

On the Longevity Revolution and You

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Like the sun coming up over the ocean, the Longevity Revolution is on the horizon. It is coming toward you, beckoning you to envision an expansion of possibilities for your future. What, exactly, is the Longevity Revolution?

First, it is a *scientific* revolution based on medical advances that will be coming fast and furious over the next decade or two. At a conference last month, Dr. Ken Dychtwald of Age Wave made this statement: “I sit on various boards and panels with gero-scientists and I’m increasingly hearing that, because of breakthroughs that are 10 or 20 years away, living to 110 or 120 or more may become commonplace.”

I attended (virtually) the second and third Longevity Leaders World Congress in 2020 and 2021, respectively, and came away from those events with a similar message: the healthy 100+ year life isn’t science fiction, it’s what science is preparing to deliver — and relatively soon. Michael Roizen, M.D., Chief Wellness Officer Emeritus at the Cleveland Clinic, has said that by 2030, 90 will be the new 40! The next decade just isn’t that far away.

Second, the Longevity Revolution is a *cultural* revolution because the potential of extra decades of healthy living is calling for deep reflection on each individual's (a) purpose and passion for living (and, likely, working) for a much longer time, (b) core values for personal growth, (c) health habits for supporting the scientific advances and (d) capacity to advance intergenerational relationships for a more fulfilling, longer life.

Third, the Longevity Revolution is a *financial* revolution because living healthier for longer calls for an investment strategy and a financial plan that envisions the 100+ life.

The best way to join the Longevity Revolution is to establish a holistic Personal Longevity Plan for yourself. The most exciting part of the plan is for the purpose of flourishing for decades to come. Here are some key points:

- Define your planning horizon. Given the coming advances in aging science, if you could be both old and healthy, to what age do you want to live? What year will that be? Speaking personally, I aspire to live to be 110. If I get that far, I'll make it to the year 2066. That's my planning horizon. How about you? To what age do you want to live? What year will that be?
- Here is the key question for your Personal Longevity Plan: "How can I make my potential 100+ life the most fulfilling it can be?" To answer this question, you need clarity about your ikigai, your purpose (or "purpose portfolio" if you have more than one purpose for living) for two or three extra decades of healthy living. You'll need to adopt or enhance core values for safety and security: healthy longevity and sufficient financial resources for the 100+ life. You need to adopt or enhance core values for personal growth that will allow for flourishing in the Longevity Revolution: long-life learning, creativity and exploration, passion, happiness and a growth mindset. These prescriptive values for joining the Longevity Revolution supplement core values you already have. You can then take your ikigai/purpose portfolio along with your complete list of core values and ponder the question about how to enhance your intergenerational relationships as you grow older.
- Creating an excellent Personal Longevity Plan involves everything stated above as well as mining your wisdom for balanced goal setting. Your sources of wisdom are your intelligence quotient (IQ) plus accumulated knowledge, your emotional intelligence quotient (EQ), your curiosity quotient (CQ) and your transition quotient (TQ) which, taken together, are The Wisdom Quadrants. Mining your wisdom also involves seven characteristics of wisdom: acceptance of divergent perspectives, decisiveness, emotional regulation, prosocial behaviors (compassion and empathy), self-reflection, social advising (giving relational and helpful advice to others) and spirituality. (See *Wiser: The Scientific Roots of Wisdom, Compassion, and What Makes Us Good* by Dilip Jeste and Scott LaFee.) Goal setting for your Personal Longevity Plan is balanced in two ways. First, it is balanced between happiness goals, meaningful-purposeful goals and goals that foster psychological richness; i.e., "variety is the spice of life." (See the work of Shigehiro Oishi and Erin Westgate.) Second, goal setting is balanced in terms of time zones so that goals are spread out for easier completion and an easier-paced lifestyle (e.g., one year; two to five years; six to 10 years; and 10+ year goals).

- Two other areas of focus make a holistic personal longevity plan complete: planning for help when you'll need it and creating a legacy plan that consists of traditional legacy planning (e.g., a will, trust, health directives, etc.), an Ethical Will (your values and beliefs) and a Spirit Legacy (the stories and events that have shaped your life).

Your holistic Personal Longevity Plan is your “navigation chart” for sailing on the beautiful blue ocean which is the Longevity Revolution. Because your navigation chart is for “ports of call” which stretch over many decades, midlife editing skills and transition skills such as the Modern Elder Academy teaches will be vital for making your Personal Longevity Plan dynamic and effective.

To be sure, there are no guarantees of becoming a healthy, happy and purposeful centenarian. But you can certainly hope that with excellent personal health habits and a coming tailwind from scientific discoveries that you, too, could someday blow out 100 candles on your birthday cake and flourish for some time longer!

Come, sail away!

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