

# **SuperAgers: Direction Over Perfection**

Live a Life striving to be  
Healthier, More Active, and  
Full of what's possible!

**What words come to mind  
when you hear the word aging?**

What if our beliefs about aging actually  
influence **HOW** we age?

Aging is not just about genetics...

# The Power of Expectations

**A 2002 study published in Geriatrics by researchers Becca Levy and Martin Slade at Yale**

A substantial portion of participants showed improvement in cognitive function, physical function, or both over the 12-year period.

Not just maintaining or slowing decline...

**Actual IMPROVEMENT!**

The predictor? **POSITIVE AGE BELIEFS**

# **What Culture Teaches us to Expect**

**Think about the messages we hear daily,  
how our doctors respond to symptoms,  
what we resign ourselves to giving up...**

We begin to expect less of ourselves...

We laugh & agree with jokes about  
memory loss and decline

We internalize and begin believing  
the story of inevitable decline.

# Questions to ask Ourselves

**Examine the cultural messages being absorbed, otherwise they become our story and can determine how we age.**

What do I assume is harder or not worth starting?

When I forget something, what do I blame it on?

When there is a physical challenge, am I  
curious, or resigned?

# **Stereotype Embodiment Theory**

Age-related stereotypes we internalize, often unconsciously, become self-fulfilling prophecies at the biological level.

These messages alter stress responses, health behaviors, neuroplasticity, and inflammatory pathways in ways that compound over decades.

**POSITIVE AGE BELIEFS** are protective even when controlling for other health factors.

# Who Are SuperAgers?

A 2025 study published in Alzheimer's & Dementia examined brain tissue from donors, and identified a remarkable group over the age of 80 with exceptional memory and cognitive function.

## **SUPER AGERS**

Their brains were still producing new neurons which play a crucial role in learning, memory, & cognitive function.

**What makes the difference between  
the brain that keeps building  
and the one that stops?**

# Habits of SuperAgers

## Physical Activity

- Movement remains one of the strongest predictors of healthy aging. Exercise appears to help slow biological aging and supports both physical and brain health.

## Plant-Rich Diet

- A landmark study found that people who reached age 70 free of major chronic disease were more likely to follow a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, whole grains, and healthy fats while limiting ultra-processed foods.



# Habits of SuperAgers

## **Social Connection**

- Many SuperAgers maintain strong friendships, meaningful relationships, and active engagement with others.

## **Purpose**

- They continue contributing, learning, serving, mentoring, and growing.

## **Positive Outlook**

- While they don't ignore challenges, they choose not to define themselves by limitations.

# **What Story are you Telling Yourself?**

- What am I building?
- What am I learning?
- Who am I serving and impacting?
- How can I become healthier next year than I am today?

# **SuperAgers don't just think differently about aging—they often eat differently**

Their plates are filled with foods that nourish the brain, protect the heart, preserve muscle, and support the energy needed to continue living a life of purpose.

## **The gut-brain connection is key:**

- The microbiome produces neurotransmitters.
- Gut inflammation becomes brain inflammation.
- A compromised digestive ecosystem is a compromised mind.

# The Research Suggests

- People who **view aging more positively** tend to live longer.
- **SuperAgers** demonstrate that significant memory decline is not inevitable.
- **Healthy aging** is influenced by mindset, movement, nutrition, social connection, purpose, and lifelong engagement.
- **Aging well is less about perfection and more about consistently moving in a healthier direction.**

# **Remember...**

## **Direction over Perfection**

- One healthy meal.
- One walk.
- One workout.
- One meaningful conversation.
- One positive belief.

**Small choices, repeated over time,  
create extraordinary lives...SuperAgers!**