

Dr. Bill Dorfman: He Who Does the Giving, Receives the Greatest Gift

Posted: 04/15/2013 11:03 am

By: Getrude Matshe

"He who does the giving, receives the greatest gift." This is the philosophy by which **Dr. Bill Dorfman** lives and operates. Popularly known for his part in the ABC show *Extreme Makeover*, Dr. Bill Dorfman, a cosmetic dentist based in Los Angeles, does a lot to give people back their smiles.



In a recent interview with Dr. Dorfman I asked him, "What is it about the ability to smile that changes people's lives?"

He simply answered, "Well, think about it, when you walk up to somebody and they look at you with a cold hard look, how do you feel? As opposed to walking up to somebody with glowing beaming eyes and a big bright smile? It's a sign of friendship, a sign of happiness, a sign of warmth, a sign of acceptance and a sign of all positive things. A smile is the first thing that people notice about you and the last thing they remember."

Not only does Dr. Dorfman bring smiles to his Hollywood clientele, he also helps women in the community who are victims of domestic violence. Restoring their smiles gives them confidence to go back to work. More importantly, it helps them to get back into society.

Dr. Bill Dorfman is also the co-founder of the LEAP Foundation, a non-profit organization formed five years ago to provide a motivational and leadership program geared towards teaching life skills to youth. LEAP is an acronym for Leadership, Excellence, Accelerating Potential. It is a one week summer program held on the beautiful campus of UCLA in Los Angeles, with students from all over the world.



The program aims for both male and female students aged 15 to 24. LEAP runs two programs concurrently -- a high school program and college program and scholarships are awarded to children who cannot afford. Each program culminates on Friday, in what is called a "Mentor Workshop." This workshop hosts 100 professionals from a wide variety of fields. There are doctors, lawyers, architects, business people, journalists, hair stylists, fashion experts, actors and more. The students have an opportunity to sit at a table for 30 minutes and just fire away questions at these people, rotating every 30 minutes. They do six cycles of this, during which they are exposed to a plethora of different successful professionals. They have the opportunity to find mentors and ask any professional questions they would like.

Students are taught money management, time management, study skills, public speaking and resume writing. They also learn how to apply for college and how to apply for jobs. There is even a special program called "How to be a Gentleman," because a lot of the kids who attend don't have a father figure at home. They are taught eating etiquette, dating etiquette and other life etiquette skills. The kids love the program, and they form friendships that last a lifetime. It is an amazingly positive experience.



One of the advantages Dr. Dorfman has is that he is a native of Los Angeles. He knows a lot of great people that he brings to the program. Being a native and practising dentist in this area, in a very high profile practice, has enabled him to bring in some super stars. For example, they have support from Anthony Hopkins, Jason Alexander, Paula Abdul, Usher, Seth Green, and many other high profile actors and actresses who participate as speakers.

Dr. Bill Dorfman grew up in a very modest family with four siblings. His parents didn't really have the means to pay for a formal education for their children, so they attended public schools all their lives. When he applied to the University of California at Los Angeles, he was very fortunate to be the recipient of an Alumni Scholarship. That extra help enabled him to attend one the greatest universities in the world.

In 2009, life went full circle when UCLA bestowed upon him a life time achievement for Outstanding Community Service. Bill said that as he stood there receiving the award, he realized that if it had not been for the generosity of the UCLA Alumni Association, he would have never have gotten the incredible education that enabled him to become a dentist and to build so many of his dreams. As a result, he not only has been a very generous donor for UCLA scholarship recipients, he showed similar gratitude to his dental school, to which he donated money to build an auditorium.



Dr. Dorfman said, "You know there's a saying that says 'He who does the giving, receives the greatest gift,' and I really feel that. I really feel that if we don't leave this world having made it a better place for having been here, we have wasted such an opportunity that has been given to us. I work with the kids in my LEAP foundation, and I see these kids years later having become lawyers, doctors and everything else and they thank me for the foundation and scholarships."

Even when I was doing the ABC show *Extreme Make Over*, when we brought in people who had these horrific dental situations, we changed their lives and gave them an opportunity to live a normal, healthy life and look and feel better about themselves. Those things were invaluable and there's no amount of money that they can give you that replaces or measures up to the feeling you have inside that you changed other people's lives. As a dentist, every day that I go to work, I make people healthier and happier and improve the quality of their lives. There are still very few jobs in this world like that, so I enjoy that, I thrive on that. That makes me happy, there's nothing that makes me happier than helping somebody and making their lives better. Maybe I am selfish because I get so much out of this, that's what drives me.



For more information about Dr. Bill Dorfman, [click here](#).

For more information about the LEAP FOUNDATION, [click here](#).

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/getrude-matshe/he-who-does-the-giving-re_b_3050929.html