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Health & Fitness

Holistic Beauty from the Inside Out: Your Complete Guide to Natural Health, Nutrititon, and Skincare

Julie Gabriel
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Don't be brainwashed by beauty industry, says cosmetics CEO, in book that gives advice as time-honored as motherhood.

According to the cliché, beauty is only skin deep. If so, then Americans who worship at the Fountain of Youth should pursue the care of their skin as if it were the Holy Grail. That is the premise of Julie Gabriel's *Holistic Beauty from the Inside Out: Your Complete Guide to Natural Health, Nutrition, and Skincare.*

Gabriel has served as beauty writer for *Harper's Bazaar, USA Today,* the *Washington Post,* the *Toronto Star, Natural Health, Shape,* and *Better Homes & Gardens*. She is the author of several books on beauty, including *The Green Beauty Guide* and *Green Beauty Recipes*.

In *Holistic Beauty*, readers will discover how to take care of their skin, hair, and body in a holistic way and will learn why this integrated approach makes more sense than addressing each issue individually. The author explains, "Holistic principles of well-being use natural diet, herbal remedies, nutritional supplements, relaxation, meditation, and alternative medicine practices … to achieve the optimal state of well-being." Accordingly, her chapters focus on the importance of attitude, stress reduction, adequate sleep, whole-foods nutrition, and organic means for tending to the body. Appendices provide useful information on toxic ingredients in cosmetics, natural beauty brands, and ingredients for holistic do-it-yourselfers.

Gabriel opines that during the past half century, the cosmetic industry has "brainwashed" women. During 2011, she says, US consumers spent $12 billion on fragrances and makeup, and asserts that some women spend up to half their monthly income on cosmetic products. She argues that no cosmetic company CEO should be trusted. "He hopes that you (and millions of others) will have enough hope to buy him a new jet, a new boat, and a new villa in France." Yet,

ironically, Gabriel is positioning herself as CEO of a new line of cosmetics, Petite Marie Organics, which this book clearly promotes.

Most of Gabriel's advice is as time-honored as motherhood and apple pie. But readers may find some of Gabriel's assertions amusing—for example, that housework should be valued as endorphin-boosting exercise, and that healthy thoughts will "make your skin glow and eyes sparkle."

The author refers to 139 published studies as scientific basis for some of her conclusions. But, far too often, she offers advice as if it were empirically based without providing citations from peer-reviewed studies. For example, in order to combat stress, she says, "Siberian ginseng should be taken in two courses, thirty days each, with a two-week interval between them."

Generally, *Holistic Beauty from the Inside Out* reads more like a compendium of fashion magazine columns than an authoritative source. Still, it serves as a refresher course on Mom's best advice on healthy living: eat right, get plenty of sleep, exercise regularly, and avoid toxins.

Nancy Walker