

“The 4 Pillars of Human Health.” by Garey Simmons,
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4 Pillars of Human Health



Before we dive right into “The 4 Pillars of Human Health” We must first look at the big picture.

I am going to define Human Health as a long and healthy life lived with meaning and purpose. For most of us, it takes some time to learn what the purpose of this life is meant to be. It’s different for each of us, but I am going to make a bold statement: “The purpose of life is to contribute to _____.” Your job is to fill in the blank.

It’s philosophical, sure. But having a look outward into your family, community, country and even the world is a good place to make a foundation. Sometimes we need to look inward to find the rules and constructs that help us to make sense of the world around us but physiologically, our eyes point outward to see the needs of those around us and to contribute. You don’t have to agree with me but this is just a starting point for thought and perhaps further discussion.

The average life expectancy in the USA stands at 78. You probably know people who are older than that. And if you are reading this Practical Guide, you are probably younger than that.

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However, there are people in their 80’s running marathons. There are folks in their 90s still hiking in the mountains. There are centurions who still till the land. Some years ago, I was helping my mom move “off the farm” literally and find a nice home in a retirement 55 plus community. The real estate agent was in his eighties. He drove a fifteen-year-old Toyota Camry. I found out that he was a runner and still participated in a couple of marathons a year.

I was fascinated with this elderly agent who seemed to have an eternal smile on his face. What did he know that I didn’t? I asked him, “What’s your secret?”

He said, “When I was 17, I had graduated from high school and applied to go to college. The entire summer I was extremely worried that I would not be accepted. I had no idea what I was going to do and I was already feeling shame for failing my parents. It turned out I was accepted. I had wasted a whole summer worrying over something that never happened. I decided then and there that I would never worry about anything ever again.”

Later I learned that our real estate agent was also the primary care giver for his disabled wife and had been so for decades. He had every reason to be bitter about fate but he could have joy in the most mundane tasks. This is just one example of living large and contributing to those around you.

But the idea is to preserve wellbeing, preserve youth by leveraging a few things. There are no guarantees in life but there are a few promises of good fortune awaiting you. Read on.

If you want to maintain your good health, enjoy a youthful and energetic body and live longer than expected, here is a simple and short to the point blue print.

There are only a few things you need to attend to:

Probably the simplest formula for living a long and healthy life is to “Remember Your MEDS.”

And I don’t mean medications.

The Meds I mean is M. E. D. S.
Mind State, Exercise, Diet and Sleep.
The 4 pillars of human health.

Mind State: The First Pillar of Health.

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There is a lot to be said about your disposition towards life. Some people think that 80% of health has to do with your attitude. Like the old saying "Attitude determines altitude." Here's another one: "You are what you think you are." And Henry Ford's observation, "If you think you can or you think you can't, you're right."

Consider this: If you keep your personal responsibilities straight, if you keep your personal relationships straight, if you keep your faith in yourself and your level of trustworthiness high, you will go far and live long, no matter what else transpires in life.

The alignment of universal truths, whatever you perceive those to be, to your inner character probably has more to do with how long you live, how well you sleep, how your body functions than anything else. Keep your integrity high and be accountable to your friends and family.

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Affirmation: I hold myself to a high standard of personal integrity and stay accountable to my friends and loved ones.

It's similar to the Golden Rule. "Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you."

If you are familiar with the Pareto Principle, then you know that 20% of your actions lead to 80% of your results. It's called leverage. Sometimes, 5% of your decisions can lead to 95% of your results. And this can be a good results or bad results. Google "Pareto Principle" and you will find a lot to read on the 80-20 rule.

So in the realm of Mind State consider your mind's intake and output.

Ask yourself these questions: What am I feeding my mind? What kind of results am I getting from these thought patterns and beliefs? Can I think better thoughts and get better results? Whose programming am I following? Mine or my parents or society's at large? No judgment here, just be aware that your thoughts lead to feelings which lead to actions, and that lead to your results. What kind of results are you getting? If you need to, you can work backwards and look at your results and find out what actions you took or didn't take to get those results and what was the attitude behind your actions that led you.

Your mind is a computer, so sophisticated that we don't really comprehend much about the processes involved in our lives. However, there are very clear ways to manage mind state to get incredible results.

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My commitment to a healthy mind state: (Write in your own words)

Exercise: The second pillar of health.



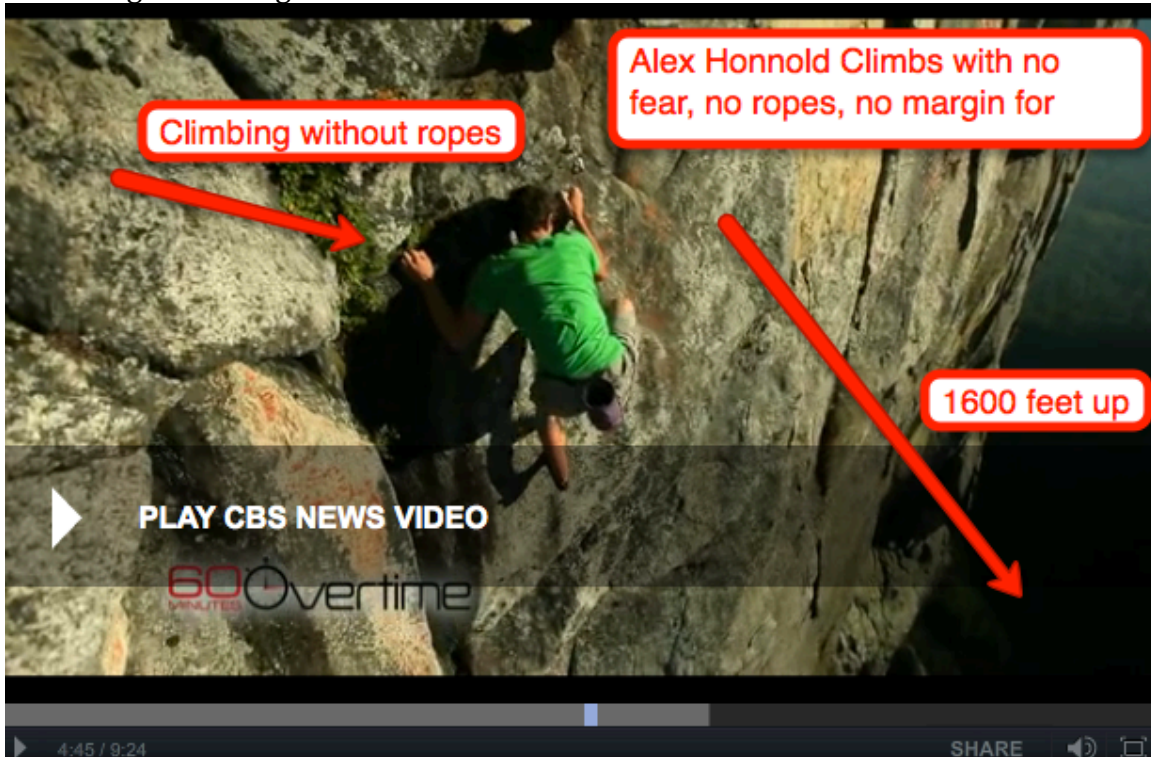
Human beings are functional machines. We have amazing abilities to do incredible things. Most of us can thread a needle, split firewood with an axe, change a tire, change a baby's diaper and hike 5 miles without dying. We are capable of painting a sunset or painting the kitchen; some of us know how to paint the town. Most of us operate in our human experience with agility and precision.

Last Sunday I saw a young man climb the sheer face at Yosemite, without ropes.

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Read about [Solo Climber](#) Alex Honnold and watch the video of how 60 Minutes shot the footage. Amazing.



In nature, the principle sign of life is movement.

No, you don't have to risk life and limb to get your exercise. But the lesson from Alex is to **love what you do for exercise**. Whether you walk, run, bike, hike or swim, till the garden, pull weeds, kayak, water ski, mountain climb, what's important is to find a method for getting your body moving. As our jobs become more sedentary, obesity rises, with obesity comes diabetes and heart disease.

There are many factors involved but the one thing all humans can aspire to is to keep your body moving.

Get up from your desk.

Walk around.

Bend your knees.

Get some fresh air.

Look for something to inspire you. Years ago, I made a commitment to be in nature at least once a week. At the time, my office was in my basement and the only natural

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light came through block glass. That commitment led me to a waterfront community where there was a house for sale. I bought the house with a view.



I have no excuses for not getting out and kayaking, walking or running. But neither do you. One of my favorite authors noted that just about everyone lives within a few minutes of a beautiful nature scene like this. It can be a mountain, a tree, a lake, or a nearby park. Check your neighborhood and community and see what trails and parks are nearby. Do you live near a stream, a lake or a river, a forest, a beach? Explore and see what you can find.

Look around and appreciate what is available to you. For exercise, I like to do *intervals* the best. I run as hard as I can for 20 – 30 seconds and then walk for a minute. I do this for 15 rounds. It takes less than 30 minutes but some fitness experts say that the “burn” last for up to 24 hours from this type of exercise. This is actually better for your heart and joints than a steady jog. This is my preference. You need to find your own. It’s not hard. Allow yourself to move. If you can identify what you love about moving your body, it will not be considered a chore.

I would be remiss if I didn’t mention yoga, tai chi or qi gong as really great ways to get stretching in and practicing balance. This is very important for your back and hips, which you will need to be in great shape as you age. Just consider it. Find a gym with group classes is the best way to get introduced to these practices that are growing in popularity. Just as an example of how these eastern practices are, cardio surgeons have begun instituting yoga in hospitals for after surgery recovery. Dean Ornish teaches yoga as part of his prevention and reversal of heart disease program.

Another easy way to get started is to do vertical pushups. Lean into a wall and do a pushup, then do 50. They are very easy to do and as you get into it you will feel your shoulders engage and feel the muscles working. The biggest exercise bang for your

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buck is air squats. The thigh muscles are the largest group of muscles in the body and you can get the biggest calorie burn from cycling or deep knee bends. This could be an advanced method of exercise, so just a word of caution to stay safe as you exercise.



Of course there are muscles to exercise and there is your cardio system to engage, hence, speed walking or interval training. One more system that needs movement is the lymph system. This is part of your adrenals and it's part of the detoxification system your body has in-built. You didn't know you owned a detoxification system? Well you do. Your liver detoxes the blood, but the dead cells from other parts of your body are either sweated out or sent through the lymph system.

The lymph system is hydraulic; there is no pump. Only through movement can you keep your body in a proper state of detoxification. **Rebounding if fun.**
That really gets your lymph system moving.

Affirmation: The principle signs of life are manifested by movement. I will stay fit and maintain wellness with movement.

My Commitment to Exercise:

Write your commitment in your own words:

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Diet: Third Pillar of Health



There are some profound statements that make a lot of sense if you think about them. For example, “You are what you eat.”

There are some nutritionists who consider the actual food that goes into your mouth to be secondary to health. What’s primary? Reread mind state section above and that might give you a clue. Yes, it’s your career, your relationships, your family, and your kids. Keeping things right in your heart.

But there are some veritable pitfalls that face us in the 21st century. Our food supply has become politically controlled. Politicians are not nutritionists yet they vote on the Farm Bill every five year subsidizing certain crops to the tune of 300 billion dollars. There are powerful lobbies in Washington DC that make decisions based on political influence. The food items that

go into processing of foods are heavily subsidized making natural and organic vegetables and fruits abnormally high.

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It's not really the topic of this report, but be aware. Here is the safest bet when you enter a supermarket. Shop the perimeter of the store. The fruits, the vegetables and fresh produce are the least likely to be tampered with much. Raw is good, organic is better. If you eat meat, choose free-range chicken and grass fed beef. It costs a little more and is sometimes not easy to find, but those farmer's markets and organic stores are growing in popularity.



Eat less. Yes, you heard me. If you go to a restaurant, usually one entrée in today's restaurants are enough to feed two people. It takes about 15 minutes for your brain to get the message from your stomach that you are already full. Therefore most people will overeat out of habit and then find themselves bloated. As an experiment, try eating half a portion of a meal and wait for 15 minutes, if you really are still hungry then continue the meal. Otherwise, get a take home container for the rest of the meal and voila, you have your lunch for the next day. Dr. Oz counsels to eat a handful of almonds 15 minutes before a meal and you will find that you don't need to eat so much.

Typically, a 1400 – 1800 calorie a day menu is plenty sufficient unless you do physical labor such as a plumber or carpenter, or you are an athlete. During the Beijing Olympics, much was made of Michael Phelps 10,000 calorie breakfasts. It's okay for an athlete like Michael since he will spend many hours a day in a swimming pool exercising, drilling and practicing. Not only is his calorie expenditure very high, but also the temperature of the pool causes a much higher metabolic rate. In other words, he burns calories very efficiently.

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For us mortals, we are inclined to eat too much by societal conventions. You can break out of that mold whenever you become aware and decide that your health and your body belong to you and you want to do what’s right for you.

Meat portions: The size of your palm is the size of a portion of meat needed for your protein requirements. Please avoid the cheap meats in most supermarkets. Identify grass fed beef and free-range raised chicken. It costs more but you now know you don’t have to eat so much.

Vegetable portions: Double or triple what you normally eat in the way of phyto-nutrients. Someone is going to ask, “What’s three times zero?” If you are not used to eating vegetables, you can experiment with protein and high quality vegetable greens powders that are available. Juicing or blending your vegetables and fruits is another way to up the nutritional intake. I have recently experimented with adding carrots, celery, apples, bananas to my protein-veggie shake. It’s really my main meal of the day. It helps to cover a lot of other dietary sins.

Fruit: Apples and pears are low glycemic and good for you on a daily basis. Most berries yield a healthy amount of quality nutrition and benefit the human body with antioxidants that can prevent cancers from occurring. All other sugary fruits are to be avoided except on a special occasion. Orange juice and most fruit juices are very high in sugary calories. Avoid or use very sparingly.

Dairy: Most people are allergic to dairy and don’t know it. If you have had trouble with your sinuses, most likely that mucous is the result of dairy products. If you can find a way to cut down on dairy, it could be worth it. If you have constant sinus conditions or suffer from fibromyalgia, you should be tested for dairy allergies.

Grains: Whole grains can be healthful and beneficial. But when your loaf of bread says, “Whole grain” on it, they could be talking about the few little sprinkles on the top of the loaf. Flour, no matter what the color, is pulverized and therefore high glycemic. The one exception is bread made from sprouted grains such as Ezekiel bread or Essene breads. Gluten allergies are very common and if you have any sort of chronic conditions, there is a simple way to test for these allergies, which we can share with you at a later date.

Glycemic Index: We emphasize using low-glycemic foods since one of the greatest threats to our wellbeing is sugar addictions and insulin resistance, which lead to diabetes, which leads to heart disease. It’s not a foolproof scale since even candy bars can be made to rate low to medium on the glycemic scale.

In 1900 the sugar intake for the average American was about 12 lbs. a year. In today’s world, most Americans ingest 156 lbs. of sugar a year, just about a half a pound a day. Couple that fact with the general lack of exercise and mobility and a blind man could see it in a minute, we are digging our graves with our teeth.

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You may think you're different that you don't take in that much sugar but you do. Every carbohydrate you eat turns to blood sugar. The donuts, dinner rolls, sandwiches, rice and noodles add to the sugar caloric intake. Then there are the hidden ingredients in every processed food. Even your bottle of ketchup has high fructose corn syrup in it. Potato chips are pure high glycemic carbs that is to say that potato chips are quickly converted sugar. Cookies, ice cream,... you get the picture.

Stay away from the aisles of the supermarket and buy fresh, buy raw, buy organic whenever you can.

Fats: Low fat diets were all the rage for a few years and spawned a generation of young girls who indulged themselves in anorexic and bulimic behavior. Like everything else in the world, there are good fats and bad fats. Some fats are absolutely essential for optimal health, like omega-3 fatty acids. Trans fats are processed fats produced by the food industry originally as a means of avoiding saturated fats. If it's solid at room temperature it's either a trans fat or a saturated fat. Trans fats are to be avoided like the plague. Saturated fats like butter and from meat are okay in moderation, especially if they are from a smaller free range farm. Our cellular structure require some saturated fat for cellular integrity.

The fat that is most neglected in our American diet is Omega-3 fatty acids. Best obtained from wild caught fish, omega-3s have been clinically studied and found to be beneficial in almost one hundred categories of human health. But there is a dearth in the land. Many people are afraid of wild fish due to the pollutants in the oceans such as mercury, arsenic and PCBs. Supplementation is one answer that I advise everyone to consider. Highly potent, highly distilled Omega-3s fish oil can do wonders for you, your parents and your children!

Most cooking oils and all of our bake goods rely on Omega-6 oils, which are also necessary for human health, but the intake proportions are totally out of whack. Whereas, a hundred years ago, the proportion of Omega-3 to Omega-6 oils was 1:1, now the average American will ingest 15..7 times as much Omega-6 to Omega-3. Why does it matter you ask?

Omega-3s are anti-inflammatory in nature and Omega-6s are pro-inflammatory in nature. Diabetes, heart disease and arthritic conditions are all exacerbated by inflammation. Balance out your Omega-3s and Omega-6s and most problems with these three major inflammatory conditions will cease.

Affirmation: I am what I eat. I am committed to consuming what is good for my body.

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Here is what I am committed to doing to improve my dietary habits: (Write in your own words)

Sleep: The fourth pillar of health.



I don't have to tell you that if you don't sleep well, health deteriorates. Good sleep is an integral part of good health.

If you step back, like Archimedes, step way back away from the planet and have a look at the earth rotating on its axis. Now use your imagination and watch the rotation of the earth as each continent, each country around the globe falls away from the sun and is engulfed in the great shadow we call Night.

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Now picture the population of each country climbing into their beds for the night. Why is it that we humans all need to sleep? All of us? We can examine that question on many different levels. All six billion of us have to sleep and sleep for many, many hours. Most of us would like to sleep for 8 hours per 24-hour cycle. Not everyone can do that but it's the ideal biologically.

For one thing, it makes me feel a little safer knowing that evil dictators and maniacal megalomaniacs HAVE to sleep too. We humans are so smart we know how to kill off our species in awesome ways. Thank God, everyone needs to take a break and sleep. So it's kind of a cosmic relief that humans HAVE to sleep.

Sleep gives us as individuals pause in our lives, time to reflect, time to dream. It's a time to reset the algorithms, recharge the batteries. It's a time to renew and refresh. Some tips for you try if you have trouble sleeping eight hours a night:

1. Make sure your bedroom is dark. Blinking lights from cell phones on the charger need to be hidden. Turn your bedside clock away from you. Close the shades and drapes.
2. Do not look at computer screens, the TV or other light sources directly before going to bed. For your last waking hour, conversation with your mate, your kids or reading a book is better for you. The brain interprets artificial light entering the eyes as daytime. Your circadian rhythm should be respected.
3. If your job allows it, sleep during the night, not the day.
4. As you prepare to sleep and you lay there, it's a great time for reflection, rumination and especially gratitude.
5. If there is a perplexing problem going on in your life, this is the perfect time to frame the question and trust that your subconscious, Source, God, Spirit or whatever belief system you ascribe to, can help bring an answer. This is not a time to worry about the problem but to seeking guidance. Those who don't believe in a higher source can be assured that 90% of your brain can help find solutions while you sleep.
6. Upon awaking, find that place of gratitude and pay attention to whatever answers come to you. The answers to my questions usually are waiting for me in the morning as I awake. Be conscious of the fact that those answers are always brilliant.

Affirmation: I sleep restfully and peacefully at least 7 or 8 hours every night.

- How many hours do you sleep per night?
- Do you feel rested in the morning?
- Do you awake at night? How many times?
- What one thing can you do to improve your sleep?

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Clinical conditions must be address by physicians. Understand that there are many types of doctors from western medicine to eastern practices with many helpful traditions in-between.

One size does not fit all. However, most of us can find comfort and good health by raising our awareness in these vital four categories. May you live a long and abundant life.



Garey Simmons
443-852-1000 (direct line, leave a message if I don't answer.)

Four Affirmations from this text: (you can make up your own as well)

Mind State Affirmation:

I hold myself to a high standard of personal integrity and stay accountable to my friends and loved ones.

Exercise Affirmation:

The principle signs of life are manifested by movement. I will stay fit and maintain wellness with movement.

Diet Affirmation:

I am what I eat. I am committed to consuming what is good for my body.

Sleep Affirmation:

I sleep restfully and peacefully at least 7 or 8 hours every night.