

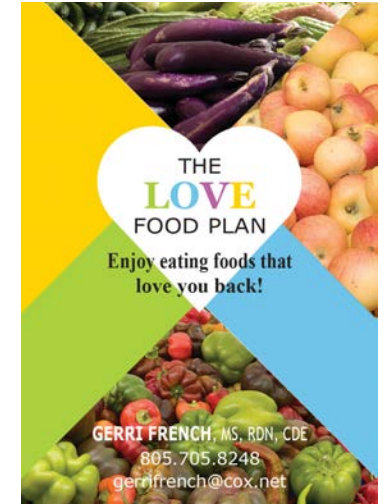
Plan for LOVE with the LOVE Plan

By Gerri French, MS, RDN, CDE



Everybody loves love, right? Well, here's a way to **LOVE** yourself and **LOVE** our planet by eating foods that **LOVE** you back—wise nutrition choices provide nourishment and vitality, and you will **LOVE** how they taste!

Introducing the LOVE Food Plan:



L LUSCIOUS & LOCAL

Buy Local. Locally produced food is fresher, ripened for maximum nutrition and tastes better! Purchasing local food supports our farmers and keeps our land and wildlife productive. It also stimulates our local economy. Growing your own food is a wonderful way to “eat local” whether you have fruit trees or grow vegetables or herbs. To take nutrition and food enjoyment to a higher level, increase your awareness while eating each meal. Whether eating alone or sharing food with others, savor each bite and each taste sensation. Eat mindfully.

O ORGANIC

Choose Organic. Foods produced organically contain fewer chemicals, are better for your health and the health of our soil, air, and water. Organic farmers eliminate the need for fertilizers and pesticides by following proven farming practices to regenerate the soil: planting cover crops, composting, and growing flowers for pollinators—bees, butterflies, and other beneficial insects—to control invasive pests. Organic eggs and dairy contain more beneficial Omega 3 fats and are free of antibiotics and hormones that interfere with the body's natural rhythms.

V VITAL & VIBRANT

Vibrant seasonal plant foods contain vital vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and fiber. These colorful plant foods reduce inflammation in the body and provide prebiotics that feed our microflora to protect our immune system. Simple easy-to-prepare meals of wholesome ingredients including vegetables, legumes, whole grains, fruit, nuts, and seeds with optional meat, seafood, eggs, and dairy. Nutritional supplements are recommended when needed.

E ENVIRONMENT

The LOVE Food Plan promotes environmentally friendly purchases and lifestyle. The goal is to select products made without harmful chemicals and minimal plastics, using fewer natural resources like water and oil. Some keys to longevity are routine exercise and spending time in nature. In addition, relationships with people and pets are important, along with efforts toward animal welfare and social justice for farm workers. We can all make a difference by our choices and curiosity.

Continued on page 2

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

By Justine Sutton

Love is a many-splendored thing. Can't help falling in love. Lost without your love.

We likely have thought all of these at some point, as well as asking questions.

What's love got to do with it? Why do fools fall in love? Will you still love me tomorrow?

Romance is wonderful, even blissful. But can also be painful when it doesn't go well. That's when we say:

Love stinks.

Whether partnered or single, perhaps the most important love we can cultivate is love for self. The opposite of romantic love, it means instead of focusing our adoration on another, we turn that focus inward. It's not something we're taught in life, so learning to love me myself and I can at times feel like you and me against the world.

Self-care isn't all bubble baths and bon-bons, though there's nothing wrong with indulging in these if you enjoy them! Self-care means doing what brings you joy and nourishes your spirit. It may take time to discover what these are as you learn to go your own way.

As Gerri French shares in our cover story, deciding what we eat is self-care. Beyond nutrition, it's important to enjoy our food, its textures and flavors. So dig into that American pie and cheeseburger in paradise!

Rachel McDonald says let's get physical as she shows how embracing our love for ourselves with enjoyable movement is deep self-care.

And Heidi Rigoli's essay on the loss of her dear husband and best friend is poignant and relatable. It's been said that grief is just love with no place to go. Fully experiencing those feelings of grief and love is crucial self-care as well.

When it comes down to it, we know there is one basic truth in life.

All you need is love.

Plan for LOVE with the LOVE Plan

Continued from page 1

SO, WHAT TO EAT?

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS:

Breakfast: Pasture-raised eggs or tempeh scrambled with spinach, beet greens, peppers & mushrooms—serve with salsa, avocado and beans or simply a slice of multi-grain toast with avocado

Lunch: Mediterranean salad with cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, red onion, olives, feta cheese & garbanzo beans—serve with a simple dressing of olive oil & balsamic vinegar

Dinner: Local seafood or veggie patties—serve with roasted potatoes, zucchini, fennel, carrots & beets

GERRI FRENCH, MS, RDN, CDE

Gerri has been a clinical nutritionist, nutrition educator, and cooking instructor for the past 35 years. She currently is a nutritionist and diabetes educator at Sansum Clinic, the nutrition instructor for the Culinary Arts Program at Santa Barbara City College, and as an instructor for the School of Extended Learning. Gerri graduated with a BS in Nutrition from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and an MS in Physical Education and Wellness.

Contact Gerri at gerrifrench@cox.net

RESOURCES

NATIONAL

Ewg.org — *Environmental Working Group: Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce* (Dirty Dozen/Clean Fifteen) and Food Scores

Foodprint.org — Project of Grace Communications: Resources on increasing awareness of environmental and public health issues and advocating for sustainable alternatives

Seafoodwatch.org — Guide to selecting safe, sustainable fish

LOCAL

Ediblesantabarbara.com — A publication celebrating those who produce our food, with seasonal recipes

SBfarmersmarket.org — Support our local farmers

Meetup.com/santa-barbara-food-and-farm-adventures — Join Gerri to learn more about local food production, visit Santa Barbara Food and Farm Adventures Meet-Up, where small groups meet the farmers who grow our food, tour their farms, and attend other food-related events. Join the fun!

Free CSA Support Groups

Caregiver is a noble yet demanding job, often a blur of medication schedules, doctor appointments, and trying to meet the loved one's emotional needs. Caregivers can easily become isolated and overwhelmed, yearning for a lifeline. This is where CSA's caregiver support groups step in, providing help with day-to-day challenges as well as a vital sense of community and belonging.

The groups offer members emotional validation, tears met with kindness and laughter reminding everyone that even the most trying moments can hold humor. In this space, caregivers are held as simply human with their own feelings and grief. Joining a support group can be a turning point as they realize tending to their own well-being is not a luxury, but a necessity. They are encouraged to carve out time for their own hobbies, exercise, and social connections because a replenished caregiver is a better caregiver.

Although each member has unique circumstances, the common thread binding them is the shared experience of love and responsibility. Support groups offer the powerful reminder that we are not alone and that in our most challenging journeys, connection and compassion can light the way.

Support groups are available online and in person, including at Vista Del Monte each Wednesday, 10 - 11:30am. All are free of charge to any caregiver. To sign up, call CSA at 805-898-8080.

SINGLE ITEMS TO WHOLE ESTATES

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PEARLS is a nationally renowned, evidence-based coaching program that teaches skills to manage difficult feelings and improve quality of life.



What Not to Say Or Do When Someone Is Grieving—Signed, One Who Is

By Heidi Hutton Rigoli, BSN, RN

My husband died a little over two months ago.

I'm 68 years old and have lost other people. My father, my mother, and others.

But my husband was my most important person and the best friend I've ever had. We were married for almost 30 years, and I'm experiencing a depth of sorrow I've never known.

Yet, I feel the need to speak up about something. Not just for myself, but for others in grief who may not want to say it.

Here goes—sometimes people say and do dumb things when you're grieving!

Sorry to be harsh, but it's true.

The problem is that these things aren't just dumb. They can be hurtful too.

I know you don't mean to hurt anyone. I've often said the wrong thing too.

For instance, saying that the one who died is "in a better place." That isn't helpful. Anyway, how do you know?

Also, people will tell you they're sorry, but at least the loved one had a good, long life.

No matter how old the deceased one was when they died (my husband was 92), their life wasn't long enough for the person who is missing them.

Then, there are the people who don't show up to support you.

What surprised me the most were the reactions of friends I thought were the closest and would be the most supportive.

Some of them didn't show up.

Then there were people I never expected, who were there for me.

Yes, I have expectations.

I've been told expectations only lead to disappointment.

I agree. But sometimes I *do* have them.

I don't know everyone's reason for not showing up. I think some people don't know what to say and are afraid they'll say the "wrong thing."

Like the things I'm writing about here!

Or maybe a person doesn't show up because they can't bear to look death in the face.

And looking at you, my friend, right after your loved one dies, *is* looking death in the face.

Another thing I feel and hear amongst grieving people is that most people who did come to support them came during the first few days or weeks after the death.

Eventually, people get back to busy lives and families.

What they may not know, and the one grieving is surprised to discover too, is you're in shock at first. You might be busy taking care of business.

I was pretty numb those first weeks.

Unfortunately, a couple of months or more later, the shock wears off. The fact that the person is *really* gone hits hard.

The loneliness is excruciating.

Not that anyone can take that away, but a little distraction might help.

Many of the people who were there to support you for the first few weeks are understandably going on with their lives. They probably figure you are too.

But quite often, you're not.

It's very clear now that the person you've lost is never coming back. You have no second chances with them. No do-overs. If you have any guilt about things, you can't make it up to them now.

There will be no new experiences with them, no more hugs and kisses, or intimate conversations.

There are also the "firsts."

The first time you do things, like shop, walk, or go places, since the person died.

These come when you're at the grocery store.

You pass by the snacks you used to buy for them and it hits you right in your gut: You won't be buying them their favorite food anymore. You realize how automatic it was to look for the things they like to eat.

You might even reach for an item, but your hand draws back as if from fire.

Or you go for a walk and pass someone you and your loved one used to say hello to while out walking.

You say hello and hope they don't see that you're crying.

Now you're walking alone.

Sure, there will be friends to walk with, but you'll never again walk with your best friend.

When we were walking, my husband would point to birds and flowers. Seared in my mind is the joy with which he would gently hold a flower between his fingers, and say to it, "Wow! You're beautiful. Thanks for showing up!"

You might even try to do that yourself now.

But, your words seem to fall to the ground.

You feel empty, hollow. And in that hollowness is nothing but pain for a while.

If the person you loved died over a period of time and not suddenly, you might have thought you were prepared for the loss. Others might think so too.

But there is no preparation for this.

People who have lost someone with whom they were lovingly intertwined may get what you're going through. Others will not.

I'm only in the third month of living without my husband, Fran. I know things will lighten up as time goes on. I know grief doesn't end, but we can learn to live with it. Or so I'm told.

I am not resentful of my friends who can't show up the way I want. There have been plenty of times I have not been there for people.

I know I have a choice about how I go on with my life. I can choose to be bitter, sad, angry . . . but do I want to do that?

No. I realize we're all trying to do the best we can, including me! And our lives can be gone in a moment.

I know that more than ever now.

Heidi Hutton Rigoli is a freelance writer who has retired from psychiatric nursing. Her current interests are people, psychology, and spirituality. She lives in Santa Barbara and is currently enrolled in writing classes at Santa Barbara City College.



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Dancing With Time!

By Beth Amine



Hello Everyone, and Happy New Year!

Welcome back to Dancing With Time, my column for *Successful Aging*. Here we explore creating an ever-developing foundation for joyful, timeless living.

It is always so wonderful in the New Year to have the opportunity to attune to fresh starts and new possibilities!

In my last issue, I focused on the meaning of “Dancing With Time,” reinterpreting and recreating your personal moving-through-time story to one of self-love and playful expansion. This involves finding, living, and evolving your own unique value.

In this issue we will explore this topic of value. For many of us who have spent our lives devoted to career, family, and others, it is now time to focus on relationship to and care of self. It can be challenging to believe we are

deserving of the time and care it takes to be healthy and happy. How do we do this?

What comes up for you when you say, “I am the conscious creator of my life”? Panic or power? Fight or flight? Where do your senses of value, worthiness, and personal strength come from? For most of us they have been externally based—job, family, money, education, looks. And yes, all this adds to our sense of self but there is something much deeper, therefore more stable and freeing.

Your deepest value is internal and comes from the miracle of just being alive. Your worth is innate. When we are connected to all-that-is and know we are part of it, we know our value and that we are deserving of love and happiness. There is nothing for us to do but love, create, and enjoy. We have access to infinite sources of power that are ours to use.

Beth Amine is a multi-media artist who is devoted to sharing the Joy of Living with others. www.bethamine.com

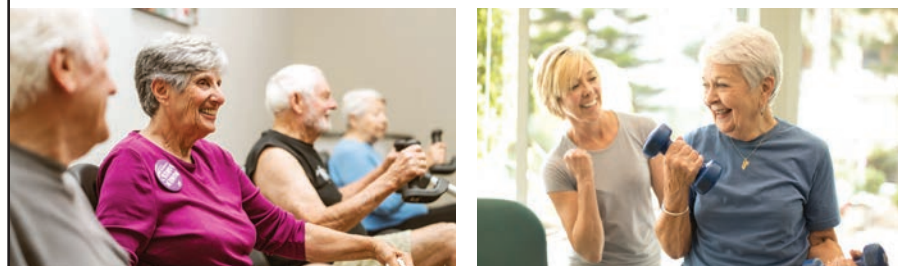
CSA is Here to Help

In addition to this quarterly newspaper, the Center for Successful Aging offers several programs to help you age successfully:

Senior Peer Counselors are marriage and family therapist interns and trained volunteers who provide individual and group support and direction to seniors. Staff are supervised by CSA’s Clinical Director, Gary Linker, PhD, MFT. Fees are determined on a sliding scale.

CareLine is a telephone reassurance program with CSA volunteers calling seniors each day to check in and make sure they have their daily needs met. This free service is open to any senior living alone.

Real Help provides seniors with help in their homes: basic caregiving, cooking, cleaning, driving, and light housework. Helpers vetted by the Center are available at a discounted rate of \$25 per hour, usually for a 2-hour minimum.



Create a Happier, Healthier You!

The Vista del Monte Fitness and Aquatic Center

specializes in fitness for older adults. Improve your strength, balance, coordination and cardiovascular fitness. Our friendly, knowledgeable fitness trainers will introduce you to state-of-the-art exercise equipment and our easy walk-in pool to meet your fitness plan! All levels of ability are welcome. Join us!

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Embracing Self-Love Through Exercise: A Guide for Seniors

By Rachel McDonald

“Today, I will love myself enough to exercise.”

My clients see this message every time they enter my fitness studio. I’ve posted it as an invitation to make a mental shift.

I don’t want exercise to feel like punishment or a chore. Instead, I want it to be something to get excited about! The benefits of regular exercise cannot be overlooked, as it can improve our physical well-being, is a potent elixir for our mental health, offers opportunities for social connections, and empowers us to stay independent.

Regular physical activity helps to strengthen muscles, improve flexibility, and enhance balance, reducing the risk of falls and injuries. Embracing exercise to nurture your body’s strength and resilience is a way to say “I love you” to your body.

Engaging in activities like walking, swimming, or gentle yoga releases endorphins, the body’s natural mood lifters. Endorphins help combat feelings of anxiety and depression and foster a positive mindset, contributing to a fulfilling and joyful life.

One of the best ways to incorporate movement regularly in your life is to find something you love doing. If you enjoy being outdoors, take walks, go for hikes, or find a fitness class in a park. Group classes offer opportunities for social interaction, and one-on-one training is perfect for an introvert. Do you get bored quickly, or do you like routine? Are you competitive with others, with yourself, or not at all? These are all questions to ask yourself, and answer honestly, when looking for your perfect fitness routine.

For those with less mobility, try putting on your favorite song, sitting in a supportive chair and moving to the music. You can chair-dance, conduct an invisible orchestra, or just tap your toes. Only a few minutes of this movement can be enough to lift your spirits and chase away aches and stiffness. For a more structured session, look for seated exercise or yoga videos on YouTube.

Whether it’s the ability to carry groceries, climb stairs, or simply move with ease and without pain, staying active ensures that daily activities remain manageable and enjoyable. This profound empowerment enables us to lead lives filled with vitality and autonomy.

The journey of self-love through exercise is personal, with each step and movement contributing to enhanced well-being. Whether it’s a gentle stroll in the park, a water aerobics class, or stretching exercises at home, every effort counts.



Rachel, far left, leads an exercise class at her studio.

Rachel McDonald is a fitness professional specializing in working with seniors, and cancer patients and survivors. She is the owner of Fitness with Rachel, a small-group and personal training studio in Goleta, CA

She can be reached at rachel@fitnessrachel.com



A flyer for a Senior Lunch event. The top text reads "CLIFF DRIVE CARE CENTER" in a green, sans-serif font. Below that, "SENIOR LUNCH" is written in a large, bold, green font with a decorative leafy border. The center of the flyer features a circular photograph of three women sitting at a table, smiling and clapping. The bottom text, also in green, provides the event details: "1ST & 3RD THURSDAYS | 11:00AM AT 1435 CLIFF DRIVE (COME FOR FELLOWSHIP AND A DELICIOUS MEAL! (\$8 DONATION))".

Mark your calendar and plan to attend this value-packed Symposium:



15th Annual Symposium

Parkinson's Disease Awareness Month

Saturday, April 6, 2024 9:00am to 3:00pm
Elks Lodge, 150 N. Kellogg Ave, Santa Barbara

Please take advantage of Early Bird pricing:
\$35 through March 24th, then increasing to \$40.

Space is limited and PASB expects this popular event to sell out, as in years past.

To register, go to www.mypasb.org or use the QR code at right.
If you have further questions, call PASB at 805-683-1326.

Direct access to the
Symposium Registration
website here:



For its annual Symposium, the Parkinson Association of Santa Barbara (PASB) continues its 15-year tradition of inviting nationally recognized physicians to share their expertise on the disease.

PASB
PARKINSON ASSOCIATION
SANTA BARBARA
2024 Symposium
Living Well with Parkinson's Disease

Dr. Jeff Bronstein
UCLA

Dr. Laurie Mischley
Seattle Integrative Medicine

Saturday, April 6, 2024 9:00 am – 3:00 pm
Elks Lodge - 150 N. Kellogg Ave. Santa Barbara, CA 93111

Register Early: Space is limited
\$35 per person, \$40 after March 24

Register at mypasb.org or scan the QR code
Scholarships are available

mypasb@gmail.com
805-683-1326

Jeff Bronstein, MD, Director of UCLA's Movement Disorders Clinic, will provide an overview of the neurological causes of Parkinson's disease (PD) and the latest research findings. State-of-the-art treatments and the importance of non-medical therapeutic modalities are the focus of his address.

Laurie Mischley, ND, PhD, MPH, of Seattle's Integrative Medicine Program, focuses on treating the person, not the disease. The app she developed tracks and quantifies PD symptoms and correlates them with lifestyle factors. Her team has also trained a PD-detecting dog!

Lunch will be provided following this morning of presentations. In the afternoon Q&A session, moderated by **Dr. Sharon Basham**, Pain Management Specialist and Medical Director at Cottage Rehabilitation Hospital, Drs. Bronstein and Mischley will address the audience's submitted questions.

Sponsors, mainly suppliers of PD medications and treatments, will be present through the day to answer questions and provide information about local activities and services.

To close out the day, attendees will participate in a free drawing with prizes including a variety of gift baskets.

What To Know About Parkinson's

Over 90,000 people are diagnosed each year with Parkinson's disease.

Most associate this disease with physical symptoms, but it can manifest in other ways as well.

Here are the 10 most common symptoms:

- Tremors—hands, fingers, even chin
- Small handwriting
- Loss of smell
- Trouble sleeping
- Trouble moving/walking
- Constipation
- Soft or lower voice
- Facial masking—serious or depressed expression
- Dizziness and fainting
- Slumping or hunched posture

If diagnosed with this condition, here are some first steps:

A full **neurological evaluation**—your doctor can best assess and discuss options for treatment

Consider medication to relieve/lessen symptoms as the condition progresses

An **exercise routine** not only helps with balance, mobility, and the ability to continue daily activities, but may slow progression of the disease

Accept support from family and friends—let them be there for you

Parkinson Association of Santa Barbara (PASB) is always there for you with information and resources: mypasb.org or 805-683-1326.

Your SB Team's Smart Senior Living Seminars

Nancy Newquist Nolan and Rachel Quittner aren't just Real Estate Agents. In between selling homes, they are busy running seminars and helping seniors. Nancy has been specializing in work with seniors for over 24 years. Rachel has always loved working with seniors and is close to being certified through the Senior Real Estate Institute. Nancy and Rachel also proudly hold their SRES Certifications as "Senior Real Estate Specialists" and they have the hearts to go along with these certifications and experience.

“ *I attended the Medicare seminar hosted by Your Santa Barbara Real Estate Team. It was well organized and packed with information. The presenters did an excellent job of answering questions and keeping the program interesting. I look forward to attending more of these seminars.*

~ Amy Marie O.

Poetry Corner

the transition continues

I think:

it's best to just notice

everything

the edges of clouds

blue sky beneath

the breathing out

the breathing in

— Grant House



Dr. Kathy Gruver Speaking at a Previous Seminar

Seminars take place the **first Tuesday of each month** at two locations:

~ **10 - 11:30am at the University Club** – 1332 Santa Barbara Street, Santa Barbara

~ **2 - 3:30pm at Cody's Café** – 4898 Hollister Avenue, Goleta

University Club 10-11:30am

March 5

Wilma Melville – Nat'l Search Dog Fdn

Wilma Melville founded the National Search Dog Foundation after being deployed with her dog to the Oklahoma City Bombing in 1995. Seeing the magnitude of the devastation at the scene convinced her of the need for more highly trained teams to respond to disasters.

April 2

Jeanne West – Prepare to Care

At some point, all of us will likely be a caregiver or need one. Learn tools to be prepared to fill this sensitive role for someone you love.

May 7

Janet Reineck – World Dance for Humanity

In 2010, Janet Reineck's background in anthropology, humanitarian aid, and dance led her to found her non-profit. Ordinary dance classes became chances for people of all ages and abilities to get fit and have fun while doing something meaningful for the world, with all proceeds going to programs helping people in Rwanda.

June 4

Alzheimer's Association

Learn about the Ten Warning Signs of Dementia at this valuable seminar.

Cody's Cafe 2-3:30pm

March 5

Dr. Kathy Gruver

Join award-winning author and two-time TEDx-er who knows stress affects us all. In this fun and educational workshop, you'll learn the warning signs of stress and a simple mini meditation that you can do anytime, as well as exploring the use of affirmations and visualizations.

April 2

Peter Trent – Paragon Mortgage Group

More and more seniors are finding that their retirement funds are not keeping up with the cost of living. Come learn how a Reverse Mortgage can fill in the gap, pay off your existing mortgage, and provide additional funds for home repairs, long term care, travel, or even purchasing a second home for family gatherings.

May 7

Rachel McDonald – Fitness & Nutrition

Maintaining overall health and well-being supports our mobility, energy levels, moods, and immune function as we age. Rachel will discuss how to add elements into your daily routine to support your wellness and retain those habits long-term.

June 4

Alzheimer's Association

Learn about the Ten Warning Signs of Dementia at this valuable seminar.



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Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC)



(805) 963-0595

www.ilrc-trico.org

Contact one of our advocates in our Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Santa Maria, Ventura, and now open Thousand Oaks office.

¡Nosotras hablamos español!

A Senior's Lament

By Diane Blau, PhD

Since entering my eighth decade, my days are filled with appointments that center on the preservation of my health and well-being. It is commonly said, "It takes a village" yet I seem to need a nation.

I now organize my medical team alphabetically under O for "-ologist" as follows:

Cardiologist
Dermatologist
Gastroenterologist
Gynecologist
Neurologist
Otolaryngologist
Ophthalmologist
Pulmonologist
Urologist

Throw in an orthopedist or two (each with their own specialty, most recently back and knees), a doctor for sleep disorders, and of course, a primary care physician to coordinate it all. I should also mention I have a dentist, periodontist, and an audiologist in preparation for hearing loss.

I also belong to the Medical Procedure of the Month Club. Whether it be injections for my back in the past year (3), a process to clear my left retina of "debris" in December, or surgery to repair two trigger fingers on my right hand in January, there always seems to be something to refurbish. I can hardly wait to see what March will bring!

This is not all it takes to keep me going. With an emphasis on a healthy diet, I have learned there are many foods to avoid, generally my favorites. Those recommended to consume mostly taste like hay or sand. Least enjoyable of these are quinoa, kale, and beans, but they are, of course, good for me.

And then there is exercise. Daily is preferred but I am told that at my advanced age, three



times a week is sufficient. For an hour. Walking, biking (if one can balance and avoid permanent injury), a treadmill, or stationary bicycle are all desirable, even swimming. As I contemplate these options, I wonder if napping might be a viable alternative.

In moments of sanity, I realize I must add psychologist to my -ologist list. Obviously, I need intensive therapy, certainly a major attitude adjustment, if I am to comply with the requirements consistent with age-appropriate health maintenance.

Yet, I want to be free of all the obligations that self-care presents. It is exhausting. Don't I finally deserve a rest?

I know the answer. Rest will come only with my fateful end. Considering the alternative, I will relish the present and seek the potential in each new day.

But for now, I will safeguard my -ologist directory, remain mindful of diet and exercise, and pay my monthly subscription dues to the Medical Procedure Club.



OUR MISSION:

The mission of the Center for Successful Aging is to promote the physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual needs of seniors and their families.

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