

## Stop growing old – mentally and physically

A remarkable change is taking place in the way we view life expectancy and the aging process. For the first time, scientists and metaphysicists are thinking along parallel lines in speculating that it may be possible to significantly extend the length of human life, partly through experiences we don't yet fully understand.

Not only that but the potential quality of that extended life, including health and vigor, could be positively influenced by simple thought processes. Ultimately, as we uncover more of the remarkable secrets of the working of our minds and our bodies, we may learn how to control or even halt the aging process.

The days when reaching the age of, say, 150 or even 200, seemed like a crackpot idea are gone. Every day, researchers are finding clues that point to the causes of cell failure – the underlying mechanism that brings about our demise – or that demonstrate how our state of mind conditions our health.

“Aging is not a natural process,” says life coach and mindset expert Julie Hutton. “There is plenty of research that shows that people’s attitudes affect their own longevity. Putting it bluntly, happy people live longer. It is perfectly possible to imbue yourself with the right mindset and to enjoy vibrant, youthful longevity.”

She points to the work of Stanford psychologist Carol Dweck who has shown how a particular mental attitude can affect all areas of your life, from business to sports and love. At any time, Dweck argues, no matter how fixed and limiting your mindset might have been, it is perfectly possible to change it to your advantage.<sup>1</sup>

“When you couple this with recent discoveries about what happens physiologically in the aging process and how we might be able to intervene to halt or even reverse this, you realize that we are on the threshold of a major change in life expectancy,” says Hutton.

She runs a mindset/meditative program she calls Super Youthening and is in the vanguard of a new and growing movement that adopts an inquisitive approach to the issues of aging and life fulfillment, an uninhibited open-mindedness to the potential of humans to access energy and resources that we don't entirely comprehend.

We are already witnessing unprecedented extension of life expectancy in an era when it is no longer uncommon to live beyond the age of 100. We live now, on average, 50% longer than people did in the 1900s and centenarians are the fastest growing population sector in the US. With 66,000 at the start of this century, the figure is projected, even on current knowledge and trends, to increase to 834,000 by 2050.<sup>2</sup> In Japan, the number of centenarians doubles every decade.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mindset: The New Psychology of Success by Carol Dweck (Ballantine Books)

<sup>2</sup> US Census Bureau

<sup>3</sup> The Population Council

Intensive research on the frontiers of medical knowledge of senescence – the aging process – could accelerate that trend exponentially. Startling and sometimes controversial is the cellular and molecular biology work of British scientist Aubrey De Grey, who has identified seven causes of aging and suggests that the fundamental knowledge necessary to develop effective anti-aging medicine mostly exists today.<sup>4</sup>

Editor in chief of the academic journal *Rejuvenation Research*, De Grey runs the research organization The Methuselah Foundation, to which PayPal founder Peter Thiel has recently donated \$3.5 million "to support scientific research into the alleviation and eventual reversal of the debilities caused by aging."

Attention is also being focused on the regenerative powers of the brain. Recent discoveries have debunked the long-held belief that we cannot regrow our brain cells when they die – as they do regularly – and are thus doomed to a deteriorating state of mind. Scientists have confirmed that cells in the region of the brain responsible for memory and learning can and do regenerate.

The implications of the theories of maintaining the good health of our cells and on their ability to regenerate are profound for longevity. Coupled with new approaches to mindset therapy promoted by Julie Hutton and others, the mouthwatering prospect not only of extending our lives but also enjoying them as a long-term youthful experience suddenly seems almost within grasp.

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<sup>4</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aubrey\\_de\\_Grey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aubrey_de_Grey)