



TO SEE AND BE SEEN

After 30 years of performing LASIK, phakic IOL implantation, and lens replacement surgery, I have received numerous thank-you cards from patients who now see and navigate the world with greater confidence. Occasionally, however, a patient's experience resonates on a deeper level, reminding me of the profound impact of cataract and refractive surgeons' work.

A recent handwritten note from a grateful patient shifted my perspective on how vision correction surgery transforms lives. It is more than a medical procedure—it is a journey that reshapes how patients perceive the world and themselves. Although they may not recognize these changes on day 1 or even in the first week, people around them often notice subtle yet significant differences. Patients stand taller. Their walk exudes newfound confidence. They may even alter how they dress and carry themselves. For many, the phrase *to see and be seen* takes on an entirely new meaning.

Before surgery, life can feel like navigating through a fog. Simple tasks—reading a book, driving, recognizing a friend's face from across the room—can be frustrating and limited. The decision to undergo vision correction often begins with a desire to reclaim these everyday moments. The day of surgery is filled with anticipation, excitement, and, for some, a touch of nervousness. Then, the morning after surgery, when they first open their eyes, the transformation begins. Colors are more

vivid, details are sharper, and the world appears alive in ways they never imagined.

The impact extends beyond vision. Seeing the world more clearly often shifts self-perception. Confidence rises. Tasks that once seemed daunting become effortless. Many patients feel more present and engaged in their interactions; they no longer hide behind glasses or struggle to make out faces. The world, once distant and blurry, becomes an inviting space full of possibilities.

Ultimately, *to see and be seen* encapsulates the dual transformation of vision correction surgery. Patients gain not only a clearer view of the world but also a renewed sense of self—authentic, confident, and vibrant. A patient of mine once wrote, "You have not only changed the way I see the world but also how I see myself." These may be the most meaningful words I have read in my career. Not every patient has such a gift with words, but these sentiments are echoed in the gratitude I receive. I feel privileged to work in this field. ■

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