

Be **Cheerful**, Stay **Young!**



Learn to age with a cheerful attitude, positive self-talk and outlook! By Elisabetta Franzoso

Ageing is a natural process and nothing can be done about it. Yet everyone wants to remain young as long as possible. So how do you stay young? In order to do so, many things can be done: eating healthily with meals full of fibers and anti-oxidants, exercising regularly, nurturing a healthy marriage and sexual life, getting enough sleep, practicing meditation or yoga, the list goes on.

Yet one of the most relevant things to staying young is self-talk. According to my experience and research, observing, understanding and self-talk (intrapersonal communication) keeps us young and healthy. It all starts from the way we communicate with ourselves. Apart from indulging in healthy food, sleeping well and exercising, we need positive self-talk and attitudes towards our surroundings which will result in stronger self-esteem. Tell yourself, "I am growing younger, more powerful and wiser every day."

Here are some tips for Ezyhealth & Beauty readers:

1

Build and keep a positive attitude set (a wellness coach can help you on that).

It is most important that you choose to feel young always (fake it until you make it!). It is your decision.

You must feel young at heart even when you are ageing physically. Those who are young at heart also live a longer life. We should always consider ourselves young - the older we are, the younger we should be in our spirit and actions.

Scientists have discovered that the more you buy into the notion that getting older means losing your mental acuity,



the more likely you are to succumb to it. Yale University psychologist Becca Levy, Ph.D., has explored psychosocial influences on ageing; particularly, on how older individuals perceive ageing and how it affects cognition and health.

Through her research she has found that older people that have more negative perceptions towards ageing, such as becoming senile, did significantly poorer in memory tests than those who were more positive towards ageing. In fact, those who used positive words to describe ageing obtained better scores. Levy has also shown that average scores in cultures with more positive views on ageing were higher than average scores in the United States and other western countries.

In addition, her research has shown that older individuals with more positive self-perceptions towards ageing live 7.5 years longer than those with less positive self-perceptions.

One of the theories to explain the data, says Donald B. Ardell Ph.D, author of *Aging Beyond Belief* is, "survivors with the bright side outlooks simply internalized the good feelings that go with learned optimism from an early age. That upbeat attitude is what served them, not the answers they gave in the surveys. You probably guessed as much. We would all expect folks with better attitudes about getting older (and everything else) to live longer than others less positive about their situations. The key variable, then, might well be a positive, overall optimistic outlook. That's just one more reason, as we go into yet another nice summer weekend, you might want to do your best to be well and always look on the bright side of life. Even if you have to fake a bit of optimism about getting older!"

Keeping a positive attitude is fundamental when it comes to ageing and health. Since 1986, University of Kentucky, scientist David Snowdon studied 678 nuns in hopes to discover secrets of the brain. In particular, what happens to the brain as we age. His findings, known as the Nun Study, have shed some light on how to live a mentally active life well into old age. One of his findings is that a positive emotional state at an early age might help ward off disease and even prolong life. In fact, there is a growing body of literature that shows a correlation between a person's attitude and physical health, mental health, and longevity.

2

Be optimistic if you want to live longer.

People have known it instinctively for a long time. Happy, optimistic people tend to live longer.

A recent study showed that people with terminal cancer and were unrealistically optimistic about their chances of survival lived much longer than their counterparts who were realists.

Optimism is more than mere positive thinking, it is more than thinking that a glass is half full rather than it is half empty. True optimism relates to the focus of control. The optimist believes that she is in control of her own destiny and interprets events in a way that protects her ego. Pessimists, on the other hand, have a neutral or a negative bias towards life events.

Optimists view favourable events as permanent, pervasive, and within their control. Pessimists, on the other hand, view the world in the opposite way and think favourable events as temporary. Negative events are the norm and they should be permanent.

Unfortunately a large portion of people's optimism or pessimism is based physiologically. However, one cannot change what they think overnight and consuming mood altering drugs should only be the last resort. Self-talk and altering your behaviour with cognitive behavioural therapy or communication coaching can help.

I recommend repeating the following affirmations. You can repeat these and other similar affirmations while driving, waiting in a line, when you are in a bus or taxi, or any other spare time you have. I find repeating self-affirmations first thing in the morning and the last thing at night very powerful.

“Every day, I live life with a positive and cheerful attitude (think, feel and act). I grow younger, healthier, more powerful and wiser.”

“I like myself, my wrinkles, my gray hair, my need to slow down... that is beauty!”

“LIFE IS FULL OF WONDERFUL SURPRISES, AND I ALLOW MYSELF TO BE SURPRISED TODAY!”

“I approve of myself, no matter the mistakes I make. Mistakes are lessons I should learn from.”

“I love life!”

“Every day is a new beginning and a chance of feeling love in my heart for myself and others.”

3

Spend time with positive and cheerful people.

We should try our best to be with people with uplifting attitudes as much as possible. Enthusiastic people have the power to make you feel positive in return; they motivate you and they can light up your life. Jovial people will make you laugh and laughter is very good for your health. You can also choose to spend time with children and play with them. They just uplift your moods!

Suggested readings for this topic:

Aging Beyond Belief – Don Ardell Ph.D.

How Full Is Your Bucket – Tom Rath (Positive Psychology)

Ageless Body – Deepak Chopra M.D.

4

Communicate love to yourself and others more and more often.

Dr. Marian C. Diamond is one of the world's foremost neuro-anatomists who conducted an experiment that showered older rats with love. She chose 600 day-old rats (that about equates to a 60 year-old human). In most cases, rats die around the 600 day-old mark. However, the rats the scientist petted everyday lived longer than those which were not.

Love is a positive emotion which triggers positive choices and attitudes in people. Love can also contribute to longevity. [ehb](#)

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