



## **Staying Physically and Mentally Active Leads to Successful Aging**

It seems as though everyone is looking for the secret to living longer and staying healthy. Every article geared towards Baby Boomers features headlines that promise the secret to increasing wellness – travel more, spend more, laugh more. However, it turns out that the secret to this mysterious “successful aging” prospect is a bit more simple than you may have thought.



The MacArthur Foundation spent more than ten years researching what makes successful aging, and gave their opinion known as the Four Pillars of Successful Aging. Here at [Visiting Angels](#) Wayzata, we have taken these four pillars to heart. We gear our services and communication to reflect each of the MacArthur Foundation’s recommendations, knowing that our clients can age in a healthy and independent way, no matter where they live, with the support of our caregivers and staff.

The first two pillars of successful aging reflect staying active, both physically and mentally. The best news about these recommendations are that you can begin your new active lifestyle at any age and with any ability.

### **Staying Physically Active**

Successful aging requires a commitment to stay physically active. While our bodies do tend to breakdown as we age, staying physically active can keep impairments at bay, increase the immune system, and decrease the risk of cardiovascular complications. Starting or maintaining a physically active lifestyle doesn’t have to be overwhelming, and all progress matters for all ages.

Physical activity can be rigorous and include running or cycling. Physical activity can also include low impact exercises such as hiking, walking, yoga, or tai chi. Finally, physical activity can include hobbies such as gardening.

Exercise or activity shouldn’t only work on one aspect of the body. It is important to incorporate exercise or activity that encourages range of motion, flexibility, and strength. It is also important to note that a sit-and-be-fit exercise group, or adapting activities to suit your current medical condition and abilities, are still positively contributing to your successful aging process!

At [Visiting Angels](#), we work hard to assure that we are providing encouragement and support for our clients who wish to be more physically active. We love strolling alongside our clients during a morning walk or participating in a seated Tai Chi class with them. Our office believes in supporting and encouraging one another to stay active together!

### ***Incorporating Cognitive Activities into Daily Life***

Speaking of exercise, the second pillar of successful aging includes exercising the mind as well as the body. Cognitive decline is a real concern for aging adults, but research has shown that consciously incorporating intellectually stimulating activities into daily life can lead to decreased risk of memory loss or judgment issues.

Whether you work a crossword puzzle, use a brain building app on your smartphone, or take up learning a new hobby or language, be sure you are actively using your brain in a new way every day. Our caregivers love incorporating brain building activities throughout our time with our clients. We can use tools like reminiscing, trivia, and even sing-a-longs to connect with our clients while giving their brain a much needed burst of activity.

Ready to take a step in the direction of more successful aging? [Give us a call](#) to set up a consultation so that we can get to know your situation a bit better.

Ready to read more about senior issues that pertain to you or your loved one? Curious about other senior topics and challenges? [Check out our Family Resource Center](#) for insightful articles, caregiver tips and other important resources.

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