HEALTHY TIPS

Always Look on the Bright Side: Can Optimism Help Us Live Longer?

By bestfolkmedicine · 28/10/2020 · 2 min read



'Look on the bright side of life' is a common advice we hear often. It sure sounds nice and comforting and nowadays, researchers also claim it may help us prolong our lifespan.

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According to the study that was led by American academics and published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences journal, people who're optimistic have a greater likelihood of experiencing

longevity.

Their chances are quite high, between 50 and 70 percent. These people lived to the age of 85 and some even longer.

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The 30-year study concluded that there's a major link between optimism and long life. The scientists define optimism as a general expectation that things will be good or a belief in a favorable future.

Studies done in the past have found numerous risk factors that elevate our chances of premature death and illnesses; however, little is known about what is good for a healthy aging and long life.

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Optimism, the Key to a Long Life?

The study, done with 69,744 women and 1,429 men, required from the participants to assess their personal levels of optimism, as well as their overall health and lifestyle habits like smoking, alcohol, and type of diet.

The men were followed for a period of 30 years and the women only 10.

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When the participants were compared on their primary optimism levels, it was discovered that the most optimistic women and men on average had 11 to 15 percent longer lifespan and 50 to 70 percent higher chances of living up to 85 years of age than their less optimistic counterparts.

These results were obtained after accounting for demographic factors, education, diseases, and other health-influencing factors.

The corresponding author of the study, Dr Lewina Lee, assistant professor of psychiatry at the Boston University School of Medicine, notes that although the research found a lot of risk factors, they know less about the positive factors that can help us reach deep age.

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However, it does remain unknown how and why optimism helps us live longer.

Why Does Optimism Prolong Our Life?

The senior author of the study professor Laura Kubzansky from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public School says that according to other research, it may be because more optimistic individuals are better at regulating their emotions and behaviors and to recover from stress and struggles more effectively.

Moreover, they're believed to have healthier habits like exercise and no smoking, which further contributes to longer lifespan.

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The researchers hope that this study will be a motivation for further research that will help teach the public about benefits that better our quality of life and prolong our lifespan.

Sources:

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