



SEATTLE STUDY CLUB®

Belonging

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A newcomer to an existing SSC club, or a new member attending the SSC annual Symposium shortly after joining a club, may experience a déjà vu resembling the feeling of your first day after being accepted into a well-established fraternity. You enter a group in which everybody knows each other well, the camaraderie, the looks, the smiles, and the comfortable and relaxed attitude all seem to convey the feeling of “belonging.” Any newcomer to any group would be quickly willing to adopt some of the group codes of behavior to quickly create the facade of “belonging.” However, from the first time I entered one of the SSC network events I wanted to go beyond adopting the external codes of behavior; I truly wanted to belong. From the west to the east, from the heartland to the prairies, once you are a part of the family, you find yourself surrounded with close friends who will be there for you with professional advice, solid business guidelines, or personal heart-to-heart talk. As I closely watch the interaction among the members, it seems that the network also serves as a support group to a group of professionals who decided to commit themselves to one of the most demanding and challenging professions, dentistry. When one considers joining a professional group, he or she does so hoping to become a better dentist, but as you become part of the SSC family, you find yourself around people who just try to better themselves in every aspect. I have visited many clubs and therefore see the SSC with a global perspective. And as I reflect on the past few years after closely associating with many of the club members on numerous events and on many occasions, I know this group of phenomenal individuals has helped me become a better person.

It has been many years since I was inducted into the SSC family, so for all you newcomers who keep wondering: Is it for real? The answer is: You better believe it!