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Secrets to a long life




Roberto Salazar is officially New York's oldest living person. Here he explains, in his own words, the secrets to his long life.

"I get up early, about 6 a.m., and I don't care about the weather – every day I go for a brisk walk in Central Park. I'm lucky, as I live on the Upper West Side, so it's nearby. I come back to the apartment and have fruit for breakfast. Always fruit. I lead a healthy life and that's why I'm 104.

Another reason is that I don't get stressed. My job was easy. My kids are normal, sensible people. My extended family is great. There is nothing to get stressed about. Also I'm never in a hurry. If I miss the train, I don't run. I wait for the next one. If I'm late, I phone and tell people. I watch people rushing up and down Columbus Avenue and I can't understand it. It makes no sense.

I came from Cuba, and arrived in the USA when I was a teenager. This country has been very good to me and my family, and there is a lovely Cuban community here in the city. We help each other. If someone is ill, we go round with some picadillo – a Cuban meat stew. It's important to have a strong network of friends.

I walk a lot and I recently (at the age of 93) started doing some martial arts. I saw some people doing tai chi in the park, so one day I just joined in. It helps me to stay in shape.

In the evening, I sit at the window and watch the sun go down. There are some really spectacular sunsets here. And I always just hope to see another one the next day!" There's no mystery. If you're active, if you have good friends, a healthy diet, and a stress-free lifestyle, you will live longer. It's as simple as that!

Zoom out

2 Complete these collocations with words from the text.

- a How often do you go for a brisk walk?
- b Do you think you lead a healthy life?
- c Do you know anybody who does martial arts?
- d Do you feel that you are always in a hurry?
- e When was the last time you watched a spectacular sunset?
- f Do you have a large extended family?
- g Do you have a strong network of friends?
- h What's your favorite way to stay in shape?