



Jeff Davidson: Breathing Space

You're in it for the Long Haul

A couple who have been married for more than seventy years go to visit a divorce lawyer. The lawyer asks them why, after all these years, they want to get a divorce now. The couple look at each other sheepishly and then say, “We were waiting for the children to die.” I first heard this story told by Dr. Ken Dychtwald—a psychologist and authority on lifestyle and healthcare—and it underscores a major theme: You are going to live much longer than you think you will. Perhaps you’ll reach 100.

New developments in science and technology all but guarantee that barring some unforeseen catastrophe, you’re going to live longer. Medical breakthroughs already in the pipeline—that seem as if they are more akin to Star Trek than planet Earth today—promise a new age that would even astound the “New Agers.”

On The Horizon

- Major victories in the fight against AIDS, including genetic therapies that offer a high cure rate.
- Full recovery from spinal cord injuries via the development of artificial nerves.
- More development of artificial body parts that function as well as or better than the original organs, and are visibly undetectable.

Within Forty Years

- Replacement of body parts through cloning, which allows perfect genetic substitution of one’s own regenerated organs.
- The eradication of cancer and heart disease.
- Human life spans averaging 100 years or more.

In such an era, it’s likely that you may stop and start work several times, go back to school, perhaps get a Ph.D., start a second family, or even a third family, and start your own business. Even if you can’t see it now, you may find yourself taking time off to do something outside of your current consciousness. You may retire, then come out of retirement several times. At 85 or 90, you may even decide to run for political office. After all, a large constituency of your contemporaries will have no problem voting for a fellow octogenarian.

While stress can certainly shorten a life span, most people still realize something close to their estimated life span. What counts is the quality of your life on the way there.