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A boomer's guide to work & life balance

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# Dr. Elaine Dembe

## Being the best you can be

Optimism oozes from Elaine Dembe. The Hamilton, Ontario born chiropractor, who has treated celebs like Celine Dion, Mel Gibson and members of the Toronto Blue Jays, is a whirlwind of positivity – a 'cheerleader for life.' She's run marathons, written two best sellers and touched the lives of thousands with her 'go for it' message. Currently working on her third book and training as a 'life coach,' the energetic Dr. Dembe took a few minutes before a daily five-mile run, to chat with *Solutions* editor Ian Corks.

**Q** You're in your 50s now...a veteran chiropractor with a thriving, holistic practice. You've traveled extensively, you're an accomplished athlete and a successful author and speaker. Most people would consider that more than enough, but you feel you have more to give. Why?

Despite my humble beginnings with an ill mother and elderly dad, I've been blessed with unbridled energy and a tremendous *joie de vivre*. Plus, somewhere along the way, I forgot to have kids, so I have time to share and also, time for myself! I see so many people growing older without passion and missing out on the joys that life has to offer. **I see too many people sleepwalk through life. I think that's wrong.** With what I have learned and the inspirational people I've met, I feel I can help them. In fact, it's become my personal mission statement. My purpose in life

is to touch others with my positive energy

**Q** What exactly can you do to change people's lives?

It's not what I can do...it's what people can do themselves. They can learn to change the way they grow older. They can learn to embrace life. I describe myself as a 'cheerleader for life.' If I can inspire or help people make these changes, to live longer, happier, healthier and more productive lives, then I've fulfilled my mission.

**Q** What kind of changes are we talking about?

There are so many ways a person can change. Some are common to most of us. For example, I have identified what I call '10 secrets to growing younger.' These are 10 key aspects of our lives that we can adjust in ways that will make us better and help us to age successfully. Others are more personal.



## Q Such as?

That's up to each person to identify. You have to take a hard look at yourself. Many people are content. They have a good life, stable relationships, a successful career, etc. But they are not really fulfilled. You have to ask yourself 'what do I have to change in order for me to be fulfilled?' Maybe you need a creative outlet...to write, or paint. Perhaps you need to give something back. **As the late cartoonist Ben Wicks told me once, "the best way to forget your troubles is to help someone else."** We have to find things that connect to our soul. We all have something that we can change for the better... something that is holding us back.



## Q Can all this really make a difference to a person's life?

Without a doubt. I've met so many people who are living with passion and enjoying every minute. Many are quoted in my books. And age is no barrier. I have interviewed over 80 older Canadians who I consider my 'life mentors.' They are happy, vital and full of energy. People who have 'grown younger' as they age – and all by learning to embrace life.

## Q Can anyone make the changes necessary to get this new outlook on life?

Absolutely. Everybody has the answers within themselves. The secret is to find a way to unlock those and to make these changes a priority in your life.

## Q If it's that easy, why doesn't everyone 'just do it'?

Many of us simply don't realize the state we are in. We get stuck in our own worlds. For example, so many of us waste time waiting for the 'big thing' – the right guy, the perfect job, the financial windfall – that we miss the pleasures and fulfillment that the little things can bring. How many of us pay attention to the first signs of spring? We should, and we should feel good about it. If we can't, we need to change.

## Q What are the real benefits of making these changes?

You'll live longer and better, and you'll enjoy life more. It's as simple as that! You'll notice it immediately in terms of your health. **When you are happy, every cell in your body knows it and you feel the benefits.** It's the same when you're unhappy. Your unhappiness shows up in the form of stress, trouble sleeping, headaches, etc. What I call 'dis-ease'.

## Q How can someone get started?

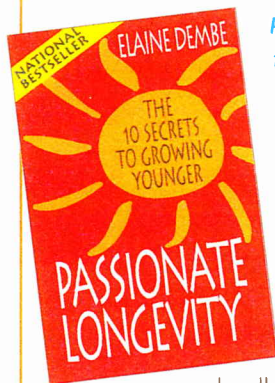
Fitness can make it happen. As you grow older, your fitness is the first thing to go, and that leads to lack of energy, lack of motivation and other negative feelings. Regain your fitness. If you are fit and healthy, anything is possible.

## Q What would be your advice for someone who wants to follow your path?

First of all, decide what you want. Then go after it. But don't try and do too much at once. Big sweeping changes, like promising to exercise every day when you haven't been doing anything, are bound to fail. Don't write a long 'to-do' list that is overwhelming. You're bound

to be disappointed and discouraged. I never said to myself, 'I want to be a competitive athlete.' I started off by deciding I wanted to get fit, then I decided I wanted to start running. Before I knew it, I was competing in marathons against the best in the country, but I did it a little bit at a time. **My advice that'll get you on the road to success: Start small and build up! Then you'll see results that'll make you smile.**

### Read all about it!



*Passionate Longevity: 10 Secrets to Growing Younger* shares Elaine Dembe's not-so-secret recipe for successful aging. Based on her personal experience as a leading edge chiropractor and her first hand interviews with older Canadians from all walks of life, this self-help book, *Passionate Longevity* hits the psychological, social, emotional and health

and wellness issues that matter. **It's a hand-book for living life to the max.**

*Use the Good Dishes: Finding Joy in Everyday Life* is a 'heads up' for what really matters. It is full of 'A,B,C' advice on how to gain pleasure in the small things, learn to **"love the process of life"** and go forward with grace and style.

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