

Authority Magazine

www.medium.com/authority-magazine

**“Listen To Your Patients But The Advice They Need
May Not Be What They Ask For, Never Be Afraid
To Educate”**



Lessons In Wellness With **Dr. Stanley G. Poulos**

“I would like to find a way to work with our neighbor countries, especially those to the south, to minimize the huge disparity in lifestyle that exists on either side of a line drawn on a map. There is a win-win situation there, we just have to be open to finding it.”

*I had the pleasure of interviewing **Stanley G. Poulos, M.D.** of Marin County California. **Dr Poulos** is a board certified plastic surgeon and cofounder of Plastic Surgery Specialists, one of the premier aesthetic clinics in California. He and his team combine the best combination of surgical innovations and non surgical treatments with an eye on staying abreast of the latest advancements while choosing only those with proven track records of success and safety.*

Thank you so much for doing this with us! What is your “backstory”?

I grew up in west Texas. Somehow I decided as a young boy that I wanted to be a doctor and never wavered from that vision, benefitting from a college football scholarship allowing me to pursue premed studies and eventually an M.D. from the University of Texas. I moved to San Francisco to pursue surgical internship , residency and eventually a plastic surgery fellowship. I moved 15

minutes across the Golden Gate Bridge to Marin county and that remains my home today.

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

I recall years ago consulting many times with a young woman seeking breast implant surgery. She returned 3 or 4 times for visits because she had a morbid fear of waking up from surgery and being too big. She finally decided to proceed, and sure enough just before she went into the surgery suite she saw me one more time and again begged me to be conservative. Then as was my custom I was holding her hand as the anesthesiologist was putting her off to sleep. Then her final instruction ... ‘Dr. Poulos make me look like a porn star!’ That is where I learned we deal with conscious as well subconscious motivations in this business.

Are you working on any new or exciting projects now?

I am so excited to become involved in bringing weight loss options to the aesthetic arena. For years I would see patients seeking plastic surgery for tummy tucks or liposuction while they were 40, lbs or more overweight. We would ask them to try to lose weight and come back for a better result but most of these patients we never saw again because we were not helping them to get healthy . then in the last few years the FDA has approved a new treatment involving placement of balloons in the stomach to take up space and change eating habits. We developed a division of our clinic focused on health and wellness centered on the gastric balloons and a very structured program of nutrition and exercise and have seen many patients lose more than 20% of their body weight in 6–8 months. It has been so gratifying to see the changes physically and emotionally that this brings.

What advice would you give to other doctors to help their patients to thrive?

“listen to your patients but the advice they need may not be what they ask for. Never be afraid to educate.”

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 was strongly influenced in high school by an assistant principal who encouraged those of us who would listen, that transcending roots in a small West Texas town to follow big dreams is not so hard but to staying true to your moral character should never change .

How have you used your success to bring goodness to the world?

Sharing my story with young people who often feel that time is running out on pursuing their dreams has been a great way to connect with the future. Looking back on how fast an entire career flashes by makes one realize the wisdom of choosing the right path for that individual

The team at PSS gives back 1% of its gross revenues each year to a charity in our community that the entire team selects. This connects all of us to giving back a little piece of our success.



What are your "5 Things I Wish Someone Told Me Before I Started" and why. (Please share a story or example for each.)

5 things I wish somebody had told me before I started:

- 1) A fast start in practice does not equate with the best start. I wish I had taken time as a young surgeon to travel the world and spend time with the best.
- 2) Consider being really good at one thing and have that one thing be your passion. It's hard to give up skills you have acquired and focus in one super specialty but in many ways it is easier.
- 3) Older colleagues don't always know best but they didn't get to be old in the business by being stupid. Never be afraid to accept advice from a mentor.
- 4) Patients aren't always right, but they do get to think they are. Work on the patient experience in your office and happy patients will follow.
- 5) As a surgeon try not to operate on patients that you don't like, or those that don't like you. It just never seems to work out.

Can you please give us your favorite "Life Lesson Quote"?

"It's amazing how much smarter my parents got the day I went off to college and had to make all my own choices."

You are a person of great influence. If you could inspire 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. :-)

I would like to find a way to work with our neighbor countries, especially those to the south, to minimize the huge disparity in lifestyle that exists on either side of a line drawn on a map. There is a win-win situation there, we just have to be open to finding it.

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 :-)

I would love to have a private breakfast with Gen. Colin Powell to ask his retrospective view of his withdrawal from active politics and if it has left him fulfilled and feeling that he made the right decision for his life.

<https://medium.com/authority-magazine/listen-to-your-patients-but-the-advice-they-need-may-not-be-what-they-ask-for-never-be-afraid-to-906435a125b4>