

# Improve your “Health Span” as we move toward the Decade of Healthy Aging 2020

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In July 2015, “Healthy Aging” emerged as a theme at the White House Conference on Aging.

In September 2015, The World Health Organization (WHO) echoed the need to change attitudes toward aging when it released the “World Report on Ageing and Health.” The agency later announced the “Decade of Healthy Ageing 2020-2030.”

As life spans increase, so does the potential for adding more years of health. We know our lifestyle choices directly impact our health and how we age; therefore we can impact our “health span” (the period of one’s life during which one is generally healthy and free from serious disease or the number of years one lives in the best health possible).

## ➔ Build a Positive Mindset

Our state of mind usually influences how well we perform. It also influences our health.

Older adults who hold negative beliefs about aging have poorer health and tend to perform more poorly on cognitive and physical assessments than older people who do not hold those beliefs. Conversely, studies have reported that when people’s attitudes toward aging improved, their functional or mental health also improved.

- 1 Think about what you are thinking about. How you think about things is the key to how you feel about them. Awareness of your daily thoughts can affect you in a positive or negative way. ....
- 2 Get rid of negative thoughts. Don’t allow bad thoughts to stay in your head. ....
- 3 Choosing a positive attitude every day makes happiness a habit. Attitude is one of the most important choices you make each and every day. ....
- 4 Practicing the act of gratitude can create a pattern of looking for the many good things in your life. Consistently grateful people are happier and healthier. ....
- 5 Appreciation and counting life’s little blessings help you keep a positive attitude.



# Five Recommended “Health Span” Resources

## DR. ANDREW WEIL

Dr. Weil, a Harvard-educated physician, is a pioneer in the field of integrative medicine, a healing-oriented approach to health care which encompasses body, mind, and spirit. He has written 13 books including the bestseller *Healthy Aging: A Lifelong Guide to Your Well-Being*. Weil is the founder and director of the Center for Integrative Medicine at the University of Arizona College of Medicine.

In 2008, Dr. Weil introduced his Anti-Inflammatory Diet to counter chronic, low-level inflammation that damages the body and promotes disease.

It is based on the Mediterranean diet, tweaked with Asian influences. Visit his website, especially the section on Healthy Aging: [www.drweil.com](http://www.drweil.com).

## BLUEZONES

What is a Blue Zone? It's a term used to describe parts of the world where people live the longest. More specifically, it is an area which is demographically confirmed and geographically defined, where people are either reaching age 100 at extraordinary rates, have the highest life expectancy or have the lowest rate of middle-age mortality.

Learn how to transform your health using smart eating and lifestyle habits gleaned from new research on the diets, eating habits, and lifestyle practices of the communities that have been identified as Blue Zones.

For more information and a series of books by Dan Buettner: [www.bluezones.com](http://www.bluezones.com)

## BE YOUNGER NEXT YEAR

*Younger Next Year and Younger Next Year for Women* are books by Chris Crowley and Henry S. Lodge, M.D. that tell us how to turn back our biological clocks—how to put off 70% of the normal problems of aging (weakness, sore joints, bad balance) and eliminate 50% of serious illness and injury.

The key to the program is found in Henry's Rules, based on the latest findings in cell physiology, evolutionary biology, anthropology, and experimental psychology. Dr. Lodge explains how and why they work—and Chris Crowley, who is living proof of their effectiveness (skiing better today, for example, than he did 20 years ago), provides the essential motivation.

[www.youngernextyear.com](http://www.youngernextyear.com)

## THE HAPPINESS ADVANTAGE

I had the opportunity to hear and meet Shawn Achor when he spoke at the ICAA conference in New Orleans in 2015. His book shares key principles and strategies that can help you train your brain to be happy.

[www.goodthinkinc.com](http://www.goodthinkinc.com)

## THE TELOMERE EFFECT

Have you wondered why some sixty-year-olds look and feel like forty-year-olds and why some forty-year-olds look and feel like sixty-year-olds? While many factors contribute to aging and illness, Dr. Elizabeth Blackburn discovered a biological indicator called telomerase, the enzyme that replenishes telomeres, which protect our genetic heritage. Dr. Blackburn and Dr. Elissa Epel's research shows that the length and health of one's telomeres are a biological underpinning of the long-hypothesized mind-body connection. The telomere effect will make you reassess how you live your life on a day-to-day basis. It is the first book to explain how we age at a cellular level and how we can make simple changes to keep our chromosomes and cells healthy, allowing us to stay disease-free longer and live more vital and meaningful lives.

Read their book, *The Telomere Effect*

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Happy learning! Be well and *thrive!*