

FOREVER ACTIVE

PERSONALIZED FITNESS AND WELLNESS FOR MEN 50+

Younger Next Year

Editors Note: The information in this newsletter is from the very popular book “Younger Next Year” by Chris Crowley and Henry S. Lodge, M.D. ISBN # 978-0-7611-4773-2.

Introduction

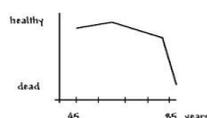
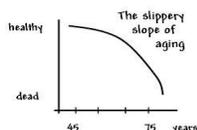
As we approach the end of the year, it is always a good idea to reflect on the past 11 months. What were the highs, the lows, the goals we achieved and the ones we didn't. Reflection is good, it gives us a moment to slow down and appreciate the good things in our life and consider how we can improve ourselves and our world as we move forward into the upcoming year. The best selling book, “Younger Next Year” is all about self improvement. It is written for the older adult or, as they say, those of us who are approaching the last third of our lives, but it is really applicable to everyone of any age. The book is divided into two parts; Taking Charge of Your Body and Taking Charge of your Life. In other words, it is about taking control and being in control. Your chronological age is only a number, but how you feel next year, younger or older, is determined to a large extent on the decisions you make now on how you want to live the rest of your life. The book says, “Live Strong, Fit and Sexy-Until You're 80 and Beyond”. Is this possible?? Hopefully, after you have reviewed this newsletter and read the book you will feel it is. The choice is yours.

Your Last Thirty Years

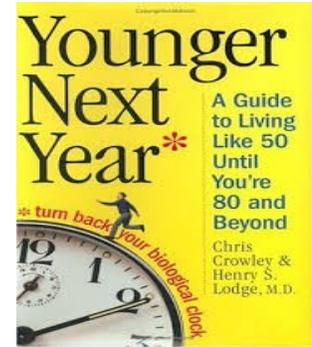
Horror Story– you are in your 50's, early 50's or late 50's it doesn't matter, and you wake up one night and you say, “I am almost 60” and you are awake for the rest of the night asking yourself, “What is to become of me?”

Typically - most people when they approach 60 answer that they are on a slippery slope toward death.

Truth– Most of us in our 50's and 60's can be *functionally younger every year for the next 5 to 10 years.*”



- Facts:**
1. 70% of what you feel is aging is optional.
 2. 50% of all illness and injuries in the last 1/3 of your life can be eliminated by changing your lifestyle.



Harry's Rules

1. Exercise 6 days a week for the rest of your life. You want to stay strong, agile, flexible, with good balance and coordination.
2. Do serious (60—70% HRmax)(HRmax= 220-age) aerobic exercise (walking, running, biking, swimming) four days a week for the rest of your life. Build up the strength of your heart.
3. Do serious weight training, (body resistance exercises or weight), 2x's a week for the rest of your life. Build up the strength of your muscles, ligaments and tendons.
4. Spend less than you make. Serious stress reduction technique.
5. Quit eating crap. Eat less sugar, eat less fat, eat less. You are what you eat so eat nutritiously well.
6. Care. You have to care about something to keep yourself alive. Charities, people, family, job. It needs to be specific, important and interesting to you
7. Connect and Commit. You have to be involved with other people.

Part One: Take Charge of Your Body

Chapter 5- The Biology of Growth and Decay

Editors Note: I choose this chapter because if you understand how the body functions, how it responds to physical and emotional stress, you should be more motivated to do activities (exercise and joyful living) that will contribute to growth than those that facilitate decay (sedentary lifestyle). In other words, “If you understand the why’s, you can overcome the how’s.”

Introduction

Biologically, there is only growth or decay. Your body is always in a state of metamorphosis. The muscle cells are completely replaced every four months, blood cells every three months, platelets every ten days and your bones every couple of years. The net result is that you are actively destroying and growing large parts of your body all the time. The secret is to grow more than you destroy and this is why exercise is so important.

Mechanisms of Growth

Muscles control the chemistry of growth throughout your whole body. The nerve impulses that contract a muscle also send a tiny signal to build it up, creating a moment to moment chemical balance between growth and decay (remember the body is constantly destroying cells) within the muscle. Those signals are sent to the rest of the body and if enough growth signals are sent, they overwhelm the signals to destroy or atrophy and your body turns on the machinery to build up muscles, heart, tendons etc. and growth occurs. If your muscles sit idle, decay will dominate and the aging process is accelerated.

C-6 and C-10

When cells are damaged or destroyed (decay), they release chemicals (for simplicity they call this C-6) to start the inflammatory process which sets the stage for cellular repair by a set of chemicals that, again for simplicity, is called C-10. C-6 is produced in both the muscle and bloodstream in response to exercise and C-10 is produced in response to the release of C-6.

Key Point

Not all decay is good and C-6 does not always trigger the production of C-10. When you are sedentary or under chronic stress (loneliness, boredom, apathy, worry), the constant slow decay that occurs naturally and low levels of C-6 that are produced is not enough to turn on the release of C-10. The explosion of growth that slows the aging process only comes with the surge of C-6 you get with exercise, joy, play, engagement, challenge, and closeness.

Summary

There is a constant struggle between decay & growth and as we become more sedentary and withdrawn with age, decay starts to win the battle. Either exercise or joyful living can reverse this trend but they are most effective when they work together.

Part Two: Take Charge of Your Life

Chapter 18– The Limbic Brain and the Biology of Emotion

Editors Note: I found this chapter to be especially important because it explains why, as humans, we are social beings or as the author says, “social pack animals” and need social interaction to live a happy long life. Unfortunately, as we age, there is a tendency for our self esteem and self worth to wane and we begin to isolate ourselves, because we begin to feel that our contribution to our family, friends and society is not appreciated or valued as much as it used to be. This is contrary to the truth and is just the opposite of what you need to do to “Live Younger Next Year.”

Introduction

Staying emotionally connected is biologically imperative and a critical part of a good life. We have evolved as social pack animals and our survival depends on being part of a group. For example, no one has ever gone into the Amazon jungle and found an isolated person; it is always a tribe. In other words, isolation is fatal.

You Have Three Brains

1. Physical (Reptile) Brain– This brain detects sensation and movement and has the control centres for fear and aggression, our deepest and most primitive emotions. This brain runs on negative reinforcement and triggers an automatic chemical response for personal survival.

2. Limbic Brain

This is the emotional brain. It allows us to feel love, joy, pleasure and play. The limbic brain reads the real world through our senses and makes emotions out of it. In fact, the limbic brain makes “maps” out of the information it receives, thousands of maps every second. Physical (from the physical brain), social and intellectual (from the thinking brain) stimuli streaming in and emotional maps (such as where you stand in the pack, whom you can trust, who likes/dislikes you) stream out. Each one of these emotional maps has a dash of relaxation, anger, anxiety, love, excitement, fear or optimism. This brain responds to both positive and negative reinforcement but responds best to the chemistry of pleasure.

3. Thinking Brain

This is the brain of language. We have access to other people’s brain maps and this brain reads these maps and allows us to communicate to our pack our emotions and thoughts.

Summary

All three brains are intricately wired together and alternate between being the most dominant, it is therefore important to have a constant stream of positive emotions. This can be achieved by *consciously* creating a positive environment around you. Deliberately drive away chronic stress, loneliness, worry etc and implement good stimuli such as exercise, proper sleep, nutritious diet, love, companionship and play. In other words, Connect and commit to family, friends and activities, avoid isolation, to generate positive emotions and drive away despair.