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What's Up, Doc?

Dr. Robert Rey, best known for *Dr. 90210* on E! Entertainment Television, proves he knows plenty about inner beauty, as he and wife Hayley crusade to protect animals in need. BY DEBORAH CORDAY AND DREW SELTZER

LAC: I think it's safe to say that the majority of your practice is dedicated to helping people achieve their goals in the quest for external beauty and perfection. In your personal life, you so willingly open up your heart and home to animals that are emotionally scarred and less than perfect. Is there a correlating factor between your professional work and your work at home?

DR. ROBERT REY: One of the driving forces of the show is to make the public aware that in the midst of a frou-frou town, true beauty must start from within. Because of this, I am very careful as to whom I operate on. It's my belief that the way one achieves external beauty is by an accumulation of good deeds. Reaching out and helping God's creatures is a sure way to build eternal beauty.

LAC: Dr. Rey, you've impressed the public with your generous pro bono work—most recently changing the life of an immigrant worker with a cleft palate who could barely speak. Hayley, you and your daughter, Sydney, recently donated clothes as well as your time to Goodwill. Does this relate to your compassion in regard to adopting and rehabilitating homeless animals?

RR: First of all, Hayley is a woman who truly practices what she preaches. She regularly combs the shelters and the Internet [her favorite website being petfinder.com] searching for the most tragic cases—ones that hardly have a shot at survival, let alone being adopted.

HAYLEY REY: We're fortunate enough to be in a position to help out the more desperate cases, the ones that are in need of extensive medical care. Most recently we adopted Trinket, a Chihuahua with a severe case of mange. The poor thing had lost almost all her hair, but now she's well on the road to recovery. Our other adopted Chihuahua, Gherkin, has a stage-four luxating patella, can only use three of her legs, and was on the red list to be put down at a city shelter—so of course we took her in! She will be having surgery later this month, and there's a 98 percent chance that she'll be walking on all four legs again soon.

LAC: Hayley, as far as your personal life is concerned, we hear that Dr. Rey really pursued you.... Would this relationship have had a chance if the good doctor didn't share your love of animals?

HR: On our first date, I made it very clear that I was planning on dedicating my life to the care and well-being of animals and had no intention of getting married. After learning that Robert was planning to become a veterinarian, I decided to be more open-minded about the possibility.

LAC: You make a strong point of raising your children with healthy values. Is adopting companion animals an example of that practice?

HR: I think it's our generation's duty to teach the next generation how very important adopting is, versus buying from a pet store or breeder. Children should be raised to understand that animals are not property, but a part of the family, and should be treated as such. There are countless abandoned animals out there in need of homes. Our daughter, Sydney, is just six years old and plans on becoming a veterinarian. I already hear her talking to her friends about how crucial it is to rescue animals. I do my best to impress upon the children that life isn't always like this and that it may not stay like this, so while we have the media's attention, it's our responsibility to educate the public about spaying, neutering, and in general, care and respect for animals.

LAC: Dr. Rey, as a native Brazilian, how do you feel about some other cultures' understanding of animals?

RR: I find that third world countries' ideas are lagging behind in regard to the respect and treatment of animals. Unfortunately, in my country, homeless dogs are running rampant. There are so many undiagnosed diseases in South America that haven't even made it into textbooks—meanwhile, while we were there, Hayley was hugging and kissing every dog she came close to.

LAC: What statement would you like to leave our readers with?

RR: After around 10,000 years of civilization, it makes sense that the last step of civilizing ourselves is the emancipation of animals. ★