
What's Really Most Important For Your Longevity

As we become more different from each other with age, we should set our own time frames for important longevity-managing actions.

Longevity planning offers you a 'big picture' for your future and a process which is yours to manage. At first look it may seem like a lot, but you can do it bit by bit – like painting a picture. Here's a few thoughts on how to keep things on track.

Pareto Principle

The Pareto Principle is a useful approach. Also known as the 80-20 rule, this suggests that for many outcomes, about 80% of the impact comes from 20% of the possible causes. This is a useful way to think about longevity. Acting on just a few factors is likely to make the most difference.

Your Longevity Plan suggests which of your answers to the SHAPE Analyser most warrant attention. Typically, these are just a few answers out of the total.

Making a start is important. Decline over time is often a characteristic of ageing. The earlier we start, the more likely we are to be successful in making a difference. Using the 'by when' dates in longevity planning helps you stay on track.

A good example of a priority is managing cognitive decline, which can often be stabilised or reversed by exercise and other actions in your Knowledge library.

Losses and gains

We hate losses more than we like gains. It is natural to start planning using the proposition that managing our longevity (the rest of our life) is about preventing losses. The tendency to avoid losses more strongly than we seek gains is supported by neural research, but not everybody experiences the same level of aversion.

Even games like golf reveal this. Golfers are more aggressive at preventing a loss (being over par because of a putt) than they are at pursuing a gain (a birdie, or under par) for a putt of the same length. Even Tiger Woods, one of the most accurate putters, was as affected as his competitors.

Being aware of this natural tendency can enable us to offset it by a stronger focus on potential gains (such as better quality of life) than simply seeking to prevent deterioration.

Mindset

There's a good article on **Mindset** in the Attitude section of the Knowledge library.

Mindset reflects our beliefs about our basic qualities, such as intelligence, talents and personality. To think they are unchanging implies a fixed mindset, whereas a growth mindset suggests these qualities can change and develop.

While we may naturally seek to avert negative outcomes, we can choose to pursue a positive attitude too. Which can lead to outcomes such as higher resistance to infection and greater lifespans (which in turn can lead to less dependency!).

In summary

- Keep your focus by targeting just the few most important longevity issues rather than tackling them all at once. But do prioritise action – doing nothing is not an option!
- Be conscious of a natural bias to counter negatives rather than pursue positives
- Be positive in your mindset and look for personal growth in your longevity journey.

The goal of longevity planning is to support you in making clear decisions about what you can change to make a difference, what's most important, and enabling you to manage your own progress.

With a clearer sense of your future, all your other decisions – health, financial and others – start to fit together.

It's a good idea to update your SHAPE Analyser results regularly - why not do one now?

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