

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Dr Yannis Alexandrides

We were delighted to chat to **Dr Yannis Alexandrides**, the American and British board certified Plastic Surgeon, specialising in facial reconstructive surgery.

You are internationally renowned in the field of plastic surgery – what made you choose this as a career?

I come from a family of doctors; my father is a cardiologist, my mother a microbiologist, my sister and her husband are both ophthalmologists and finally, my uncle is a surgeon as well. So, I grew up around science and medicine. I decided to specialise in reconstructive surgery and conducted part of my training at a trauma centre in the US, working on burns patients all the way through to those with facial gunshot wounds. It taught me a lot and I became very interested in the effect that cosmetic and plastic surgery can have on a patient.

What led to you leaving the United States and setting up in Harley Street, London back in 2001?

I very much enjoyed my training in the US, however my family are predominantly based in Greece and my wife's family are in Bulgaria so it made more sense for us to move back to Europe and establish roots here. It's a decision that I am very happy I made as London is one of the most unique cities in the world, a melting pot of so many different cultures and it's great that my sons are able to experience all of this growing up here.

Do you see significant differences between practising plastic surgery in the UK and the US?

I think one of the key differences is in the varying attitudes to plastic surgery in the UK and US. In my opinion, plastic surgery is about improving someone's quality of life. It is not just about a perceived notion of beautiful, but also about improving the wellness of one's mind which in turn means their



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health too. In the US, this seems a more widespread way of thought and it is becoming increasingly common here too. However, there is still a certain stigma associated with plastic surgery in the UK. Whilst, of course, the patient's welfare and safety is of the utmost importance, I feel it's equally important to be able to have open discussions about surgery so potential patients are better educated and can therefore hopefully make more informed decisions.

What has been the best piece of advice that you have received in your career and

what advice would you offer to those following in your footsteps?

The best advice I can give is the advice that I was given myself, which was to follow your dreams, and don't allow the difficulties encountered deter you from staying on course. It's a long process which can take anything from 8-14 years after medical school, and even after that, starting as a junior consultant has its own challenges in an environment that is constantly changing for doctors. However, the reward is really worth it, and I would advise those who want to follow that career path never to give up.

Plastic surgery is evolving all the time; what do you think have been the most exciting developments in recent years?

One of the most important developments is the understanding of the aesthetics of the human body, especially when this is in regards to body contouring and body reshaping and being able to achieve good results in liposuction and the Brazilian butt lift. The techniques are constantly evolving and there is a huge interaction from doctors all over the world – results are getting better and better.

If you could recommend that plastic surgeons read one textbook or journal paper what would it be?

If I had to make one recommendation, then it would be the journal *Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery*, which is published by the American Society of Plastic Surgeons. It is a highly-scientific all-encompassing journal.

Where do you hope your career will take you in the next 10 years?

In the next 10 years I hope to continue improving my surgical results and

the satisfaction of my patients in the surgeries that I perform. I'd like to continue to grow the recognition of my other businesses which include 111SKIN. I believe that this is a very important dimension of my career as it allows me to reach out to a lot more people than my plastic surgery office can. It focuses on prevention and maintaining healthy skin which is the most basic requirement for good results in plastic surgery as well.

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