

# Healthy LIVING

## Keep It Real

Dr. Aram Casparian

The United States spent \$3.8 Trillion dollars on healthcare last year, more than any other country by 50%. For perspective if a million dollars is ten years, a trillion is 46,000 years! That's a lot, but after all we are the wealthiest country on earth. You'd think that with this much emphasis on "health care" that we'd be leading the world in health and longevity. The truth is that we are last or near last in all measures as compared to other wealthy countries. So what gives?

When paired with the fact that the vast majority of modern diseases are completely preventable, the picture becomes puzzling if not disturbing. How is it possible to spend the most and be the worst? The answer is: each of us makes ourselves sick more than any other country. The burden we create demands that money is spent on treating our sickness. The system would be better described as "sick care", not health care and there

is a stark difference between these two descriptions.

Health care is up to us. Each of us as an individual is responsible to maintain ourselves at the level of health that we choose. The way I see it the crux of this health crisis is our willingness to con ourselves and gamble our very lives away in a high-stakes game of very slow Russian-roulette. I see it happening every day and most of the time it's not by choice at all. Instead I see people accepting a lower level of function by default. They have some emotional investment in the story they tell themselves, the habit that is worn thin and lost its usefulness long ago, is still unconsciously clutched. I'm not condemning this, it's human nature. We live in a land of freedom, so our system indulges us in our very own indulgence.

On the other spectrum, here is what we know about healthy people: they eat well, they exercise and they have

good relationships and a sense of purpose. I'm healthy; and I'm also an expert at conning myself. I've been fit and I ride

that memory for all it's worth. I've found myself talking about injuries that keep me from performing the way I should, even though I haven't done my best to rehab them. Eating I'm pretty sensitive to so I can't stray too far, but there are times that I sure do try. This is why I've started to check in with myself in an attempt to "keep it real".

My basic check list looks like this: What's happening in my body right now? Am I doing all I can to make it better? Am I using it as an excuse for not doing what I should be doing? What am I eating now? Is it serving my health and longevity? Am I respecting and nurturing the people around me? Am I respecting and nurturing myself? That's it! This is how health becomes a choice and



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not a circumstance. Beware of the phrases "It's in my genes", "I have a bad back", "I eat pretty well", "I'll start tomorrow", because these are the early symptoms of disease.

So, can you keep it more real? Diligence, honesty and a check list can do a lot. If needed there are so many people out there to help you. There is really no reason not to thrive. I personally know handfuls of wonderful people whose life purpose is to teach you how to move well and be aware of your body, how to cook satisfying meals that are wholesome, how to get along better with others and with yourself. It's all better than a pill or surgery, the rewards are more fulfilling, and it actually costs less by several thousand years. ♣

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