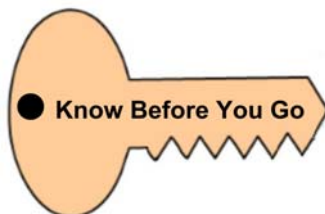
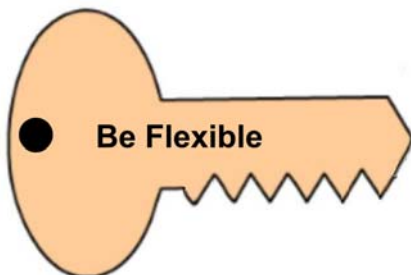
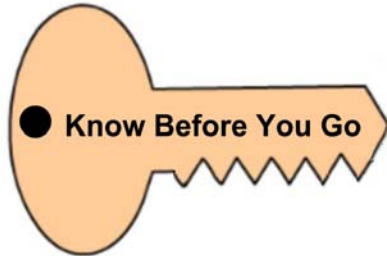


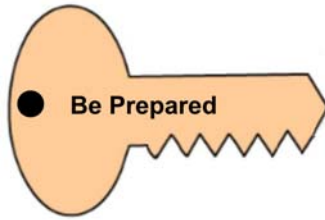
CHAPTER 2

KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL PORTABLE DENTISTRY

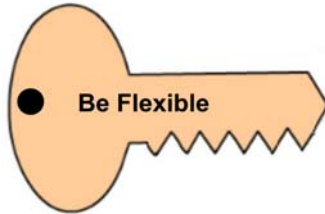
Four short statements define the keys to a successful portable dentistry experience: **KNOW BEFORE YOU GO! BE PREPARED! BE FLEXIBLE! HAVE A GOOD ATTITUDE!** Whether you are serving in a foreign country, hospital, nursing home, or with a bedfast individual at home, nothing can substitute for knowledge, preparation and the right attitude.



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO Find out details about where you are going and what you will be doing. Learn as much as possible about the patients you will see and the facilities you will have to work with on site. If it is one patient, get a health history and detail the symptoms before going. If you are going to a third world venue, learn about the endemic diseases and peculiarities of that country. Prior knowledge of the facilities and conditions with which you will have to work will make setup and actual practice go more smoothly on site.



Be Prepared speaks for itself when you are packing a bag to do portable dentistry. Go through the procedures you will perform, step by step and systematically pack your bag with every item you will and might need. Once on site, it is impossible to turn around and run back to the office to get something you have forgotten to pack.



Be Flexible and have an alternate plan. On many trips we have had circumstances arise which changed our original plans completely. We have missed planes, had medicines confiscated, equipment impounded, luggage lost, permission to practice not granted for days, and the list goes on and on. But good always comes from what appears to be disaster at the time. When a problem arises, start thinking of an alternate way of "making things happen." We sometimes refer to it as "go with the flow." It does no good to get frustrated or upset. Remember, people are watching you and how you react.



HAVE A Good Attitude is essential, especially when in a strange environment trying to perform dentistry with unfamiliar equipment. There is nothing more fulfilling than helping people in desperate need and quickly relieving their pain. You may be their only exposure to a compassionate professional who can perform his/her profession in a strange remote setting. Do the best with what you have and keep a good attitude. Everybody with you and around you will be happier.