Let's Disrupt Aging
Every day, 10,000 people in the U.S. turn 65.¹

We all have a lot to look forward to since the fastest growing segment of our population is people 85 years of age and older, followed by the second-fastest growing segment — people who are 100 and older.

Modern medicine has brought us extended longevity. Attention to social determinants such as food, security, jobs, education, transportation, and livable communities have contributed to better health outcomes.

If so many of us are living longer, isn’t it time we reconsider what it means to be old? Maybe we are defining age too narrowly; age really is just a number, but it’s a number that reflects experience, knowledge, a life’s journey with twists and turns, successes, failures, and lessons learned.²
Let’s move from managing a healthcare plan to codesigning a life plan.
The real nugget behind aging wonderfully is resiliency — the ability and attitude that ensures you can cope and adapt when life slams you with a curve ball.

A review of the literature around optimism and positive perceptions of aging reveals that three components, in particular, help inform the essence of resiliency:

1. **A strong sense of purpose.**
   A strong sense of purpose is associated with fewer heart attacks, strokes and cases of dementia, fewer nights in the hospital, and lower healthcare costs.

2. **Optimism and positive view of aging.**
   A positive view of aging has been correlated with a 44% increased likelihood of recovering fully from a severe disability, as well as fewer plaques and tangles in the brain (the anatomic evidence associated with dementia).

3. **Social connections that matter.**
   Loneliness, or the feeling of not being connected to others, has been shown to have a health risk equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

With these insights, is it any wonder that we should be fostering resiliency as part of healthy longevity?
We can work together to move from talking about what a patient “should do,” to working with patients to help them understand “how to” use emerging technology to improve their lives. When we put the patient at the center, we create the opportunity to do a much better job of understanding their life-stage, their perspective, and where they are on their journey in life. Focusing on the patient presents us with the opportunity to change the dialogue by changing the question from “what’s the matter” to “what matters to you?”

Move from prescribing treatment... to prescribing purpose.
People with a sense of purpose have:*

- 58% better sleep
- 71% reduced risk of stroke
- 61% fewer overnight hospitalizations
- 32% fewer doctor visits
Optimism and a positive view of aging adds 7.5 years to life. Those with a positive view of aging:

- Are 44% more likely to fully recover from a severe disability.
- Have an 80% reduction in cardiovascular risk.
- Have a larger hippocampus and less anatomic evidence of Alzheimer's disease.

Impact of loneliness:

Loneliness is the “new smoking,” considered equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes per day.

Social isolation among older adults is associated with an estimated $6.7 billion in additional Medicare spending annually.

Each month, Medicare spent an estimated $134 more for socially isolated older adults ($1,608 more annually).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Additional Medicare Spending ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social isolation</td>
<td>$134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High blood pressure</td>
<td>$117</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arthritis</td>
<td>$163</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>$241</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heart disease</td>
<td>$270</td>
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</tbody>
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What can you do?

Be Social.
Build opportunities to connect with friends and family. Consumers with close friends are more likely to engage in healthy behaviors, such as getting plenty of sleep,
The burden of hearing impairment has a larger negative impact on quality of life than many common medical conditions, including diabetes, stroke, and cancer.

40% of people age 60+ and more than 2/3 of adults age 70+ in the U.S. have clinically meaningful hearing loss.

Hearing loss is associated with increased risk of dementia, falls and depression.

Loneliness shaves 8 years off longevity.

Hearing loss represents 9% of potentially avoidable cases of dementia, the most of any risk factor.

Nearly 30% of older people live alone...

...and almost half of women age 75+ live alone.

Loneliness shaves 8 years off longevity.

eating healthy foods, maintaining peace of mind and minimizing stress, engaging in brain health activities, and taking on new challenges or hobbies.
The way people are aging is changing. It’s not really about whether or not we should be embracing technology, but whether or not technology is embracing us, whatever our age. If we can use technology to keep our minds active as we age, bring social connectedness that is meaningful and results in creating purpose each and every day, we will have done much to transform aging and enhance longevity.

Here is the true opportunity for technology— to keep us engaged, productive and connected. In short, to assure we always have something to get us up in the morning, someone to share our lives with, and with a smile on our face.

Join us. Together we can challenge outdated beliefs and spark new solutions so more people can choose how they live and age.
“I believe that it’s not about aging in place, it’s about thriving in motion.”

– Charlotte Yeh, MD