

Clive Friedman talk was named:

What does good care for individuals with disability and high anxiety look like

Clive started by talking about Children with disability: Children with disability do in most countries get quite good dental care with financial assistance until the age of 18. Then there is a challenge when the child suddenly is an adult at 18, but because of the disability still needs help and support. This transition is challenging for both parents/care takers and the individual.

Clive then talked about barriers: There is some evidence that many individuals with disability and high anxiety find barriers to dental care.

It can be

- 1) Financial barriers.
- 2) Lack of expertise at the dental office
- 3) Lack of facilities
- 4) Organizational barriers

Clive Friedman also explained the Polyvagal Theory by Stephen W. Porges.

In short words the Theory stresses that when the individual gets anxious and stressed it can be impossible to contact them and explain anything for them. They have an overactivated sympathetic nerve system and their fight and flight response is taking over the brain. To get any contact it is necessary to activate the parasympathetic nervous system and deactivate the sympathetic.

How do we do that?

Clive recommended breathing exercises and grounding techniques.

The audience also did a relaxation exercise where each person with closed eyes, feet on ground and deep breathing found their own special safe space in 1 minute.

Finally Clive stressed the advantage of having a safe space in the dental office where individuals with high anxiety can feel safe and even get a clinical check up in a room with no dental chair, but for example only a bench by the wall.

The summary wrote Elin S. Wang, DDS