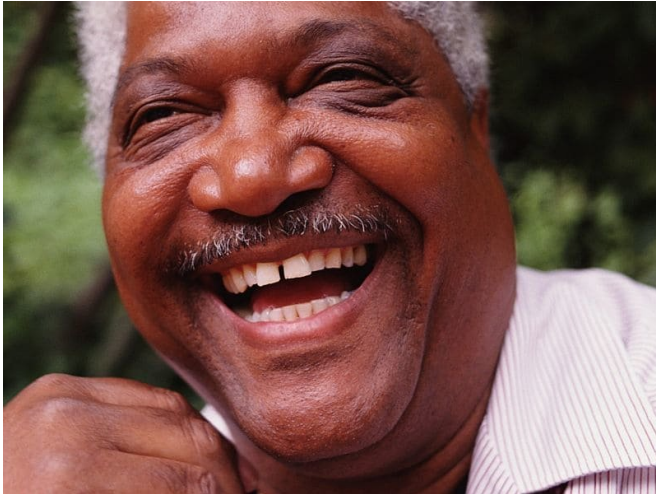


# Staying young at heart

1 January 2019, by Len Canter, Healthday Reporter



(HealthDay)—*You're only as old as you feel.*

It's a common expression that has some science behind it, thanks to a study from University College London in England.

The [researchers](#) set out to learn if people who feel younger than their [chronological age](#) actually live longer. They looked at information from about 6,500 participants. The info included the participants' "self-perceived age"—how old they feel compared to their actual age, which is typically a reflection of health, [physical abilities](#) and well-being.

At the start of the study, 70 percent of the respondents said they felt at least three years younger than they were. In fact, the average was nine years younger. Twenty-five percent felt their age, while just 5 percent felt older.

Eight years later, the researchers looked at the group's mortality rate and found a greater mortality risk in the people who felt older than their age—75 percent of those who felt older than their age were

still alive compared to 82 percent who felt their age and 86 percent of those who felt younger.

It may be more than mind over matter—feeling younger could lead to better health habits that can make people feel and be healthier.

It's never too soon (or too late!) to adopt a younger mindset. Stay adventurous, try new things, develop new skills, and take up hobbies you're passionate about.

Live in the moment: Don't waste time on the "what if's" about the future or be stymied by regrets over the past. Get involved in the world around you to connect with others in positive ways, whether it's volunteering or deepening friendships—these are relationships that can make you feel good about yourself while benefiting others.

**More information:** The Center on Aging and Work at Boston College has more on the importance of [staying engaged](#) at work and at play.

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