

Healthy Happy Lifestyle

**Enjoy Longevity
In Good Health &
Happiness**

Kevin Richardson



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Introduction



The quest of almost every individual today is not just to have a long life, but to have a healthy and happy one as well. People plunge headlong into an ocean of trying this and testing that, of having as much as possible, and of working extra time to get all three in life - longevity, happiness, and health.

More and more people today get tired and burned out while trying to figure out the kind of life they want to live. They end up wanting more, rather than being satisfied with what they have. They wake up to the reality that life is getting shorter, more fragile, and more taxing. Schedules just keep getting more hectic. Even if you get to avail paid overtimes, the workload just keeps piling up. Exhaustion gets the better of you. Even with all that overtime pay, you still cannot afford to find real rest and vacation to do what you want in your so-called "free time."

Fact is, most vacations are tightly planned and pressure laden. They say that you have to keep up with some schedule to make the most of your vacation time. When you really think about it, most vacations are really extensions of the pressures you thought you left at the office. Just the same, they often mean you have to beat some deadlines. People tend to feel more tired after such "vacations."

As technology offers amenities and new possibilities that are more modern, people build dreams and ambitions faster than what their pulse rate or heartbeat could endure. The result is a mechanical life enslaved by pressures from deadlines, company goals, and other people's expectations that have no bearing on what you really want to achieve for you and your family. Instead, you and your family are dragged reluctantly into the rush of things and are merely fitted into somebody else's schedules and "cut-off" dates.

Later, the hustles and bustles all end up in a shortened life span; and there at the end of your rope, you realize you have done nothing you really wanted to do in your life. Modernity also keeps pushing us to quick-fix foods that not only cut the time for food preparation, but shorten our health and lives as well.

Not all these killer pressures have to continue if you do not want them to. It is really your choice. Would you drag yourself into such things that will lead you to a short, unhealthy, and miserable life; or would you stand up and decide what you want to do with your own life to achieve longevity, health, and happiness?

This book is based on scientific studies, medical researchers, and empirical studies on lifestyles of people, with some backgrounds on life philosophies lived by people who reached old — yet happy — ages.

Reading this book and keeping the principles here in mind are not enough to achieve the desired result. Neither will trying a little be sufficient, like deciding to apply the principles for three to six months, or even for a year. Instead, you have to commit to a life of doing these steps and principles. Faith is the key. Real faith is not just mental belief — it is living each moment of your life based on principles.

There are three easy yet essential steps involved in attaining a longer, healthier, and happier life. These steps are not intended to be more authoritative than hospital treatments. When you are sick, it is always best to consult with your physician. This book is merely for added information on how to live a better life.

Step One: Keep Your Life Simple

It may be too unsophisticated, but keeping your life simple is an important key to longevity. Aside from prolonging life, it makes a long life happy. What is the purpose of a long life, if you spend most of it in illnesses? A short life is better than a long life of being bedridden, medicine sustained, and pierced by dozens of intravenous tubes.



In all the perplexities that are going on around, many people have forgotten how simple “simple” really is. They have forgotten that one key to a healthy life is being downright simple. Simplicity is often times so profound to other people that they do not believe it unless someone complicates it for them. They find it hard to imagine that once upon a time, people lived comfortably and very happy — that satisfaction exists even without TV, air conditioners, or phones.

They lived much longer and healthier lives long before the discovery of Science and Medicine. They don't need some social science expert to tell them that needs are proportional to progress, and that needs cannot stay as they are while progress goes on, especially at a fast pace.

Well, some people have found the secrets to keeping simple while progress goes on running a crazy race around them. We will see this later in this book.

This thing about life being complicated (and should be made complicated to enjoy it) has been impressed on people by media and by a “metropolitan culture” that says *life is all about competing and coping up*. Daily, from every possible angle of attack, we are bombarded by manufactured suggestions that we cannot be simply simple — that you got to have this and that, and you got to be this and that — or be left behind by the majority and be worlds apart from the rest.

This is mostly the spirit of modern commercialism. Though not actually said, the mindset of “being simple is a sin” has become rampant. In case you haven't noticed, commercialism has become the strongest life pressure, and the strongest life killer! The pressures brought about by stressful competition can kill!

Recently, Australian health experts discovered that too much emotional and work related pressures produce chemical reactions in the blood that later develop into fatal diseases like cancer. According to physical therapists and massage therapy experts, pressures build up lumps in the body that constrict smooth blood flow. These constrictions produce your unexplained body aches that can later weaken your body defenses. They are harmful to your health.

Advocates of simple living say that *Commercialism* is blowing surface-deep physical and vain emotional needs out of proportion by tricking the conscience of people into believing that non-conformities to suggested and highlighted commercial needs are bad.

Simply put, it is saying, “You’re a loser if you don’t have this!”

Commercial needs are often for physical beauty, trendy accessories, fame, prestige, fashion, and other mundane, temporal, and non-essential things, all of which man can live without. These things excite and resurrect the spoiled brat in people.

Without knowing it, many drag themselves into the lethal race of commercialism. Here are some ways that commercialism traps people:



The profit race – Urbanized places are buzzing with commercialization.

The objective of people worldwide is to urbanize as many places as possible to make them havens for investors. This is more evident in Southeast Asia, South America, and South Africa. As many business establishments open up, more jobs become available. As businesses mushroom everywhere, stiff competition follows.

Most businesses cannot live without killing each other. Somewhere in this rat race, you find yourself in the middle of mountains of work pressures. As business owners crave for more profits, you are yanked along the tug-of-war whether you like it or not. You are cast off into the ocean of deadlines, quotas, and cut-off dates. You kiss your own dream life goodbye, because you are now fulfilling somebody else's dreams — your boss.'

The attention race – As commerce develops, new products and services are introduced. People purchase expensive things because these products make them the centers of attraction. These things get better every day because of competition.

New products and services are sold to produce profits, so new markets ought to be found — and you and your family are among these potential markets. Businesses spend lots of money to convince buyers to buy their products by “helping” these customers see their need for such items. The desire to buy the products will intensify once you see TV personalities (especially actors and sports idols) using them; or when all your neighbors, friends, and relatives have them.

Because you don't want to be left behind and be called a loser, you are influenced to buy them. Of course, buying these latest product lines (and in commercialism, there's always a new one that will outshine what you already have) entails an added burden to your already tight budget, so you will have to strengthen your buying power.

That means you have to get a salary raise, an additional part-time job, or a part-time business. Worse, your last option is to use your credit card — using “money” that does not yet exist. The temptation to buy and forget about your budget triples when all you have to do is have your card “slashed” at the cashier counter, and presto! You have everything your eyes desire! Then the sufferings come sooner than you expect when the credit card company starts sending you bills.

Here is another rub: Often, the more you have these latest models, the more you incur electric consumption, and the more you buy spare parts. Just look at how TV sets now seem to be useless without pairing them with the latest DVD players or computer game devices. Then look in your kitchen. The simple thing of mixing your eggs, milk, and flour now needs electric consumption. Have you noticed how your cell phone model keeps getting out of style?

More people are being obsessed with consumerism (or being addicted to their role of being consumers) and plunge their heads deeper into work to increase their buying power.

The *Journal of the American Medical Association* once said in the early 1990s that workers who had demanding jobs and had little control over them were three times more likely to develop high blood pressure; while those with demanding jobs but had control over them had no such problem. How many today have “control” over their work? Even big business owners do not have control over their businesses when economic problems hit the world, which often happens today.

The American Institute of Stress reported that more than 66 percent of all visits to primary-care doctors are for stress-related problems.

The food race – Commercialism gave birth to fast food chains serving oily and spicy foods that are bad for the health. All the keeping up with schedules, appointments, deadlines, and goals have left little time (if any) for preparing fresh and healthy foods that take time to prepare. People often eat processed foods that have no real nutrients except synthetic ones. They add many preservatives to keep the business from losing profits. Have you noticed how fast food chains mushroom around thriving business establishments?



The frantic search for more profits helplessly lures the employees to take the easy yet unhealthy way. The faster food is prepared in fast food stores, the more it is oily and spiced by quick-fix chemicals. Nowadays, it is rare to find foods patiently marinated in natural herbs and spices, and cooked through steam or boiled in all-natural soups. These foodstuffs, taking no less than artistic skills and the patience of old days to cook, take time to prepare. The food race has no interest in anything that does not convert into FAST cash.

The above are just some useless commercial races people often find themselves in. There are many more. Yet, there is a way out of all these. Some people have chosen a better path than what this world presents as "life." Each of these people has chosen a simple life that is long, healthy, and happy. You can also have this life if you choose to...and you can begin right now!

What Is A Simple Life?

A simple life is more than just living on a small salary. You can be a millionaire and yet live simply, free from common worries. You can be the president of a big and competitive company yet live in complete simplicity. You can be a dogged salesperson targeting high sales quotas and still live simply.

A simple life is abandoning most unnecessary vanities. It means you will have to give up some things in life that you really do not need. A favorite smart term in business today is “prioritizing.” Abandoning is more than just prioritizing. Abandoning is like disposing of garbage because you do not need them. You do not include your garbage in your priority list — you throw them away for good.

A simple life is different from a meaningless life. The former implies simplicity, yet has a purpose. You must have a mission or a goal in life to live it to the fullest. The latter implies having no direction at all. Research has shown that many employees who retire, die 1 to 2 years later. Although stress is not in the equation, these employees might have lost something very significant – having a calling or purpose in life.

A simple life personifies the following:

Eliminate Self-Importance

Self-importance is the basic culprit or cause of vanity. Commercialism feeds on vanity. We don't mean a disregard for your welfare. Welfare is different from vanity. The former is a concern for well-being that is having just enough of what you NEED. Vanity is craving more than what meets your DESIRE. The former is a responsibility. The latter entails selfishness and self-centeredness. It is mere egoism. It is mostly doing something to prove a point or to prove your self - to feed the ego. As long as you're out to prove something, you're susceptible to pressure. Proving something means you are competing — with who is better or has something better.

If you grew up in a city, chances are, you've been raised in an environment of proving your worth. You have been exposed to competition. The usual city motto is *"Not just at par—yours must be better."*

The "Standard"

"Standard" often means what is generally expected and accepted. "Generally" implies that the people took it upon themselves to impose on others what they expect and accept.

The "standard," or what is generally accepted or expected, is often just the whim of some self-important people given authority also by other self-important people. If you join their self-importance, you will never be able to escape the cycle of vanity, and you will never live a simple life.

Standards, indeed, are necessary to gauge good performance and to establish right and wrong. However, they must be TRUE standards that are objective and unbiased.

Standards often times can be manipulated to serve a selfish end. These standards are subjective or biased, and are oftentimes false. They can be ruthlessly used for commercialism. Standards will serve us right as long as they are unstained by ulterior or deceitful motives.

If you don't succumb to the general "standard," how would you know if you are doing right or wrong? How would you know if you are improving or worsening?

The questions therefore should be, "Is what you are doing increasing or decreasing your self-importance? Is it promoting the cravings of your ego, or promoting simplicity in you? Is it reducing your pride? Is it making you meek?" This standard leads to a quiet, simple life.

Whatever you are doing, though it looks good to people and gains their approval, will likely lead you away from a simple life if it promotes your self-importance. Anything that feeds self-importance, or the ego, is unlikely to end up in a long, healthy, and happy life.

Eliminate Negative Stress

Necessary stress is called *eustress*. You need it to boost good performance. It works more like a challenge to give your best to a certain task. You can have this stress and still live simply.

What we don't like is *distress*. It is having more stress than you need to accomplish a task happily. It is stress born out of stiff competition. Having to pay for bills incurred by things you really need causes *eustress*. Having to pay for bills incurred by materialistic desires, especially when the bills have mounted up, causes *distress*. Once desires are fed, they grow into devouring monsters.

Coping Up With Stress



This is how the body copes up with any kind of stress. Your brain has a nerve center called *hypothalamus*. Stress begins to affect you there. The nerves affected then activate your pituitary gland, which secretes or sends a hormone to excite your adrenal glands. This reaction produces “adrenaline” or the “emergency” hormone that makes you more ready to face a suspense or thrill.

Then your heart begins to beat faster, then wilder, sending more blood to the brain and muscles. You become doubly or triply aware of your situation and ready to jump at anything that moves. Breathing becomes faster and deeper; you may even start to gasp for air. This sends more oxygen to your body.

Saliva and mucus (that slimy body secretion, especially from the nose) dry up to increase the size of your body tubes to your lungs. You may find it difficult to swallow (no saliva), but your body will make up for the loss of saliva by perspiring to cool you down. Your intestines stop digestion for a while to conserve your energy.

When the stress is gone, all body systems return to normal. You will find that you feel much better after the stress reaction. You will regain oxygen in your body, good blood circulation, and conservation of energy. When you see what body functions are involved during a stressful situation, you will understand why stress, especially eustress, is necessary and even healthy.

A good physical exercise and a healthy working environment use this type of stress. Facing challenges calmly and positively also utilizes eustress.

However, imagine what would happen with distress, especially a prolonged one. The struggle in your body continues and increases at a stimulated level, badly affecting internal systems. After some time, the body becomes exhausted and abused. It becomes ill or susceptible to misjudgments that lead to relational conflicts (that produce more distress) or accidents.

Distress often results to fatigue.

They are classified into:

- **Physical fatigue** – The body is overworked or becomes too exhausted, often leading to illnesses.
- **Pathological fatigue** – Body defenses (immune system) to fight diseases wear down.
- **Psychological fatigue** – Mental stress destroys mental calmness and sensibility.
- **Psychosomatic fatigue** – Both mental and physical parts are overworked.

Desire Less

Need is a word different from desire. Extreme desire often leads to unwanted problems. In a too commercialized world, people usually cannot accurately identify their needs from their wants or desires. For instance, a sales agent may not be able to reconcile his sales commission earnings and his lifestyle.

Sales and marketing people often find themselves in a fashion struggle with their sales rivals. The idea usually is that making sales depend largely on how fashionable you are - how you are fitted with the latest trend on wears and gadgets.

Take these cases.

CASE # 1:

You may really want to be in social work, but the pay is too low to support your dream to have a car; so you sacrifice your real love and force yourself on something you really do not need. This causes much distress. Yes, you may have the money, but you will have to pay a big price for it.

CASE # 2:

You may want to be a simple homemaker and focus on your children, but other homemakers in your neighborhood have joined the bandwagon of office work. You see that they are able to buy more than what your family can. Therefore, even if it is against your will, you abandon the care of your kids to a babysitter, start your heavy trek to the jungle out there, and look for a job.

The basic idea is to desire less materially. Do what you must do to fulfill a need. Work on it heartily, but do not impose on yourself a desired outcome. Make goals if you wish to — to inspire (not pressure) yourself to more productivity. If you hit your goals, be thankful. If not, so what? Forgive yourself then try better next time. Do not punish yourself for not hitting the goals.

You may not see this as a good work habit. You may even think that this work principle would accomplish practically nothing. Some may see this as destroying the healthy incentive in competition. But it's either you win in stressful competitions all your life and have the enjoyment short-lived, or you live a simple but long, happy, and healthy life; though you may not look like a winner in people's eyes. You cannot have both masters pleased; you can only choose one.



You may window shop in malls all you want and enjoy everything you see. Buy something you need if you can afford it. However, do not feel sorry or be anxious for things you want but cannot afford. Assume the attitude that says, "So what if I can't afford it? I don't need it anyway. And I won't die if I can't have it."

Always remark "SO WHAT?" to things you want but cannot afford or achieve. Then really mean it. It does wonders to the soul — and health.

Laugh More Often

Laughing helps keep things simple. When a problem presents itself, you have two options: to worry, or to laugh some while dealing with it. Worrying often blows things out of proportion.

Laughing makes even big problems seem easy to solve. We do not mean to treat problems lightly, but we need to neutralize an explosive situation with laughter, and then proceed calmly to deal with it.



Once you eliminate the tension, you can assess the situation with clarity and ease of mind. With a clear mind, you will find that the situation involves something you really don't need, and that the permanent and REAL solution is to get rid of that unneeded "something" in your life.

One family was so bothered by how their DVD player always literally burned any disk they put in it. They had spent a big sum having it repaired, to no avail. They sought out the opinion of a friend — would they continue to have it repaired, or buy a new one? Continuing the repairs will seem a fruitless project, and they couldn't afford to buy a new one.

The friend asked them though, "Will you die without a DVD player?"

The family stared at the floor for a while and then looked at each other. Then they broke into wild laughter. The friend asked them again, "Will you?" Then he added, "You know, there are lots of families out there who live happily just watching the TV."

Many of your internal organs including your chest, thorax, abdominal muscles, diaphragm muscles, heart, lungs, and possibly your liver, contract when you laugh.

After laughing, all systems return to normal. This results to less stress and lower blood pressure, as well as an all-around good feeling. Good, hearty laughter is constructive and releases tension.

WARNING: Don't be negative though, and laugh at other people's mistakes.

Overly formal people will not buy the idea of laughing at problems, much less, laughing at yourself when you err. Simple people are not bound by such self-imposed restrictions that feed stress out of bounds. Laughing at your mistakes or problems is a way of telling your emotions that, "Yes, I make mistakes; but I can forgive myself and give it another try." This is a liberating attitude and helps to achieve simple living. This does wonders to your mental and heart health. Come on, everything in life is designed to be enjoyed!

Do Not Be a Perfectionist

Being a perfectionist sounds good a reputation to earn, but it is actually just an ego booster that enlists you, as a permanent and fierce competitor in a useless competition of proving to all that you are the best. It only makes distress an everyday meal for you. Some would insist that being a perfectionist is a good attitude to have, to make sure that your work quality is always top of the line.

Again, if you submit to "standards" made by some people, and if you pursue to fit into that "standard" just to earn their admiration, you are locked into the trap of self-importance; and the "standard" you follow is a false one. In the end, all you get is an ailing body battered from an overdose of distress.

Strive to be perfect by all means, but only in character, especially on how to become more loving, forgiving, patient, understanding, meek, and simple. Do not be a perfectionist — trying to perfect your accomplishments to prove your worth, and punishing yourself doing it — that is, if you want to live a long, happy, and healthy life.

Striving to be perfect in character is a goal that actually takes loads of stress off you. In this case, you often just forgive and forget. On the other hand, a perfectionist assumes to possess something that he does not actually possess – perfection.

Perfectionists live a life of distress due to frustrations and undue pressure. They are usually the most discontented people and easy to disappoint. They always have plans they carefully think of. They feel that there should be nothing on earth to prevent them from accomplishing these plans, according to the details. They easily get angry when some details are ignored. These traits make for a short, unhappy, and unhealthy life.

Always be happy and thankful for what you have and for what you have achieved. Many things we do or achieve in this life will be set aside to oblivion someday. If remembered, they may be susceptible to evil application someday by unscrupulous future generations. The splitting of atoms was a perfect accomplishment. A perfectionist poured perfect attention into it. However, later generations used it to annihilate races and nations.

Love and good character are the only endeavors worth perfecting, and they are the only lasting memories that survive generations.

Love Everything

When you focus on love as the rule of your life, everything becomes simple. It becomes very easy for you to let go, to forgive and forget. Nothing in this life is as important as character. People living simple lives often have enough quality time to meditate on life and realize that this philosophy is true: That there is nothing more important and sublime than to love — love God or a Higher Being, love life, and love people around you.

Some will say they are perfectionists because they love. However, note that perfectionists love nothing except people's admiration.

The adage goes that love conquers all and never dies. Love does not conquer in ways that perfectionists do. Most people, when they do an unsatisfactory task, will be frustrated even to the point of dire depression.

However, simple people who have mastered loving people will simply let go and think positively. They give everybody a chance to try better next time. The way they conquer

is to always find something positive in everything, thwart unnecessary distress, and free everybody of pressure. They are serious in matters that deal with values and character.

Stop, Look, and Listen

While everybody else is busy running around beating deadlines, simple people make time to stop and watch life unfold each day. You may find them sitting by their doorsteps quietly watching people pass by, or enjoying how the neighborhood goes about its daily routine. Some of these people, being used to daily neighborhood activities, know what would take place at such a time in a particular spot in their street.

Simple people watch life unfold before them as a kind of meditation. They may also engage in leisure activities such as gardening, painting, photography, or simply writing a diary. Other people, who have the luxury of time and space (and money), leisurely walk through parks or forests to watch and enjoy nature. They sigh and rejoice at the wonders of creation.

To busy people, these leisurely activities seem nonsense and a waste of time. However, meditative moments like these calm the nerves and ease pressures that choke nerve points in the body, aside from taming the blood pressure. The human body, being a "temple," as a popular eastern belief goes, actually needs quiet and tender moments like these. Scientifically, the mind needs rest as much as the body does. Not even sleep can provide the mind the rest it needs, especially when schedules become too tight.

Meditation adds considerably to the ease and relaxation that the mind needs. When the mind is at rest, the body follows suit.

The seven points above are just examples of what makes a life simple. The basic principle is that, the more you trim down your lifestyle — throwing away everything that does not help in building up good values and character, and getting rid of anything that promotes self-importance — the simpler it becomes.

In some extreme cases, people who are dead serious about having a simple life actually quit their lucrative jobs or businesses and retire with their loved ones to their chosen haven. The idea, according to them, is that a long, healthy, and happy life is the only thing worth living for.

It has been observed that rural folks live long lives mostly because they are free from the pressures of city life. Simple living often means less, if any, pollution – air, noise, and water. It also constitutes fewer things to worry about.

The exodus to the city from the countryside has been going on en masse, and people find it harder and harder to enjoy a peaceful, quiet, and simple life in the crowded cities.



Step Two: Eat Right

The right diet is not just a balanced one — meat, carbohydrates, veggies and fruits — but the serious inclusion of natural food supplements from rare super herbs and other natural sources. These supplements are the best promoters of a long, healthy life, especially in these days of fakes and second-rate commercial items. Moreover, a balanced diet is not just having a balance on a variety of foods. It is primarily having a balance between macronutrients and micronutrients.

First, let us talk about right nutrition. So how nutritious, do you think, is the food that you eat today? Are you sure the “fresh” veggies, fruits, fish, bread, and meat you eat are indeed fresh? Do you know how they were grown and handled?

Right diet begins from the very root. When you really dig deep into it, you might be shocked to know that nowadays, “nutritious” foods are just figments of the imagination of unscrupulous sellers and TV commercial producers. There is almost no such thing as “100% nutritious” food anymore. If you intend on living a long and healthy life, you have to know the following facts.

So Where Have All The Nutrients Gone?

When your body receives right and REAL nutrition, it becomes self-sustaining and self-supporting. It has the ability to produce its own natural vitamins and resistance forces, or disease fighters, known as antibodies. If you feed your body with REAL food, you will minimize the occurrence of diseases in your body systems. Your cells will reproduce healthy cells that will reproduce healthier ones, and so on. The body tissues will be able to repair themselves quickly and the immune system will always be in tiptop shape.

Why do we have such dreaded life-threatening diseases today that were unheard of in earlier times? One of the oldest and authoritative books on life, the Bible, records people living to almost a thousand years—with no illnesses whatsoever. Even from the days of our grandfathers and great grandfathers, we hear stories of amazing physical feats of health and longevity.

People from “those days” live incredibly simple but very happy lives, the kind that many of us today would like to go back to. What happened to all these?

Consider the following reasons and know what caused them:

1. Soil Depletion

Let us start from the very beginning. It all begins from food existing as a seed until it grows and bears fruit. The onslaught of soil depletion and erosion reduces the nutrients that plants get from the soil. Plant crops can only be as nutritious as the soil is rich in nutrients. Bad soil cannot equate to good crops.

Over the years, especially when global commercialism intensified, the field of agriculture was pressured to produce not only for the nation but also for the world. The race to feed the world (exporting of agricultural crops) introduced the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides to hasten production. The soil was poisoned and eventually made impotent. The abuse did not stop there, however. The huge crop production must continue, so even the soil was “pressured” and forced to produce against its will, so to speak. Commercialism even pressures nature, not just humans!

Hence, agricultural crops are no longer as nutritious as they used to be. You have to eat bowlfuls of vegetables today just to equal the nutrients that a small bowl of veggies produced a long time ago. So don't be so sure of your health just because you eat plenty of fruits and vegetables. The question is, “How nutritious are they today?”

2. Soil Erosion

Global commercialism also results to forest denudation (rampant cutting of mature trees, balding the mountain coverings), which further results to large-scale floods until today. Rural floods wash away precious soil down rivers. The soil, with the fertilizers and pesticides included, clogs the rivers and kills nutritious fresh water animals as well. Soil left to itself has the natural ability to recycle its potency; meaning, when the nutrients of the top soil is used, it can be refreshed by deriving potency from the upturned lower soil.

Traditional farming (which uses NO chemicals) helps in this. This natural process retains potency for the top soil. However, with man's destructive intervention, like the wholesale introduction of chemical or inorganic fertilizers (which become deadlier with technological advances), plus deforestation, the natural soil process is disturbed. Instead of letting the soil rehabilitate to retain natural nutrients, it is forced to produce through unnatural means. This results to crops with greatly reduced nutrients.

3. Chemicals in Foods

Aside from having their nutrients greatly reduced, many foods today are treated with harmful chemicals. Washing, cooking, and boiling for long hours may lessen the chemicals in your foods, although these harmful substances may not be fully eliminated.

Peeling the skin off some fruits will not ensure safety either. Imagine swallowing and accumulating all those fertilizers and pesticides in your body. Do you still wonder why deadly diseases today were unheard of in the days of our ancestors?

Insects know better. They will not touch crops with pesticides. That is why you will find these crops sold in the market without any sign of insect bites. People buy them because they look clean and delicious. They don't know that these outward appearances conceal inner hazards. Some people think it is a good option to eat fruits and vegetables that have a few nibbles from insects.

4. Processed Foods

After having your veggies and fruits treated with fertilizers and pesticides (and these are given to farm animals as part of feeds), they also undergo artificial processing to prolong their “freshness.” They are treated with preservatives, which mean more chemicals. Some instant noodles are added with chemical wax, which may be cancer causing. Do you know that other countries ban some of these noodles?

Moreover, many processed foods are abundant in salt. Because they terribly lack REAL nutrition, their sellers sometimes put synthetic vitamins in them and pass them off as “plus factors” for good health — when actually, these synthetic vitamins often do either nothing or even harm your health.

If you want to live a long, happy, and healthy life, always be on the lookout for the presence of preservatives in your food. See the labels and find out if some of the ingredients can be harmful to your health.

5. The Hazards of Eating Meat

Eating meat in itself is unhealthy especially when eaten too much. Certain meats, such as beef, take some 72 hours to digest completely. Therefore, if you eat meat each meal, you would still be digesting the food you had for breakfast the other day while you are again consuming another round of it. Now, imagine how unhealthy it becomes if the animal where the meat came from was treated with antibiotics and other artificial health sustainers? These chemicals stay in the meat fibers; and no amount of washing, cooking, or boiling will get rid of them.

Hence, many people today are immune to antibiotics for humans. They ingest the antibiotics from animals, and the extra strong antibiotics kill both the good and bad bacteria in the human body. The more you eat chemically treated meat, the more you weaken your body's defense mechanisms. This hazard is aggravated further when the meats are processed with artificial tastes and preservatives.

If you want to live a long, happy, and healthy life, minimize your meat intake. Substitute meat with healthier alternatives like bean curd.

6. Precautions When Consuming Fish

Many “fresh” fishes in the market today are added with preservatives to lock in their “freshness.” Some use formalin, a chemical used in embalming human corpses, to preserve newly caught fishes. A few wicked sellers may wash marketed fishes with food coloring or textile color to give these fishes a “fresh” look. To ensure your safety and enjoy the nutritious benefits of fishes, buy them from trusted sources only.

7. Precautions When Consuming Bread

Many white breads are hard to digest. Their hard residues stay long and may form blockades in the intestine. Moreover, experts say eating white bread actually accumulates sugar in your body. Health enthusiasts say wheat bread is a healthier alternative for white bread, but many of the wheat breads today still have preservatives because they are commercially produced. Always check the ingredients just to be sure.



How About Producing Your Own Food?

Now what if you can produce your own food instead, and make sure they are all natural and chemical-free? That is a smart idea. In fact, there are people doing that. For instance, there are producers of really clean and natural honey. They grow them in secluded and tightly covered farms so that the bees they are keeping will only sip nectar from chemical-free plants grown inside the said covered farms. Look for these people, but they may be hard to find. Most people would rather forget all about the hazards of modern food and just get right into business selling them.

If you desire, you can grow your own organic veggies and fruits right in your yard, and have them fresh on your table three times a day! All you need is enough space to have at least three plots for planting.

Have your yard (or a portion of it) covered with screen to protect from insects. Use plastic or fiberglass roofing materials for your roof. Place small earthen pots or any small containers on your plots, and arrange them in rows. Put beats of dried coconut husks, instead of soil, in your containers. Putting soil in them might defeat the purpose.

Grow your seeds in these husk-filled containers, and water them daily. If you want, water them with mineral water. To safeguard against stray insects that manage to break through your green house, spray your plants with a concoction of water and salt. You may want to maximize your green house. Construct shelves in it instead of plots. You may even want to build shelves all around the walls. Put your containers on these shelves. Hang some of them like orchids.

Here's the best part. When the leafy vegetables are ready for harvest, do not take them by the roots. Simply cut the leaves from their stems. Leave the plants in the containers and wait for them to bear new leaves again. The bodies of the plants can reproduce leaves for a number of harvests before you replace them with new plants. Thus, it is good to keep a seedling box for new plants while harvesting from the present ones. Do the same for fruit-bearing small plants like tomatoes, eggplants, etc.

The continuous harvests would start about 2 to 4 months after your first planting. For more information, contact your government agency on agriculture.

Producing your own food is possible even if you have a limited space at home.

With some imagination, you can even have your own private little gardens right in your living room, kitchen, front yard, or clothes-drying area. Make sure to take them out in the sunshine every morning when you plant them indoors.

The important thing is that you must have the patience and determination. You must believe in this thing to make it happen. Once you are deep into this undertaking called *hydroponics*, it can be a meditative discipline. It is being one with your “little creatures” and making an art of it all.

This private food production is possible even on a small budget. A study says hydroponics eventually can yield as much as 30 percent more than usual home gardening. It can even develop as a small (if not full-scale) business.

From this gardening, you can also later produce organic feeds for your small poultry or piggery, if the local laws in your place would allow you to engage in these.

Don't be fooled by some commercial producers who think only of profits. Most of them do not believe in these natural foodstuffs. They join the modern trends of commercialism only because they are more lucrative.

Plant foods grown naturally can rebuild and restore great health, specifically the immune system. However, even if you could grow your own food, you have to know some very important facts about what you need specifically to make your food nutritious. Just because you eat chemical-free meat, fish, veggies and fruits, does not mean you consume nutritious foods.

Macronutrients and Micronutrients

A real balanced diet includes maintaining a balance of macronutrients and micronutrients in the body.

Examples of foods giving macronutrients are the following:

- Protein-rich foods
- Carbohydrates and energy foods
- Fats

From the above, you will notice that foods with macronutrients give bulk and weight to our bodies. However, when we consume too much of these foods, we grow big but not strong. Whatever “strength” we feel comes mostly from body bulkiness — from burning energy. Bulkiness won’t protect us from diseases. They won’t give us staying power to go on even when the energies are burned out. Only our immune system can do that; and the immune system is not fed or strengthened by macronutrients, but by micronutrients.

Here are some micronutrients — natural minerals and vitamins — many of which are likely to sound strange:

- Polysaccharides
- Rhamnose, Xylose, Glucose, Mannose
- Amino acids
- Trace minerals
- Catechins

Micronutrients are found in vegetables like broccoli, and citrus fruits like oranges and grapes. However, these vegetables and fruits might not carry enough micronutrients today. If they do, they might be insufficient to give us the needed nutrients our bodies need to build strong defense systems. Hence, we need to eat bowlfuls of them each meal.

Micronutrients not only feed the immune system; many of them directly fight bad cells and viruses in the body. These are mostly what experts call *phytochemicals* or plant chemicals. These natural chemicals from plants fight off synthetic chemicals formulated by man.

It might come as a surprise that availing of foods rich in micronutrients is actually both hard and easy. Just get natural food supplements sold anywhere. The problem is that natural food supplements are always met with negative bias and destructive criticisms.

Micronutrients are simple natural foods designed to empower our natural bodies. The more you live a simple life, the more you will enjoy these simple yet very powerful natural foods.

Though killer foods (like processed and junk foods) are on the rampage, more and more people go crazy over them. Slowly, a growing number of people on earth are realizing the benefits of a vegetarian and fruitarian diet with natural food supplements, and are joining the crusade to return to the basics and to what are 100% natural.

Good and Bad Bacteria

Another wrong but popular notion we must discuss here is that good health means the elimination of all bacteria. They say clean is healthy.

In a way, yes, clean is healthy. However, "clean" and healthy does not mean zero bacteria. It means a healthy balance of good and bad bacteria. The balance is not 50-50, but about 85 percent good bacteria and about 15 percent bad bacteria.

The reality is often the other way around — that bad bacteria are 85 percent and the rest are good bacteria. In this case, the immune system suffers. Bad cells and bad bacteria are on the loose in your blood stream, destroying every healthy activity in your body. In such cases, the immune system often overreacts to some stimuli and gives you allergies.

The body has trillions of cells. Bad bacteria and free radical cells can destroy about 10,000 of our cells per year; but if our cells are healthy, they will reproduce healthier cells and will likely outdo the destruction of the bad cells. Science has not yet fully understood why we need the 15 percent bad bacteria. It has been observed that if you wipe out the 15 percent bad bacteria, you will grow very weak. Balance is needed to sustain good health.

What happens when your body cells are weak? With 10,000 cells destroyed each year by bad bacteria and bad cells, what do you think will happen as age catches up? Aside from wrinkles, body aches, gray hair, weak eyes, falling teeth, failing health, bending posture, and impotence, some other strange reactions in the body may lead to fatal, terminal diseases.

Antibiotics and Synthetic Remedies

Nutrition experts say natural food is the only suitable “drug” for the natural body. A healthy body is designed to heal by itself. Natural food will help greatly in this natural healing process.

However, since the natural body has been taking chemically treated foods, as well as synthetic “vitamins” given to it since infancy until adulthood, the balance between micronutrients and macronutrients (as well as the balance between the good and bad bacteria), has been gravely interrupted to alarming proportions. The immune system and body cells weaken; and when invaded by deadly viruses and bad bacteria, the body is then introduced to another deadly synthetic remedy — the antibiotic.

Antibiotic (as opposed to probiotic or pro-life) cleans your body of bacteria thoroughly. It aims to eliminate both good and bad bacteria. Yes, you get a cure, but only temporarily. The next time around, other bad bacteria will find the place swept clean (without the good bacteria that could fight off the bad) and make a more powerful comeback. Thus, when you get sick again from the same ailment, you may need a stronger synthetic antibiotic. From then on, each time you get sick, you may need a stronger medicine.

Take the case of penicillin. Fifty years ago, all bacteria were sensitive to it. As the years passed, more bacteria became resistant to penicillin. Currently, it is reported that 50% of bacteria are resistant to it, and 25% of such bacteria are also resistant to newly introduced antibiotics. Bacteria know how to adapt easily! Scientists are left with only one remedy — try to discover and develop antibiotics that are more powerful. New, stronger antibiotics can take years to develop.

Here's another rub. When synthetic drug cures you in some way, it only means it has compromised some other functions of your body. Many diabetes drugs destroy the kidneys. Most synthetic drugs are good only for a short while. When taken for long periods, they cause untold damages to your body organs.

So What Should You Eat?

A balanced diet of meat, vegetables, carbohydrates, and fruits is the common answer; but from the information above, we found that good nutrition is something more than what meets the eye. We need to look for REAL foods that retain enough micronutrients to sustain and empower the life energy (not just body energy) in us.

Since we have also discovered that most foods available to us today in markets are actually so poor in REAL nutrition, and that most are for macro nutrition (giving us mere bulk and weight), we need to look for other alternative and non-traditional sources of nutrition. Natural foods sold in the market must be supplemented with alternative ones. The following are alternative and common sources of micronutrients.

All-Natural Sources of Micronutrients

Pure Green Tea



Camellia Sinensis or Green Tea is rich in Catechins, which are antioxidants. The best variety is said to originate from tea farms in China, especially those protected from pesticides. It is best to drink pure green tea without preservatives or other artificial flavors.

Teas have been found to have powerful effects on levels of cholesterol in the blood stream. Green tea in particular can also help in battling cancer. In Japan, it was discovered that drinking 10 or more cups of green tea daily delays the onset of cancer by some nine years among women and about three years in men.

Another source of good green tea is the high-grade tea sold at Japanese Tea Online. These are delicious kinds and contain large amounts of polyphenols and flavonoids (catechins which are also immune system boosters), and natural vitamins and minerals. Catechins destroy free radicals. Green tea also has carotenoids, chlorophyll, polysaccharides, fats, natural vitamins C and E, manganese, potassium, and zinc.

Pure green tea is said to be 100 times more effective than vitamin C from other sources, and 25 times better than vitamin E from other sources.

You may find green tea mixed with other medicinal herbs in leading drug stores, but rarely can you find pure green tea sold alone. Green tea is usually sold in tea bags, but modern processing has made possible its liquefied form in bottles, and also its powdered form in sachet packages, without damaging its health and healing benefits.

Green tea and other natural food supplements carry micronutrients that feed your immune system and strengthen your body cells. When the immune system becomes stronger, tissue and cell repair is enhanced in a way that the body retains the ability to heal itself; thus, ailments and even serious diseases are healed. It is not the food supplement itself that heals, but the empowered immune system.

A Japanese monk, Eisai, wrote in 1211 AD that (green) tea is a miraculous medicine for the maintenance of health. "Tea has the extraordinary power to prolong life. Anywhere a person cultivates tea, long life will follow."

Eisai further wrote that tea in general was known as an elixir that created the "immortal" mountain dwellers.

In the 16th century, European explorers were said to have found that tea, especially green tea, was used to treat fever, headache, joint pains, and stomachaches.

Green tea, according to modern nutritionists and herbal medicine experts, can help prevent high blood pressure, cancer, diabetes, heart ailments, skin diseases, and lung ailments. It actually delays the aging process. It eliminates distress by refreshing your mind and body.

The Himalayan Red Berry



Many call it the “happy” berry. The Chinese call it *gougi*, or sometimes Xinjiang berry. The Koreans call it *Kugicha*, and the Japanese call it *Kukoshi*. Whatever it's called, this “happy” berry is said to be the most powerful food on earth. It has different varieties growing from different parts of central Asia, but the best variety is said to be those growing high up in the Himalayan mountain ranges, especially on Mount Everest, the highest place on earth, cutting across the boundary of China and India.

These red berries have a history to tell in the world of ancient healings and nutrition. Records date as far back to the time of Bodhidharma who crossed the Himalayan mountain ranges to reach China. This Buddhist monk was said to have accomplished impossible feats and was never beaten in any challenge. His secret, according to legend, was some strange form of exercise adopted from the movements of animals found in the lowlands of the Himalayas, and a diet of fruits from unusual plants growing on the harsh environs of the Himalayas.

Later, explorers found a certain red berry abundant in the Himalayas that folks living at the base of the mountains claimed were responsible for their long lives and experience of zero ailments.

Indeed, there was a Buddhist temple in China (situated near the Himalayan slope) that had a well where the water was said to be miraculous. From it, the monks drank and never became sick.

Curious people came and found red berries at the bottom of the well, fallen from a crawling shrub on a wall of the temple nearby. From then on, the red berries became popularly known as longevity berries.

Much later, Western scientists and nutritionists investigated the phenomenon of the red berries and took samples to their labs. What they found was truly fascinating. The red berries contained the highest concentration of a unique variety of polysaccharides never before encountered in the world. This unique type of polysaccharides has a tremendous effect on the immune system. It can help the body fight off even the mother of all cancers. So far, Himalayan red berries have proven to be the mother of all natural food supplements.

Here is a summary of the record of one of the early users of the Himalayan berries. The user, Li Qing Yuen, lived to be 252 years old. He was born in 1678 in a mountainous region of China. His life was documented and confirmed by many modern scholars. A noted Chinese herbalist, Ron Teeguarden, wrote about Li.

Traveling around, Li became an herbalist expert under three master herbalists. Li was known for his amazing vigor and excellent health, especially when he started devouring bowlfuls of the Himalayan red berry soup every day, along with steamed aboveground vegetables and other herbs. His eyesight remained sharp and his legs stayed powerful even at an old age. He died in 1930 after a celebration in his honor given by a government official. He married 14 times and lived to see 11 generations of his offspring — 200 people in all.

Probiotics



Probiotics are good bacteria. They can be derived from the cultivation of lactic acid, which in itself will also produce numerous other types of lactic acids. In other words, it is a process of fermenting milk products to produce good bacteria.

We need a large population of probiotic bacteria to help in digesting food, killing harmful microorganisms, and keeping our bodies functioning properly. Probiotics also produce many important enzymes, Vitamins B and K, lactase, fatty acids, and calcium. Probiotics strengthen the immune system by producing specific proteins that act as antigens.

These are used by the immune system in battling or “shooting” enemy intruders or diseases in the body. Probiotics also attach themselves on the walls of the intestines and “ambush” harmful bacteria there, allowing the immune system to focus its work on other parts of the body. As good bacteria attach to intestinal walls, they also pluck out hardened thick plates formed by undigested food residues that clog the intestines. Probiotics help kill viruses and parasites. They also “recruit” new antibodies by actually producing huge pools of extra antibodies that will act as defenders of the body's total health.

When you buy a probiotic fermented drink, make sure you check the label for the ingredients. The best brands carry eight good microorganisms, namely:

a) Plantarum

It has a high digestive capacity to break down proteins. In other words, it helps you absorb more proteins. Think of what that can do to your body and immune system. It produces the natural antibiotic called acidophilin. It also produces tryptophan, which helps to improve your nerve fibers. That means more emotional stability and calmness for you!

b) Acidophilus

It helps to maintain a balanced flora in the small intestine, contributing to good digestion of milk and sugar (lactose). It helps produce natural vitamins and enzymes, fights against microbes in the intestine, and controls yeast overgrowth. It also produces the natural antibiotics called lactocidin and acidophilin.

c) Casei

It helps in digesting carbohydrates and produces secretory IgA, which is a natural chemical weapon of our immune system against pathogens, a deadly virus. It also produces peptidoglycan, which considerably strengthens the immune system.

d) Bulgaricus

It has natural antibiotics and produces blastolysin in the body's cell membrane. This helps prevent tumors in the intestine and colon.

e) Bifidus

It produces certain acids that stop the colonization of deadly bacteria, such as salmonella. It protects against diarrhea, intestinal infections, tumor cells, constipation, and cirrhosis of the liver. It greatly helps prevent cancer.

f) Rhamnosus

It treats and prevents diarrhea, arrests negative effects of synthetic antibiotics, gives the intestine the ability to survive acid and bile digestion, and protects the respiratory tract (a tube to the lungs). It helps the white blood cells kill harmful bacteria.

g) Buchneri

It revitalizes the immune system.

h) Delbruechi

It inhibits the accumulation of toxins in the body.

Chili

Chili not only enhances flavor, but it is also a good source of vitamin C and beta-carotene. It is good for heart protection. It also helps relieve nasal congestion, and prevents blood clots that can lead to a heart attack or stroke. Eat them raw or half-cooked.

Asparagus

Asparagus is a good source of folate (good in treating heart disease) and potassium. Folate helps in pregnancy since it protects against neural tube defects in babies. The asparagus stalk is high in antioxidants.

Grapefruit

Here are the wonders of this common fruit. The pink or red kinds both give beta-carotene and lycopene. Lycopene is good for the heart and lowers the risk of prostate cancer. Grapefruit also gives potent antioxidants and potassium. It also has phytochemicals and bioflavonoids that fight cancer, inhibit tumor growth, prevent inflammation, and fight heart diseases. It is high in pectin, which is a soluble fiber that helps reduce blood cholesterol. Its phenolic acid inhibits the formation of cancer-causing nitrosamines. Its limonoids, terpenes, and monoterpenes induce the production of enzymes also responsible for preventing cancer. That's multi cancer protection for you.

Bok Choy

This is a green leafy vegetable common in Asia. When chewed, it releases isothiocyanates found to be effective in preventing certain cancers, particularly lung cancer. It is rich in vitamin A and fiber.

Garlic

Eating garlic is the cheapest way to protect yourself against heart diseases, says a study at the All India Institute of Medical Services in New Delhi in 2002. It is all in the compound called allicin, which comes out when garlic is chopped or crushed. This compound helps in preventing the accumulation of platelets on the heart's vessel walls that can trigger a heart attack.

Mango

This yellow fruit is an important source of vitamin A and beta-carotene. Vitamin A is good for the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases. Mango is also rich in fibers and vitamin C. Choose the ones with solid yellow color.

Kiwi Fruit

It is high in vitamin C, potassium, fiber, and phytochemicals. It also contains pectin, which is good for controlling blood cholesterol. It has lutein and zeaxanthin, antioxidants that are good for the eyes.

Mushrooms

Aside from being fat-free and high in minerals and phytochemicals, mushrooms also have glutamic acids that combat infections, and eritadenine that helps lower bad cholesterol. It contains potassium, which is good in lowering blood pressure. Flat and button mushrooms have selenium which helps prevent prostate cancer.

Tofu

Soya bean curd, or tofu, is not only an excellent meat substitute but also a very healthy one. It helps prevent cancer, especially of the prostate, and is a fat burner. It has fiber to clean your veins and intestines. A study in Japan showed that Tofu helped the Japanese counter their cigarette smoking and heavy drinking habits.

The Japanese are known for their workaholic attitude and are among the worst smokers in the world. Yet, majority of them stay fit and healthy. Upon close examination, experts discovered that their daily consumption of Tofu helped them lick serious diseases.

Fresh Coconut Water

Fresh coconut water is complete with natural minerals and vitamins taken straight from the nutrients of the soil. Make sure you get this fresh from the tree if you want to reap all the benefits. Some of the coconut drinks available commercially are diluted with water and added with sugar. Some have preservatives. Fresh coconut water can help clean the kidneys and gall bladder of toxins. The coconut shell that protects the water from any outside contamination is hard enough for said protection, and soft enough for sunlight to affect it favorably.

What Should You Avoid To Eat?

There are certain everyday foods that can cause damage to your health when taken in excess. Here are some words of advice to enjoy good health and long life.

Avoid Consuming Too Much Salt

Taking in too much salt, or any spices for that matter, is bad for your heart. However, studies indicate that natural spices like garlic and onions are good for your blood pressure. Remember the simple rule that moderation puts you on the safe side. Salt has a corrosive effect, as salt water from the sea corrodes even the steel parts of ships that touch the seawater. Salt deposits in the body can cause serious side effects like gout, kidney stone or gall bladder stone, and even clogged blood veins.

Avoid Drinking Too Much Coffee and Tea

Coffee and tea taken in moderation is not bad, except when your doctor says otherwise. The problem occurs when a person gets too addicted in drinking these beverages. The accumulated caffeine in the body, especially from coffee, has dire side effects that eventually connect with the brain. If you treasure a strong memory, watch

your coffee and tea consumption. On the contrary, green tea has been observed for decades to contribute only good health to the body. Ordinary tea has about 15% to 30% caffeine, while green tea has 3% caffeine, which many nutritionists say is minimal.

Reduce Your Food Intake

Cutting down your food consumption by 40% than your usual intake can be advantageous to your health. This helps add to your life expectancy. A study says it actually increases life expectancy two times. Eat smaller meals more frequently. Smaller food consumptions taken 6 times a day are better than enormous food intakes taken 3 times a day.

Cut Down On Sugar.

Consuming too much sugar makes you susceptible to a host of diseases, among them diabetes and cancer. Cancer tumors devour sugar and actually triple their growth because of it. Besides, it has negative effects on aging and the eyes.

Watch Your Dairy Products Consumption

Taking in too much of them may lead to heart problems. A better choice would be drinking skimmed, non-fat, or low-fat milk.

Avoid Taking Cold Drinks after Eating Fatty Foods

Take sips of hot water instead. This is to avoid the accumulation and hardening of fats in your stomach and intestine.

Do Not Smoke

For some, smoking is especially tempting after a hearty meal. If you reduce your eating by 40%, you fill your stomach less; and that lessens the temptation to smoke.

Step Three: Enjoy Exercise

Everybody knows that being healthy requires plenty of exercise. However, you must enjoy your exercise if you want it to help you live longer.

A routine that takes the fun out of working out will only make you less motivated and weaker. It will do more damage in the long run. You may exercise rigidly or lightly. Just make sure you are enjoying it and it does not become a punishment for your body.

Here are important considerations for a Fun-filled but effective exercise:



Do the Exercise You Love

Never impose something on yourself if you don't love doing it. Never mind if it's the latest craze in town. If you don't enjoy it, don't do it. Never mind if the exercise you enjoy is old fashioned, out of this world, or something you just made up yourself. Do it if it fits your lifestyle, and if it's something you enjoy doing.

Make Sure You Work Out A Sweat

Whether you want it rigid or light, sweating is your gauge of effectiveness. If you want it light, do it until you are sweating well, then gradually stop.

Some people think they always need to get too tired and breathe so heavily, to get a good workout. This is not true. Make sure that you do not spend all your strength just so you can say you had a complete workout. You don't need to tire yourself each time. You must end each workout relaxed and still energetic.

Exercise Regularly

Exercising once a week is not good. In fact, you may even be harming your body that way. Doing cardiovascular exercises, 3 to 4 times a week, for at least half an hour each time, is ideal.

Do a Variety of Exercise Activities

They say variety spices up everything. If you feel like running today, go ahead. Run leisurely and enjoy the scenery. Next day, if you feel like doing table tennis, go ahead. On the third day, you may feel like just staying at home and doing some rounds of skipping rope and weights. Go ahead. Variety can eliminate boredom and can motivate you to enjoy your exercise.

Don't Be Obsessed With Muscles

Bulky muscles are not important. You will survive without them. The important thing is to be fit, pass your medical tests, avoid a protruding stomach, and maintain your ideal weight. If you're working out like crazy just to have those rippling and bulky muscles, you probably have been watching too much TV and movies, or you're very insecure about yourself. Bulky muscles are not for everybody. Cheer up! Just be thankful that you have a body to keep fit and healthy!

Break It Down

If you don't have enough time in the morning, break your exercise session down into smaller sessions during the day. Have 10 to 15 minutes of exercise in the morning, another one at noon, and another one in the afternoon. You may also do exercises while at work. Take very short breaks now and then for good stretches. If possible, do push-ups, isometrics, squats, or other simple but significant exercises (without need for any equipment). Some people who are glued to their computers 8 hours daily do hard and tight hand/ arm compressions now and then, along with occasional squats. If you can walk instead of commuting or driving, that would be a healthier and cheaper alternative.

Shift Your Focus

Remember this truth: Having healthy internal organs is more important than having big muscles. People who live long, healthy, and happy lives are seldom preoccupied with gaining big muscles, though they are fit and have healthy internal organs. Focus more on aerobic exercises, muscle stretches, and deep breathing in a healthy environment.

Don't Strain Yourself Too Much

Although the saying "no pain, no gain" has a ring of truth in it, always listen to your body. When it urges you that it cannot do more than two or three sets of nine push-ups, then comply accordingly. Do more next time.

Exercise in a Quiet Place Where Fresh Air Freely Circulates

If you can, exercise in the early mornings when there is lesser noise and pollution. A calm mind during a workout is very beneficial. When your mind is at peace, your organs will acquire most of the invigorating effects of smooth respiratory and blood circulations. A troubled or agitated mind due to a noisy environment sends unwanted stress signals that cause interruptions in the functions of your body organs.

Keep a Cheerful Heart While Exercising

Get rid of all evil thoughts, malice, anger, wrath, hatred, and other negative emotions. Make sure not to just put them aside for a while; instead, get rid of them! Negative emotions store prolonged distress in the body, thereby triggering bad chemical reactions in the blood and adversely affecting internal systems. These are the silent killers – time-bombs waiting to explode. Exercise will only hasten the time mechanism.

Some people pour their outrage into exercise — like angrily doing the punching bag, or lifting heavy weights — and feel much better later. This may be excusable if not done habitually. Don't get used to releasing your negative emotions through rigid exercise. At times, fierce anger triggers high blood pressure, which is a silent killer. It often does not give warning signals. As your anger wells up, your blood pressure likewise jacks up. Any doctor will tell you that exercise is bad when you are suffering from high blood pressure. What you need to do is to relax or rest, and not to engage in rigid exercise.

Remember, feeling good does not always mean being healthy. Bad food feels good in the mouth too.

Pause A While For Deep Breathing

This ensures good air and blood circulation in your body. Rest and relax in-between exercises.

Drink a Lot

Make sure to drink lots of water or natural fruit juices during your rest periods to replace lost body fluids through perspiration.

Hobbies or Chores as Exercises

There are hobbies and house chores that involve physical activities. With a little imagination, you can have fun doing them and convert them into real body workouts.

Here are examples:

Gardening

All the gardening activities such as squatting, bending, stretching, trimming, and sweeping are real exercises if done regularly. If possible, try not to use the water hose for watering plants. Instead, fetch a pail of water from the water source to the plants, alternately using your right and left hand in carrying the pail.

Sweeping the Street

Do a little favor for your neighbors. Sweep not only your yard, but also the portion of the street in front of your house as well. All that body sways, bending, and carrying trash into the garbage can are good exercises.

Car Washing

Wash not only your car, but volunteer to wash others' cars as well. Again, don't use the water hose but use a pail to get the water. The fetching of the water, the hard arm scrubs, and the stretching and bending are all good exercises. These build good relations too.

Cleaning Your Library

If you are a book lover and have piles of them in your home library, clean that room at least once a week. Bring out the books from the shelves and clean everything spotlessly. Place the books on the floor while you wipe the shelves. It would be better if you're climbing up and down a ladder. After cleaning, replace the books. Now, imagine all that bending, going up and down, and carrying from the floor up to the shelves! That is a mighty workout! Try alternating the cleaning of the library, the kitchen, and the basement, week after week.

Biking

Hop onto a bike, instead of your car, when you need to go to the market, shop, grocery, mall, school, or even work. Forget about shortcuts. Biking can promote good cardiovascular health. Just make sure to ride safely always. We want a long life here, don't we?

Hiking And Taking Pictures

If your hobby is photography or filmmaking, take hikes as you look for things to shoot. Appreciating the beauty of nature can give you an inner sense of peace.

Rearranging Your Rooms

Do major clean-ups and rearrangements of your rooms often. Rearrange your living room, bedroom, and dining room. Rearrange the furniture. Don't just drag them as you move them; lift them as much as possible. Choose manual tools for cleaning.

Note: It is important for you to enjoy doing a house chore to take out the pressure and tension in an exercise session. It is wearily doing a chore that makes it stressful.

True Stories of Longevity

A. The Hunzakuts



In the Hunza valley somewhere up the Himalayan mountain ranges, ethnic people called Hunzakuts live. They are able to do superhuman feats and have the endurance that surpasses that of well-known athletes. They can climb up and down cliffs and run for miles along narrow mountain passages without feeling tired. Even elderly Hunzakuts do these feats. They live over 100 years. These people are generally brave, yet patient and cheerful. They remain free from diseases and are excellently healthy. They stay far away from the ways and habits of the modern world.

These people have learned by their native wisdom what some intellectuals of the metropolis are only starting to see. They have prioritized a long, healthy, and happy life over the drive to win in the world. They live with the basic life principle to live simply, eat right, and enjoy exercise. They may not be modern people, but they live full lives.

B. The Sardinians



Many people living in Sardinia, an island in Italy, are centenarians, particularly those in the remote mountains of Nuoro province. In 1999, 66 people in this island were 100 years in age or older. These people often live alone (they don't need care-givers), cook, attend to their small shops, and hunt. Some are shepherds who walk their sheep for kilometers. They are slim people.

Their daily diet consists of loads of fresh fruits, nuts, seeds, fava beans, and vegetables — a daily diet rich in fiber, phytoactive vitamins, and minerals. In addition, a glassful of the local red Sardinian mountain wine they drink each meal, which is high in polyphenols that seem to release more age-busting sirtuins, seem to do wonders to their health. An example of a wine label is Gabbas, from Oliena, south of Nuoro. The Sardinian wine originated from grapes grown from the mountain vineyards.

Their general life principles are:

- **Live a simple life.** Expect little but work seriously. Be thankful for what you have.
- **Always have a sense of humor.** Enjoy time with families and friends.
- **Eat only organic foods.** Try to lessen what you eat. When the stomach is full, stop eating. Do not overeat. Junk foods are definitely out of the diet.
- **Exercise moderately** – not too much and not too little. Just stick to regular physical activities like walking, woodworking, and enjoying the outdoors.
- **Drink the glass of Sardinian red wine** after each meal.

You might say that long lives and low life stresses are possible only in the mountains or at least in remote rural places. If you want to, you can have the same conditions, or at least something close to them, in the cities — and even in your very own work place. Admittedly, you will have to make many adjustments to simulate a simple life in the mountains, with all the good foods.

It's not really a question of how applicable the 3 easy steps are in the city, but how willing and serious you really are in actually living a long, healthy, and happy life. When there is a strong will, possibilities will start to show themselves up. Take the first big step of faith.

Conclusion

The discussions here so far may have sounded complicated and lengthy, but they are nothing more than three simple steps.

People have made living complicated, basing everything on what they desire to have and do. However, if you really think about it, there is nothing more important than these three things: a long life, a healthy life, and a happy life.

The story of humanity has been one from extreme simplicity to gradual “progress,” which often means that life has become more and more complicated. Then it climaxed to a point where man thought, “This is it.” At last, he has discovered what real life is — but only to realize that, at the same time, everything has started to crumble before his eyes, especially his accomplishments and hypotheses. It is like the principle of diminishing returns — that once something has reached its peak, there is no other way but to go down.

Man abhorred the simple things in life and set out on an adventure to discover some other worlds out there. “There must be something more to life than just this boring, simple world,” he said. It’s like the classic story of the Prodigal Son who, having everything he needed in his father’s house, left and set out for a more “exciting” world out there, seeking to quench his desires.

The world “out there” seemed more:

- Exciting
- Meaningful and profound
- The real LIFE

Then reality violently shook him wide-awake. There was actually no “*more exciting world out there.*” He found that his only choice was to go back to the world he once detested.

Today, many people like to talk about living a simple, healthy, and happy life. They actually muse on the possibility, but many of them back away when the actual living of such life is seriously considered.

Are you ready to give up some things or assume a completely new lifestyle? Today, you have a choice. You can read this book, sigh deeply, and ignore the simplicity of the techniques in this book; or you can start living a long, healthy, and happy life using just three easy yet powerful steps. It's all up to you.

To a healthier, happier you,

Kevin Richardson