

Dr. Bill Dorfman Of Century City Aesthetic Dentistry On The Self-Care Routines & Practices Of Busy Entrepreneurs and Business Leaders

Maria Angelova | December 6, 2022



...You'll have a longer life. I definitely believe in the old adage: Use it or lose it. If you don't exercise and utilize your muscles, they just wither away. It's also important to not only focus on strength, but flexibility. As you get older, things don't move the way they do when they are younger, and if you don't continuously stretch and exercise, you lose a lot of flexibility and mobility as you age. Also, exercising pumps endorphins into your system and makes you happier and healthier.

All of us know that we have to take breaks in our day to take care of ourselves. "Selfcare is healthcare", the saying goes. At the same time, we know that when you are a busy leader with enormous responsibility on your shoulders, it's so easy to prioritize the urgent demands of work over the important requirements of self-care. How do busy entrepreneurs and leaders create space to properly take care of themselves? What are the self-care routines of successful

*entrepreneurs and business leaders? In this interview series, we are talking to busy and successful entrepreneurs, business leaders, and civic leaders who can discuss their self-care practices and self-care routines. As a part of this series, I had the distinct pleasure of interviewing celebrity cosmetic dentist, **Dr. Bill Dorfman**.*

Dr. Bill Dorfman is not just a famous cosmetic dentist, he is THE famous cosmetic dentist. Affectionately known as “America’s Dentist,” Dr. Bill is widely recognized world-wide as a leading dentist who is responsible for creating smiles for many of Hollywood’s brightest stars. The innovative and accomplished doctor is also renowned in his field as an energy-brimming inventor and brilliant entrepreneur who has brought award-winning innovations to the world of dentistry, while also modeling philanthropy and physical fitness.

Thank you so much for doing this with us! It is an honor. Our readers would love to learn more about your personal background. Can you please share with our readers your personal backstory; What has brought you to this point in your life?

It’s been a long journey and quite honestly my career has exceeded every expectation I could have ever imagined. It all started off in dentistry and going through dental school I quickly realized that people really didn’t care if you did a great filling on them, or a great root canal. But they did care when you gave them a beautiful smile makeover, and I realized that dentistry wasn’t only important for the health of your mouth, but also for your appearance and self-esteem. I quickly became enamored with cosmetic dentistry, where my goal was to give my patients the healthiest and most beautiful smile I could. On my journey, I became active in the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry, and in the late 80’s when tooth whitening first hit the market, I realized that there was a huge demand for the procedure. The initial products that were on the market really lacked a lot of critical components to be incredibly successful. When I realized this, I started looking for ways to improve the take-home tooth whitening market. Fortunately, I went to a charity event and I met a young man who became my best friend, and still is, and who grew up in the cosmetic industry and had recently graduated with a business degree from Boston, named Robert Hayman. Robert was the son of Fred Hayman, who created Giorgio Cosmetics, Rodeo Drive, and essentially Beverly Hills as we know it today. With Robert’s background in marketing and manufacturing and my background in dentistry and marketing, we created our first whitening product, which was called Nite White. Nite White soon became the leading take-home tooth whitening product on the market. Right around 2001, we launched ZOOM! Tooth Whitening and that quickly became the most popular in-office tooth whitening product in the world. In 2003, ABC was casting a new reality show called, “Extreme Makeover,” and I was fortunate enough to be selected as the featured dentist on this soon-to-be hit series. Being on that show not only gave me the ability to show the world what cosmetic dentistry could do for patients, but it also enabled me to show the world how important tooth whitening could be in improving a smile with our ZOOM! Tooth Whitening product. The show

was a huge success and the halo effect on our tooth whitening business was astounding. We basically grew Discus Dental, the company that manufactured ZOOM!, from zero to \$1.3 billion, and ended up selling the company to Philips in 2010. Since then, I have received 21 lifetime achievement awards from some of the most prestigious academies in dentistry. In addition, I have become a New York Times Bestselling author with my book *Billion Dollar Smile*, named in the Guinness Book of World Records twice, and in 2018 I was knighted by the Royal Order of Constantine. My mantra for life has always been “Learn, so you can Earn, and then Return,” and in this phase of my life, I’m really focusing on giving back as much as possible. Sixteen years ago, I formed the non-profit LEAP Foundation, which is an entrepreneurial, motivational, leadership program for high school and college students ages 15–25. Every summer, we have a week-long program at UCLA, where we bring in some of the top speakers for the 450 or so students who attend. The part that we are most proud of is that 60% of the students come from low-income families and are awarded scholarships to attend the program. Currently, I’m working on my next two big projects. One is a take-home tooth whitening strip that dissolves on your teeth, and brightens your smile — It will be launched in December of 2022 in conjunction with Great Health Works — so keep your eyes open for Poof! In addition, I will be launching a new caffeinated chewing gum that not only gives you the equivalent amount of caffeine as a 9oz cup of coffee, but it also gives you fresh breath, and it fights tooth decay because it’s sweetened with Xylitol. We haven’t finalized the name yet, but it looks like we’re going to go with KICK Ballz.

What is your “why” behind what you do? What fuels you?

As I mentioned earlier in my mantra: “Learn, so you can Earn, and then Return,” I feel like if you become successful and you don’t give back, what was the point of all the success?

How do you define success? Can you please explain what you mean from a personal anecdote?

Success is setting a goal and working hard until you achieve it. I have a very unique perspective on success and on succeeding. A lot of people feel like if they try something and they don’t succeed, they’ve failed. For me, there is no failure — it’s just practice. If I try something and I don’t succeed at it, I’ll do it again, and again, and again, and again, until I find a way to succeed. So, you really only fail when you quit...and I never quit. So, in essence, I will do everything I can to continue “practicing” until I succeed.

Another thing we have to have a mindset shift change on is practice doesn’t make perfect, practice makes permanent. So, if you keep practicing and you’re not getting the right results,

you need to change things. That's why LEAP is such a great program for young people because we introduce them to mentors and people who can help them succeed more quickly.

What is the role of a growth mindset in your success? Can you please share 3 mindset mantras that keep you motivated, sane, and propel you forward?

When I graduated dental school, there was no such thing as cosmetic dentistry. They didn't even have porcelain veneers, which is almost 90% of what I do today. In order for me to have had the success that I had, I had to continually learn. Without knowledge, there is no way to grow. My field is changing all the time, and if I didn't stay on top of all of trends and the information that was coming out, my career would certainly wither away. Three mindset mantras that I live by, are ones that we teach at LEAP:

1. Don't wait for opportunities in life, make them.
2. When you do get an opportunity don't take it, master it.
3. Copy genius, don't reinvent mediocrity.

You are by all accounts a very successful person. How have you used your success to bring goodness to the world?

First and foremost, through LEAP. As I stated earlier, it's a week-long program we put on at UCLA every year for approximately 450 high school and college students, where we really teach them skills to be successful in life. In addition, I have been very active with a group of dentists called The Crown Council

where we have raised over \$50 million for children's charities by doing a Smiles for Life campaign. During the campaign, my company donated whitening products to dentists, and dentists whitened their patient's teeth and instead of having the patient's pay them, the patients wrote a check to Smiles for Life, so 100% of the money that was raised went to children's charities and hospitals.

Can you share a mistake or failure which you now appreciate, and which has taught you a valuable lesson?

One time when we were about to launch a big product at my company, we pre-paid for a lot of advertisement months in advance, and when it came time for the ads to appear, we still didn't have the product done. Don't ever put the cart before the horse in business. Sometimes we get so excited about things we don't dot all of our 'l's' and cross all of our 't's' and it can get us into trouble. So, make sure that, especially in business and in life, you plan things out and execute properly.

You are a successful leader. Which three character traits do you think were most instrumental to your success? Can you please share a story or example for each?

I would say the three-character traits that are most instrumental in my success are: Tenacity, Creativity and Compassion.

Tenacity — I think the example I just gave exemplifies my stance on tenacity. I tell my students at LEAP that I never fail. And the reason I tell them that is because you only fail if you quit, and I never quit. If there is something I really want to do, I figure out a way to do it.

Creativity — When we first launched our tooth whitening product, we hired two of the biggest ad agencies in Los Angeles to come up with a name, and we had hundreds of names. I love creating ideas and products, and brands. One day, when I was at the gym, I was working out next to my business partner and he said he saw the biggest smile he's ever seen on my face. He looked at me and he said, "You got it, don't you?" and I looked at him back and I said, "Yes!" He said, "What?" and I said: "Nite White." And within a year, Nite White became the most successful take-home tooth whitening product in the world.

Compassion — I think that a big part of being successful is bringing others along on your ride. Compassion encompasses a lot of things — it's how you deal with people in business, relationships you make. But I think more importantly it involves giving back. As my company, Discus Dental, grew we made a firm commitment to raising money for different charities. And through the years, we've raised millions of dollars for the children's dental center in the Smiles for Life campaign with Garth Brooks. We've raised over \$50 million with a group of dentists called The Crown Council. And personally, I give back every year to my LEAP Foundation and other charities.

What are some of the most interesting or exciting new projects you are working on now? How do you think that might help people?

Currently, I'm working on my next two big projects. One is a take-home tooth whitening strip that dissolves on your teeth, and brightens your smile — It will be launched in December of 2022 in conjunction with Great Health Works — so keep your eyes open for Poof! In addition, I will be launching a new caffeinated chewing gum that not only gives you the equivalent amount of caffeine as a 9oz cup of coffee, but it also gives you fresh breath, and it fights tooth decay because it's sweetened with Xylitol. We haven't finalized the name yet, but it looks like we're going to go with KICK Ballz.

OK, thank you for all of that. Let's now shift to the core focus of our interview about Self-Care. Let's start with a basic definition so that we are all on the same page. What does self-care mean to you?

I think you need to take care of yourself on three levels: physically, mentally & financially.

Physically, I work out every day, I try to eat as healthy as possible, I never drink alcohol or take any kind of drugs, and try to maintain as healthy a lifestyle as possible.

Mentally, I think it's important to surround yourself with people who make you a better version of yourself — support you, love you, and add value to your life.

Financially, I've often heard people say that money doesn't buy happiness. I agree with that. I know plenty of very, very wealthy people who are miserable. However, I also think it's very difficult to be happy when you are completely broke. So, finding a happy medium in life is really important, and being financially sound enough where you don't need to rely on others for money is an important part of my life.

As a successful leader with an intense schedule, what do you do to prioritize self-care, and carve out regular time to make self-care part of your routine?

No matter where I am in the world, or what I'm doing, I go to the gym every day. If there is no gym, I'll just do calisthenics and exercise for at least an hour every day. On top of that, I always eat healthy no matter where I am or what I'm doing.

Will you please share with our readers 3 of your daily, or frequent self-care habits?

Sometimes we learn a great deal from the opposite, from a contrast. Can you please share a few ways that NOT taking time for self-care can harm our lives?

Many people don't know this, but I was actually adopted when I was four years old. My mother unfortunately married the wrong man, the first time she got married. And fortunately, the right man the second time she got married. My biological father ended up being a nightmare. After having three children with my mother, he got involved in a lot of very dangerous business deals, and had a horrible drinking and gambling problem. Fortunately, for me and my brothers, my mother had the wherewithal to remove herself from that situation and cut him out of our lives. I think that some of the memories I have as a young child helped form the character I have as an adult, and is probably one of the reasons why I've never engaged in drinking or gambling at all. And fortunately, my mother married one of the kindest and sweetest men ever. My brothers and I were so fortunate to be raised by a man with great integrity, character and compassion and I fear to think of what I might have turned out like had I been raised by my biological father instead.

What would you tell someone who says they do not have time or finances to support a regular wellness routine?

I think that's a cop-out answer. First of all, you manage your own time. I can honestly say that for my entire adult life, no matter how busy I was, no matter where I was in the world or what I was doing, I always made time to exercise. And there were periods in my life when I was literally existing on 3–4 hours of sleep a night in order to get everything done. You HAVE to make time — it's as essential, in my opinion, to life, as eating. So, time management needs to be a priority for you. As far as not having enough money, that's a cop-out answer as well. You don't need money. You can run, walk, jog and do push ups and sit-ups in your house, if need be — and none of that costs any money. So, it's not about the money, and you must make the time.

We are very blessed that some of the biggest names in Business, VC funding, Sports, and Entertainment read this column. Is there a person in the world, or in the US whom you would love to have a private breakfast or lunch with, and why? He or she might just see this, especially if we both tag them :-)

I am also incredibly blessed to have been able to meet some of the most amazing people in the world through dentistry. And although I did have a chance to meet Oprah one time, I would certainly love to sit down with her again for a longer period.

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What is the best way for our readers to continue to follow your work online?

Readers can find me online at BillDorfmanDDS.com or LEAPFoundation.com, and connect with me on Instagram at [@DrBillDorfman](https://www.instagram.com/DrBillDorfman)

This was very inspiring. Thank you so much for the time you spent on this. We wish you only continued success.

<https://medium.com/authority-magazine/dr-bill-dorfman-of-century-city-aesthetic-dentistry-on-the-self-care-routines-practices-of-busy-98e45d1f5e42>