

Imagine...

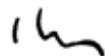
Dear Reader,

Imagine a world without adhesion! What would happen if all of a sudden every adhesive bond ceased to function? Your post-its on the bulletin board would fall to the floor, the windshield and many other parts of your car would detach, your tires would disintegrate because the rubber would separate from the steel, trains would slide on the rails rather than move forward, airplanes would drop from the sky because many structures are bonded, your skis, your boat, your high-tech bicycle, your surfboard, your tennis racket etc. would fail, because fiber reinforced composites would no longer provide the strength that was intended. Even the soles of your shoes would peel off of course, dental restorations would also fail, leach, become unesthetic etc.

So you see, bonding has become an integral part of daily life, not only in dentistry. There we are able to obtain excellent bond strength between restorative materials and tooth hard structure. Just to illustrate how good we are: assuming we have an adhesive which provides 30 MPa bond strength, to suspend an 85-kg man with an adhesively bonded hook, all you'd need is a round surface 6 mm in diameter! These facts are impressive and may lead us in the wrong direction, namely to blindly trust technology. Unfortunately,

between the technology and the patient there is someone else: the dentist. And he or she has the most important influence on the outcome. If I look back at previous issues of the *Journal of Adhesive Dentistry*, I see more and more articles focussing on the effects of application techniques on the final outcome, thus confirming my gut feeling. This leads us in the right direction: we have good materials, but as dentists we are not as good at applying them. Michel Degrange has shown this very clearly in his continuing "battle of the bonds". Among the top ten adhesives applied by dentists, there are representatives of all known groups of adhesives (etch, prime, bond; etch + prime, bond; etch, prime + bond; and etch + prime + bond) (unpublished data). The message is quite clear: continuing education is important, with emphasis on the practical courses rather than the lectures. Theoretical knowledge is one thing, but implementing it correctly is another altogether.

Sincerely yours



Prof. Jean-François Roulet