ENJOYING LIFE AS A STAINED GLASS ARTIST
Dr. Sanford Aaronson

TRANSITIONING FROM ORTHODONTICS TO YOGA THERAPY
Dr. Art Litowitz
For Drs. Sanford Aaronson and Arthur Litowitz, retirement is a time to devote much of their time and energy to long-time hobbies.

Dr. Aaronson, a long-time stained glass artist who also has other artistic interests, spends a portion of nearly every day working on his projects in a studio in his backyard. He takes an unusual approach to stained glass work, incorporating detail into it and exploring various visual styles. He rarely sells his work, but exhibits it in his home and often gives pieces away as gifts.

Dr. Litowitz, a yoga enthusiast since college, has a desire to use his yoga skills and knowledge to help others that has led him into the emerging field of yoga therapy. He plans to work with individuals to help them enhance their well-being on multiple levels — much as he has done himself through the practice of yoga. Working as a yoga therapist will enable him to share with others his knowledge and skills — and gain fulfillment from the educational interaction.

Both doctors express enormous passion for learning, both in their hobbies and in other areas of interest. After decades of work in orthodontics, of course, the learning habit would be hard to break.

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While Dr. Sanford Aaronson was growing up in Cleveland, he began developing an artistic sensibility. His father, a dentist, was artistically talented and critiqued his son’s drawings of guns and battleships.

"Dad would say, ‘Your perspective is wrong here,’" says Dr. Aaronson. "I never got discouraged by the criticism and kept trying. Over time, the detail and perspective of my drawings improved, thanks to my dad’s coaching. When he asked, ‘Did you trace this?’ I knew I was getting better.”

The senior Dr. Aaronson also began teaching his son dental lab techniques when he was just 11 years old. Eventually, the son began making crowns in his father’s office.

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“When I started dental school, I did not have to spend much time on projects because of my background in lab work,” says Dr. Aaronson. “I had a lot of time to study, which was helpful in gaining the academic qualifications to enter an orthodontic residency.”

Dr. Aaronson completed his residency in orthodontics at Case Western Reserve University after first working as a dentist at the U.S. Coast Guard base in Alameda, CA. He opened his orthodontic practice in Santa Monica, CA in 1966, two years after he completed his residency.

“I kept the practice until 2006, when my nephew took over the practice,” he says. “He had excellent training and is doing things I would never have imagined as an orthodontist, and I am very happy to see his success with the practice.”

Dr. Aaronson also completed a law degree at night school in 1991. With his combined academic background he now does expert witness work in dental malpractice.

“I pursued a law degree because after practicing orthodontics for 20 years because I missed the academic environment and wanted to continue to improve my mind in another discipline,” says Dr. Aaronson. “My orthodontic practice was busy and I was not seeking to work more. The four years that I spent obtaining my JD degree were very enjoyable.”

While he was in practice, Dr. Aaronson always made the esthetic aspects of orthodontics a priority of patient care.

“As I evaluated my plans for a case, I tried to consider how the approach to treatment might affect the patient’s appearance at 25 or 30 years of age,” he says. “You could say that was in part due to my lifelong interest in the visual arts. As an adult, I also maintained my interest in art by attending many art shows.

While he was in practice, Dr. Aaronson always made the esthetic aspects of orthodontics a priority of patient care.
“In 1980, I stopped at a stained glass booth at an art show,” adds Dr. Aaronson. “I had always admired stained glass and said so to the artist. He told me he had a class starting soon, and invited me to attend. I went to the class, never looked back, and have stayed with it ever since.”

Dr. Aaronson notes that stained glass windows are typically very large and lacking in detail. He prefers to produce small projects showing flowers, birds or butterflies and filled with visual details.

“Most of my projects are about 18 inches by 24 inches,” he says. “I also have a strong interest in photography and often photograph my subjects first, then develop a good design with strong detail, and finally start working with glass. Sometimes I add other elements to support the detail, such as copper wire fitted over the glass to simulate a bird’s feathers or the stirrup of a horse.”

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– Dr. Sanford Aaronson
Although he sometimes exhibits his stained glass work in art shows, Dr. Aaronson rarely sells his work, preferring to keep most pieces or give them to friends and relatives. Nonetheless, he procured a business license, which enables him to use a commercial warehouse for contractors as his glass supplier and save a great deal of money on glass.

“I get a much better selection of glass at the warehouse, which has glass from all over the world, than I could get anywhere else,” says Dr. Aaronson. “I have learned that glass striations may flow a certain way, and getting the right piece of glass can make a great difference in simulating a petal or bird’s wing.”

Dr. Aaronson does his glass work in a studio that he built in the backyard of his Santa Monica home, and he also restores frames there.

“I place a lot of my work into antique frames,” says Dr. Aaronson. “I find beautiful, elaborate wood frames at swap meets. They often have breaks, chips and other imperfections, and I restore them with plaster using my restorative dental skills. After I repaint a frame, it is almost impossible to tell that I worked on it.”

Dr. Aaronson strives to make his works unusual.

Using his restorative dentistry skills, Dr. Sanford Aaronson also restores antique frames into which he places many of his stained glass works.
“In designing stained glass windows, I always try to think out of the box,” he says. “One of my favorite things to do is to make a small glass butterfly or hummingbird and hang it on a little soldered hook somewhere in the window design. Also, if I am not going to place a window into a wooden frame, I may have some of the figures or flowers extend beyond the edge of the glass. There are no rules in art or art design.”

When planning to give a stained glass project to a friend or relative, Dr. Aaronson, coordinates colors with the décor of the individual’s home. Keeping many of his projects in his own home, he rotates the works that are displayed. When he was in orthodontic practice, he also displayed and rotated his works of stained glass in his office, along with paintings and pen sketches that he had done.

“Many of my patients and their parents were involved in the arts, and when they saw what I could do artistically, they knew I could apply my artistic talents to their orthodontic treatment,” says Dr. Aaronson. “The ever-changing display of my work was always a great talking point with patients who were interested in art.”

Striving to advance his art in different directions, Dr. Aaronson continually seeks new subjects and studies various visual and artistic styles.

“I am now getting interested in Art Deco and expect to try a project in that style,” he says. “The Web makes it easy to learn about anything I might want to incorporate into my work, so I can keep learning and enjoying new aspects of the stained glass art.”

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Transitioning from Orthodontics to Yoga Therapy

Therapist: Dr. Art Litowitz

When Dr. Arthur “Art” Litowitz was a pre-dental student, he enrolled in a yoga class for the first time. He quickly appreciated the physical, emotional and spiritual benefits of the practice.

“For me, yoga is an excellent exercise for toning, strength and flexibility, but it also has advantages that extend beyond the physical,” says Dr. Litowitz. “It has a philosophy and restorative/therapeutic applications that have helped me in many ways. For example, the breathing aspect of the practice helps produce relaxation and a sense of well-being. It integrates the needs of body, mind and spirit.”
As Dr. Litowitz continued his education — first as a dental student at Washington University in St. Louis and then as an orthodontic resident at the University of Pennsylvania — he continued to practice yoga. After completing his residency, he entered orthodontic practice in Florida. He opened his own practice and over time expanded to multiple locations in the Greater Orlando area.

“My practice evolved into a group practice,” says Dr. Litowitz. “I sold it in 2011 after 35 years of orthodontic practice.”

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As a practicing orthodontist, Dr. Litowitz gradually increased his practice of yoga and his knowledge of it. He enrolled in a 200-hour program to become an instructor, taking classes four times per week.

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“While I was in orthodontic practice, yoga enabled me to remain calm no matter what happened during the course of the day,” he says. “Eventually, research began to document what I had felt for many years as a physiological benefit of yoga practice. For example, a recent study in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology* showed yoga has a significant positive effect on atrial fibrillation.”*

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After completing his initial training to become a yoga instructor, Dr. Litowitz was contemplating his retirement plans. He had completed an MBA degree in finance, primarily in order to participate in a business owned by his family and to manage his investments as effectively as possible.

“I wanted something else to be a major focus of my time, and began exploring the opportunities that yoga might afford me as a retiree,” says Dr. Litowitz. “I am not interested in teaching large classes,” explains Dr. Litowitz. “However, I feel working with individuals would be very fulfilling. My goal is to help people in whatever place they may be physically and emotionally. One of the great things about yoga is that you can start at any level and build up your capabilities gradually, starting with simple moves.”

Dr. Litowitz says that a one-on-one teaching approach focused on helping an individual experience better fitness, health and emotional well-being is considered to be yoga therapy. To further advance his knowledge in order to specialize in yoga therapy, Dr. Litowitz recently began a 500-hour training program through the Yoga Alliance, a non-profit organization that maintains a registry of yoga instructors whose training meets specific standards.

“As a yoga therapist, I can extend my interest in teaching and helping others, enjoy the educational interaction and experience how my clients benefit from the practice,” says Dr. Litowitz. “Another goal that I have is writing about yoga. Although I am just getting started on this new path in life, I am very excited about it.”

As a retired member of the AAO, you continue to receive many of the same benefits and services that you received as an active member, plus a few extra perks. First, your AAO membership is provided at no charge to you, in honor of your years of service to the specialty. In addition, you enjoy free registration for the AAO Annual Session, where your presence is welcomed.

You also continue to receive:

- 24-hour access to the AAO member website, aaoinfo.org, which offers information and resources for members, including the membership directory;
- Regular publications, both print and electronic, that deliver news about the specialty and orthodontists – New Dimensions is designed especially for you;
- A discounted subscription to the American Journal of Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics (AJO-DO) for $36 per year (contact Sherry Nappier, manager of membership services, at 800-424-2841, ext. 518, or snappier@aaortho.org);
- Access to the AAO reference library through aaoinfo.org;

Other benefits, including:

- Quotes on AAO-endorsed long-term care insurance;
- Access to AAO-approved Medjet Assist, a medical evacuation service for travelers;
- Discounted access to Oakstone Inc. continuing education products.

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Your retiree membership in the aao renews automatically every year.

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Many retired AAO members enjoy thinking of the many colleagues within the specialty whom they met over the years and like to stay in touch when possible. Now a new online tool is available to help AAO members stay in touch with each other and meet new friends: Use AAO’s Communities to introduce yourself. Confer with your colleagues, learn about interesting cases being treated, offer advice, ask questions or comment on news and information from the AAO.

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- Visit www.aaoinfo.org and “Sign In” using your username (e-mail address) and password.
- Click on “My AAO” to edit your Community Profile. You can add a picture or alter your display name if desired.
- Click on the “Communities” button on the far right of the navigation bar.
- Click “Join Community” on any communities of interest to you. Choose from Science and Technology, Trends and Their Impacts, and others.
- Choose the option to “Subscribe to All Posts in this Community.” Subscribing will ensure you are notified of any new posts as they occur.
- Browse “Latest Discussion Topics” within each community. To read the entire post and/or make your own comment, click on the title of the Discussion Topic. This will bring up the full post as well as a comment box that you can use to enter in your comment.
- To add your comment, click the “Save” button beneath the Comment box.
The AAO and the eight constituent organizations make it easy for you to reconnect with old friends and colleagues. The organizations offer great destinations, excellent programming and exciting social events through their annual conferences. Even better, you can register for the AAO Annual Session at no charge before the early registration deadline.

Midwestern Society of Orthodontists
2013 Annual Session
September 20-22, 2013 ▶ Kansas City, MO
INFORMATION: http://www.msortho.org/

Great Lakes Association of Orthodontists and Rocky Mountain Society of Orthodontists
2013 Annual Session
September 26-29, 2013 ▶ Colorado Springs, CO
INFORMATION: www.glao.org/

Southern Association of Orthodontists
Annual Meeting
October 2-6, 2013 ▶ Hilton Head Island, SC
INFORMATION: www.saortho.org/

Southwestern Society of Orthodontists
2013 Annual Session
October 11-13, 2013 ▶ Grapevine (Dallas), TX
INFORMATION: http://www.swso.org/

Pacific Coast Society of Orthodontists
77th Annual Session
October 17-20, 2013 ▶ San Diego, CA
INFORMATION: www.pcsortho.org

Northeastern Society of Orthodontists and Middle Atlantic Society of Orthodontists
2013 Joint Annual Meeting
November 14-17, 2013 ▶ Rio Grande, Puerto Rico
INFORMATION: http://www.neso.org/

American Association of Orthodontists
2014 Winter Conference
“Adult Treatment: A Clinical Conference for Orthodontists and Restorative Dentists”
February 7-9, 2014 ▶ Las Vegas, NV
INFORMATION: www.AAOinfo.org

American Association of Orthodontists
114th Annual Session
April 25-29, 2014 ▶ New Orleans, LA
INFORMATION: www.AAOinfo.org

Plan to join your friends and colleagues at the 2014 Annual Session in New Orleans.