

Take the Cheerios Dancing Ads a Step Further: Be Heart Healthy Where it Counts – In Your Mind

Los Angeles, Calif. (January 28, 2016)--The current [Cheerios TV ad](#) campaign, “Healthy Hearts Start Young, Healthy Hearts Stay Young,” where moms and their young kids dance in perfect unison with unbridled joy and enthusiasm, is not only one of the most adorable ads on television, but it totally has the right idea, says Dr. Noelle Nelson, author of the new book [Happy Healthy...Dead: Why What You Think You Know About Aging Is Wrong and How To Get It Right](#) (MindLab Publishing).

“Healthy hearts *do* stay young,” says Nelson. “A healthy heart gives you a terrific platform for a long, happy life, but even more important, it’s about engaging the power of your mind, as well as the power of a healthy diet. What you think has enormous impact on your health and well-being. In particular, on your cardiovascular system--the healthy heart part.”

Study after study shows the link between an optimistic and appreciative point of view and a happy healthy long life. A study that followed the health of 255 medical students for 25 years found that those who were the most hostile had five times greater occurrence of coronary heart disease than those who were not hostile (Barefoot et al, *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 45:1).

Another study, out of Johns Hopkins, reported that even in adults at risk of heart disease due to their family history, a positive outlook offered the strongest known protection against heart disease--as well as or even better than maintaining an appropriate diet, exercise regimen or body weight (Becker et al., *American Heart Assoc. Scientific Sessions*, 2001).

“The Cheerios commercial has it right. Starting young matters,” says Nelson. “Not just with your physical well-being, but starting to think positively--deliberately appreciating your life, yourself and the world around you--when you’re young.”

This was proven in a study that analyzed the autobiographies of nuns written when the nuns were in their 20s, and then looked at how long each nun lived. The nuns who expressed gratitude, happiness and positive emotions in their 20s lived as much as 10 years longer than those who had expressed fewer positive emotions (Danner et al., College of Medicine, University of Kentucky, 2001).

“Pay attention to what you put in your body, absolutely, but also to what you put in your mind,” suggests Nelson. “Make it a practice to focus more on what is working in your life than on what is not, more on what makes you happy than on what brings you down, more on who put a smile on your face than on who made you frown.”

“Like those fantastic mom-and-kid Cheerio duos, fill every moment with as much appreciation, joy, gratitude and enthusiasm as you can muster. You’ll have not only a healthy heart, but a happy, long-lived life as well.”

To learn more about the mind-physical body connection, watch a YouTube presentation by Nelson at <https://youtu.be/7xcgq4TbGgA>.

###

Follow: [@drnoellenelson](#), [#HappyHealthyDead](#), www.facebook.com/Dr.NoelleNelson, www.noellenelson.com, <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/noelle-nelson>