

# Is there life **after** dental practice ownership?

Dentists often put off selling their practices because they are concerned about life after dentistry.

What will they do with all those extra hours, how will they cope with leaving behind the identity that has defined them for decades? This series of articles explores the very busy lives of some of Practice Sale Search's clients, former-practice owners who have embraced post-sale life.

**Name:** Joanna Karefylakis  
**Age:** 56 when I sold. I have been in Blacktown for more than 30 years.  
**Graduated:** Sydney Uni 1986  
**Practice Owned:** Blacktown Dental Care

## Brief Career Summary:

While I was going through university I worked as a dental nurse on Saturdays and school holidays for a dentist in Pennant Hills. When I graduated, she offered me a full-time job as a dentist.

After less than a year working there, an opportunity came up to buy a practice in West Ryde. It was a small practice, quite inexpensive and I got the loan quite easily. I bought it, but it wasn't very busy. Soon afterwards I heard from a supply rep that there was a busy, growing two-chair practice for sale in Blacktown, which I ended up buying in Oct 1989. In 1999, we upgraded to a better, three-chair facility and I was there until I sold in 2020.

## Why did you sell?

I had enough of being the boss, stressed and worrying about paying bills and staff.

The whole idea was to sell the practice, work less and travel more ...



My partner and I teach dancing and have a dance studio; we also teach dance at nursing homes and on cruise ships. We were booked to teach on a cruise in December, but I doubt that will happen. It is very disappointing, but we are only on hold, we will get past this. I am generally a glass half full person; I know it's coming.

For now, I am still working in my old practice. While I've cut down my hours, it doesn't feel any different when I am there. The new owners haven't changed anything in the practice; I have the same people working with me. I am really enjoying working two days a week; I work Tuesdays and Thursdays and have a four-day weekend.



## Tell me about your dancing:

My partner and I teach Ballroom, Latin and Street Latin styles, from Waltz to Cha Cha, Salsa and Argentine Tango. We've had a dance studio in Paramatta for eight years and have been teaching on cruise ships for five years. When I owned my practice, we would sometimes take six weeks off a year and teach on cruises during that time.

We averaged about one cruise a year until Covid-19, because we both had businesses that suffered if we weren't there. We've taught on cruises to the South Pacific, New Zealand, Perth to Singapore, Singapore to Sydney, Sydney to Hawaii and Hawaii to Sydney.

We teach one hour per day and only on the days we are sailing; on the days we are docked we don't teach. The rest of the time we are simply passengers. I have not told them I am a dentist, so haven't ever been called to do emergency treatments on the ships.

## If the pandemic ended tomorrow ...

We would go to Hawaii for a few weeks, then Argentina and Cuba. Ideally, I would like to take six months and do South America, Europe and especially Greece. ♦



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