

Chapter 1

Living Well Aging Well

To begin this discussion, I have to say a few words to set the book's tone. As a physician, I want to be a helpful guide and offer the reader a way to understand the complexities of the aging process, as I have witnessed in my practice with clients. However, it is not my position to make sweeping generalizations or deny that new information will permanently alter how we perceive our current medical arts.

Aging is an inescapable and necessary human and evolutionary process that we must embrace and celebrate. Societal youth objectification and the attempt to hinder Father Time is as ancient as humans have walked the Earth and a quest that has never ended and will continue as we as a species. Nevertheless, on a macroscopic level, humans are their worst enemy. Over the last 100 years, humanity has manipulated the very nature of life, yet humans naturally gravitate toward self-destructive ways. On a more intimate level, obesity, abuse of drugs and alcohol, and other detrimental conduct lead to poor health outcomes; therefore, health and longevity are fulcrum points, and we must find balance in how we live our lives.

You may be reading this book to identify hidden secrets and methods to stay young, but in my experience, practicing a set of simple and logical guidelines grounded in basic science in a "stair-step approach" is best. We will get to that later. Interestingly, most centenarians you read about in the paper all have a few longevity secrets that are common sense. Still, they are potent nuggets of data to load in your mind to preload better decision-making. One most long-lived are opportunistic carnivores and plant-based foods – the most common type of diet consumed. As we have canine teeth and several digestive enzymes for eating meat, the quantity they seem to enjoy is limited and not often. Third, many are not tea toddlers, enjoy sipping alcohol as an evening digestif and have a regular wine or brandy in the evenings. Second, a preponderance of centenarians exemplify an optimistic demeanor, lead more or less simple lives serving others, are teachers, mothers, and civil servants, and do this sort of work "happily." Third, many are spry and weight-conscious throughout their lives. Many have weights that are very much in line with their early 20s and have kept that weight throughout their lives. Fourth, they enjoy being physically active, gardening, bowling, golfing, walking, and swimming. More importantly, they like to do things to keep their minds vibrant and sharp, like playing bridge, cards, puzzles, or reading. Fifth, many firmly believe in a higher spiritual power and consider a source or Godhead part of their belief system. These are a few key points to make as a basis for establishing some context toward making choices to live longer.

The key to living longer is maintaining our brain's functionality. The brain is about 7 lbs of fats floating in our heads. The brain is full of an array of chemicals. In addition, it has mechanical and electrical properties making it an emitter and receiver of electromagnetic energy.

Neuroplasticity is key to understanding the brain's method of building new neural pathways and how it reformats the brain's wiring to keep up with the everyday stresses of environmental

changes as we age. NP occurs every time you do something to learn or adapt to a new environment to use a complex set of skills, keeping the brain young.

Also, being part of a robust social system can help retard aging and avoid allowing our brains from invoking. When viewed on a CT scan or brain X-ray, brain atrophy in those over 60 there is a set of terms radiologists use to describe the topographical features of the brain, "widening of the sulci and narrowing of the gyri." This feature suggests that the brain is shrinking and supports the relationships between cognitive test performance and reduced cortical morphology associated with the Alzheimers dementia.

As we further study aging, we need to define the concept a bit differently. I like to use the term health span versus life span. By health span, I mean a period of vitality and robust living, not just sucking air and passing would, in other words, quality of life. By looking at the entire world as a unit of discovery and the lessons of history as a grueling, but excellent process of trial and error, we can learn to become healthier and happier people over time.

Through education as well as dedication, we can alter our patterns and allow ourselves to recognize the intrinsic value inside every one of us. By expanding this knowledge, we will become the type of people that we have always hoped to be.

Aging, or the fear of aging, is weakening us as individuals and society. I would like to alter your perceptions of the process of growing older. I want to educate you on proven sciences, preventative health care, and conceptual thinking to improve your vitality, mental strength, and overall well-being.

We are complicated yet delicate beings, made up of a whirlwind of inner working parts, instincts, thoughts, and emotions. Yet, what distinguishes us from any other species is free will—the ability to choose—and the choices are endless. So how can we ensure that we live longer, healthier, and more fulfilled lives? How can we stop the clock from turning so fast? How do we survive in a world that is only rooting against us? I am here to answer all those questions that continue to weigh heavily on the hearts and minds of males and females alike.

Along with possessing free will, humans often are hampered by the propensity to self-destruct. Still, evil feeds evil and good feeds being well. As humans enter a new era of boundless technology and a hive mind, how do we survive as individuals and live healthy lives? First, we must find a balance in a world that is by no means balanced. We must pay equal attention to mind, body, and soul. Everything we do matters, from how we eat, to how we think, to how we treat one another, to how we conduct ourselves daily. What also counts is what we don't do.

There is so much information pouring through multiple social media outlets like a technological tornado many of us need help distinguishing junk from jewels. Overt in exposure, bombarded with salacious advertisements, exciting visual stimuli, and worldwide word-of-mouth from social media networks and forums. As a result, making an informed decision has become more tedious and complicated than previously manageable. A neurophysiologist told me that the human brain

could only make about 500 decisions over a day before we begin to disengage. Despite this problem, overall, people live longer than ever but with more mental stress. However, this is not to say that living longer has anything to do with significant scientific breakthroughs. On the contrary, science seems to be following a steady path of enhancing human evolution; it may soon rise to the point where it is more masterful than the human beings who control it.

Chapter 2

We Must Face Facts

Embracing a new era of human evolution and looking at ourselves from afar, even superficial imperfections like graying hair, skin wrinkles, or a little extra meat on our bones can shatter our confidence and ramp up our worries as we march through time. First, however, we must face facts: all of us will undoubtedly confront time's wear and tear on our bodies, and unfortunately, there is little we can do to fix these human erosions naturally after they occur. Yes, hair dye, Botox, and a tummy tuck might temporarily conceal Father Time's undesirable intrusions. Still, by living with more consciousness, both in mind and body, we can mitigate the need and want for unnecessary procedures.

When we were young, we seldom thought of what would become our physical futures or saw our bodies aging. But as the decades pass and we learn more, our priorities change—eating right, living smart, and achieving our real dreams become goals. Slowly, almost paradoxically, we begin to measure how well we can delay and then face our mortality. I encourage my patients to set healthy goals for themselves and not become discouraged if they cannot reach them as quickly as they like. Life is a learning curve set that overlaps until we focus on new objectives. I am here to help you deal with the passing years and show you fundamental ways to increase your vitality so you can enjoy your life to the fullest.

As we grow more mature, it becomes harder to break habits. We soon realize that our immediate environment can weaken our momentum with its surrounding temptations of laziness and overeating. We become accustomed to the reality that life is no longer just casual fun and games with our friends in the sunshine. Hit in the face with a different truth; we see those around us getting older; therefore, you must count on yourself above anyone else to pause the progression of bad habits—this is scary stuff. No one can tell you who and what and how to be, and unfortunately, there is no trail of breadcrumbs you can follow for answers waiting outside your front door. When we reach a certain age, we limit ourselves by fear and must learn new habits. You are not alone! Remember, though, friends, family, some trusted doctors, and teachers give us clues. They are all valuable advisors and companions; it is pretty hard to get along without them.

You can overcome your feelings of anxiety associated with aging! You can learn to fight back against time's heavy hands! I am here to give you the skills you need to strengthen your mental, physical, and spiritual longevity.

The key is always to be willing to embrace new behaviors, understand holistic living, embrace natural foods, muster daily physical activity, and, more importantly, be receptive to mental change.

Also, have the willpower to understand and avoid subliminal messages. Essential because, as you will begin to notice, they are part of everything created around us to motivate us to confirm, buy, and live. The glossy magazine ads of tiny bikinis and beaches, the dancing box of buttery popcorn and big sugary soda before the start of a movie, and the TV adverts and Instagram reels manipulate you to act. We are programmed to behave and perform a certain way based on these images, forcing us to make poor choices based on psychological manipulation.

Our consumer economy and sedentary lifestyle have made Americans some of the unhealthiest people on the planet. We waste our lives from youth, emphasizing the television, Internet, and phones absorbing ways to destroy our minds, body, and spirit.

Our advanced technology has created an enormous explosion in superficial and useless information on staying young with infantile and counterproductive ways to conduct your life. The media and those who promote it make "celebrities" famous because they behave in silly and arrogant ways and become cheerleaders for harmful propaganda. Without well-researched and documented knowledge of healthy living, most of us will continue to follow a negative lead. As a result, we will not only fail to avoid aging more gradually but accelerate the process. A famous comedian once said, "You know your life is going downhill when you watch fishing on television instead of fishing."

There is a familiar quote that I still believe holds a lot of weight: "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." The statement suggests we must alter our brain's neural pathways to follow a more constructive course. Otherwise, we will repeat ourselves. If one follows a new road long enough, the behavior will become second nature. Many psychologists understand the way to encourage new neuronal development or neuroplasticity is to practice something new —for example, using musical instruments, complex physical activity, swimming, or riding your bike -- and then it will become a healthy habit.

How much are you willing to learn? How much of yourself are you ready to give? How much are you willing to change? These are all critical questions to consider.

Chapter 3

Envision Your Goals

I would like you to try an exercise. You can do this in a real place, such as in a park near your home, or if the specifics of your desired location are not always available, find a quiet, private area where nothing will distract you. Shut your eyes.

I want you to imagine for a moment that you are stepping through a doorway. On the other side is a vast, unobstructed landscape that stretches beyond the boundaries of practical thought. You close the door behind you. Your particular setting could be anywhere:

- An infinite blue ocean.
- A meadow that disappears into the sky.
- The cold freedom at the top of a mountain.
- Perhaps just an endless white hallway floating through space.

Your thoughts are empty now; nothing else matters except the pure, endlessness of what is before you. Your phone is off, your income is of no concern, and the nervousness that begins with ringing your alarm clock in the morning is gone. Right now, time is not counted in minutes or hours; the "before and after" of your existence is no longer relevant. Therefore, the idea of aging does not matter. Nothing affects you.

As you stand in your world, marveling at its infinite grace, a warm, glistening static surrounds your entire body. Feel it drift from your head down to your neck, fizzing and percolating across your shoulders, bubbling on your arms and over your back until you are entirely covered in a soft, iridescent glow. Your concentration strengthens, and the glowing feelings moving throughout your body become more powerful.

Allow your dreams to drift into your world while keeping your other thoughts at bay. Let your desires rise from the ground like clouds, and watch your goals form wispy pictures above you. Finally, they can leave your mind coherently. Allow your five senses to be engulfed by the possibility of a better and outstanding you. Let all that you want to be, all that you are and WILL become, all that you dream, all the love, beauty, and incomprehensible purpose that is you, glide across your infinite landscape like the sunrise grazing the Earth in the early morning.

Now stay there for a while. Take slow, calming breaths and notice that the air feels different as it enters your lungs; cooler, thicker, and more fulfilling. Let the clouds break apart to form new dreams and goals, building brighter and faster energy around your body. Nothing exists here but you and possibility. You are not young or old, and because time is no longer time, every dream floating in the distance, every goal that is forming, will soon be fulfilled; you are changing into a new person every time you take a breath.

Lastly, begin to voice some of these goals out loud, and as you do, imagine that you have met these goals. Picture how it feels, how the dreams you have achieved heighten your energy and all of your senses. Nothing is impossible. If you want to whisper them, fine, or if you prefer, shout them out as loudly as you can. See them completed without stress. When you are ready to leave, turn around and open the same door you entered, but return with the positive feelings that your mind and body helped build and use them to your ultimate advantage.

Everything on our planet is constructed of energy. From the smallest atoms, humans are surging with it, and we can harness it to make positive life changes. Humans are master creators; we visualize things on the horizon to make them happen and bring them to life. The more emotional energy we put into our intentions and goals, the more likely they will manifest in reality. If you

want something to occur and know the intention, you can make it happen. If you use the force inside, you will create a vibration to bring forth positive change. But more is needed to want to change; we all need to take the necessary steps and follow proper strategies to achieve our goals. If you have the right attitude, you can reduce the odds against you.

It is hard to change. For some people, it is impossible. Suppose you fear change, as many people do. In that case, you might feel a thickness in your stomach before altering your behavior as your anxiety levels rise. But I say: Why not try something new? Unfortunately, this is only sometimes so easy. For example, people become accustomed to their bad habits of eating the dead mince in a hamburger instead of drinking the vibrant enzymes of a green juice-- such as inertia -- and the longer they practice them, the harder it is to change them. As a result, it is challenging to turn around and face the reality that you must reevaluate many aspects of your life.

I implore you-- never pass up a desire to achieve good health. Suppose the dream exists to change something about yourself. In that case, the achievement may seem impossible, but the impossible is possible. Look around you and realize the people, places, and things you do profoundly impact how you live; by exercising your inner spark through discipline and innovation, you can change.

Chapter 4

The Four Stages of Competence

The four stages of competence is a psychological tool developed by Noel Burch in the 1970s to turn the process of competent progression into a teachable skill. Noel Burch was an employee of Dr. Thomas Gordon, a pioneer in the instruction of innovative communication and conflict resolution skills. This skill set is also attributed to the psychologist Abraham Maslow.

The first stage of the learning model recognizes unconscious incompetence. Unconscious incompetence refers to the mind's gravitation towards dismissing a helpful skill that may be considered unnecessary. You must first realize the potential loss from such an easy dismissal before moving on to the next step. For example, knowing CPR may not be a skill you believe you need to learn, but you might save someone's life one day if you acquire it.

The second stage of the learning model is conscious incompetence. Conscious incompetence is when you recognize the loss that comes from not learning a skill but still do nothing about it, perhaps due to apathy. This trait infects the people on Earth like a virus. True, none of us is perfect, but we all have the power to prevent mistakes long before they begin to take shape. We must recognize our folly in neglecting to take charge and act immediately!

Stage three is conscious competence when learning a new skill requires hard work, strict concentration, and stamina. Acquiring the aptitude should not be enough; we should consciously try to master it.

The last stage is unconscious competence; it refers to the achievement that comes from setting your neural pathways to a new type of behavior. You have attained abundant knowledge and skill and a thirst for more. You are finally at the point where talent has become second nature. Think of the simplicity and ease of having a conversation with friends. Now imagine having that same discussion in a foreign language. It takes time for a new skill to transform into what many of us can consider a reflex reaction. We must all strive to attain that ability level in everything we do. Doing so opens a window to a world where nothing is out of reach and allows us to take on multiple goals without becoming overwhelmed. Think of all the skills that you learned as a child. They did not seem so difficult because our determination and energy to know something new were unparalleled at that time. We must hold onto that mysterious motivation that propelled us as children and apply it to our adult lives. We can learn a lot from our younger years.

Some people talk about a fifth learning model stage, called reflective ability. This ability recognizes the inner workings of the fourth step. It helps you attain a heightened satisfaction in knowing that what is now second nature was once quite complicated. For example, if you learn to exercise effortlessly daily, you will lose weight and live well easier.

How can this help you to age better? Use this model in every aspect of your life; implicate it into your work to become a more productive employee. You can become someone who allows your mind to extend beyond the boundaries of specified duties and create a flow of innovation throughout the workplace. As a result, you will always be looking forward, higher up. This model will help you to be the best you can be. It will empower you to build a stable and rewarding career while diminishing the stress of succeeding in a job market that only seems to be getting more competitive.

Introduce this model into your relationships, including your sex life. You will not be dissatisfied with the results, nor will your partner. Instead, strive to become more highly skilled in every critical aspect of your life. These patterns, with practice, will become more automatic.

For example, research shows that people who wake up early are more likely to participate in various high-endurance sports. You can use this model to build a better fitness regimen, which will help to fend off aging. If you are not a morning person, then start there. For one week, make the extra effort to get out of bed one to two hours earlier than usual. Don't lie around watching TV. Use that time productively. By the end of the second week, this new habit will already become part of your routine, and you will be happy that it did. You have now gained two more hours of your life!

Introducing this model of creating change in your behavior involves the positive thinking that I am discussing—the negative would be as follows...

Negative Thinking or Snake Oil Potions for Staying Young

The fight against aging is like another drug with which consumers destroy themselves. The dream of immortality has become a mass-produced fantasy. Over the last 100 years, people

have bought a slew of snake oil treatments, bathtub cures, and late-night infomercials gadgets, believing that it is possible to maneuver around the inevitable physical flaws that the passing of time creates in our bodies. The marketing of products and techniques that claim to remedy aging processes is a multi-billion industry, and it continues to climb. As a result, people are filling perfect faces with bacterial-made deadly toxins, having surgeons perform multiple invasive procedures they don't need, and popping every pill on the Internet that proposes results they usually cannot achieve, such as maintaining a "stiff four-hour erection."

The existence of this rapidly expanding market is undeniable. It's out there, in front of us, pills, cream, potion, lotion, product after product, with different names but the same basic construction. I call this the Soap Box Effect rooted in our merchant class culture. An American salesman stands on a rickety platform. He loudly boasts about his new wonder tonic to a crowd, who are frightened in their gullibility. This craziness stretches back years: at circuses, fairs, and bazaars-- a barker calls out another potion, a huckster tries to snare another buyer-- except today's snake oil tricksters can reach millions with their diet pills and penis products in only seconds. In a way, this kind of power is dangerous. Buyer beware, so much of it is junk, and we must be careful what to believe.

That is what the aging fixation has done to us; it has altered our thinking patterns so that we put the importance of beauty before risk, leaving the consequences for the aftermath.

The physical image of beauty will not change in our lifetime; it is ingrained in our minds. If possible, it would take centuries to undo the perception forced upon us since birth.

A physical image is currently being presented to the public that defines beauty. Our eyes bend towards symmetry; someone-- such as a woman -- becomes more appealing to us if she has the perfect shape, the right curves, and a surface free of imperfections. Think about picking out an apple at the grocery store and sifting through bruised, unwanted fruit as we carefully search for the most round, ripest, shiniest one. This same selection process occurs between men and women worldwide; we strive to keep our teeth whiter, our skin blemish-free, and our bodies toned and lean in the hopes of boosting our chances of being picked by that special someone.

There is nothing wrong with wanting to do these things. You should do them if you believe you can keep your body healthier. It is good to feel attractive; it boosts confidence and staying fit benefits our physical and mental health. But some people overdo it. When does aging become an obsession?