

Dr. Deepak Dugar uncovers the truth that your beauty perceptions are shaped by advertising, social media, and the perceptions of people around us, and empowers you to filter those toxic inputs with a grateful mindset so you can accept and love yourself as you truly are: a beautiful human.

—Tony Robbins,

New York Times #1 Bestselling author of Unshakeable

Dr. Dugar is the rare human being (let alone plastic surgeon) who makes everyone around him feel beautiful with his kindness, empathy, and wisdom. Known for his immense skill in rhinoplasty, Dr. Dugar is actually a humanist who understands that the physical body is only one part of you, and he finds real meaning in making people feel good about their whole self. In his thought-provoking book, Dr. Dugar explores how culture, social media, and celebrities distort our self-images, and how confidence, humor, and perspective can give people their positive self-image back, often without surgery.

—Jeff Toll MD,

Celebrity Primary Care and Concierge Medicine Physician

I've always admired Dr. Deepak Dugar for his integrity and honesty, and those attributes shine brightly throughout his book, Be-YOU-tiful. I found it fascinating that Dr. Dugar turns more people away from surgery than those he actually operates on! What a fresh perspective from a celebrity Beverly Hills plastic surgeon! This book leaves a lasting impression, one that empowers readers to appreciate their beautiful uniqueness, not society's warped view of how they are supposed to look.

—*Leslie Marcus,*

Supervising Investigative Producer, The Doctors TV Show

It takes courage for a celebrity plastic surgeon from Beverly Hills to say, "You don't need surgery." But that's what Dr. Deepak Dugar does in Be-YOU-tiful: Flip the Script and Celebrate Your True Beauty. We've all carried the false narrative in our minds about the definition of true beauty and how we don't measure up. Dr. Dugar has written an empowering message to free us from those outside voices and to quiet those inner voices. He helps us to flip the script and begin to appreciate our own real beauty. He assures us that even on our worst days, we indeed are Be-YOU-tiful!

—*Stephanie Mahin, Ph.D.,*

Public Relations Specialist

The tricky thing about beauty is that it should be our right to choose how and what we do to our bodies. But, the scary thing is, we often don't know how influenced our beauty choices really are. We're living in a world of beauty peer pressure and pretending it's our idea that we need a surgery, an injection or something to make ourselves more beautiful...and I include myself in that category.

—Mia Khalifa,

Model, Actress, Sports Commentator, Social Media Influencer

Dr. Dugar always reminds me how beautiful I am, advocating to NOT get surgery—not a typical plastic surgeon. I'm so glad this book gets to show the world his love for his patients and the importance of self-love. He is always helping bring out the best you while reinforcing your confidence!

—LouLou Gonzalez,

Comedian, Actress, Writer

Be-YOU-tiful is an engaging and data-driven book packed with enlightening insights! It will challenge your perceptions of beauty by highlighting the ugly truth about the cosmetics, fashion, and diet industries and their harmful marketing practices. It will inspire you to love yourself and appreciate a natural approach to holistic beauty. As a professional in aesthetics, I respect and admire that Dr. Deepak Dugar can put his clients and their best interests ahead of his own. It's a wonderful read, and I highly recommend it!

-Tulsi Shah Bhargava MSN, RN, AGNP

When a highly sought-after Beverly Hills plastic surgeon uses frank and honest conversation more than he uses his scalpel to help patients see their true beauty, it's worth taking notice! With compelling data and colorful stories, Dr. Dugar takes us behind the curtain to expose how culture, advertising, media, and even the people we choose to spend our time with influence us about what is beautiful.

-Shelby Howard, BSN,

Registered Aesthetic Nurse Injector

It is strange how being Dr. Dugar's patient, I feel the prettiest with my surgical nose and also the prettiest looking back at the photos before my surgery. He is not just a doctor to me, but a therapist in ways that are unimaginable. Is there really a difference between someone telling you "you don't look pretty" and going to a plastic surgeon and hearing all the things that they can do to improve your attractiveness? Imagine going to a celebrity plastic surgeon who has an encyclopedia of experiences, hearing him say every little thing that makes you beautiful and rejecting you for surgery because the expert himself believes in your beauty. Be-YOU-tiful feels like I am in a deep conversation with Dr. Dugar himself, unlocking every reason why I am so compelled to follow beauty standards to be considered "beautiful.

-Ishika Jain,

Former Patient, Mumbai, India

BEYOUTIFUL

**FLIP THE SCRIPT AND
CELEBRATE YOUR TRUE BEAUTY**

DEEPAK DUGAR, MD

BEVERLY HILLS CELEBRITY PLASTIC SURGEON



Be-YOU-tiful:

Flip the Script and Celebrate Your True Beauty

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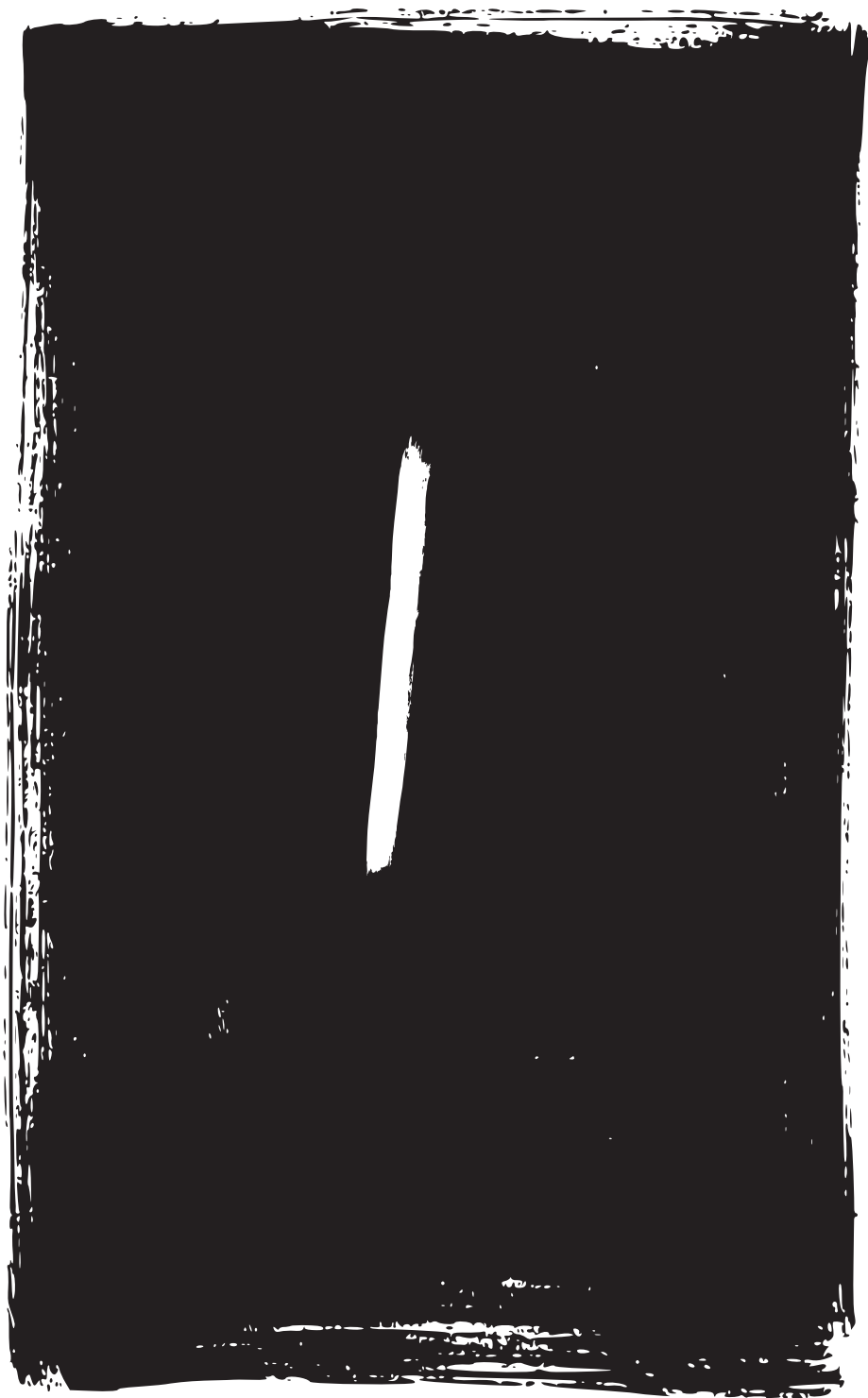
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In dedication to my amazing
patients and their vulnerability
which has taught me the truth
that feeling beautiful is far
greater than looking beautiful.



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How Ugly Are You?



She was born with a mole above the corner of her left lip. From the time she became self-aware at all, it bothered her. Her sisters told her that it was an “ugly mark” because beauty marks can only be on the right side of the face.

On her first day of high school, a group of senior football players made fun of her, laughing that she had chocolate on her face. Many times during her childhood she asked her mom if she could have it removed, but always got the same reply: *You know what your mole looks like. You don't know what a scar will look like.*¹

When she was a junior in high school, she got a job working at a local clothing store as a brand

ambassador, a role that required a fashion show and photo shoot for the local newspaper. As a result of the exposure, another local photographer asked to take her photo for a university newspaper. He introduced her to a stylist to do her hair and makeup for the shoot. That stylist encouraged her to attend a beauty show where hairdressers cut and styled models' hair on stage. She signed up, thinking it would be fun.

The hairdresser that day ended up being a successful New York hairdresser. After giving her some pretty waves and good advice, he gave her her two agent names to contact. The first modeling agent had nice things to say and booked her for a test shoot; however, she suggested she have the mole removed. That only amplified her insecurity about it. She went ahead with the test shoot with the mole intact.

The hairdresser from that shoot showed some of her Polaroids to Marie Anderson, an agent at what eventually became Elite Model Management in Chicago. Marie saw potential and requested a meeting. When they met, Marie never said a word about the mole. The meeting resulted in one professional photo

shoot, then another, and another—the jobs kept coming. A few times the mole was airbrushed out of printed photos. One time a makeup artist tried to cover it—only to have it look like a giant pimple. But as the modeling jobs increased, the mole simply stopped being mentioned at all.

Eventually, she appeared on the cover of the American *Vogue* magazine. At that point, she decided that if she looked good enough, mole and all, for the cover of arguably the most relevant fashion magazine, then she was good enough for everyone else. Some years later, as she reflected on her struggle with feeling insecure about her appearance, supermodel Cindy Crawford said, **“Isn’t it ironic that the very thing that made me most insecure turned out to be my trademark?”**²

Cindy went on to be featured on a record-setting eighteen *Vogue* covers and countless others. This girl who grew up insecure about her looks nearly let the perspectives of other people define whether or not she was beautiful.

United by Ugly

It's hard to believe that at one point in her life, Cindy Crawford, a supermodel who was the face of "beautiful" for decades up to and into the new century, thought she was ugly. **But the ugly truth is this: every single person on this planet—supermodels included!—has at one time or another felt ugly.** I get it, *ugly* feels like a strong word, but it's the harsh word we often use when talking about ourselves to ourselves. Even if we don't say it out loud, deep down we may think it.

Have you ever looked in the mirror and seen something you didn't like? It's okay to admit it. You're not alone. Crow's feet. Nose bump. Freckles. Rosacea. Pimples. Grey hair. Thinning hair. Turkey neck. Droopy eyelids. Forehead lines. Thin lips. Big ears. High forehead. And that's just looking at the face!

Age spots. Breasts too big (or too small). Belly pooch. Fat rolls. Moles. Cellulite. Knock knees. Weird toes. Cankles. If I haven't already mentioned something you've criticized about yourself, I'd be surprised—and there are probably a few other things I didn't mention that also bug you about how you look.

Across the world, regardless of culture, age, race, gender, or any other category we use to divide ourselves, human beings are uniquely united in this one way: we have all felt less than beautiful at one time or another. The question is, *Why?*

As a plastic surgeon specializing in scarless rhinoplasty in Beverly Hills, California, I've had the privilege and opportunity to help a lot of people change their lives through surgery. But don't worry, this book is not about the merits of plastic surgery. We live in a culture where plastic surgery has become common because so many people are doing it. However, some of the most rewarding work I do is having frank conversations with people about just how beautiful they already are and explaining why they do not need surgery to make them beautiful. I know talking people out of surgery is, unfortunately, not a common practice for a plastic surgeon, but it is often the right thing to do.

Throughout my many years of practice, **I've interviewed over ten thousand people from all over the world and all different walks of life.** They meet with me because they think they want to surgically alter something about their appearances

and are willing to accept the risks inherent in doing so. As people share their greatest insecurities with me about their physical appearances, our conversations often get deeply personal and usually reveal a deeper story.

One woman hates her nose because it looks just like the nose of her father who abused her when she was young. Another was bullied at school every day because of the bump on her nose and thinks if she can make the bump go away, all the hurtful memories will go with it. For some people, it's just a matter of wanting to look like someone they admire. Every situation is unique. **Sometimes I can change their lives with my scalpel; but often I can change their lives with a conversation about beauty and confidence.**

The truth is there are a lot of ideas out there about what beauty is and what it is not, who is beautiful and who is not. Unfortunately, too many people, perhaps even you, have fallen into the trap of thinking the question is not, *How beautiful am I?* but *Am I beautiful?* Ironically, feeling less than beautiful tends to leave us feeling isolated and alone when, in fact, we're all united in wrestling with the



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feeling that we may not be as beautiful as we wish at times. All of us, even supermodels, feel ugly at some point in our lives. In the pages to come, I'll share more stories from other celebrities, influencers, and people just like you and me who've all struggled with feeling beautiful in some way, because I want you to know you are not alone. **Fighting that feeling of ugly is a universal human challenge.**

Taught to Be Beautiful

Our concepts of *ugly* have been programmed into us by our cultures. Our perceptions of *beauty* have been unconsciously shaped by voices around us. We've all been trained to think we have to look a certain way to be considered beautiful or good-looking. This is all taught to us, often at a young age.

Depending on where we live, we're taught different things. When we compare Asian cultures to Middle Eastern cultures to South American cultures, we see their concepts of beauty are dramatically different, not because of natural programming, but because of the way they were *taught* about beauty. Likewise, if we go to an African jungle culture where tribal

leaders expect the females to elongate their necks using stacked rings, they're not doing that for fun. They're doing that because they have been taught that is how to become the most beautiful woman in the tribe.

These varied concepts of beauty exist for a wide variety of reasons, but the bottom line is that they are simply made-up, completely fabricated by social constructs. When we understand that those constructs exist and see them with a heightened self-awareness, we become empowered when it comes to how we think about our own appearance. For example, as you read these words, why are you wearing the clothing you have on right now? Why have you styled your hair the way you did today? Are you wearing make-up, or did you engage in some sort of personal grooming? Why? I suggest that those choices you made today about your appearance have been shaped by the social constructs that taught you to look a certain way.

Each of us has been shaped by these constructs. **It is this struggle to look and feel beautiful that unites us, but we must see the voices that shape us for what they are so we can**

free ourselves to be beautiful just as we are.

Unfortunately, when it comes to assessing our own beauty, we tend to blindly follow the perceptions of others. For example, a young, twenty-something female once came to me for a consultation. She showed me pictures of people she follows on Instagram. She was obsessed with the shapes of their noses and wanted hers to look like theirs. But all the pictures she showed me were of girls who were pretty but had no relevance to the way this patient looks or should look.

Her example spotlights a problem we'll revisit later. Social media can be a dangerous place for beauty perception if you overexpose yourself to concepts of beauty that are probably filtered and not necessarily a natural fit for your personal genetic makeup. Depending on who you follow, you can create a social media landscape that is more inclusive to yourself, or you can make yourself feel more isolated and alienated.

Your closest real-life friends probably have similar interests and look a lot like you. You enjoy hanging out with them and feel like you "belong" when you

are with them. You feel comfortable with them and experience positive energy from your encounters.

Contrast that with how you feel if you follow only the “beautiful” celebrities on social media with whom you have virtually nothing in common. You see them only after they’ve been worked over by their glam squad, perfectly positioned on their yacht, or flying around in a private jet—so you’re not going to feel like you measure up. It can easily leave you feeling a little inferior, even ugly, when you compare yourself to someone else’s perception of what it means to be beautiful.

But the reality is this: **Ugly is only a perception.** You are not ugly unless you think so. So, how ugly are you? That is entirely up to you.

Perhaps a better question is this: How beautiful do you want to be? Because the truth is, you already are.



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“What Bothers You?”

I realize it may seem odd to hear a plastic surgeon from Beverly Hills telling people they don't need surgery to be beautiful. But a lot of what I believe about telling the truth about beauty was shaped by my own story.

My dad grew up in a village in Rajasthan, India that had no electricity. One of eleven siblings, getting an education and a good job was the only way to escape poverty. He studied hard and became a “gold medalist”, the equivalent to being a class valedictorian in America, but even more difficult to achieve. After he came to America and earned his engineering graduate degree, he returned to India to marry the woman who would become my mom. They returned to America and started a new life together.

I was the youngest of three kids. On the day I was born, my dad held me in his hands and said, “My third doctor!” (He was right. All three of us are doctors today.) I grew up in a small town called Beaumont in southeast Texas with a pretty “normal” upbringing. As an Eagle Scout, I loved spending a lot of time outdoors. I loved doing things with my hands and helping people.

My parents shaped who I became, each in their own unique way. From my dad, I learned the critical role of discipline and duty to success. My mom taught me to dream, think big, and change the world. She never cared about how much money we kids would make, what kind of car we'd drive, or what kind of house we'd live in. She only cared about each of her kids *being a good person*. I cannot tell you how many times I've heard those four words: ***Be a good person. It seems so simple and such obvious advice, but it's another thing to live it, breathe it, talk it, and walk it.*** Together they instilled a deep, deep sense of ethics into me that drives why I do or don't do certain things—including choosing not to operate on many patients.

As a teenager, I did have a defining experience that profoundly shaped how I saw the world around me. While our friends were vacationing in Europe or away at summer camp, my sister and I spent two consecutive summers at Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity orphanage in Calcutta, India. Every single day, we would sit with, take care of, and talk to kids living in poverty. Their parents or guardians had abandoned them at some point because they didn't have the ability, financially and or mentally, to care for them.

Working at Mother Teresa's orphanage was a transformational experience in that it made me realize both how fortunate I was and how much potential I had to help people simply by talking with them. My time there put things into perspective—suddenly not getting invited to a classmate's birthday party wasn't such a big deal when I saw children abandoned and left in an orphanage.

From an early age, I sensed a desire to help people by doing something meaningful with my hands that would affect someone's life in a positive way. That's why I made the choice after high school to pursue plastic surgery. I went to a seven-year combined medical program at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. I did my surgical residency training at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, a top-ten program in the country.

Then I did my fellowship for closed rhinoplasty under Dr. Raj Kanodia, known as the celebrity guru of rhinoplasty in Beverly Hills for the past forty years. After I did my training under him, I started my own practice in Beverly Hills. More than twelve years of surgery and ten thousand patient interviews later, I have done thousands of surgeries—not only in my

specialty of rhinoplasty, but also in other plastic surgeries. My practice has led me to work closely and confidentially with many celebrity names you would recognize, to be consulted as an expert by *E! News* and *The Doctors*, a syndicated television show, and to be featured in *Allure*, *The Huffington Post*, and more than forty-five other publications.

I say all that not to brag or impress, but simply to share that **beauty is my life's focus**. I'm not just a guy with an opinion about how people, women and men alike, should think about beauty. It's what I do all day, every day. As you'll see in the pages to come, I've engaged with thousands of people on this topic since my fellowship with my mentor, Dr. Raj Kanodia. Not only did he teach me everything I know about plastic surgery, but he also helped me understand the concept of beauty in terms of ethics and honesty because of how he practices. The first thing he helped me see was that as a plastic surgeon, it doesn't have to be only about surgery. It can really be about the conversation.

He would regularly say *no* to operating, telling people with such confidence how beautiful they are and that they didn't need surgery. When patients

walked into the room, no matter what they looked like, he focused on their beautiful features. His approach contrasted with that of many plastic surgeons, who start a consultation by picking apart the patient to create the felt need for more surgery. What Dr. Kanodia would do—and what he taught me to do—was to immediately pick out all of someone’s best features and share that with them. *I love your eyes. I love the way your lips look. I love your beautiful smile. Now, tell me what bothers you.*

And that’s the second critical thing he taught me: never ever impregnate your perceptions of beauty into someone else’s mind. Let them come to you with their perceptions. Let them bring it up. Many times people will come to see me and ask, *Just tell me, what do you think I should do?* I believe I have an ethical responsibility not to abuse my position and to evaluate who the person is and why they have come to me. If I sense someone is insecure and asking, *What would you do to me?*, my answer is always the same: *I wouldn’t do anything. What bothers you?* That is the real question.



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As a plastic surgeon, people come to me at their most vulnerable. I can use that position for the good of the patient or for my own personal gain.

With my mom's voice in my head, and supported by Dr. Kanodia's example, I have always tried to wield my scalpel very carefully. I don't just pull it out because someone comes to me with insecurities they want fixed. A scalpel won't do that. I don't look at the money I could make, but at the *impact* I can make. If I can impact someone more by talking to them for an hour than by wielding my scalpel, then that's what I'll do.

It's not uncommon for people to fly from all over the world to see me. This past week alone I had three patients from London, one from Lima, Peru, and two from Dubai. They literally flew across the world to meet with me for surgery. When they arrived, I spoke bluntly and authentically with each of them as I always do. Regardless of the distance traveled, the consultation could result in my helping them realize they don't need the work done after all—and that revelation alone can be life-changing.

Beautiful Is Up to You

If there is one thing I have learned from studying beauty and people it is this: sometimes you need

permission simply to be you. Instead of focusing on what you look like, how people perceive you, or how beautiful they think you are, you can actually become more aware of those voices that shape your perceptions of your beauty. Once you become aware of them, you can filter them and finally begin to relax instead of feeling like you have to conform to the expectations of others to be beautiful.

When you realize that we all struggle with some sort of insecurity about our physical appearance, from supermodels to teenagers to moms, dads, and grandparents, and that most of that insecurity comes from artificial expectations, you'll be equipped to finally break that frustrating cycle of trying to meet those shifting expectations.

No doubt you've heard it said, "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder." But what if beauty is actually in our own mind's eye? What if the only "beholder" that matters is you? Earlier I wrote that ugly is only a perception. Conversely, we could also say, beauty is only a perception. Everyone is beautiful who thinks they are. Just like it's up to you if you're ugly, it's up to you if you're beautiful.

In the pages to come, we'll explore what it means to be beautiful, both in Western culture and in cultures all around the world. We'll explore the voices that influence our perceptions of ugliness and beauty, both internal and external. I'll share with you the insights I share with patients who come from all over the world to consult with me. **Most importantly, I'll help you discover the truth that you are already beautiful and empower you to own it.** I want you to look in the mirror and acknowledge what is beautiful about the person looking back at you.

That doesn't mean it will be easy to break free from the prison of perceptions. But first, we need to see the ugly truth about beauty.

Beauty Notes

- * Feeling less than beautiful tends to leave us feeling isolated and alone when, in fact, we're all united in wrestling with the feeling that we may not be as beautiful as we wish at times. All of us, even supermodels, feel ugly at some point in our lives.
- * Our concepts of ugly have been programmed into us by our cultures. Our perceptions of beauty have been unconsciously shaped by voices around us. We've all been trained to think we have to look a certain way to be considered beautiful or good-looking.

* Sometimes you need permission simply to be you. Instead of focusing on what you look like, how people perceive you, or how beautiful they think you are, you can actually become more aware of those voices that shape your perceptions of your beauty. Once you become aware of them, you can filter them and finally begin to relax instead of feeling like you have to conform to the expectations of others to be beautiful.