



DR. VIVIAN DILLER, PH.D.

DrVivianDiller@gmail.com

212.535.5065

www.viviandiller.com

AGENT: Jim Levine

jlevine@lgrliterary.com

BIO

Vivian Diller, Ph.D. is a psychologist, consultant and media expert. For over thirty years, she has been researching, writing and speaking about psychological issues in contemporary culture. Prior to getting her doctorate, Dr. Diller was a professional dancer with the Cincinnati Ballet Company and a Wilhelmina model. She left the stage and fashion world to get her Ph.D. from Albert Einstein College of Medicine. She interned at St. Lukes-Roosevelt Hospital, completed post-doctoral training at NYU and now has an active practice in N.Y.C. working with individuals, couples and families. Her book, “**Face It: What Women Really Feel As Their Looks Change**,” in paperback and translated in 7 languages, has been described on the Today Show as “a smart book for smart women.” She has become a recognizable media presence through her columns on the *Huffington Post* and *Psychology Today*, regularly appearing on television (NBC, ABC, CBS, PBS, CNN/Sun News), in magazines (*Vogue*, *Allure*, *Elle*, *Cosmo*, *Health*, *Prevention*) on the radio and online (Forbes.com, Oprah.com and Self.com). She consults for marketing researchers, advertising agencies, cosmetic, fashion and healthcare industries. Her reputation for providing valuable insights into the psychology behind consumer needs has reached companies all around the world. She is married to Dr. John Jacobs, a psychiatrist, with whom she shares four children.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Dr. Diller's research and experience offers an in-depth understanding of the psychology behind the following areas:

- fashion, hair, skin and beauty products
- grooming practices and services
- cosmetic procedures and plastic surgery
- body-image, self-esteem and eating disorders
- adolescence, midlife and menopause
- healthy aging and health services
- relationships, divorce and online dating
- parenting, family and lifestyle issues

She shares insights about what people *really* want when it comes to looking and feeling good at any age, using psychological, sociological and anthropological perspectives to shape her answers. Having first hand experience in front of audiences as a dancer and model in combination with her years of academic research makes Dr.Diller uniquely suited as a media expert and consultant.

▶ Also see: www.faceitthebook.com/expertise.shtml

CLIENTS

Dr. Vivian Diller has provided consulting services for:

Cosmetic and Personal Care Companies:

Estee Lauder
Procter and Gamble
Unilever
Johnson and Johnson
Kimberly Clark

Skin, Hair Care, Feminine Wellness:

Clairol
Olay
RoC Skin Care
Tresemme
Dove
Head and Shoulders
Poise
Impressa
Allergan Pharmaceuticals
CVS

P.R. Firms:

Edelman
Ketchum
Kaplow
Marina Maher Communications
Behrman PR
Lippe Taylor Marketing

Research and Marketing:

Consumer Dynamics
Flamingo Marketing Consultants
Hal Phillips: Brand Strategy
Revolution Marketing
Fletcher Knight Consultants

VIDEO



Vivian Diller, Ph.D.
Consultation on Boomers
Psychology



Vivian Diller, Ph.D.
Women's Health Day for Poise



Vivian Diller, Ph.D.
Consultation for Eyewear
Marketing Research

▶ More videos: www.faceitthebook.com/gallery.shtml

TESTIMONIALS

“On behalf of the entire Clairol team, I want to thank you for a fantastic event yesterday! The influencers were SO excited to meet you and were fascinated by your talking points during the presentation. They loved hearing from someone authentic who could speak to the issue at hand and why your partnership with Clairol makes so much sense.”

— **ALEX KAHRER,**
Marina Maher Communications LLC
For P & G: Clairol Age Defy

“Dr. Diller led a research team to deliver powerful insights and folded them into a compelling narrative based on her years of experience through her psychology practice. She joined CVS/pharmacy executives in eloquently communicating the findings directly to high-profile media through events and interviews. She brought her personal passion to the project, and was a pleasure to work with.”

— **MAGGIE BOEZI,** Vice President
Kaplow

“I wanted to thank you for all the work you did on the report and the fast turnaround. It really is one of the best pieces of external endorser content we’ve had produced for us! Thank you again.

— **REBECCA JONES**
Associate Director, Ketchum PR
For P & G: Head and Shoulders

“Thank you Dr. Diller, you were very helpful! I’ve heard from a few editors in passing that they thought you were a great contribution to the hair presentations, and my clients and I agree. Appreciate again your work with us on this event!”

— **JULI FREEMAN**
Edelman, Senior Account Supervisor
For Unilever: Tresemme

“Thanks Dr. Diller! Your insight was very helpful – exactly what we needed. I’ll send you any notes we present on our conversation. If you don’t mind, I’ll also give your information to some other folks here as a “recommended” luminary for future reference.”

— **(R)EVOLUTION**
Marketing and Branding Consultation

How A Former Model Copes With Aging

Vivian Diller's advice for admiring the woman in the mirror—at any age

By Janet Ungless



Most women will, at some point in their accomplished midlife, experience that uh-oh feeling. Maybe you pass a mirror and notice your sagging jowls or the skin fold above your eyelid. Or you have a memory blip you've always referred to (with irony) as a "senior moment." And though the world—and you yourself—may still marvel at your fierce intellect and emotional agility, all those internal struggles you've weathered pale in comparison to a glance in the mirror at a face you don't recognize as your own. Is that really me?

"I think it's so gut-wrenching not only because it prompts reflection into profound life questions like 'Who am I?' but also because there's a larger, deeper context. It taps into a long, historically connected feeling that has probably existed for centuries. The sole role of women for so long was about survival of the species—attracting a mate and having children," says Vivian Diller, PhD, a psychologist and the author of the book *Face It*, who specializes in helping women deal with the emotions brought on by a changing appearance. Our survival role required physical attractiveness, which, by any definition, didn't include gray hair and crow's-feet. "Add to that our youth-oriented culture, and it's no wonder women who are smart and wise and together feel panicked...frozen," says Dr. Diller.

It's not supposed to matter, but it does. "Women of my generation—I'm 59—and even women a little older were very wedded to the whole feminist movement, which emphasized that looks should not matter. Please! We

live in the real world. Looking and feeling great matters at every age. We have to give value to this issue. What's inspiring," Dr. Diller says, "is that we have the chance to be pioneers in this new experience of life, to renegotiate the definition of beauty. It's time to have this conversation among thoughtful women."

Vivian's story

For Dr. Diller, the process of learning how to move forward with time, rather than clinging to a past image of ourselves, isn't just empty rhetoric. Enthralled by dance as a child, she was accepted into the Metropolitan Opera Ballet School at age 10, and from that moment devoted every fiber of her being to her art. She put off college to pursue a ballerina's life of auditions and performances, exhausting herself physically and emotionally. All that came to a grinding halt after a second metatarsal fracture, which caused chronic pain when she went on pointe and ended her professional dreams.

Facing an uncertain future, she signed with the Wilhelmina Agency and began modeling while taking courses at night to get her college degree. Though posing for photographers was more a job than an identity, she observed firsthand the struggles of women coming to the end of careers rooted in evanescent youth and beauty and saw how that elicited the same emotional crisis as

when she left dance.

“By the time I hit midlife, I felt like I had already mourned a youthful identity—twice,” she says. “I felt very familiar with the psychology of learning how to make room for what is to come. And I realized this doesn’t just happen to models or dancers. All women go through this to some extent. And when you hit that uh-oh moment, it is not a superficial experience. It is substantive and beyond just our looks. It’s Oh my God, I feel like life is passing me by and Will anybody pay attention to me? It strikes at the core of who we are as women.”

Dr. Diller’s unique perspective inspired her to become a psychologist and begin a private practice in Manhattan. She says she got her PhD and a postdoctoral degree in psychoanalysis to help other women “struggling with their aging appearance in a way that seemed out of control and potentially destructive to them.”

There is no secret sauce or one size fits all, she says, because it depends on the role looks have played in your life. But there are steps we can all take to feel great at any age.

Here’s what she learned:

Let go of your former self-image

The most important step toward ageless beauty is letting go of your attachment to your youthful self-image, not getting stuck on the way you used to look. Mourn it as you would your connection to an old friend. Letting go means making room for what comes next. Even though our culture emphasizes turning back the clock, rewinding, I’m saying that’s the wrong message—50 is not the new 30 or even the new 40. Fifty is the new 50! It’s not that we don’t want to stay feeling vital or looking attractive, but we have to let go in order to move on. I’m constantly revising what

it means to be in shape. If my standard for fitness at 60 was based on what I could do as a young ballerina (like being able to lift my leg over my head!), I could never win that battle. For me, it’s now about being able to play tennis for 2 hours and walk away feeling like I had a great time.

Confidence is built from inside out

I have a hard time when psychologists try to simplify things by telling people that “it’s what’s inside that really counts.” Actually, both inside and outside matter, and how the two reflect each other is what really counts. In the end, if you don’t take care of yourself or you let your health and grooming go, “what’s inside counts” is not going to work that well! Women who feel good about themselves still work out, find fashionable clothes that make the most of their figures, and get their hair done—maybe even highlighted. And if they let their hair go gray, they do it with style. A woman who walks into the room who’s put some effort into looking her best—maybe she’s just come from running with friends or lifting weights or getting a facial—isn’t comparing herself to the 20-year-old who just ran a marathon or has flawless skin. She’s thinking that she feels pretty good for her age, and if that’s what 60 looks like, great.

Women who feel great about themselves as they age have found a good balance between looking after themselves and letting other things they feel passionate about matter even more—children, grandchildren, art, sports, an interest in travel. These things play a very important role in ageless beauty. That’s the balance of inner and outer confidence, and it all matters. (Get inspired by the 60+ women who told us why they love their age.)



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How to Let Go of Wanting to Look Young

No matter who you are or how much money you throw at a plastic surgeon, you will age. What you can control? How you do it: in denial—or with dignity. Psychologist Vivian Diller lays out a plan for those who choose the latter

By Emily Listfield

There's an uh-oh moment in every woman's life, whether at the first gray hair or the first fine line, when we realize that the first blush of youth is gone. Yes, we can panic (and pluck). But the key to weathering this transition with aplomb, says Vivian Diller, PhD, author of *Face It: What Women Really Feel As Their Looks Change*, is to redefine how we think about beauty. "Our generation owe it to ourselves to find another way to feel beautiful rather than trying to turn back the clock," she says. Here, Diller, 58, a former ballet dancer and model who has decided to age without significant nipping or tucking, explains how a change in attitude can help us regain confidence and even improve our looks.

Why are the most confident women—even those who never cared much about their appearance—thrown when they start to see changes in their looks?

We have an attachment to the image we see in the mirror, and barring illness or major weight fluctuations, that image remains much the same in your twenties and thirties. But when it begins to change, it doesn't just affect your looks; it affects your identity. These changes reach down to a deeper place: what your future holds, who you are as a woman.

So this is about more than just looks?

Yes. Most of us grew up assuming that assets other than our appearance—education, experience, achievements—would be in the forefront of our identity. Yet at some



Vivian Diller

Photograph: Chris Fanning

point in our thirties, forties or fifties, depending on the woman, we hear another message: that if you don't take care of your looks, you will disappear. You'll lose your job. You'll lose your husband. That's why it's important to ask yourself what you are feeling when you have that first uh-oh moment. It can bring about panic, as if you're losing control. Some women feel they must do something, to "fix it." Others become apathetic.

Why is it a mistake to think aging is something we can fix?

If we look at aging as an illness or as something un-natural, it can lead to rash decisions. After other losses, people may renovate houses. Unfortunately, with the loss of looks, some people renovate their faces. But no matter what you do, your youth is something you have to let go of. And to let go, you have to let yourself feel sad about the loss.

Letting go of youth—that's hard to do in our culture.

You can't change society's attitude, but you can change your own. To start, you have to leave behind the youthful image we associate with beauty. Once you have your uh-oh -moment—in your forties or fifties or sometimes even in your thirties—you have to begin a mourning process as you let go of that aspect of yourself. If you don't go through that, you can't open up to the possibilities of what you can become. Remember, we're not just talking about the next 20 years anymore; we're talking about the next 40.

Your own uh-oh moment came early—when you were a twenty-something dancer.

Yes. So much of my self-esteem was connected to being a ballet dancer, and then I injured myself. I was just 21 when I realized I was going to lose my spot to someone younger, healthier. I felt scared at first; if I wasn't a dancer anymore, I didn't know who I was. So I had to broaden my self-esteem, basing it on more than just looks and youth. I had to find something I could get better at as I got older. The process I went through is very similar to what women go through in midlife as their looks begin to change. I ended up going back to school and becoming a psychologist because I wanted to help others going through similar situations.

Why is it so detrimental to avoid coming to terms with these changes?

We've noticed that in midlife there's been an increase in eating disorders. There's a rise in alcoholism. There's drug abuse. I wouldn't say they're all related to our appearance, but I have no doubt that if your aging face is hard for you to accept, you might take that extra drink. You might go on an excessive diet. Sometimes we mask our feelings. I had one patient who was absolutely- determined to have a fourth child, even though she was in her fifties. Her husband didn't want more children, but she was dead set on it. When I talked to her, it wasn't really about wanting a child. She was beginning to see her body and face change, and she thought one way to retain her youth was to be pregnant. She had to work to redefine her sense of worth.

How do you navigate the process of mourning your youth and looks?

It's not unlike what occurs when you lose a loved

one. At first, there is a feeling of, Oh no, this isn't happening. Then there is a gradual understanding that you can't hold on to the past. There may be a deep sadness that life has turned a corner, but you have to let go. If I tried to be the ballet dancer I once was, or you cling to the idea of preserving the look you had in high school, it will only make us sad and anxious. When you truly accept that your life stage is changing, it doesn't feel so sad in the end. You can have a big cry and then move on with your life.

How do you redefine beauty?

When you glance in the mirror, instead of worrying about appearing younger, think about looking good for your age. Don't lead yourself down the path of "But I don't look like I did when I was in my twenties" or "But my neck!" Think about whether there is anything you can do to look the best for your age—not for 20, not for 30, but for your age now. Changing that internal dialogue takes practice. You have to become aware of what you say to yourself when you are in a dressing room or looking in a mirror, and start shifting it. We have to be kinder to ourselves. You would never say to a friend, "You look old" or "You look fat." The notion of perfection isn't healthy for young kids, and it is definitely not healthy as you get older. There are certain aspects of your face and your body that don't change that much, and you should concentrate on those. Your eyes, or for some women, it's great legs. It's up to you to take those features and wear them with pride.

Looking good versus looking young is a big shift.

Yes, but once you accept that you can't turn back the clock, you can take positive steps. You might go to a dermatologist to have sun damage treated. Or have your teeth whitened. I play tennis, I look after my skin and wear makeup, but I don't spend an obsessive amount of time on it. The best way I take care of myself, besides staying active, is by making sure I'm involved with something I feel passionate about.

Have you ever considered Botox?

Every woman in the world probably considers it. I feel strongly, though, that there is no turning things back and that ultimately it's a short-term solution to

a long-term issue. I do feel there are increasingly better procedures that are not so radical and are probably going to be what dyeing hair used to be. One example is the new light-based, nonablative laser therapies. These have fewer risks than cosmetic surgery, create more subtle, gradual changes in aging skin and appeal to women who want to look better rather than younger. But again, none of these procedures replace the necessary internal work that helps us age with grace.

What about plastic surgery?

I don't judge anyone who has it, but once you get that face-lift or neck job, it's a slippery slope, and it's very hard to enjoy the changes unless you change the inside as well. If you've done the work of going through the mourning process, you have a better chance of being happy with the results. I had one patient who wanted to have plastic surgery because she thought she'd lose her job if she didn't look younger. We worked on that, and she was feeling better and taking care of herself, but she still looked tired. She was a good candidate to get her eyes done, and she was happy with the results because they matched how she was feeling inside. But there are other women who are going through a divorce and want their breasts done or a face-lift, and they come to me afterward and still feel unhappy because the new breasts didn't get them what they wanted. You need to work on feeling better about yourself first; otherwise you will be disappointed.

What are the benefits of consciously letting go of youth?

The mourning process usually takes about a year, but at the end you will see yourself differently. You will feel more hopeful. You will create a solid foundation from which to grow for the rest of your life. Yes, there is loss. But you also gain something on the other side of it. There's a comfort level, a renewed energy for other things. When I look in the mirror now, what I see reflected back looks like age-appropriate beauty. It's not because I'm wearing a particular kind of makeup; it's because I like my life.

The Four Stages of Beauty Mourning

It's OK to cry. But then move forward with these four steps from author Vivian Diller

1. Face your uh-oh moment head-on

Acknowledge that your appearance is changing. Dig deep to discover what feelings this elicits beyond fear of losing your looks. Are you suddenly worried about your marriage, your career or your financial future? Being honest about what you are truly scared of will help you face the transition with more confidence.

2. Listen to your internal dialogue

Pay attention to what you tell yourself when you look in the mirror. Are you disparaging or overly critical of your skin, your hair or your weight? Rewrite your dialogues in the kinder tone you might use with a friend.

3. Learn to appreciate your appearance today

Fast-forward 20 years and imagine seeing a photo of what you look like right now. You'll probably think you look pretty great—and might regret that you didn't enjoy your appearance more when you had the opportunity.

4. Make some healthy changes

Instead of clinging to the past or trying to recapture the look you once had, ask yourself what positive changes you can make that will help you feel attractive right now. These might include exercise, visiting a dermatologist to discuss skin care or concentrating on healthier eating.

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