Leonard Davis Institute

2023 Health Services Research
Dental Fellowship

Mentor

Dr. Tatyana Straus

STUDENT

Azin Pooresmaeil

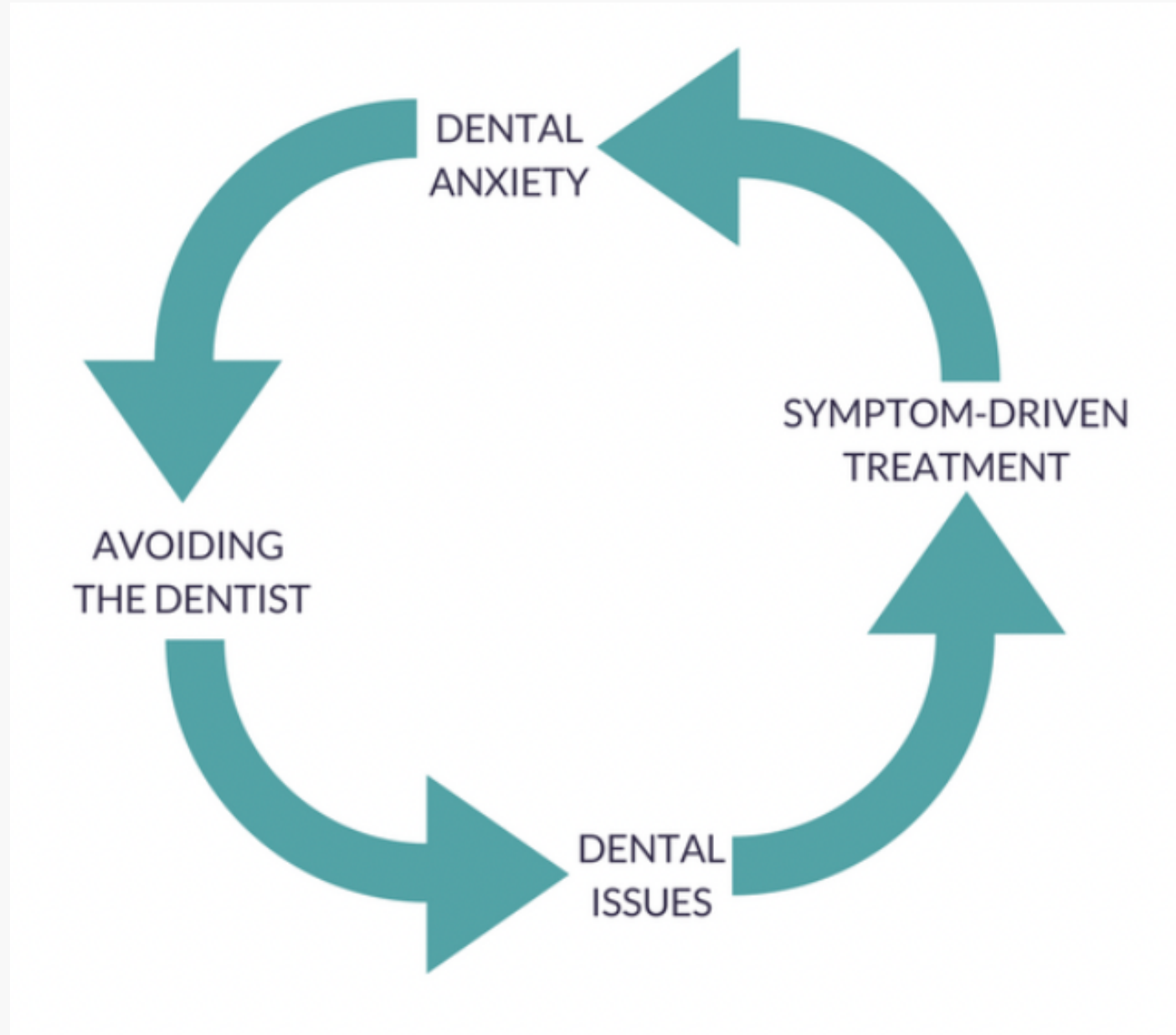# Approaching Dental Anxiety at Philadelphia FIGHT

Goal: To develop a protocol for dental providers to use when treating patients with high dental anxiety

About 36% of people in the United States present with dental anxiety

1 in 7 of the population present with severe dental anxiety

Roots of Anxiety

- Literature Review (4 papers)
- Interviewing Staff
  - When do you see dental anxiety manifest most?
  - How do you approach patients with dental anxiety?
- 4 providers, 1 hygienist, 2 dental assistants

Anxiety Reduction Mechanisms Currently Used and Future Suggestions

- Current: Observation of high anxiety dental procedures
  - I.e., Extractions, Anesthetic Injections, X-Rays
- Future: Literature Review (12 papers)

Scheduling and
Insurance Intake

X-Ray's

Examination and
Diagnosis

Injections
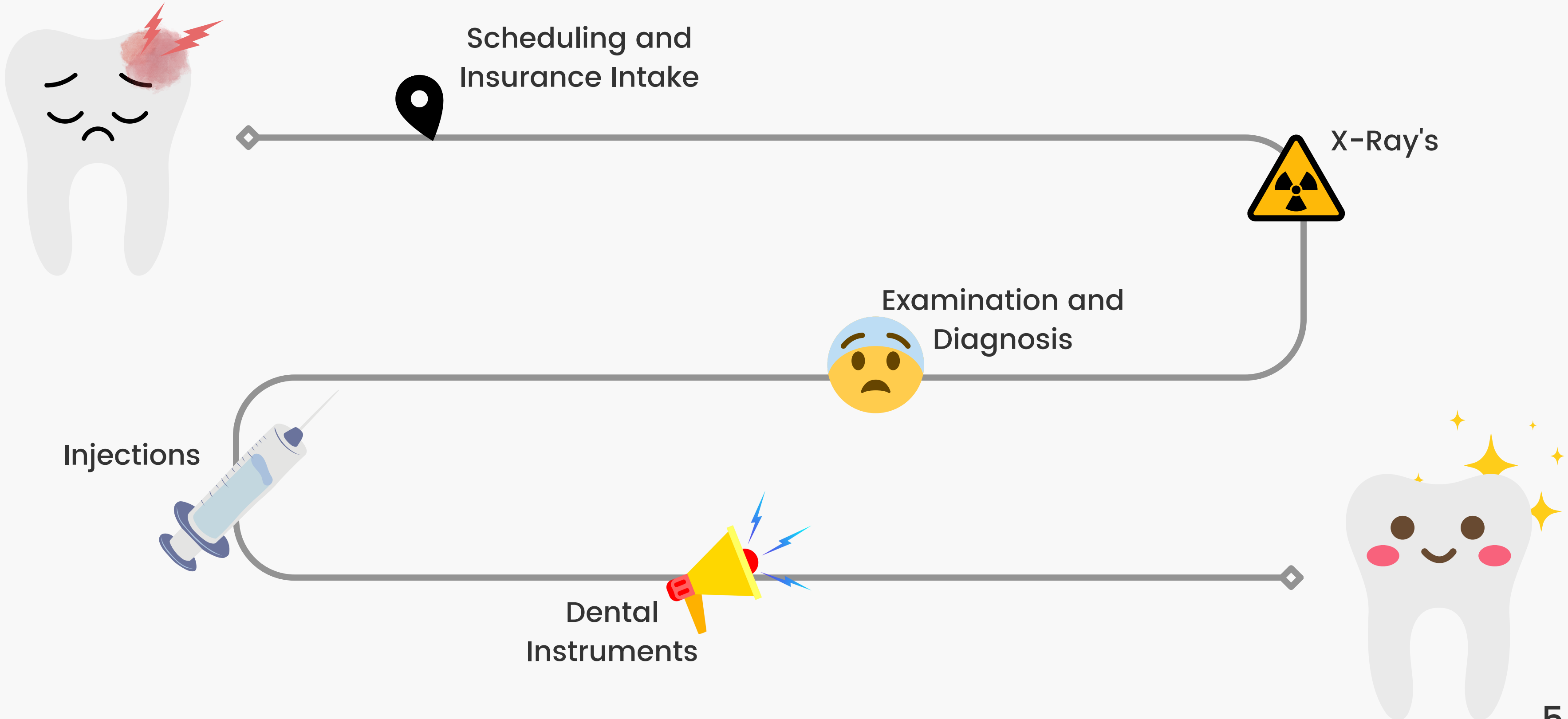
Dental
Instruments

Perceived Lack of Control

Anticipation of Pain

Feelings of Shame or Embarassment

Trauma from Past Dental Experiences

Anxiety is unique for each patient. Practitioners should be compassionate and flexible, while maintaining the safety of procedures.

- Explaining each step to the patient and consistently checking in.
- Patient-Centered Care

- Behavior Management Techniques:
  - Diaphragmatic Breathing
  - Guided Imagery
  - Desensitization

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- **2 Main Sections:**
  - **Roots of dental anxiety during 7 different points of a dental visit**
  - **Techniques used at FIGHT to approach dental anxiety, and suggested additions**

- **General Behavior Management Techniques**

- **Vocabulary Substitutions to use for patients with high dental anxiety**

- **No anxiety is the same**

- **Developing research questions**

- **Creating the foundation for future research studies**

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Advisor

Dr. Tatyana Straus

Student

Azin Pooresmaeil

Thank you for listening!

Questions?
azinp@upenn.edu