

To thrive in old age, keep an open mind

November 28 2010, By Janice Lloyd

Don't worry, be happy about getting older.

New research shows being optimistic and open-minded and having a will to live are key [personality traits](#) that promote successful aging and might even help prolong life.

Studies presented at the meeting of the Gerontological Society of America here looked at the relationship of psychological resources to [health](#) and well-being in centenarians and subjects as young as 65.

"We see less decline, maybe even growth" among older people with these traits, says Daniela Jopp of Fordham University. She studied 356 adults ages 65-94 who rated their [life satisfaction](#) and psychological strengths such as persistence, optimistic outlook and will to live.

Being open-minded is going to be vital for Baby Boomers to thrive, says Jay Firman, as they face the changes aging will create in their lives.

"It's going to be uncharted territory for them," says Firman, president of the National Council on Aging. "A lot of people will get depressed when they give up careers. They will have to find a new sense of self-worth."

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