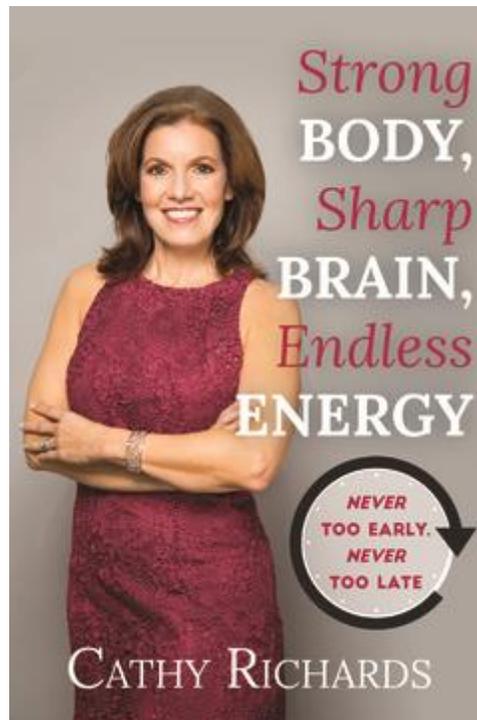
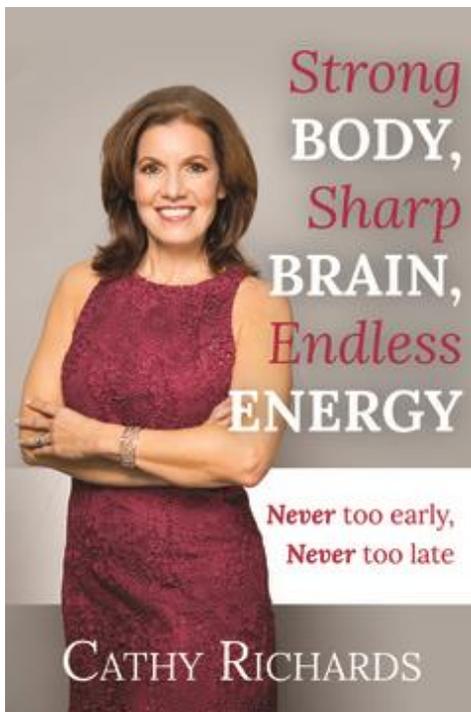
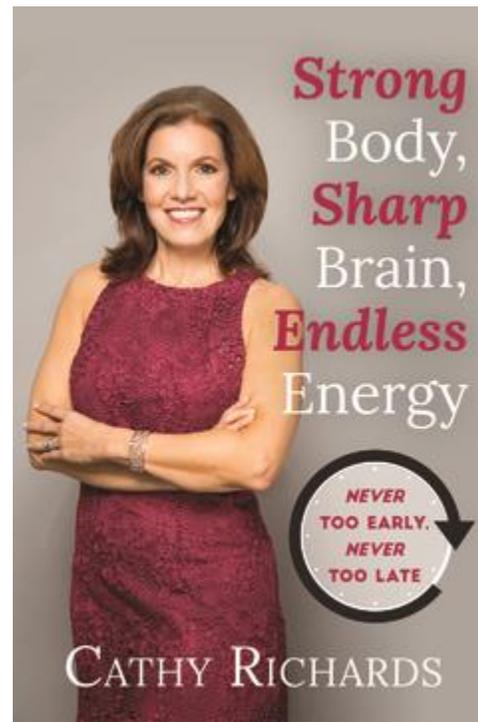
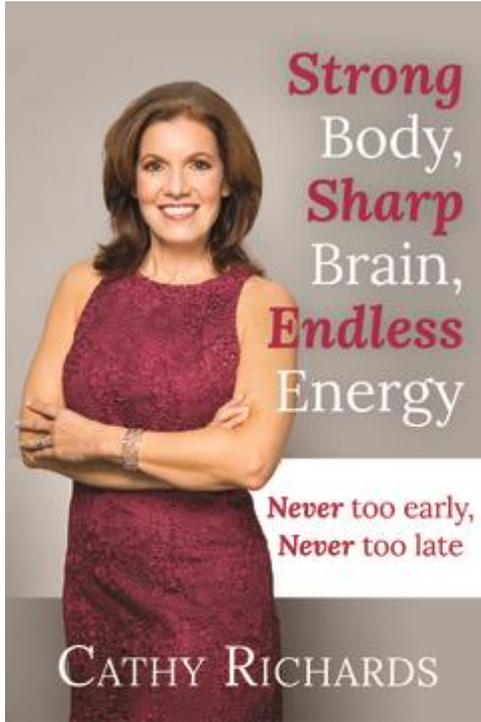




[Front Cover Mock Ups] Awaiting drafts that use the fonts from my logo.]



Who *doesn't* want a strong body, sharp brain, and endless energy?

Regardless of your age, there are simple, realistic things that you can do to improve your fitness, brain health, and energy level NOW. It's easy to get complacent when we are inundated with healthy living advice that seems at once both overwhelming or contradictory. And yet, there years are FLYING BY and there is that little voice inside of you (echoed by your doctor and a whole lot of others) telling you that you can't afford NOT to take care of your health.

The good news is that it's not as hard or as complicated as you might think – really! You will feel inspired to take the message to heart that our habits NOW are the largest determinant of the quality of life we will have in our later years. And if you are already in your later years, you will feel inspired that your amazing body is still very capable of making meaningful improvements with modest changes to your habits! Quite simply, it's *never too early* and it's *never too late* to get stronger in body and brain, and energy level!

You won't want to miss:

- Mindset mastery that will change your intermittent efforts into lifelong healthy habits
- How exercise is the closest thing to a magic pill we'll ever see
- Strength training as the secret weapon for women and men who've never tried it
- Short realistic fitness plans: two choices each for “never too early and “never too late”
- The superfoods-based timeless eating plan for a healthy weight
- Metabolism magic to burn calories like a furnace
- Goodbye back pain in two minutes per day
- Four factors that forever fix fatigue
- Brain fitness facts that will change your future
- The link between healthy hearing and dementia
- It's never too early to reduce your risk of falling when you are older
- Intergenerational vitality – rewarding strategies for families to look out for each other through all the meaningful stages to come

[Testimonial #1 by
.....]

[Testimonial #2 by
.....]

Cathy Richards, M.A. has more than 20 years' experience as a wellness coach and strategist. With a M.A. Degree in Exercise Physiology, she earned the C. Everett Koop National Health award for her work in corporate wellness for Marriott. Then, as a young mother, she wrote and published “The Busy Mom’s Ultimate Fitness Guide” and as the children grew, she shifted again to older adults, spending eight years in wellness for a large retirement community. Her unique “never too early, never too late” approach to lifelong vitality capitalizes on lessons learned from these varied and wonderful populations. Visit her at www.InspringVitalityNow.com



Table of Contents **[Draft]**

Foreword: TBD

Preface: The Road to My Point of View

Section One: A Strong Body, Sharp Brain, and Endless Energy Starts in Your Head

Chapter 1: Understand the Urgency: Time Stops for No One

Chapter 2: Motivation and the Magic Pill

Chapter 3: Strategies to Change Your Mindset

Section Two: Exercise as the Magic Pill

Chapter 4: Exercise Basics and the *Never Too Early, Never Too Late* Philosophy

Chapter 5: Aerobic Exercise

Chapter 6: Strength Training

Chapter 7: Stretching

Chapter 8: Exercise Extras

Chapter 9: Back Pain and Falls Prevention

Section Three: The Speedometer Exercise Levels

Chapter 10: Making an Exercise Plan

Chapter 11: Level One: Just MOVE!

Chapter 12: Level Two: 20-minute No Equipment Exercise Plan

Chapter 13: Level Three: 40-minute Minimal Equipment Exercise Plan

Chapter 14: Level Four: 60+-minute Full-Fledged Exercise Plan

Section Four: Fueling Up and Balancing the Scale

Chapter 15: Fueling Up for A Strong Body, Sharp Brain, and Endless Energy

Chapter 16: Balancing the Scale

Section Four: Beyond Eating and Exercise

Chapter 17: Brain Fitness

Chapter 19: Healthy Hearing

Chapter 19: Fatigue, Stress, and Sleep

Section Five: Across the Ages – With Each Other

Chapter 20: *Never Too Early*

Chapter 21: *Never Too Late*

Chapter 22: Inter-generational Magic

Chapter 23: Pulling It All Together

Appendices

1. *Never Too Early* Exercise Plans

2. *Never Too Late* Exercise Plans

3. Philosophies and Mantras

4. Words of Wisdom from People of All Ages Who are Making It Work

5. 65 Reasons to Exercise!

6. Resources

Preface: The Road to My Point of View

I've been fascinated by the workings of the human body since I was young. As a child, I was also a conscientious rule-follower and a good student. Mix those three things together and you have the makings of a naturally health-conscious person. I have an early memory of putting grape jelly on my toast instead of cinnamon and sugar, thinking it was healthier; only to find out that jelly is mostly sugar! I also grew up as the oldest daughter of five children, so I had no problem telling other people what to do. If my parents went out, my mother would tell my older brother to take care of himself and tell me to take care of the rest of the kids. I think I enjoyed being mom's little helper a little longer than my younger siblings did!

My parents set a great example of making time for fitness, even while raising five children. At the time, I had no idea how difficult it must have been. In addition to driving us to our sports practices, they managed to play tennis, racquetball, and volleyball themselves on a regular basis. My own athletic pursuits were not impressive. I played softball in elementary school and basketball in middle school and can safely say that I barely touched the ball in either sport. I attended an all girls' high school and was a cheerleader for our neighboring boys' school, with a decidedly nonathletic purpose! While I was in high school, I also got my first exposure to the field that I would ultimately study. My ninth-grade science class was human physiology, including the inner workings of the cardiovascular system, the muscular system, and all the other systems of the body. It was co-taught by a science teacher and a P.E. teacher and soon became my favorite class. I hadn't yet made the connection to daily living because during lunchtime, I would curiously watch that same P.E. teacher running around the campus grounds. I thought it was a curious sight and just shook my head while returning to my Doritos. The only reason I had ever seen to exercise in the past was to participate in sports. To exercise for no reason at all was a new concept to me that still hadn't quite sunk in.

I entered college as a biology major and assumed I'd pursue some type of health or medical career but had nothing specific in mind. I experienced for the first time the concept of pizza delivery at any and all hours...and proceeded to gain the dreaded "Freshman 15" pounds. As a sophomore, I decided to do something about the weight and signed up for an aerobics class for elective credits. I figured that if I had to go to class, I would lose weight. What I didn't count on was a lecture component to the class in addition to the exercise. The lectures were reminiscent of my 9th grade physiology class and I was introduced to Kinesiology/Exercise Science as a major. Yes, I lost the weight, but I gained even more – a new major and a purpose that I was excited about. Upon graduation, I went on to Graduate School in Exercise Physiology, and brought things full circle by teaching the same undergraduate aerobics class as a Graduate Assistant that first excited me as a sophomore. It was a good feeling and gave me the opportunity to teach and mentor hundreds of college students who were just a few years younger than me to start early with good health and exercise habits.

While I was still an undergraduate and throughout graduate school as well, I was fortunate to stumble upon a great job in the corporate fitness center at Marriott International Headquarters. I

learned the practical side of the fitness industry – performing fitness tests, teaching people how to use the exercise machines, and teaching group exercise classes. A corporate fitness center is a different environment than an outside health club in that you spend the full day within the corporate environment. I got to know lots of busy working professionals and began to understand the difficulty they had fitting in exercise into their stressful daily lives. I also got to serve on a committee that was planning a comprehensive corporate wellness program. I was eager to make myself useful to the group and when the committee work finished with a recommendation to create a full-time position to manage the program, I was in the right place at the right time to be awarded the job. Marriott has always had the philosophy that if you “take care of the associate, they will take care of the customer” and I can’t think of a better place for me to gain my early wellness career experience. I organized special events like health fairs, wellness seminars, and team walks and continued to hone my skills at teaching and promoting a healthy lifestyle.

During my fifteen total years total at Marriott, I had three children along the way. After my second child was born, I started taking personal fitness clients in my home and when my third child was born, I left the corporate setting to work exclusively at home, so I could have a more flexible schedule with my children. This began my next phase of working with busy moms. Everywhere I went – preschool drop off, the elementary school bus stop, or the grocery store, other moms would ask “how do you fit in exercise?” Practical advice was part of it, but they were also looking for motivation. I wrote “The Busy Mom’s Ultimate Fitness Guide: Get Motivated and Find the Solution that Works for You” in order to put all of my suggestions in one place. It was rewarding to help other moms figure out how to fit in fitness and do something for themselves that would also set a good example for their children.

As my children grew, I re-entered the full-time workforce as the Director of Fitness and then Lifestyle and Wellness for a large continuing care retirement community, home to over 1400 older adults with an average age of 85. Although I had extensive experience in wellness; I had very little experience with seniors. It was fantastic and life-changing. In my eight years at this community, I met extraordinary people, exciting, inspiring, impressive, active, fun and funny people. I also met tired, lonely, achy, and unwell people with regrets and lessons to share...and lots who fell somewhere in between. The wisdom that comes with age is not a mere cliché and yet the American culture is not one seems to be noticeably appreciative of it.

The most significant thing I observed in the senior setting was the huge variation in quality of life, outlook on life, mobility, and both physical and mental health for people who were the same chronological age. I began to wonder what determined the difference. Were the major contributors luck, genetics, and/or their *current* lifestyle habits? Or, could it be that their lifestyle habits in *all the decades leading up to* their current age were a major contributor? I noticed patterns and lessons that those of us who are many years younger can benefit from if only we can heed their warning. I felt like Marty McFly in the movie *Back to the Future*, taking lessons learned with the seniors back to my corporate-aged clients to tell them “I have seen your future! If you aren’t living a healthy life yet, start now!” The second most significant thing I noticed is that the amazing human body can indeed make adaptations at any age. I observed 84 and 85

years olds making noticeable improvements to their health, mobility, and quality of life with just a few small lifestyle changes.

After I wrote and published “The Busy Mom’s Ultimate Fitness Guide” in 2006, I always had the idea in the back of my head that I would someday repurpose the material for a broader audience. Many of the concepts I wrote about are applicable to anyone who wants practical advice on fitting in healthy habits. After working with the senior population and drawing parallels between the varied groups I’ve worked, now is the time. I’ve adapted several sections of this book from my earlier writing and I can’t think of a better way to honor the different populations I’ve worked with than to highlight the benefits and linkages of living well at every stage of life. College students, working adults, busy moms, and seniors have much in common. ***It’s never too early and it’s never too late to make lifestyle changes that will yield meaningful improvements to our quality of life.*** I have found my professional philosophy and mantra. Let’s go!

Section One

A Strong Body, Sharp Brain, and Endless Energy Starts In Your Head

Chapter 1

Understand the Urgency: Time Stops for No One

“Isn’t it funny how day by day nothing changes, but when you look back everything is different?” My son Jeff selected this quote from C.S. Lewis for his high school yearbook senior year to summarize his thoughts on his four years of high school. It was a wise observation that also applies to our health over the years. We might not see the effects of our small, every day habits now, but after a lifetime of good, bad, or in-between habits, the impact adds up one way or another.

Think about the three health goals of this book: *Strong Body, Sharp Brain, and Endless Energy*. Imagine how it would feel to live that reality every day. Goodbye to aches and pains, a foggy mind, and lethargy. Hello to vitality of mind and body. Combined, these three gems are the key to, quite simply, being able to do what we want to do! Luckily, many of factors that determine our strength of body and brain, and our energy levels are within our control. In addition, there is tremendous overlap in the strategies that lead to all three so we don’t have to worry about following three different sets of recommendations.

Regardless of your age, the time is now, hence my personal mantra and the subtitle of this book: it’s never too early and it’s never too late! Once you understand the urgency and then begin to see that it’s not as hard or as time consuming as you thought, you will wonder why you didn’t start sooner!

After spending eight years surrounded by over 1400 people with an average age of 85, I started asking younger populations: What type of 85-year-old do you want to be? Picture yourself at 85. What do you look like? What pursuits fill your day? How healthy are you? You may not have given this much thought. After all, we live in a society that is focused on youth and the present. We see value placed on immediacy and instant gratification and there is very little attention given to the dutiful and boring applications of advance planning.

When Jeff was in middle school, he had a lot of neighborhood friends and would run from house to house, seeing which friends were home and when they could play so he could fit them all in. He did great in school, despite having the messiest room and messiest backpack I have ever seen. He had a giant binder exploding with dog-eared papers, all out of order and not even in the prongs. Occasionally, I’d help him clean out his binder, but it was a never-ending cycle. Let’s just say that Jeff did not “get” the benefit of doing certain things now that would benefit him later.

In high school, Jeff’s friendships were still high priority and his jovial aversion to planning was still the same. While doing homework, he would prop up his phone in “Facetime” mode every night and his laughter filled the house into the wee hours. He had a separate binder for each subject, which meant he now had seven binders that were a mess. He still left everything to the last minute. One day when I was nagging him about

getting more organized, he gave me a huge grin and said, “Mom, that’s future Jeff’s problem.” He was absolutely serious! (I didn’t find out until later that it was a line from a popular sitcom!) It became his standard answer to all questions regarding boring tasks that could be put off until some vague future time. My standard response was “please think about future Jeff!” Thankfully, although these habits continued through all of high school, Jeff still did well and earned a Naval ROTC scholarship to Purdue. Off he went to college, with my fingers crossed.

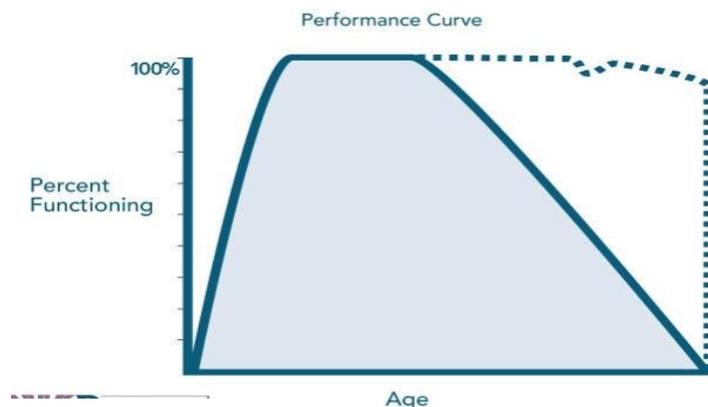
Jeff’s first year at Purdue didn’t exactly go smoothly. The demands of ROTC combined with the rigors of his academics meant that the workload has finally reached a capacity that Jeff’s habits began to fail him. There were a few learning lessons like oversleeping and missing PT. Waking up in time for PT but coming home and sitting down for “a minute” only to fall back asleep with an apple in his hand and miss a major presentation. He had to re-take the entire class. The consequences were stacking up, causing him to re-think some of his habits. He called me and said, “Mom, did you know that there’s an alarm on my phone? I can set it if I need to be someplace.” “Also, I hung a calendar above my desk and I was thinking that I could start writing down due dates of tests and big projects.” and finally “Mom, if there’s something I need to do in the future, I can just write it down on a list and keep the list with me.” It was all I could do to resist telling him that I had already suggested all of these things in the past! Present Jeff began to care deeply about future Jeff’s problems and things began to improve from that point on.

Let’s return to the question, “What type of 85-year-old do you want to be?” Younger people don’t usually contemplate what life will be like when they are 85 much less think that what they are doing today will have any bearing on it. When you are 25 you are going to live forever, 35 raising a young family, 45 gunning your career to the top, 55 starting to joke about aging aches and pains, and 65 perhaps starting to think about it because you might be caring for your own aging parent. The reason I continually to pose this question to younger adults is that regardless of your current age, you are working toward your 85-year-old self *right now*, for good or for bad. Is your quality of life at the age of 85 your *future self’s* problem or are you willing to take ownership of it now? Are you like the old Jeff or the new Jeff? Are you keeping your binders neat all along, or are you banking on periodic clean up sessions that may or may not be successful because some of the papers are lost or damaged beyond repair? Many of us “get by” in our younger years without great habits like Jeff did in middle school and high school, but by our older years, the consequences start adding up, like they did for Jeff in college. The years are flying by. In fact, at almost every age, people wonder and joke out loud “How did I get this old?” We think we are “old” at 30, then 40, then 50, etc., and then in future years, we WISH we could be that “young” age again. Can you remember how you felt 20 years ago? Did that time go by quickly? What age will you be 20 years from now? Won’t that 20 years go by just as quickly if not more so? Don’t wait! Think about *thriving* through the years!

Working in senior living for many years, I have met thousands of 85-year-olds, some with significant physical and cognitive ailments and serious challenges in daily living that made it difficult to enjoy their life. I met other 85-year-olds who were finding much more satisfaction in life in whatever way they defined it - finding new loves, participating in competitive sports, or traveling the world! What most commonly determines the difference? It's not luck, genetics, or your habits at the age of 84. ***The largest determinants of your health at the age of 85 are your lifestyle habits in the decades leading up to that age – your 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, and 70s.***

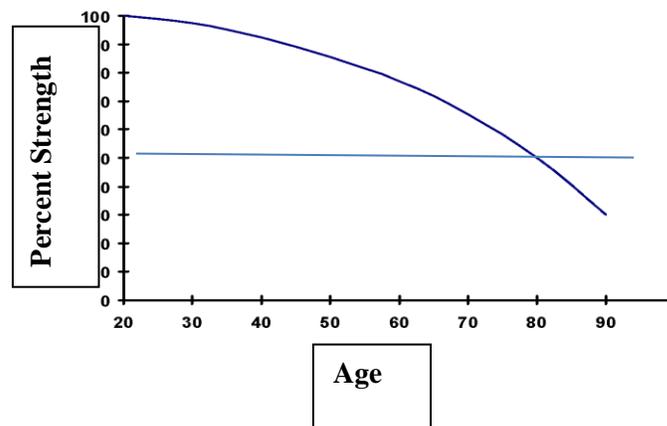
John Rowe and Robert Kahn's MacArthur Foundation Study of Successful Aging in America gave us the gifts of optimism and control over how we age. We know that life expectancy is increasing but living longer doesn't mean those additional years are quality years. While certainly not everything that can befall an individual as we age is within our control, their research tells us that we don't need to anticipate aging as an inevitable period of total decline. Rowe and Kahn went even further to show us that in fact, ***up to 70% of how we age is determined by lifestyle!*** There is much we can do through our lifestyle to *preserve* our health, mobility, and quality of life, and even *improve* it as we age.

Look at the graph below from Rowe and Kahn's book "Successful Aging". The solid blue line shows a gradual decline in physical and cognitive functioning starting at mid-age. Not a pleasant thought about aging, is it? Look at the dotted line as an alternative model for aging. Notice how this style of aging includes maintaining your functioning ability close to 100% much further into older age, before experiencing some type of health setback (the "blip" on the dotted line) that leads to a much later but quicker descent. My mom has always said that she wanted to die with her tennis shoes on, which I think exemplifies this perfectly! Which model of aging would you find preferable? I'm sure it's the dotted line!



Let's also look at one of the most shocking, yet preventable changes that can happen as we age. In the sixty-year snapshot between our 20th birthday and our 80th birthday, the average person loses HALF of their leg strength if they are not purposefully trying to prevent it through exercise. Imagine what it would look like and feel like if you were to go through daily life with your current body weight yet only half of your current leg strength. The math should work out to be like doubling your body weight for your current leg strength, yes? If that's the case, I have heard the example that it would feel like you cloned yourself and are carrying an extra version yourself on piggyback! How would that feel and look trying to get through the day? You might need to shuffle when you walk. You would need to take breaks to sit down. You would be hunched over. Does this sound like some 85-year-olds you might see on the street?

We're constantly joking about the aches and pains of getting older. These preconceptions are part of the problem. When we assume something is inevitable, we stop trying to prevent it.



The great news is that the decline in muscle mass is to a large extent both *preventable* and *reversible*! No matter how late in life you start, the body will respond to exercise. The earlier we start, the better off we are. A research study in 2018 at Ball State University found that individuals in their 70s who had been exercising most of their adult lives had muscles that were similar to 25-year-olds! There are research studies done with very frail, elderly people who began strength training at an advanced age with fantastic improvements and increases in strength through weight training exercise. In many cases, their results were significant enough to reduce or eliminate their need for walkers or canes. For fitness professionals, working with older adults can shed a new perspective on some of the shallower, vanity-related images that are commonly linked with exercise. Most seniors aren't exercising to show off their bodies on the beach; their goals may include staying fit enough for all the walking necessary to attend a grandchild's graduation, and for others simply maintaining the ability to shower and dress oneself. This is not something that many of us think about if we haven't been faced with caregiving in our life.

For older adults who have experienced a decline in function to the extent that they need regular assistance with activities of daily living, it doesn't have to be a failure or a reason to give up hope for improvements in quality of life. Families and individuals can work with their caregivers

to provide appropriate opportunities for movement and the best quality of life possible for these individuals, whatever that looks like for them.

What a wonderful, inspiring message that the muscles and the brain respond at any age, impacting mobility, agility, independence, metabolism, weight management, appearance at whatever weight you are, posture, back pain, and so much more! The use it or lose it principle extends to many of the physical ailments that we like to “blame” on age. Research tells us that *many of the changes that we commonly assume are due to age, are not due in total to the physiological aging process, but rather the gradual decline in activity – both physical and cognitive that typically comes with aging.* Something to think about! What type of 85-year-old do you want to be and are your current habits going to get you there? If your current lifestyle needs a little adjustment, that’s ok! It’s never too late and it’s never too early.

If lifestyle accounts for 70% of the differences in how people age and we want to age as healthfully as possible, why not look at examples of people who are doing it well. *The Blue Zones* by Dan Buettner tells us that there are three groups of people who have the greatest percentage of centenarians on the planet. A good portion of their elders live past the age of 100 – quite a feat! These groups include Okinawans, Sardinians, and Seventh Day Adventists. If we want to increase our chances of living to 100, wouldn’t we want to follow their example for lifestyle habits? What do they have in common?

- They don’t smoke
- They are active every day
- They put family first
- They maintain active social lives
- They eat a diet high in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains

Do these habits seem difficult or complicated? Of course not. Rather, they are probably things that many of us would like to do in theory if we aren’t already, but in our busy or preoccupied lives, don’t prioritize because we don’t think they will make that much of a difference. Perhaps it’s time for a more serious effort, knowing what we have to gain. Time and again, we will encounter small changes that yield meaningful benefits!

There are also examples all around us of inspiring people who are challenging the stereotypes of aging. Check out Marc Middleton’s website www.GrowingBolder.com for motivational profiles on older adults doing amazing things. From swimming champions, models on the catwalk, graceful ballerinas, and super strong yoga instructors, you are sure to be inspired!

Never Too Early, Never Too Late: Let’s Get Started

Regardless of your age or stage of life, isn’t it time you took charge of your health and wellness if you haven’t already? It doesn’t matter where you are now or how great or small your ultimate aspirations are, you can get a stronger body, a sharper brain, and gain endless energy. Don’t wait another day!

©Cathy Richards 2018. Confidential draft provided exclusively to review partners. Do not copy or distribute.

As you read along, look for the little sidebars that highlight thoughts and tips that are specifically more applicable for the *Never Too Early* or the *Never Too Late* reader. I hope they resonate with you: The Never Too Early mindset – start now and you’ll stave off many of the ailments that might otherwise impact you as you age. The Never Too Late mindset – regardless of your age or physical limitations, there are things I can do that will improve my health, mobility, and quality of life!