

Beauty Is How You Feel Inside

✘ Well, maybe that's easy for Sophia Loren to say, but what I've read recently about some women's obsession to attain the perfect body is downright insane.

Let me start out by saying I've absolutely no problem with anyone who wants a little nip, tuck, lipo, or lift to make them feel better about themselves. Mother Nature isn't always kind and if a little help is needed from a surgeon to age gracefully, go for it.

I do have to say the idea of injecting a toxin like botox, a form of botulism, in order to achieve that stunned, I-can't-move-my-face, deer in the headlights, Nancy Pelosi-look isn't very appealing to me. Hey, but that's just me.

I literally gasped when I read about silicone pumping parties where folks inject "industrial" silicone directly into their bodies. According to TMZ, low grade silicone used to lubricate auto parts in Argentina, was injected into Priscilla Presley's face and we all know how that turned out.

What I don't get are people who want to completely re-make themselves. Perfect example is the New York socialite, Jocelyn Wildenstein, whose initial goal was to win back her husband who she caught with a 21-year in bed and look more cat-like. You decide but she just looks bizarre. Fortunately, she's continuing to have more plastic surgery to reverse some of the horrific results.

Another example is the late Michael Jackson who, for whatever reason, wished to eradicate any semblance of his former self, and instead, did everything possible to look like his sister, Latoya, or Diana Ross – I was never sure which one he wished to emulate.

I have to say the most frightening is 24-year old "reality

star," Heidi Montag, who, before I read about her surgeries, was completely unknown to me. Here's a pretty, albeit cookie-cutter blonde who had 10, yes, 10 surgeries in one day! I couldn't even believe this. She opted for brow-lifts, ear-pinnings, a chin reduction, as well as a second rhinoplasty and second breast augmentation .increasing her 32C bust to 32DDD. Now, a year later, she regrets it all. After seeing the before and after pictures, and other than her obvious inability to sleep on her stomach, she doesn't look all that different to me except for the tape she now has to wear on her nose to keep it from shifting. She claims she'll never have surgery again. Yeah, right. Wait a few more years. We'll be reading about her again.

I have to ask myself, why a 24-year old would choose to do this. I haven't come up with an answer because I'm not a psychologist. If there isn't already one, there should be a diagnostic name in the DSM to identify someone who is so self-loathing, so insecure, so lacking in self-esteem that they would subject themselves to this kind of behavior. Perhaps it's an addiction; I have no idea. I do have to ask, if, at age 24, you hate the way you look so much, what do you do when you reach 60 when things really start heading south? But the bottom line is also, what reputable plastic surgeon would be willing to do this?

A recent article about the Chinese obsession with plastic surgery brought all this to my attention. After the United States and Brazil, China now ranks third in the world for most elective plastic surgeries. Who would've known? Plastic surgery, except for harelip surgeries, was considered bourgeois. Because of the economic reforms of the 1980s, the pursuit of beauty has risen gradually.

The problem in China became obvious when a promising 24-year old singer died in the operating room while undergoing a face-lift with her mother. 24 years old!

The article describes the journey for the perfect body of a 28-year old woman, who started having plastic surgery at the age of 16. "A nip and a tuck led to another nip and another tuck, and another." There were the follow-up surgeries, and the repairs for the procedures that were botched. In total, this young woman had between 170 and 180 operations (she didn't even know the exact number), usually six or seven at a time on nearly every part of her body.

Unfortunately, many of these surgeries aren't performed at legitimate hospitals but rather at what are called "black surgeries" where lesser standards and less experienced doctors perform these operations and are done secretly. As usual, ethics decrease while bank accounts increase.

Most of the Chinese patients are young women in their 20s and the most popular procedure is eyelid slicing – to make Western-style double-lidded eyes – followed by nose jobs and tummy tucks.

Some mornings after I've had a bad night's sleep, I wake up and look in the mirror and visualize what I'd look like with a few less wrinkles and lines but, I have to say, I never thought of doing anything as drastic as surgery when I was in my 20s.

I can only figure that these young women obsessed with their looks and the achievement of the perfect body are destined for very unhappy lives. Some people have great genetics; some don't. Not all of us are lucky enough to look like Sophia Loren or Tom Selleck.

My suggestion to any of these women is to save your money. Invest in a very good psychologist and figure out why you're so unhappy. Eventually, everything heads south and surgeons are doctors, not magicians.

I don't get it, but if you do, God bless you.