

What Makes A Good Life?

Happiness & Health Stem from Strong Connections

It has been proven that the quality of your relationships at age 50 and beyond is a better predictor of your future than your cholesterol levels. And while alcoholism and smoking are top health threats, loneliness ranks very high as well.

You don't have to have a ton of friends, one, two, or three close connections is fine. It is the quality of those strong relationships that matters; who can you count on if you are sick or scared? If you can have an honest conversation with someone you trust about something that is bothering you, your body literally calms down; your blood pressure and stress hormone levels will probably go down.

There's some evidence that it's not so much the stress that may play a big role in who ages well and who doesn't, but how you manage stress. There's a thread between the warmth and orderliness and predictability of childhood and how people do over time, but there are healing relationships and resources available if you seek them out. People who come from terrible childhoods and young adult years can sometimes do well with the right caring relationships. Self-care and forming the right relationships takes more time as we get older, but it is well worth the effort.

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