



## AGING TODAY

# Aging Today's Greatest Hits

By Bob Roth, Managing Partner of Cypress HomeCare Solutions



**Cycling through personal milestones and challenges** defines the decades and our journey. Summer of 2019 is a pivotal one for my family. The last of our chickadees will be flying the coop to navigate health care related fields to not only make a living, but also make a life and a difference.

Lately, teachable moments have come in the form of a familiar little triangle. I referenced the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs to help my daughters set realistic expectations for entry level jobs. 35 years ago I could never have predicted that I would be inching closer toward self-actualization, the pinnacle of Maslow's hierarchy, caring for seniors would be the foundation of my desire for fulfillment.

To pivot or "reinvent yourself," is to reach and develop your potential to the best of your ability. For the past four years writing *Aging Today* has been a great challenge for me. Researching and communicating issues relevant to my readers, clients, and peers. I have most certainly overused commas and left a few participles dangling. Please know that even if my modifiers are misplaced, my heart is not. My desire for seniors to age in place and to live their best life has led me on this path and a big thank you to Lovin' Live After 50 for giving me this platform.

In celebration of the past four years and a summer hiatus, here are the big takeaways from some of my favorite columns:

**We were meant to be social beings and isolation has a negative effect on health.**

***Spring has Sprung: May 2019***

Gardening makes good sense for maintaining a healthy aging brain. The stimulation of spending time outdoors and with new or varied interests is a great way to keep the neurons firing. The social component to gardening is probably one of the most

important psychological benefits for our aging population. Seniors who are involved with community projects and who feel a sense of purpose report better overall health and well-being.

***Live, Love, Laughter: September 2018***

Laughter, as an evolutionary tool confirms why we must keep our aging seniors from living in isolation. Laughter evolved as a vocal confirmation of forming and deepening alliances and friendships. In apes, dogs, and even rats the labored breathing and subsequent sounds that are formed mean I am playing. I am on your team. In humans it means, I like you.

**Our Inner caveman dictates a commonsense approach to good health:**

***Being Mindful of Mindfulness: October 2018***

The evolution of the human brain which occurred over millions of years is not equipped to sift through the information overload of modernity, especially the digital age. We must learn how to find focus in a stressed-out multi-tasking culture. Remember mother nature is a tinkerer. Our brains evolved in response to changes in cooking our food, using tools, and living in groups over millions of years. Shifting attention to focus on the present is what kept our Pleistocene progenitors from being a saber tooth tiger's taco.

***Everybody Does It: March 2019***

Better bowel health heeds me to shout out to our inner caveman, a recurring theme. Our paleolithic progenitors could check off these points right out of the gate: exercise regularly, strive to drink two quarts of water daily, eat unprocessed, natural foods including fiber-rich vegetables.

**Whatever you do, just keep moving:**

***Movement Boosts the Brain: December 2017***

Imaging studies of the human brain have shown that

that exercising increases blood volume in the hippocampus, the region of the brain deeply involved in memory formation. On a molecular level exercise stimulates the brain's most powerful growth factor, BDNF, which stands for brain derived neurotrophic factor. This protein is responsible for the formation of new neurons, or brain cells and increases the connectivity of existing neurons.

**Let's be great role models:**

***Radiating Your Inner Glow: May 2018***

We can start by walking the walk and talking the talk. Be an exemplar of sun wise habits. Avoid compliments such as, "what a great tan."

***This is Mental Illness: July 2018***

Being respectful includes not using mental illness terms when not appropriate. How often have you heard, "I am so OCD, I am addicted to; or I am paranoid. These are real disorders that cause suffering to millions and are tossed around in our vernacular casually and with little regard for those who suffer usually in shame and in silence.

***Colonoscopy as a Crystal Ball: March 2018***

If you are the one passing on the 411 regarding the colonoscopy in the form of a complaint, do your friends a favor and resist the urge to earn your battle stripes. I know how good it feels to vent after a medical milestone, but wouldn't you like to encourage rather than discourage such a proactive stance towards good health?

If you have missed any of these columns, here is your summer reading: [Cypress HomeCare Solutions' Press Room](#)

---

This column was published in [Lovin' Life After 50](#) and [Jewish News](#) as Cypress' monthly contribution.