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AUTHORITY MAGAZINE

Dr. Howard Sobel: “Here Are 5 Non-Intuitive Lifestyle Tweaks That Can Dramatically Improve One’s Wellbeing”

Dr. William Seeds Mar 25



Do something kind for someone, especially if you’re having a bad day. Guaranteed it makes them — and you — feel better!

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A leader in the industry, cosmetic dermatologist Dr. Howard Sobel has pioneered the union of dermatology and cosmetic surgery. Dr. Sobel brings his passion for dermatology and cosmetic surgery to Sobel Skin. This unique, completely personalized dermatology and cosmetic surgery center in Manhattan is designed with one single-minded focus: to help each and every patient feel comfortable in their own skin. Dr. Sobel has a masterful touch and is able to use the perfect combination of techniques from both dermatology and cosmetic surgery to create visible, lasting results.

Can you share with us the story about how you first got involved in fitness and wellness?

As a born and bred New Yorker, I've been surrounded by fitness and wellness for much of my life. Sobel Skin was part of the early stages of the medspa/medi-spa evolution in the US, and I pioneered my first professional grade, over-the-counter skincare line, DDF, in 1991. This endeavor made me increasingly aware of the need — and patient desire — to improve overall well-being and health with quality, results-driven products. The marriage of concentration and combination plus technological innovation coupled with clinical studies are key to real results. Staying on the cutting edge of advancements in skincare has become a mainstay of how I practice and inspired the creation of my new product range of skincare, Sobel Skin Rx.

Can you share the most interesting story that happened to you since you started your career?

The most interesting development of my career is quite probably a more recent one—the creation of Sobel Skin Rx, an eight-product range of authentic, high-performance skincare. Helping marry people's emotional well-being with a positive self-image has always given me great satisfaction. I've now developed the next level of anti-aging products to transform and rejuvenate skin without a prescription. Our skin is generally the first part of us seen and evaluated by others prior to any communication. As such, high quality skincare is a priority for one's overall physical and emotional wellness, and I'm so pleased to be able to make Sobel Skin Rx available in-office and online at [Sephora.com](https://www.Sephora.com) and [DrSobelSkinRx.com](https://www.DrSobelSkinRx.com).

Can you share a story with us about the most humorous mistake you made when you were first starting? What lesson or take-away did you learn from that?

I try not to make mistakes — humorous or otherwise! But I have always been a firm believer in treating each patient on an individual level. One of the biggest lessons I've carried with me during my career is to really listen to my clientele, make note of any underlying conditions, and adjust treatment, products, or approach accordingly with the individual.

Can you share with our readers a bit about why you are an authority in the fitness and wellness field? In your opinion, what is your unique contribution to the world of wellness?

Sobel Skin was part of the early stages of the medspa/medi-spa evolution in the US. Our unique practice provides the latest advances in dermatology, dermatologic cosmetic surgery, and progressive face and body treatments in our luxe Park Avenue facility. In 1991, I pioneered my first active-ingredient, over-the-counter skincare line, DDF. Most recently, as I continue the quest for innovative new approaches to benefit overall well-being, I created Sobel Skin Rx, a range of skincare products which I am particularly proud to offer both patients and clients (readily available on Sephora.com). The guiding principle of Sobel Skin is that everyone is a person-first, patient-second, and number-never. My highly individualized approach to patient care extends well beyond booking an appointment. While staying on the cutting edge of scientific data and technological innovation, I also have 30+ years of expertise to address a host of wellness and fitness issues with patients. Moreover, both physical exercise and emotional well-being (stress levels, for example) can inform our skin's overall condition.

If I could leave people with one thought, it would be that inner well-being, combined with a positive self-image, is the key to beauty. The message behind Sobel Skin Rx really is one of self-confidence.

None of us are able to achieve success without some help along the way. Is there a particular person who you are grateful towards who helped get you to where you are? Can you share a story about that?

I really have to thank my whole family for where I am today. We all just want to be “us” at our best. I try to make that happen for people on an individual basis, but the underlying lesson to be our best selves — inside and out — is inspired by my loved ones.

In your opinion, what are the 3 main blockages that prevent us from taking the information that we all know, and integrating it into our lives?

In my experience, the information we all know and need in order to achieve a healthier lifestyle is often not implemented for a few reasons. Without a doubt, time (or lack thereof) is the primary blockage. Other main factors include home or work stress, as well as the fallacy that wellness and fitness can't be achieved on a budget.

Can you please share your “5 Non-Intuitive Lifestyle Tweaks That Will Dramatically Improve One’s Wellbeing”? (Please share a story or an example for each, and feel free to share ideas for mental, emotional and physical health.)

Be grateful each and every day for the blessings you have. A positive outlook or perspective can mean a world of difference when it comes to managing our mental and emotional health. Taking a moment to acknowledge our blessings, whether it be writing them down or just taking a mental note, can help us lead more positive lives.

1. Call a loved one and let him/her know how much he/she means to you. Life is often so hectic, and filled with reasons to procrastinate. Make the time... you won't regret it.
2. Do some quick strengthening/toning exercises "on the go" — enroute to the mailbox or car, in the elevator, etc. — or better yet, take the stairs! Even small bursts of physical activity can make you feel stronger.
3. Put your phone away or on mute for 1 hour a day. Read the book you've been meaning to get to or spend some quality time with friends and family. It's a great way to manage stress without feeling overwhelmed.
4. Do something kind for someone, especially if you're having a bad day. Guaranteed it makes them — and you — feel better!

As an expert, this might be obvious to you, but I think it would be instructive to articulate this for the public. Aside from weight loss, what are 3 benefits of daily exercise? Can you explain?

There are many benefits to daily exercise beyond weight loss. Keeping muscles and bones toned and strong isn't just a matter of aesthetics. I absolutely believe in the idea of "strong body, strong mind." We feel more centered and energized with regular exercise. Additionally, daily exercise improves relaxation and sleep quality. Finally, exercise can actually affect your skin health. As heart rate goes up, you have what's called "vasodilation" — vessels widen, and more blood, oxygen and nutrients go to the skin. This creates that "glow" we all love to the complexion.

For someone who is looking to add exercise to their daily routine, which 3 exercises would you recommend that are absolutely critical?

There are some really great exercises out there, but I'd have to recommend the following:

1. Standing abdominals are a great way to achieve strong, toned abs without having to do tons of crunches. They can also be incorporated into many different forms of exercise.
2. Squats, squats, squats! A great way to get toned glutes and legs.
3. Aerobic exercises like running is a terrific way to open pores and widen vessels, giving skin a "glow."

In my experience, many people begin an exercise regimen but stop because they get too sore afterwards. What ideas would you recommend to someone who plays sports or does heavy exercise to shorten the recovery time, and to prevent short term or long term injury?

Stretching before any exercise workout or regimen — followed by icing muscles afterwards — are both great ways to ease muscle soreness, prevent injury, and shorten recovery time.

There are so many different diets today. Can you share what kind of diet you follow? Which diet do you recommend to most of your clients?

While I try not to deny myself anything, I'm also a big believer in moderation. Simply, without naming a specific type of diet, a “clean” diet makes us feel and look better. Think of yourself feeling stronger, more focused, or clear-headed. I try to follow a protein- and vegetable-rich diet, with small servings of carbohydrates. I suggest the same to most clients (depending on their specific underlying conditions). Our approach to services and products is a holistic one, which includes diet recommendations.

Is there a particular book that made a significant impact on you? Can you share a story?

Steve Jobs by Walter Isaacson is the first one that comes to mind. Jobs was such a brilliant entrepreneur, inventor and businessman, but sadly, all of his money and relationships could not buy him health. While it was fascinating to read about his life and his experience with Apple and building his empire, it ultimately taught me to appreciate each day that I have here doing the things that I love. Even if we have all of the wealth in the world, we have to take care of ourselves and our loved ones each and every day.

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 if we tag them :-)

It would definitely be Magic Johnson! As once a small basketball star on my high school basketball team on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, he is a role model and icon for all lovers of the sport. Not only is he a National Hall of Fame Champion, he used his platform to speak out on ventures he was passionate about. Along with being a basketball star, he became an advocate for HIV prevention, an entrepreneur, philanthropist, broadcaster and motivational speaker. He overcame being diagnosed with HIV, returning to the sport even after getting diagnosed and winning the All-Star MVP Award. He has become a fabulously wealthy businessman, even after the setbacks. He is a true inspiration.

What is the best way our readers can follow you on social media?

You can easily follow me on Instagram: [@DrHowardSobel](#) and [@SobelSkinRx!](#)

You are a person of enormous influence. If you could start a movement that would bring the most amount of good to the most amount of people, what would that be? You never know what your idea can trigger. :-)

Thank you for the compliment. In many ways, I think I've been part of the "wellness" movement for some time. If I were to start a movement to bring the most amount of good to the maximum number of people, it would probably be an integrated self-image, self-actualization program. Building on this idea, the goal would be to put as much emphasis on wellness as physical appearance. So much of what we put in our bodies informs our outward appearance and physical health. Inner well-being reduces stress and can have a positive impact on health and skin. Alternatively, the products we put on our skin can have irritants or reactants that not only affect our skin hygiene, but can wreak havoc on our self-confidence.

Can you please give us your favorite "Life Lesson Quote"? Do you have a story about how that was relevant in your life?

"The world is what YOU think of it, so think of it DIFFERENTLY and your life will change."

— Paul Arden, Whatever You Think, Think the Opposite

Personal outlook can be so integral to how we enjoy life and learn from the experiences and adventures within. Live life to its fullest, examine your personal and professional goals from multiple perspectives, and you'll never have regrets.