

AGE WELL PROJECT

How to 'be' to age well

9 Dec 2021

Resources

The Age-Well Project

Website: <https://agewellproject.com>

Instagram: [@agewellproject](https://www.instagram.com/agewellproject)

Facebook: [@theagewellproject](https://www.facebook.com/theagewellproject)

Susan Saunders Health

Website: <https://susansaundershealth.com>

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Books

[*The Age-Well Project*](#) Easy Ways to Live a Longer, Healthier, Happier Life

[*The Age-Well Plan*](#) The 6-week Programme to Kickstart a Longer, Healthier, Happier Life

Disclaimer

I'm not a doctor or a nurse. I can't prescribe, I can't give you advise on individual health issues. You need to talk to your GP about those. I'm here to guide you to make your own healthy choices, and to coach you to discover what's right for you.

This session is all about my fifth rule for ageing well: mental and social engagement.

So tonight I will:

1. Give you a very simple understanding of the importance of mental and social engagement as we age.
2. I've got five key actions to follow to keep you on track with 'being' as we age this and I'll talk about the science behind each one as we go.

Why is mental and social engagement so important as we age?

Research paper referenced here:

Psychological well-being in elderly adults with extraordinary episodic memory

Click the link to read the full article at:

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0186413>

Quiz: How 'Are' You Now?

- 1) How often do you try something new – a new recipe, walking route, hobby, holiday destination?
- 2) Do you consider yourself to be very stressed?
- 3) How do you feel about the ageing process – broadly positive or negative?
- 4) Do you have a few close friends who you can call if you're having a bad day?
- 5) Do you have regular social interactions outside the home – from saying hello to the postie to chatting to colleagues to a hobby or volunteer group?
- 6) How often do you challenge your brain by learning something new?
- 7) Do you have some sort of religious or spiritual practice? (I include meditation in that)
- 8) How often do you do something creative?
- 9) Do you feel happy?
- 10) How do you feel about your appearance as you age?

My Top 5 'how to be' Lessons for Ageing Well:

1. Do Something New

Research paper referenced here:

Change Is Good for the Brain: Activity Diversity and Cognitive Functioning Across Adulthood

Click the link to read the full article at:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/32025733>

2. Manage Stress

Research papers referenced here:

Longevity factor klotho and chronic psychological stress

Click the link to read the full article at:

<https://www.nature.com/articles/tp201581>

Stressful life events and cognitive decline: Sex differences in the Baltimore Epidemiologic Catchment Area Follow-Up Study

Click the link to read the full article at:

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1002/gps.5102>

Let It Go: Lingering Negative Affect in Response to Daily Stressors Is Associated with Physical Health Years Later

Click the link to read the full article at:

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0956797618763097>

3. Be Positive About Ageing – And Grateful for the Opportunity

Research papers referenced here:

Positive age beliefs protect against dementia even among elders with high-risk gene

Click the link to read the full article at:

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0191004>

Three Good Things

Click the link to read the full article at:

<https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/three-good-things>

4. Volunteering And the Vagus Nerve

Research paper referenced here:

Volunteering is associated with increased survival in able-bodied participants of the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing

Click the link to read the full article at:

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26811548/>

5. Challenge Your Brain And Develop Grit

Research paper referenced here:

Engage Your Brain: GCBH Recommendations on Cognitively Stimulating Activities

Click the link to read the full article at:

https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/health/brain_health/2017/07/gcbh-cognitively-stimulating-activities-report-english-aarp.doi.10.26419%252Fpia.00001.001.pdf

Book Recommendation:

Growing Young: how friendship, optimism and kindness can help you live to 100 by
Marta Zaraska