

LOOKING YOUNGER

Is it Worth it to You?

Looking at the huge number of women's and men's magazines you might think it's an oxymoron to not try to look younger. Every issue is filled with beautifully illustrated articles on how celebrities do it and tips to help you do it, too. But what about other folks who say "embrace your age, embrace your looks, and embrace yourself." Although no right or wrong, it does beg the question, "Is it worth it to continue trying to look as young as you feel?"

Most of us like to think we have "maturity of mind," but do we like "maturity of appearance?" The answer seems to depend on several key factors such as social desires and expectations, employment and self-image. Many people will do whatever it takes to appear younger, while others are perfectly content looking as old or even older than they are.

INVESTING IN YOURSELF

A recent column in the *The New York Times* called "Masking the Roots of Aging" spoke about one woman's determination to fight the signs of aging and realizing that coloring her hair is a necessary evil. Although this article focused on hair color, reducing the appearance of older age may well include much more than the color of your hair. Facial wrinkles, age spots, an older smile line, plus a whole lot more can contribute to an older looking appearance. I recently read about a woman who spent \$6,000 on a dermatology procedure to make her look younger and even she may not have seen any difference. But once you spend that kind of money on looking younger you tend to defend the cost by looking in the mirror with "rose colored glasses." Not to say that there are not valid cosmetic procedures that estheticians, plastic surgeons and dermatologists do.

When it comes to surgical procedures to reduce an aging appearance, Buckhead plastic surgeon Dr. John Griffin states that his patients' three most popular surgery procedures are eyelid surgery, facelifts and brow lifts. According to Dr. Griffin, his patients are very concerned that they look like themselves and not like they have been "done" following surgery. Dr. Griffin believes that looking younger also means achieving an attractive, more youthful, but especially natural appearance.

SOCIAL FACTORS

Socially, the motivation to look younger may be as simple as "keeping up with the Joneses," and fitting in with the social climate you choose to be in. For instance, on a recent trip to a private island, our affluent hostess, well into her 80s, had absolutely no interest in looking younger. She felt quite comfortable smiling and laughing with a set of teeth that most people would run to the nearest dentist to fix.

But then there is another group of women I happen to know in their mid-70s to mid 80s and you can't find a gray hair among them. Perhaps some have facials or other esthetic treatments to keep them looking and feeling younger, from seeing the dermatologist, plastic surgeon, hair stylist, or even a cosmetic dentist. And the results are amazing. They could all pass for at least 10-15 years younger!

Men's Health has found a cost-effective way to minimize wrinkles around the eyes. "Go for a brisk daily walk. Exercise flushes your skin with blood. The result is denser, thicker skin that springs back to its original shape after being stretched. This translates to fewer wrinkles and bags around the eyes," says James White, an exercise physiologist in San Diego.

Social environments vary from large to small cities, rural to city life, and different segments throughout. I recall a patient

who wanted to have a smile makeover with younger looking and brighter appearing porcelain veneers. Although both she and her husband loved the result, she felt uncomfortable at first because her friends still had worn, discolored and chipped or fractured teeth. But she soon became the trendsetter, and eventually almost all her friends wanted to have their smile rejuvenated! Sometimes it just takes someone to set the example, and others will follow.

Porcelain veneers are the No. 1 most requested cosmetic dental procedure because patients can have a new smile with a brighter, younger look in only a few weeks. Plus, the technique is the most conservative, reducing a minimum of enamel whenever possible.

As Lily Dache put it in her 1956 *Glamour Book*, "Today, there is no excuse for a woman to grow old, unless she is ill... If you want to keep up with this modern, wonderful world, you must be young in thought, feeling, and appearance... and all you have to do is stretch out your hand to receive the magic bounty of glamour that modern science has prepared for you." And 55 years later there are so many more options for looking younger.

WORK RELATED

It's not just women who are noticing the effects that age has. As reported in the trade journal *Chain Drug Review*, Combe Inc., manufacturer of Just for Men hair coloring, surveyed professional career advisers to determine what personal qualities employers most valued. That survey, "Strategies for Job Success," disclosed that looks are important to workplace advancement: An employee's youthful appearance affects salary and is closely tied to promotions. Almost two-thirds of those surveyed reported that male clients had lost job opportunities because they looked too old. More than three-fourths said that in the economic climate of the 21st century, looking younger gives men a distinct competitive advantage. And because job interviewers in many fields tend to be younger than the applicants they screen, they tend to pass over their elders and hire younger workers. These findings seem to have escaped a good portion of the male population since I constantly see husbands bringing their wives in for a smile makeover but not considering it for themselves.

Although laws may prevent discrimination regarding looks, the trend to hire younger looking and more attractive individuals has been researched and proved time and time again. Studies show that young and more attractive looking females and males make more money, and if equal qualifications, you can guess who gets hired! So if it is a job



CHRISTY BRINKLEY IS ONE 59-YEAR-OLD WHO HAS KEPT HERSELF LOOKING YOUNG.

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you seek at any age, you may be well advised to look your best!

SELF-IMAGE

In the final analysis it is your own self-image that may play the decisive decision to keep looking younger throughout your life, by healthier living, exercise, watching your diet, and not waiting until things get so bad that you may not get the cosmetic result you desire. However, not everyone relies on magazines and celebrity culture to dictate their lives. Annette Mathews, an executive editorial assistant in Atlanta, agrees. "I skip the fashion and beauty magazines because I don't think they allow you to be yourself. I would never spend thousands of dollars on a dress or change my hair and makeup every season to keep up with the latest trend." The bottom line seems to be that at some point you need to throw out the rules, trust your judgment and enjoy life the way *you* choose to look!



WITH A LIFELONG INTEREST IN BEAUTY, DR. RONALD GOLDSTEIN CONDUCTS ONGOING RESEARCH ON THE PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS PHENOMENON AND ITS ROLE IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF PERSONAL SUCCESS. HIS DENTAL PRACTICE WAS THE FIRST TO MOVE BEYOND THE SMILE AND FOCUS ON OVERALL FACIAL HARMONY. HE WRITES EXTENSIVELY FOR BOTH CONSUMERS AND THE DENTAL PROFESSION ON BEAUTY, ESTHETIC DENTISTRY AND RELATED TOPICS. DR. GOLDSTEIN IS THE AUTHOR OF THE 2-VOLUME TEXTBOOK, *ESTHETICS IN DENTISTRY* AND *CHANGE YOUR SMILE* (12 FOREIGN TRANSLATIONS), WHICH NOW IN ITS 4TH EDITION IS THE TOP-SELLING CONSUMER GUIDE TO COSMETIC DENTISTRY FOUND IN THOUSANDS OF DENTISTS' RECEPTION ROOMS AROUND THE WORLD. HE IS ON THE ADVISORY BOARD OF *NEW BEAUTY* MAGAZINE AND WRITES FOR IT AS WELL. HE IS THE FOUNDER OF TOMORROW'S SMILES, A NATIONAL NON-PROFIT FUND THAT HELPS DESERVING ADOLESCENTS RECEIVE LIFE-CHANGING SMILES THROUGH COSMETIC DENTISTRY. HIS MULTIDISCIPLINARY PRACTICE IS IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA.