



Work Smart Live Smart

Healthy Aging

By
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What Are Some Positive Ways To Aid In Healthy Aging?

I recently took a look at a website that tried to determine your real age compared to your chronological age and was pleased to see that it covered a variety of areas related to positive stress management. This site sparked some interesting questions regarding healthy aging.

What are some of the positive traits that aid in healthy aging?

A healthy genetic background is a good start - but also being positive, staying active, being able to relax, using a sense of humour, being organized, involved in hobbies/community, having a spiritual side, and striving to be a continuous learner.

What are some of the negative traits that hinder healthy aging?

Traits that can hinder healthy aging include areas such as negativity, having high or unrealistic expectations, being a worrier, being a person that has difficulty relaxing or a person that doesn't take care of themselves by getting enough sleep, proper nutrition or by not exercising.

How does the mind and body work together to keep us healthy?

The mind and body are so tightly connected that it is difficult and often pointless to separate the two. If the body is not healthy the mind reacts and if the mind is full of worry the body functions are affected. Taking care of both through nutrition, exercise and/or stimulation, and rest/relaxation, the mind and the body will work more efficiently and in tune with each other, which should result in a healthier aging process.

Are there any suggestions you can give those 50 and up as they strive to keep happy and healthy as they age?

Besides the obvious of healthy eating and regular exercise, one should also be sure to include:

- adequate sleep (usually between 7-9 hours per night- the body best repairs itself when it gets 'chunked' sleep)
- 6-8 glasses of water (to avoid dehydration which can affect ones memory)
- regular relaxation including deep breathing (increases circulation to the brain which is required for alertness, memory and problem-solving)
- regular daily exposure to natural daylight (helps to regulate melatonin and serotonin which can affect mood and energy cycles)
- decreasing or eliminating the use of alcohol, caffeine, and nicotine which adds extra stress to the body and mind
- a sense of humour which helps to release natural endorphins
- mentally and regularly exercising our brains by problem-solving, organizing and prioritizing
- a positive attitude and perspective
- a variety of hobbies to add satisfaction and enjoyment to life
- increasing areas for support and information - through family, community, spirituality and professional assistance

Any examples of people you know who have put healthy aging into practice?

I am fortunate to have several people in my family who have aged gracefully and were longevity seemed to be the norm. Until recently I had 6 living grandparents and one who will be 96 this year. I also have an associate who at the age of 50, while dealing with severe depression, took up running her first marathon. These are some of my healthy role models.

Stress and wellness specialist, **Beverly Beuermann-King** translates current research and best practices information into a realistic, accessible and practical approach through her dynamic stress and wellness workshops, on-line articles, e-newsletters and media interviews and through a collaboration called *Awakening The Workplace*. Visit www.WorkSmartLiveSmart.com for more on Beverly and her wellness work.

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