

AFRICAN-AMERICAN Healthcare Strategies

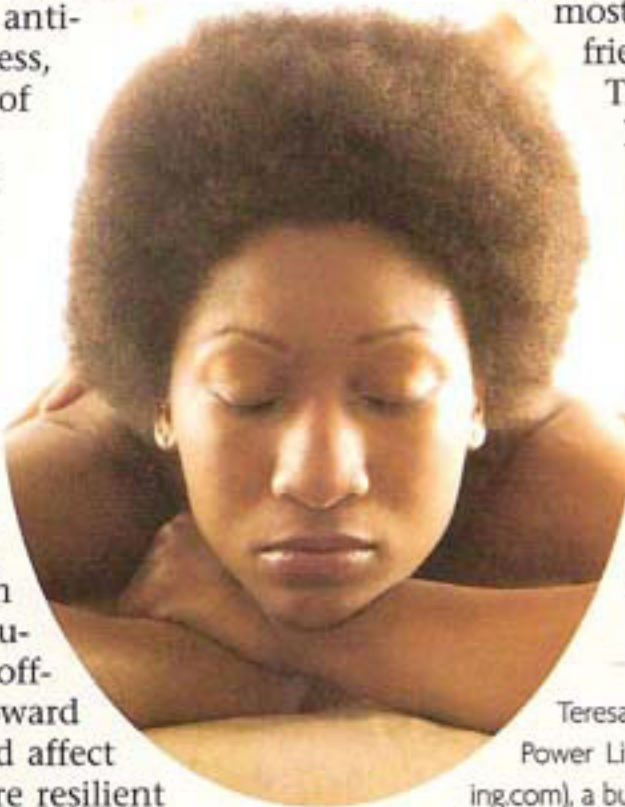
Education • Prevention • Wellness

The Ultimate Anti-Aging Strategy: Managing Stress

Forget Botox. Throw away the facial creams. Now, one of the greatest preventive health strategies has become the ultimate anti-aging technique: proactively manage stress, and you will not only reduce your risk of disease, but also keep your cells young.

We all know that chronic stress can lead to a host of physical, mental, and emotional disorders, from backache and migraine to heart disease and depression. More than 70 percent of all doctor visits are stress-related. Now, a medical study has proven that stress can actually harm your DNA and speed up aging. Elissa Epel, Ph.D., a psychiatrist at the University of California at San Francisco, conducted the research with Elizabeth Blackburn, Ph.D., a world-renowned cellular biologist. They also found that we can offset the impact of stress by our attitude toward it. What happens in the mind can indeed affect the molecules in our body. Those who are resilient under pressure don't suffer the same damage to their cells.

At the age of 28, I almost died from a stress-induced ulcerated digestive system. I worked too much, slept too little, ate processed foods, and didn't take time to nurture myself. That's



a deadly combination. It's not sustainable. Now, I help people de-stress and create habits of success. The most surprising thing is the reaction I get from friends who haven't seen me in a long time. They look at me as if I'm a different person. My body is leaner, and my face has softened. As an entrepreneur, I still experience stress; the key lies in how I manage it.

So if the "ease-up" warnings haven't prompted you to take action, maybe the thought of premature balding, fading eyesight, diminished thinking abilities, and deepened wrinkles will. If you want to live longer and look younger: breathe deeply, eat mindfully, exercise regularly, sleep soundly, and most of all...think positively!

— Teresa Kay-Aba Kennedy

Teresa Kay-Aba Kennedy is the president of Power Living Enterprises, Inc. (www.power-living.com), a business and life coaching company, and the founder of Ta Life, Inc. (www.ta-life.com), which operates one of the first yoga studios in Harlem. A former vice president at MTV Networks, she has an M.B.A. from Harvard and certifications in holistic health, yoga, and fitness.

