

The Savvy Senior Journal

Love
is in
the Air



Love Is In The Air

By Robin R. Rinke

Remember when you were a little and made valentines for your friends? Remember how fun that was?

What's stopping you from doing that now? Age?

Who says we are too old to give our friends, caregivers or neighbors a good 'ol fashioned Valentine?

How about calling your friend and saying, "Hey let me buy you an ice cream for Valentines Day!"

You can still celebrate this day of love and you can do it anyway you want!

Valentine's Day can be a lonely day for many people. Especially as we age, because of many factors. You may have lost your partner, maybe your children and grandchildren live far away, or maybe your friend group has shrunk in size over the past few years.

But you know what? You can still celebrate. In fact - Just do it!

Love is a special bond we get the pleasure of experiencing while on this earth. Go ahead and celebrate! Get a double dip!

Guest Author, Hollie Kemp

What's love got to do with it?

Have you ever wondered how love impacts your wellness? What is the science behind love? If you think like I do, this has crossed your mind. Recently, scientists have become more interested in the topic, and we are getting to know more about love, its biological impact, and our need as humans for love. It turns out love is not just a flush of your cheeks when someone catches your eye or a pitter-patter of your heart when you develop an affection for someone. It is more profound and more complex than that. It turns out that love is all about our hormones and brain. According to a team of scientists led by Dr. Helen Fisher at Rutgers, romantic love can be broken down into three categories: lust, attraction, and attachment. Each category is characterized by its hormones stemming from the brain. Because love comes from our brain our brain rewards us when we do things with the people we love. The brain releases Dopamine, our “feel good” chemical that can make us feel energetic, happy, and just giddy. So, whether in a romantic relationship or not, if you love someone, spend some time with them, and your body will reward you! This can be in person, over the phone, through letters, or via technology.

Reach out and love someone this month!



“Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage.”
— Lao Tzu

Featured Article

MY 12 REALISATIONS OF: AS I GET OLDER.

BY PAUL SCANLON

PART TWO

**GROWING OLDER IS INEVITABLE.
AGEING IS OPTIONAL**

We're all going to get older, but decay or ageing and deterioration is optional.

We can slow down decay, ageing, and we can actually reverse ageing!

That's why you get a lot of young people that are old before their time and you would guess they are much older than their years, because ageing has set in early.

You got to start being intentional about staying well and staying healthy physically.

If you don't get intentional about ageing well, then you don't just get older, you start to decay and age quicker mentally and emotionally and internally.

You are unhappy because you're harbouring regret, unforgiveness, bitterness and so on and so on.

And that's not ageing well.

That will age you before your time!



We have to fight decay, we have to fight emotional decay, mental decay, physical decay, relational decay. I've become much more intentional as I've aged, as I think you should be too, about who is *IN* your life. Every person brings an energy and an agenda complication to your life. That's why I've taught for years that relationships are spatial.

Everybody should be in a space in your life and those spaces change as you change.

And people bring different things to your life at different stages of you.

**So you might look good physically,
but internally you're 100 years old.**

**Be watching for Part Three of this
"12 Part Series" in the March issue of
Savvy Senior Journal:**

**"LABELS ARE FOR PACKAGES,
NOT PEOPLE."**

4 Steps to Developing A Healthy Mindset

What we think, influences our behaviors and emotions every day. Just as you exercise your swing before hitting the ball, it's important to practice things that can lead to a healthy mindset. Our minds are valuable tools, and maintaining a healthy headspace on and off the golf course can improve confidence and drive.

1. Have a positive attitude.

By focusing on gratitude and practicing positive-self talk, you might be surprised by how much better it makes you feel. Everyday look for new ways to nurture your positive attitude through eating healthy, staying active, and being honest.

2. Give your best effort.

Giving your best effort allows you to realize what you are truly capable of, and become more confident in your skills.

3. Give back.

Giving back to your community, or causes that you care about is another great way to maintain a healthy mentality. Volunteering can help you connect with others who hold similar values and beliefs.

4. Take ownership.

Realize you have control over the outcomes of the challenges you face, this can help build confidence and reduce anxiety. Reducing anxiety and practicing problem-solving capabilities have a huge effect on your mindset.



Wellness Quotes for Happiness

1. "I have chosen to be happy because it is good for my health." – Voltaire
2. "You don't have to be happy every second to be happy overall." – Unknown
3. "People are just as happy as they make up their minds to be." – Abraham Lincoln
4. "Happiness depends upon ourselves." – Aristotle

Hear Ye, Hear Ye!

February 29, 2024, is Leap Year!

What is a Leap Year?

Adapted by Christine Dell'Amore from a February 21, 2020, National Geographic online culture article by Brian Handwerk

This calendar oddity occurs once every four years—and helps keep us in sync with the seasons.

If your birthday is February 29, you can celebrate your actual birth date only once every four years. Sound crazy? It's not—it means you were born on a leap day.

Leap days are important because they help our calendar match up with the same seasons every year. Human-made calendars generally have 365 days; the solar, or tropical, year that influences seasons is about 365.2422 days long. (A solar year is how long it takes the Earth to revolve around the sun.)

Even though .2422 of a day doesn't sound like much, ignoring that fraction means eventually our seasons won't fall in the same months every year. For instance, your school year might eventually start in the spring instead of late summer. And if the calendar didn't match up with the seasons, farmers would have a more difficult time growing crops, which could affect food supplies.

That's why, in the 16th century, the Gregorian calendar—the calendar most commonly used today—started adding leap days to match the calendar with the seasons. Because four .2422 days equals about one day, February 29, is now added to most years that are divisible by four, like 2020.

Leap Year Facts and Folklore

- Ages ago, Leap Day was known as “Ladies Day” or “Ladies’ Privilege,” as it was the one day when women were free to propose to men. Today, Sadie Hawkins Day, sometimes applies to Feb 29 (leap day), based on this older tradition.
- According to folklore, the weather always changes on Friday in a leap year. Interesting!
- “Leap year was ne'er a good sheep year” (old proverb)

Are Leap Years Bad Luck?

Many feel that to be born on Leap Day, thereby becoming a “leapling,” is a sign of good luck.



Food For Thought...

LOSS OF APPETITE IN THE ELDERLY: WHY IT HAPPENS AND HOW TO GET IT BACK

WRITTEN BY SARAH FALCONE, RN, SENIOR CARE SPECIALIST WITH MORE THAN 10 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE IN HOME HEALTH



Sometimes known as “anorexia of aging,” sudden loss of appetite in the elderly is a common concern. Physical changes, illnesses, and social variables affect our eating patterns as we age. But simple measures can stimulate appetite and improve aging adults’ health and quality of life. Read on to learn more about common age-related causes of loss of appetite in the elderly and ways to improve their appetite.

What happens when the elderly don’t eat enough?

When the elderly stop eating, it can cause weight loss and nutritional deficiencies, potentially leading to serious health problems, including a risk for increased mortality and impaired immune function. Other consequences of nutritional deficiencies and weight loss may include an increased risk of:

- Frailty and falls
- Pressure sores
- Longer length of hospital stay
- Joint issues
- Hip fracture

Top 7 age-related reasons why elderly adults stop eating

You may be wondering “what causes loss of appetite in the elderly?” Well, aging brings many physiological and lifestyle changes that can cause a sudden loss of appetite. Research found that one in four seniors suffer from appetite loss. Typical causes for elderly appetite loss include the following:

- A lower metabolic rate and less physical activity mean seniors need fewer calories.
- Changes in the senses of smell and taste can make food less desirable. We also lose taste buds as we get older.
- Certain Medications
- Certain illnesses
- Hormone changes can alter the hunger signals to the brain. Older adults typically don’t feel hungry as often as they once did.
- Dental problems or gastrointestinal changes, such as lactose intolerance, can accompany aging and make eating uncomfortable.
- An inability to prepare meals particularly affects seniors who live independently and experience difficulty cooking or using kitchen utensils and appliances.
- A lack of or changes in a daily routine can cause discomfort or confusion around meal times.
- Loneliness or isolation can lead to decreased appetite, especially if a person recently lost a loved one or moved to a new environment.

Try these practical tips:

- Consider eating six to eight little meals instead of three big meals daily.
- Figure out the time of day when their appetite is strongest, and eat at that time.
- Even if they’re not hungry, try to encourage meals and snacks at the same times every day.
- Place healthful items around the house to promote regular snacking.

Healthy Heart, Mind, & Soul

Taking Cardiovascular Health to Heart BY HEALTHY AGING

A Vulnerable Heart

Heart disease is the number one killer of women (one in five) and a leading cause of death for men and most ethnic groups in the U.S. The risk factors for heart disease at any age are well-known: high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, sedentary lifestyle, cigarette smoking, unhealthy diet, alcohol abuse, genetics, and more.

Age, however, is the most dominant risk factor. Over 80 percent of deaths from coronary heart disease are among people aged 65 and older.

The Aging Heart

There are several factors that contribute to the decline of an older heart. Some of them include:

- **Thickening and stiffening.** Heart chambers and valves often grow thicker and stiffer with age, weakening blood pumping to and from the heart.
- **Congestive heart failure.** To compensate for diminished blood pumping, the aging heart may stretch to hold more blood, causing the kidneys to retain more water, salt and other fluids.
- **Hardening of the arteries.** In a condition known as arteriosclerosis, large arteries harden as we age, inhibiting oxygen-rich blood flow to the heart and other organs.
- **Increase in size.** Older people are at increased risk for cardiomegaly, an increase in the size and sometimes the shape of the heart.
- **Slower heart rate.** The system responsible for the heart's ability to maintain a normal pace is susceptible to fibrosis and fat accumulation in elderly "tickers," resulting in slowed heart rate.
- **Atrial fibrillation.** Common among the elderly, arrhythmia (abnormal heart rhythms) can lead to serious cardiovascular events.
- **Heart cell changes.** Lastly, molecular adaptations in the cardiovascular system can contribute to heart disease as we age.



Older age can impose unique stresses: loneliness, isolation, diminished mobility, depression, age-related illness, worry about the future.

In addition, for those living on their own, the burden of caring for oneself, house and yard can be overwhelming. There is no shame in seeking help, whether from family, neighbors or by moving to a senior community.

- **Become educated**

Credible information about heart health is abundant, and research and advances are ongoing. It is important for both seniors and their family members to know the latest in heart health. Some excellent sources are the American Heart Association, the Mayo Clinic, the Cleveland Clinic's patient education, and the National Institutes of Health.

- **Give and receive kindness**

Recent times have clearly shown us the value of human kindness. Random acts of kindness are everywhere – from friends, family, neighbors, and total strangers. Kindness literally does a heart good, both extending it to others and accepting it in return.

Get regular health checks
Know the warning signs;
Eat healthy foods; Maintain healthy weight
Stay active
Don't smoke
Reduce alcohol consumption
Respect your limits



Interesting Article...

6 OTC Drugs That Can Be Dangerous for Older Adults

By Fran Kritz

Updated on January 08, 2024

Why Are Older Adults More Sensitive to Medication?

Bodies handle medicines differently as they age, Hedva Barenholtz Levy PharmD, a geriatric pharmacist, told Verywell. For some, that means a decrease in kidney and liver function, which can slow down the speed at which drugs leave the body.

The result is increased side effects.

“In general, older adults are more sensitive to the effects of medications, both good and bad. This means that often lower doses will be effective for older adults, and they have a greater likelihood of experiencing adverse effects,” Barenholtz Levy said.

While patients may view OTC drugs as less risky than prescription drugs, “OTC drugs are distinguished from prescription drugs only in that they are defined as safe and effective for use by the public without a physician’s prescription; they are not less potent or inherently safer than prescription medications,” [Steven Albert, PhD](#), professor in the Department of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health, told Verywell.

As a result, Albert suspects unintentional misuse of nonprescription drugs may be at play among many older adults. Because products are marketed toward symptom relief rather than active ingredients, people may not realize that two OTC medications—say, one for cough and one for congestion—contain the same active ingredient.

“If they use two products, they risk an unintentional overdose,” Albert said.

The risk of drug interactions and side effects is even greater among the many older adults who take prescription drugs.

“OTC may be the only branch of medicine where we expect people to choose therapies, decide when to start and stop, and interpret [effectiveness] on their own,” Albert said. “We need better consumer education, more involvement of physicians and pharmacists in OTC consults, and better packaging of the products themselves. It may be valuable to consider age-friendly aisles in pharmacies in which OTC products are vetted and pharmacy consults are more easily available.”

Top OTC Medications to Take With Caution

- Pain Relievers
- Benadryl (diphenhydramine)
- Sudafed Sinus Congestion 24 Hour and in many generic decongestants.
- Heartburn Medications
- Milk of Magnesia and Magnesium Citrate
- Oxytrol

Even though OTC drugs are purchased without a prescription, they contain medication and can come with risks. If you are using a new OTC for the first time, ask the pharmacist if it interacts with any of the prescription drugs you take. If you start a new prescription drug, ask if it interacts with any of the OTC drugs you take.

If the wait for the pharmacist in the store or on the phone is too long, you can call the National Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222. The center is staffed by nurses, pharmacists, and physicians.



Be on the Alert

Scams Against Seniors

HOW TO AVOID SENIOR SCAMS

THE BEST WAY TO AVOID BEING SCAMMED IS TO BE AWARE OF THEM. WHENEVER YOU ARE CONTACTED BY A PARTY YOU ARE UNFAMILIAR WITH, DO YOUR DUE DILIGENCE AND MAKE SURE THE PERSON YOU ARE TALKING TO IS THE PERSON THEY SAY THEY ARE. HERE ARE SOME TIPS TO HELP YOU AVOID THESE SENIOR SCAMS:

- BLOCK UNWANTED CALLS AND TEXT MESSAGES.
- NEVER GIVE OUT PERSONAL INFORMATION OVER THE PHONE OR EMAIL IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST FOR IT.
- RESIST THE PRESSURE TO ACT IMMEDIATELY (ESPECIALLY IN REGARDS TO A PRIZE OR MEDICAL BILL).
- NEVER PAY SOMEONE WITH A GIFT CARD, REAL BUSINESSES DON'T GET PAID THIS WAY.
- STOP AND TALK TO SOMEONE YOU TRUST ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED.
- REPORT SCAMS TO THE FTC.

KEEP IN MIND THAT JUST BECAUSE YOU ARE TARGETED FOR A SCAM DOESN'T MAKE YOU A FOOL AS LONG AS YOU KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS, HOW TO AVOID THEM, AND REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY.



Be on the Alert

Scams Against Seniors

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION IMPOSTOR SCAM

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION IMPOSTERS CONTACT PROSPECTIVE VICTIMS BY TELEPHONE AND FALSELY CLAIM THAT THE VICTIM'S SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER HAS BEEN SUSPENDED BECAUSE OF SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY, OR BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN A CRIME. THEY ASK TO CONFIRM THE VICTIM'S SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER, OR THEY MAY SAY THEY NEED TO WITHDRAW MONEY FROM THE VICTIM'S BANK AND TO STORE IT ON GIFT CARDS OR IN OTHER UNUSUAL WAYS FOR "SAFEKEEPING." VICTIMS MAY BE TOLD THEIR ACCOUNTS WILL BE SEIZED OR FROZEN IF THEY FAIL TO ACT QUICKLY.

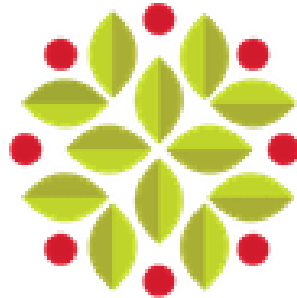
PERPETRATORS OFTEN USE ROBOCALLS TO REACH VICTIMS. VICTIMS MAY BE TOLD TO "PRESS 1" TO SPEAK TO A GOVERNMENT "SUPPORT REPRESENTATIVE" FOR HELP REACTIVATING THEIR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER. THEY ALSO USE CALLER ID SPOOFING TO MAKE IT LOOK LIKE THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION IS CALLING. WITH SUCH TRICKERY, PERPETRATORS CONVINCED VICTIMS TO GIVE UP THEIR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS AND OTHER PERSONAL INFORMATION. SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION IMPOSTERS OPERATING FROM ABROAD OFTEN USE U.S.-BASED MONEY MULES TO RECEIVE VICTIM PAYMENTS AND TRANSMIT PROCEEDS TO PERPETRATORS.

SOURCE: SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE OF THE
INSPECTOR GENERAL



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