t come.

There really is something for everybody — even for spouses who are at the conference with a husband or wife who works in the dental industry.

What’s the main thing you’d like attendees to take away with them?
It’s not at all unusual to encounter a difficult patient. There are countless reasons for it. They’re anxious, they have high expectations, they have no insurance. The list is endless.

We don’t have control over who is in the chair. All we can do is try to make it a positive experience. Or try to make it as positive as possible. My presentation is positive and it’s entertaining.

My hope is that everyone leaves with some helpful thoughts that they might not have had before coming into the room.