Healthy Lifestyle & Living

enrich

VOLUME 19 • ISSUE 217 • AUGUST 2026

PHP 75.00

18TH YEAR Anniversary

Love is Health

United States - US$ 1.50
Hong Kong - HK$ 11.50
Malaysia - MYR 4.75
Singapore - S$ 2.00

ISSN 2012-0931

WATCH OUT POLLUTION KILLS!

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
DOWNLOAD NOW
www.enrich.com.ph



HEALTH • BEAUTY • HOME • RECIPES • FAMILY • EDUCATION • TRAVEL • SCIENCE

@EnrichManila @EnrichMagazine

gsk

Mupirocin

Bactroban II
OINTMENT



GET WOUNDS OUT OF THE WAY.
Life is uncut with Bactroban.

USE FOR:

- ✔ **Impetigo** (Mamaso)
- ✔ **Abrasion** (Gasgas)
- ✔ **Boil** (Pigsa)
- ✔ **Laceration** (Sugat)

IF SYMPTOMS PERSIST, CONSULT YOUR DOCTOR.
ASC Ref G050P092120BS

Available at all mercury drug stores nationwide

REFERENCE: Bactroban Ointment API GDS17 (10 April 2017)

For adverse events, please report to: ph.safety@gsk.com
For product complaints, please contact:
PHLQC_complaints@gsk.com or (02) 7 809 2500
Trademarks are owned by or licensed to the GSK group of companies.
© 2020 GSK group of companies or its licensor.

GlaxoSmithKline Philippines Inc.
23/F The Fort Legend Tower, 3rd Ave. cor. 31st St., Bonifacio Global City, Taguig City
Tel No. (632) 8862 0700

PHMN-MUP-PSTR-200002 | SEPTEMBER 2020

SCAN HERE FOR THE FULL PRESCRIBING INFORMATION:

Glucerna

Abbott



HELPS CONTROL BLOOD SUGAR UP TO 90% OF THE TIME

vs. lifestyle intervention alone with balanced meals and healthy lifestyle

4X MYO-INOSITOL vs previous formulation

SLOW RELEASE CARB SYSTEM

CHROMIUM



TRIPLE CONTROL SYSTEM

BASTA MAY TULONG NG GLUCERNA, IN CONTROL KA.

with balanced meals and healthy lifestyle

SCAN TO LEARN MORE

Available at all mercury drug stores nationwide

NAKASISIGURO GAMOT AY LAGING BAGO

ASC A0090P081324G

PH. 2024.51602.GLU.1

Letter From The Editor

Who doesn't love to travel during the summer months in Europe. It's peak holiday season there now, and tourists from around the globe descend upon many of the magnificent old cities in search of culture, spectacular architecture, different food, and lots of new adventures.

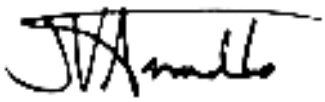
This month's travel feature, *Budapest – A Gothic Tale (Part 2),* by Dimitris Lyritzis, highlights the many facets this beautiful city has to offer. It takes us through wide cobbled streets with fabulous old buildings into the famous Great Central Market, one of Budapest's most illustrious highlights. Plus, there's lots more on offer in this interesting and informative feature.

Our special feature, *Watch Out: Pollution Kills!*, by Henrylito Tacio, highlights the dangers that each of us face almost every day. Henry writes. "Water is life," the old proverb insists. Not in the Philippines, recent studies have shown. "Heavy inorganic pollutants have made water increasingly a threat to life," here, according to a report released by the Manila-based Asian Development Bank (ADB) some years back. This informative feature reminds us that the more we know about problems, the better armed we are to deal with them,

Readers who are sports fans, will love this month's *Sporting Icons* by Luke Johnston. It tells the story of Kirstie Elaine Alora, a Filipino taekwondo athlete who became one of the most experienced and successful competitors in the sport's history in the Philippines.

I hope that the winners of last month's *Enrich Giveaways* have enjoyed spending their P1,000 Mercury Drug gift certificates. Check out our social media pages and have some fun entering - you might become one of this month's lucky winners.

As always,



JV Arnaldo

No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the written permission of the publishers. Opinions in Enrich are the writers' and not necessarily endorsed by the publishers. No responsibility will be accepted for unsolicited manuscripts, transparencies or other materials.

Editorial material contained herein is provided for information only. Readers are advised not to use this information as a substitute to seeking consultation from a medical doctor.

All rights reserved. Copyright© 2008 applied for by Mercury Media Corporation.

Enrich is published monthly by Mercury Media Corporation and is produced for Mercury Media Corporation by Jeffery International Media.

enrich

VOLUME 19 • ISSUE 217 • AUGUST 2026

MANAGING EDITOR
J.V. Arnaldo

DEPUTY EDITOR
Francisco Rodriguez

CONSULTING EDITORS
Charles Greene

COPY EDITOR
Robert Morales

CONTRIBUTORS
Eva Angcanan
Kara Santos • Henrylito D. Tacio
Mona Sabalones Gonzalez
Edith Legaspi • Stephen Hammond
Jamie Gonzales • Luke Johnston
Mikee Gan • Norman Karl O. Banayat, M.D.
Arthur Dominic Villasanta • Noel F. de Jesus
Vincent Tajanlangit • Glecy G. Gamboa
Rich Valdez • Dennis V. Gargantiel
Dimitris Lyritzis

CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER
Chelsea Ablazo Jeffery

SOCIAL MEDIA DIRECTOR
Alexandra Heard

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Wilbert Lamsen

ADMINISTRATION MANAGER
Ara Mhay Guzman

ADVERTISING DIRECTORS
Clarita Ablazo
Abiegal Doroga

PHOTOGRAPHIC EDITOR
Paolo Drilon

RESEARCH MANAGER
Melanie Gonzalez

JEFFERY INTERNATIONAL MEDIA
www.jefferyintlmedia.com

MERCURY MEDIA CORP
7 Mercury Avenue
cor. C.P. Garcia Avenue
Bagumbayan,
1110 Quezon City
Tel: **8912-4514**
Fax: **8912-4191**
Advertising — Enquiries
info@enrich.com.ph
www.enrich.com.ph

Ensure GOLD

Abbott
life. to the fullest.™

HMB

+ TRIPLE PROTEIN
TO HELP BUILD
MUSCLE MASS
with proper diet and exercise

YBG

+ IMMUNITY SUPPORT NUTRIENTS
TO HELP BUILD
IMMUNITY
with proper diet and exercise

Streng+hPro®



1 SCAN THE CODE
2 SAVE YOUR E-CARD
3 ENJOY DISCOUNTS

SCAN HERE

SIGN-UP FOR A
FREE DISCOUNT CARD
SAVE UP TO 1,500*

Available at all
mercury drug
stores nationwide

Abbott

enrich

IN THIS ISSUE

AUGUST 2026









OTHER FEATURES

07 Medic Apps
08 The Daily Grind
10 Diabetes Corner
12 Medicine In The Workplace
14 Home Safety First
18 Sporting Icons
19 Famous Filipinos
20 mTV Topics
26 To Take Or Not To Take: Are Expired Drugs Still Safe?
30 Looking For Vitamin C: Get It From These Fruits And Vegetables
44 Fibromyalgia: A Cluster Of Symptoms Affecting Adults
46 Boost Your Health With Food Synergy
50 The World Grew Quiet: And So Did I
54 "What Was I Thinking?!?" Common Cognitive Biases That Lead Us Astray
58 A Look At Pasig's Diocesan Treasures
62 Marinduque By Bike: Cycling in the 'Heart Of The Philippines'
66 Budapest - A Gothic Tale (Part 2)

BAYER

KATING-KATI KA NA BA BUMILI?



Clotrimazole

Canesten®

IF SYMPTOMS PERSIST, CONSULT YOUR DOCTOR
ASC REF NO. 0000000000000

Available at all mercury drug stores nationwide
MAKASISIGURO GAMOT AY LAGING BAGO

Similac GainSchool

Abbott

EXPERTS' MOST RECOMMENDED

Preschool Milk in the Philippines

Based on IQVIA Study
from May 13, 2025 to July 7, 2025



A0151P032626S | ANIAPAC-P-PH-202600217

Available at all mercury drug stores nationwide

NAKASISIGURO GAMOT AY LAGING BAGO



By Mikee Gan

MEDICApps

MyChart and the Evolution of Digital Patient Care

MyChart, developed by Epic Systems, is one of the most widely used patient portal platforms in modern healthcare. It serves as a secure digital interface that connects patients to their medical records, healthcare providers, and clinical services. Built on Epic's electronic health record infrastructure, MyChart has become a central tool in the ongoing shift toward digital, patient-centered healthcare delivery.

At its core, MyChart was designed to improve access to medical information. In traditional healthcare systems, patients often had limited and delayed access to test results, prescriptions, and clinical notes. MyChart changed this model by allowing patients to view laboratory results, imaging reports, immunization records, and physician summaries directly through a mobile app or web browser. This increased transparency has contributed to greater patient engagement and a more active role in personal health management.

Beyond record access, MyChart functions as a communication and coordination platform. Patients can securely message healthcare providers, request prescription refills, manage appointments, and receive billing information. Many healthcare systems also use the platform to support telemedicine, enabling virtual consultations and remote follow-ups. These features became especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic, when remote care became essential for maintaining healthcare access.

The platform also supports family and caregiver involvement through proxy access, allowing authorized users such as parents or caregivers to manage another person's medical information. This is particularly valuable in pediatric care, elderly care, and chronic disease management, where coordinated oversight is often necessary.

Security is a central aspect of MyChart's design. The system uses encryption, authentication methods such as biometrics, and compliance with healthcare privacy regulations like HIPAA to protect sensitive patient data. Despite these safeguards, concerns remain regarding data privacy, digital literacy barriers, and the increasing complexity of managing large volumes of medical information online.

In addition to its clinical functions, MyChart reflects broader changes in healthcare philosophy. It supports a shift toward patient-centered care, where individuals are more actively involved in decision-making and health monitoring. However, it also presents challenges, including potential increases in clinician workload due to messaging demands and the risk of patient anxiety when receiving complex test results without immediate interpretation.

Overall, MyChart represents a major step in the digital transformation of healthcare. By integrating medical records, communication tools, and telehealth services into a single platform, it has reshaped how patients interact with the healthcare system. As digital medicine continues to evolve, platforms like MyChart are expected to play an even larger role in connecting patients, providers, and emerging technologies.

MyChart is not widely available or used in the Philippines yet, but plans are underway to expand operations later this year. ●



FACT #01

The Philippines celebrates Ninoy Aquino Day on August 21.

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph



THE DAILY GRIND

By Jamie Gonzales

Being a journalist is one of the most satisfying professions in the world. Especially if you're a travel or food writer. I was commissioned to write a feature on our beautiful southern city of Cebu and what it has to offer. *Enrich* was kind enough to send me off on another adventure to produce next month's travel feature.

My alarm went off at four-thirty in the morning. The room was dark. Manila outside was, for once, quiet — that rare, disorienting hush that only the earliest hours can produce in a city that otherwise never stops talking. I silenced the phone, sat up, and reminded myself that today is a good day. I am going to Cebu.

The taxi I booked the night before is already waiting by four-fifty, its driver a cheerful man who seems unbothered by the hour in the way that only experienced early risers are. We slide through EDSA like a hand through water, no gridlock, no honking, just the long arterial sweep of the metro in a state of temporary grace. I watch the city pass through the window, all orange streetlights and shuttered storefronts, and feel the particular lightness that comes with being in motion before the rest of the world has woken.

NAIA Terminal 3 at five-fifteen in the morning is a different animal from its midday self. The crowds are thinner, the light cooler, the energy coiled rather than frantic. I move through check-in efficiently, clear security without incident, and find myself at the gate with time enough for a cup of coffee and a pan de sal from one of the terminal's snack counters. It is not a glamorous breakfast, but there is something satisfying about eating simply before a flight — as if you are already shedding the weight of the city.

The Cebu Pacific flight departed close to on time, which felt like a small gift. The aircraft lifted off the runway just as the sky began to lighten in the east, and I watched Manila recede below — the geometry of its rooftops, the silver thread of the river, the sprawl that stretches in every direction as if the city cannot bear to stop. Then we were above the clouds, and it was just light.

The flight took a little over an hour. I used it badly and productively in equal measure — dozing for twenty minutes, scrolling through nothing useful on my phone, then staring out the window as the Visayan islands begin to appear below, each one sitting in water so blue it seems almost theatrical. The approach into Mactan-Cebu International Airport is one of the better ones in the country: sea to the left, sea to the right, the island narrowing beneath you as you descend.

Landing in Cebu always feels like an arrival in the truest sense of the word. There is a texture to the air here that is different from Manila's — warmer, softer, carrying a suggestion of salt and something else, something harder to name. I collected my bag from the carousel and stepped outside into a morning that had already committed fully to sunshine.

The drive from Mactan to Marco Polo Plaza Cebu takes roughly forty minutes, tracing the Mandaue-Mactan Bridge across the strait before climbing into the hills above Cebu City. I have taken this road before, and I always forget, between visits, how dramatic it becomes as you rise. The city unfolds below you, dense and lively,



FACT #02

Katipunan revolutionaries led by Andrés Bonifacio declared resistance against Spain in August 1896.



FACT #03

Many August church celebrations often include Our Lady of the Assumption (August 15).

and then the hotel appears on the ridge above Nivel Hills — its tower catching the morning light, the grounds green and precise around it.

Check-in at the hotel is unhurried and warm. The lobby is cool, and the service is the kind that makes you feel expected rather than processed. I am shown to my room on an upper floor, and when I pull back the curtains, there it is — the whole of Cebu City spread beneath me, the harbor glinting in the distance, the mountains rising beyond. After the four-thirty alarm, the dark taxi, the terminal coffee, and the hour in the sky, this view lands like a reward.

I set my bag down, stand at the window for a moment longer than strictly necessary, and think: this is why you book the early flight. Not the efficiency. Not the smooth roads. This — arriving somewhere beautiful while the day is still young enough to feel full of possibility. Manila was still dark when I left. In Cebu, it is already a fine morning. ●

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph

Illuminate Your Natural Glow

Buy1 Take1 ₱1,195

글루타닉 로즈힙스

KB

L-Glutathione Plus NAC 500mg 30 Capsules
Rosehips 500mg 30 Capsules
Food Supplement
NO APPROVED THERAPEUTIC CLAIMS

Since 2007

GMP HALAL HACCP ISO 22000 ISO 45001:2018 ISO 9001:2015

Available at: mercury drug stores nationwide

Diabetes Corner



AVOCADO-CUCUMBER CALAMANSI SMOOTHIE

Here's a diabetes-friendly green smoothie using ingredients that are common in the marketplace. It's creamy, refreshing, and designed to keep the impact of sugar relatively low.

What You'll Need

½ medium avocado
1 small cucumber, peeled
Juice of 2 calamansi
1 cup unsweetened almond milk or soy milk
1 small handful spinach or malunggay leaves (optional, for extra nutrients)
1 tablespoon chia seeds
4–5 ice cubes
Small slice of ginger

Procedure

Chop the avocado and cucumber, and add everything to a blender. Blend until smooth and creamy. If it tastes too thick, add a bit more cucumber or water. ●

Note: Smoothies can be healthy, but blending makes it easier to consume calories quickly. For blood sugar control, keep portions moderate (about one glass) and preferably drink it with or after a meal rather than as a large standalone snack.

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph



FACT #04

On August 23, 1896, the Cry of *Pugad Lawin* against Spanish rule marked the start of the Philippine Revolution.



Here's a diabetes-friendly Filipino-style recipe built around common green fruits and vegetables you can easily find in the marketplace, with a focus on fiber, slow-digesting carbs, healthy fats, and lean protein.

GINISANG AMPALAYA, SAYOTE & GREEN MANGO WITH TOFU

What You'll Need

1 medium ampalaya, sliced thinly
1 medium sayote, peeled and julienned
½ small green mango, julienned
1 cup malunggay leaves
200 g firm tofu, cubed
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 small red onion, sliced
1 tablespoon olive oil or coconut oil
1 tablespoon low-sodium soy sauce
1 teaspoon calamansi juice
½ teaspoon black pepper
¼ cup water

Procedure

Sprinkle a little salt on the sliced ampalaya and let it sit for 10 minutes, then rinse lightly. This reduces bitterness. Heat half the oil and lightly brown the tofu cubes. Set aside. Add remaining oil, then sauté garlic and onion until fragrant. Add sayote and ampalaya. Stir-fry for three to four minutes, adding water, soy sauce, tofu, malunggay leaves and greens. Toss in green mango during the last minute for freshness and acidity. Add calamansi juice and black pepper.

Serving Tips

Eat with ½ cup of brown rice or skip rice entirely for tighter glucose control. Pair with grilled fish like Bangus or Tilapia for extra protein. ●

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph

FACT #05



The United States dropped the first atomic bomb in warfare during World War II in August 1945.

By Noman Karl O. Banayat, M.D.

MEDICINE IN THE WORKPLACE

Creating Safe And Supportive Workplaces For Pregnant And Breastfeeding Employees



The fertility rate in the Philippines has been reported to be on the decline according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). In their report, they mentioned that the country's fertility rate has dropped to just 1.7 children per woman. This is the lowest that it has been since its steady decline from 4.1 children per woman in 1993. This means that we are now below the amount that is needed to sustain the population, which is 2.1, the effects of which we would only see after a few years.

Aside from the current state of the economy, where it is extremely difficult to fund the support for a child, a factor that could be causing this decline is how being pregnant while working can be stigmatized. In some companies, these women face scrutiny during their pregnancy as they are viewed as liabilities, as they potentially can lose manpower at any given time. After all, not all pregnancies are smooth sailing, with some women having to be placed in complete bed rest.

Why Support Is Important

In our country, women make up a huge portion of the workforce, and every workplace should be responsible for protecting the health and wellbeing of its workers. Creating a supportive work environment for pregnant and lactating employees helps reduce health risks, improve wellbeing, and can strengthen workplace productivity.

Pregnancy brings about a gamut of physical and physiological changes that increase vulnerability to workplace hazards. Long working hours, prolonged standing, heavy lifting, excessive heat exposure, fatigue, stress and exposure to chemicals or infectious diseases can affect both maternal



and infant health. Without any proper workplace adjustments, these conditions may contribute to discomfort, increased health risks and reduced productivity.

What Can Be Done

An important step that employers can take is to conduct a workplace risk assessment for pregnant employees. This would include identifying tasks that pose risks and implementing reasonable adjustments, such as lighter workloads, additional rest breaks, ergonomic seating, flexible schedules, or temporary reassignment from hazardous duties when necessary. These measures can help employees continue working safely while maintaining workplace productivity.

As for breastfeeding employees returning to work, additional challenges may arise. The lack of time, privacy or facilities for expressing milk may discourage continued breastfeeding. To address this, workplaces can establish clean, private lactation stations, provide reasonable break times, and ensure access to proper milk storage areas. These accommodations not only support maternal and infant health but also show organizational commitment to employee welfare.

"IN OUR COUNTRY, WOMEN MAKE UP A HUGE PORTION OF THE WORKFORCE, AND EVERY WORKPLACE SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR PROTECTING THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF ITS WORKERS"

Philippine laws and workplace policies also reinforce the importance of maternal protection. The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the Department of Health (DOH) promote workplace measures that support maternity protection and breastfeeding-friendly environments. The Expanded Maternity Leave Law and lactation-related workplace policies recognize that supporting working mothers is essential to both public health and labor welfare.

Beyond just simple compliance, investing in maternal health programs benefits the organizations as well. It has been seen that supportive workplaces often experience improved employee morale, which leads to higher retention rates, reduced absenteeism, and stronger employee engagement. Workers who feel that they are valued and protected remain productive and committed to their organization.

In the same way that companies have been showing their support of mental health in the workplace, so too should they show support for these women, not just during pregnancy but also after it, when they are breastfeeding.

By recognizing maternal health as an Occupational Health and Safety priority, organizations can help protect employees during one of the most important stages of their lives while fostering a workplace culture centered on dignity, wellbeing, and care. ●

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph

FACT #06



U.S. President Richard Nixon announced his resignation on August 8, 1974.

Home Safety First

By Mona Sabalones Gonzalez



EDIBLE FLOWERS IN YOUR GARDEN

Tea, Jam, Or Salad?

Most boomers have grown up in a world where flowers are neither eaten nor drunk. However, millennials and Gen Zs are less daunted by flowers served on a plate. Despite this, few consider flowers as a main ingredient in what they're eating or drinking.

According to the 2023 *ScienceDirect* article titled "Looking to the future, by studying the history of edible flowers," blooms were historically consumed in different parts of the world and in various ways. They weren't just useful in quelling appetites; they were appreciated for their medicinal qualities.

At some point, flowers were taken off family plates and didn't appear in restaurant menus, said the 2023 article, noting, "Few people would currently appear to consider flowers as edible".

From The Garden

Now, flowers are back on plates and can be purchased at supermarkets and online stores. Edible flower seeds are also available online. If you grow them, plant them in well-draining soil, or prepare your own soil by mixing it with healthy, nutritious compost. Finally, never use synthetic fertilizer and/or pesticides on your edible flower plants, the University of Minnesota Extension warns.

Here are three edible flowers featured that you can grow in your garden. They are:

1. **Blue *Clitoria ternatea*,** also known as Blue Ternate or Blue Butterfly Pea, boosts brain health by releasing acetylcholine, which helps reduce memory decline. It also offers anti-diabetic and



▶ Blue Clitoria Ternatea

"BLUE CLITORIA TERNATEA, ALSO KNOWN AS BLUE TERNATE OR BLUE BUTTERFLY PEA, BOOSTS BRAIN HEALTH BY RELEASING ACETYLCHOLINE, WHICH HELPS REDUCE MEMORY DECLINE"

anti-cancer benefits, while promoting healthy skin and a strong heart.

If you grow this flower, you can make tea from it. But first, harvest your flowers early in the morning for their highest nutrient content. Use five to seven flowers for one cup of tea, choosing bright blue, fully opened blossoms. Rinse blossoms to remove dust and small insects.

Boil the water, then remove it from the heat to keep it safe. Dip and steep your flowers in it for five to 10 minutes for a vibrant blue color. For cold tea, pour it over ice. For hot tea, add calamansi or lemon for flavor, and honey for sweetness.

For storage, immerse the flowers in boiling water for five minutes, then lay them on a paper towel and leave them in a dry, shaded area for two to three days. When they're brittle, store the flowers in an airtight glass jar and place them in a cool, dark corner of your pantry.

Drinking the flower liquid plain yields a mild woody taste akin to fresh soil, with complex earthy notes reminiscent of aged timber and dry bark. Its natural flavor has also been associated with aged spirits, cedar, coffee, unsweetened green tea, and/or roasted nuts. Others describe the flavor as a subtle, neutral base.

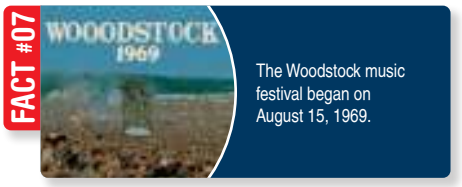
2. **Gumamela (Hibiscus *rosa-sinensis*)**. This shrub is native to China. However, it was introduced to the Philippines and is now naturalized nationwide. Also called the hibiscus flower, the gumamela stands out for its large, colorful, trumpet-shaped blooms.

   Also called "shoeflower", it has vibrant colors, including yellow, orange, white, and pink. But red gumamela is best for jams. Healthline says that gumamela is high in antioxidants, which help protect against harmful free radicals.

   It's rich in vitamin C, minerals, and anthocyanins, a type of flavonoid antioxidant that helps reduce inflammation and improve heart health. Gumamelas promote weight loss, inhibit bacteria and cancer cell growth, and support liver health.

   If you have this flower in your garden, you can make tea or add it to salads, jams, and soups. It can also be candied. Here's a recipe with instructions to make it a main ingredient in jam:

1. Ideally, the best gumamela species for jam is *Hibiscus sabdariffa* (Roselle), a red variety with a tart, cranberry-like flavor.
2. Gather only fully mature, fully harvested gumamela.
3. Remove all non-edible parts, such as the pistil and the pollen covering it, to ensure a pleasant texture and taste.
4. Remove the calyx (the green base that connects the flower to the stem) and the stamen (the long, prominent stem in the center).
5. Clean all edible red petals thoroughly under running water to remove dirt and insects.
6. Separate the petals by pulling them apart to dry faster and to better enable direct infusion into hot water.
7. Dip the petals into the hot, boiling water and keep them there until the water turns red.
8. Air-dry the petals by spreading them on paper towels. Keep them in a shaded, well-ventilated area until they are crisp.
9. Storage: Place the dried petals in an airtight container, and place the container in a cool, dark place.




Gumamela




Katuray



Now that your gumamela is suitably prepared to make gumamela jam, here's a recipe from No Way Jose Cuisine:

a. Pour ⅓ cup of sugar into a pan.
b. Add 1 ½ cups of dried gumamela.
c. Add 1 tablespoon of orange peel.
d. 4 cups of water.
e. Heat the mixture until it boils. Then turn it to "Low" and leave it there for 20 minutes.
f. Let the mixture cool.
g. Using an immersion blender, blend the gumamela mixture until smooth.
h. Once it's well blended, add sugar. The amount should be determined by your desired level of sweetness.
i. Let the mixture blend at a low temperature in the pot.
j. Stir it occasionally until it reaches your desired thickness.
k. When it's appropriately thick, put it in a mason jar and place it in the pantry. Your jam will have a nice, sweet-and-sour taste.

3. Katuray (*Sesbania grandiflora*). These large, fleshy, and edible blooms have long beaks resembling those of hummingbirds. This is why they are often called "vegetable hummingbirds". Others see these flowers as the folded wings of butterflies, calling them "white butterflies," says South Farm Panglao.

Katuray flowers are traditionally believed to help support immunity and digestion. This is because they're rich in antioxidants and are packed with calcium, iron, and vitamins (A, C, folate). They promote healthy hearts and have anti-diabetic and anti-hypertensive properties. They also treat coughs/colds. Katuray flowers pair well with salads and soups. Here's one way to prepare *Ensaladang Katuray* according to Mama's Guide Recipes:

Ingredients:
1/2 kilo katuray flowers.
1 medium-sized tomato, chopped.
1 small onion, thinly chopped.
Spring onions, chopped (optional).
2-3 tablespoons of *bagoong na isda*.
Half of lemon juice or 3 calamansi.

Directions:
- Cut off and discard the inner stamen and stem of the katuray before cooking to prevent bitterness.
- Thoroughly wash the katuray.
- Boil water. Then, dip the katuray in the water for one minute.
- Immediately drain or shock the katuray in cold water to keep them crisp.
- Drain the water and transfer to a plate to cool.
- In a mixing bowl, toss katuray and all other ingredients.
- Chill in the refrigerator until it is ready to serve.

Would you like to add edible flowers to your personal menus? Hopefully, these recipes can get you started. An added benefit: growing your own edible flowers gives you satisfaction in knowing you're cooking from garden to plate. Plus, edible flowers have many health benefits. Enjoy! ●


FACT #08
Hurricane Katrina formed in August 2005, in the Atlantic Ocean.

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph

Multivitamins and Minerals

Berocca Energy



NEW LOOK SAME ENERGY

HELP UP YOUR PHYSICAL ENERGY AND MENTAL SHARPNESS

with proper diet and exercise

ASC REF. NO. B0193P112025B

IF SYMPTOMS PERSIST, CONSULT YOUR DOCTOR.

Available at all mercury drug stores nationwide

NAKASISIGURO GANOT AY LAGING BAGO

BY LUKE JOHNSTON

SPORTING ICONS



KIRSTIE ELAINE ALORA

Sport: Taekwondo
Born: November 25, 1989
Birthplace: Biñan, Laguna

Kirstie Elaine Alora is a Filipino taekwondo athlete who became one of the most experienced and successful competitors in the sport's history in the Philippines. She entered taekwondo at a young age and eventually rose to become a member of the Philippine national team.

Her early training in taekwondo began as a response to being bullied by a classmate in grade school, an experience that drove her to take up the sport as both an escape and a means of self-defense. Her talent quickly became evident in national competitions, and she later transitioned into international competition, where she represented the Philippines in the +67 kg category (women's under-73 kg division) in various tournaments across Asia and the world.

Alora's international career gained momentum in the 2010 Asian Games, where she won a bronze medal. This achievement established her as one of the Philippines' top taekwondo athletes. She continued to compete at a high level, earning another bronze medal at the 2014 Asian Games, reinforcing her consistency in one of the toughest sporting events in Asia.

In regional competition, particularly the Southeast Asian Games, Alora became a dominant figure. She won four gold medals and five silver medals across several editions of the SEA Games, contributing significantly to the Philippines' medal tally in taekwondo. Her performances made her one of the country's most reliable athletes in the sport for more than a decade.

One of the most important milestones in her career came in 2016 when she qualified for the Rio de Janeiro Olympics. She earned her Olympic spot after performing strongly in the Asian qualification tournament, where she secured a silver medal. At the Olympics, she faced some of the world's best taekwondo practitioners, losing to 2008 Beijing gold medalist Maria Espinoza of Mexico in the round of 16, before being eliminated by Wiam Dislam of Morocco in the repechage. She also had the honor of serving as the Philippines' flag bearer during the Olympic closing ceremony.





FACT #09

The American football NFL preseason begins in August.

After the Olympics, Alora continued to represent the country in international competitions, including the Asian Games and the Southeast Asian Games. She remained an active competitor into the early 2020s, earning additional medals and maintaining her position as a senior leader on the national taekwondo team.

As her competitive career progressed, she gradually shifted toward mentoring and supporting younger athletes. She made her final appearance for the national team at the 2022 Asian Games before retiring, capping an illustrious 18-year career. Following her retirement, she became involved in coaching and development work with the Philippine Taekwondo Association's junior and cadet programs, helping train the next generation of Filipino taekwondo practitioners.

Kirstie Alora's career is recognized for its longevity, consistency, and contribution to Philippine sports. She is regarded as one of the country's most accomplished taekwondo athletes, having represented the Philippines across multiple major international competitions for over a decade. ●

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph

By Vincent Tajanlangit

FAMOUS FILIPINOS



ROSA VILMA SANTOS-RECTO

Born Rosa Vilma Santos on November 3, 1953, in Tarlac, she has spent her entire life in the eye of storms: artistic, personal, political, and emerged from each one not merely intact but luminous. Rosa is, in the phrase that Filipinos reach for instinctively, the Star for All Seasons. The title has never felt like flattery. It feels like fact.

The story begins in 1963, when a 10-year-old girl stepped in front of a camera for Trudis Liit and walked away with the FAMAS Best Child Actress award. There was nothing accidental about it. Santos had a quality that directors sensed immediately, a capacity for emotional truth that most performers spend a lifetime trying to acquire. The camera did not just find her attractive. It found her believable.

Throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, Rosa laid the foundation for one of the most extraordinary careers in Asian cinema. She played Darna, the beloved Filipina superheroine, with an athletic joy that made children worship her. She turned in a raw, courageous performance in Burlesk Queen that shocked audiences who thought they already knew her. She was becoming something rare: an actress willing to go wherever a story demanded, regardless of the risk to her image.

It is in her landmark works that Santos' true ambition reveals itself. Sister Stella L. (1984) cast her as a nun whose faith is tested by labor unrest and state violence, a film that landed like a provocation in Marcos' final years. She played the role without sentiment, without easy grace, making Stella's doubt feel as sacred as her conviction.

Relasyon placed her inside the moral complexity of an extramarital affair with such psychological precision that audiences left the cinema unsettled in ways they welcomed. Then came *Bata, Bata; Paano Ka Ginawa?* (1998), a landmark of women's cinema in the Philippines, in which she inhabited a single mother navigating a world built against her with a defiant tenderness that remains startling today.

Anak (2000) explored the fractures that OFW migration carves through Filipino families, a subject so close to the national experience that it barely needed advertising, and audiences came because they recognized themselves. And Dekada '70 (2002) arrived as a kind of reckoning: a film that dared to examine martial law not through history but through the intimate geography of one household, with Santos at its center, aging visibly across the decades, carrying the weight of a nation's memory.

Tallying Santos' awards feels almost beside the point, but the numbers are nonetheless staggering. She holds the record for the most awards as an actress in Philippine cinema, with honors from the Film Academy of the Philippines (FAMAS), the Gawad Urian, the critics' guild, the Metro Manila Film Festival, and numerous international festivals.

In December 2023, she won Best Actress at the Metro Manila Film Festival for When I Met You in Tokyo, proof, if any were still needed, that her craft continues to deepen with age. Then, in 2025, came her tenth PMPC Star Awards Best Actress trophy, this time for Uninvited. Ten PMPC awards across a career that is still producing work of this caliber is not a record. It is a monument.

What sets Santos apart from virtually every comparable figure in world cinema is the seriousness with which she pursued a second vocation. She did not dabble in politics. She governed. As mayor of Lipa City and later as Governor of Batangas, one of the country's most complex provinces, she earned the Presidential Lingkod Bayan Award for exemplary public service. She subsequently served as a congresswoman, bringing to the floor the same attentiveness she brought to a film set.

Her advocacy has centered consistently on cultural preservation and women's empowerment, causes that dovetail naturally with her filmography. It is not that Santos divided herself between art and politics. It is that she understood them, at their best, to be the same work performed in different rooms.

In 2024, the organization Aktor PH formally nominated Santos for the Order of National Artists of the Philippines, the country's highest cultural honor, specifically for Film and Broadcast Arts. The nomination was, to many observers, long overdue. Santos has spent sixty years shaping how Filipinos see themselves on screen, challenging them, comforting them, and at her greatest, transforming them.

Whether the formal recognition follows or not, the informal verdict has long been rendered. In every barrio and every city in the archipelago, in the memories of every Filipino who has ever watched Stella's crisis of faith or Amanda's quiet devastation in Dekada '70, Vilma Santos already holds the title. ●



FACT #10

On August 28, 1963, Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech.

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph

Source: www.alzheimersresearchuk.org

Health Tips To A Healthier Brain



1. Do not smoke

If you smoke, quitting is one of the best things you can do for your brain health.

2. Protect your head

Wear a helmet during sports or when riding a bike.

3. Stay sharp

Keep challenging your brain throughout your life and stay socially connected.

4. Look after your heart

Keep physically active, maintain a healthy weight, and try to limit alcohol to under 14 units per week.

5. Take care of your hearing and vision

Get your eyes and ears tested regularly, and wear a hearing aid if you've been given one.

6. Manage underlying conditions

Take steps to prevent or manage high blood pressure, high cholesterol and type 2 diabetes.

Source: www.stroke.org

Health Tips How To Prevent A Stroke



A stroke occurs when a blood vessel that carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain is either blocked by a clot or bursts (ruptures). Stroke affects the arteries leading to and within the brain. The good news is that many strokes may be prevented. Here are tips for decreasing your risk for stroke, disability or even death.

- Don't smoke or vape and avoid secondhand smoke.
- Eat healthy foods low in saturated fat, trans fat and sodium (salt). Reduce sugary drinks.
- Get regular physical activity.
- Keep a healthy weight.
- Limit alcohol to one drink a day for women; two drinks per day for men.
- If you take medications, be sure to take them as prescribed, and always talk to your doctor before making any changes.
- Know your blood pressure. A healthy blood pressure range is less than 120/80 mm Hg.
- Have regular medical checkups, including assessment of your personal risk for stroke.
- Get adequate sleep every night, seven to eight hours of sleep per night for adults; more for children.

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph

TRIVIA

The color of your nails can help reveal the quality of your bloodstream's oxygen level and blood circulation.

Source: www.deserthandandpt.com

Research has shown that colder temperatures may help reduce allergies and inflammation *and* can help you think more clearly and perform daily tasks better.

Source: www.rd.com

Recent discoveries have shown that sleep is essential for both memory consolidation and flushing out metabolic waste, such as beta-amyloids that are linked to Alzheimer's. Despite advancements in research, there's still much we don't know about why sleep is so crucial for the body.

Source: www.healthline.com

EKxperience THE MAGIC

Enchanted Kingdom 30 Forever Enchanted!



for only

₱3,800

comes with exciting FREEBIES!



SCAN ME FOR MORE INFO

- Unlimited admission and rides for one (1) year
- EKspress ride access privileges on All Major and Kiddie rides (Not applicable for gated attractions)
- Special invites to EK events, Exciting freebies
- EKsclusive discounts in-park and outside partner merchants.

FOR MEMBERSHIP INQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT:
+63 928 551 0859 or ekmc@enchantedkingdom.ph

By Henrylito D. Tacio

WATCH OUT
POLLUTION KILLS!

> *"Pollution is nothing but the resources we are not harvesting. We allow them to disperse because we've been ignorant of their value."*
>
> *—R. Buckminster Fuller, American architect and writer*

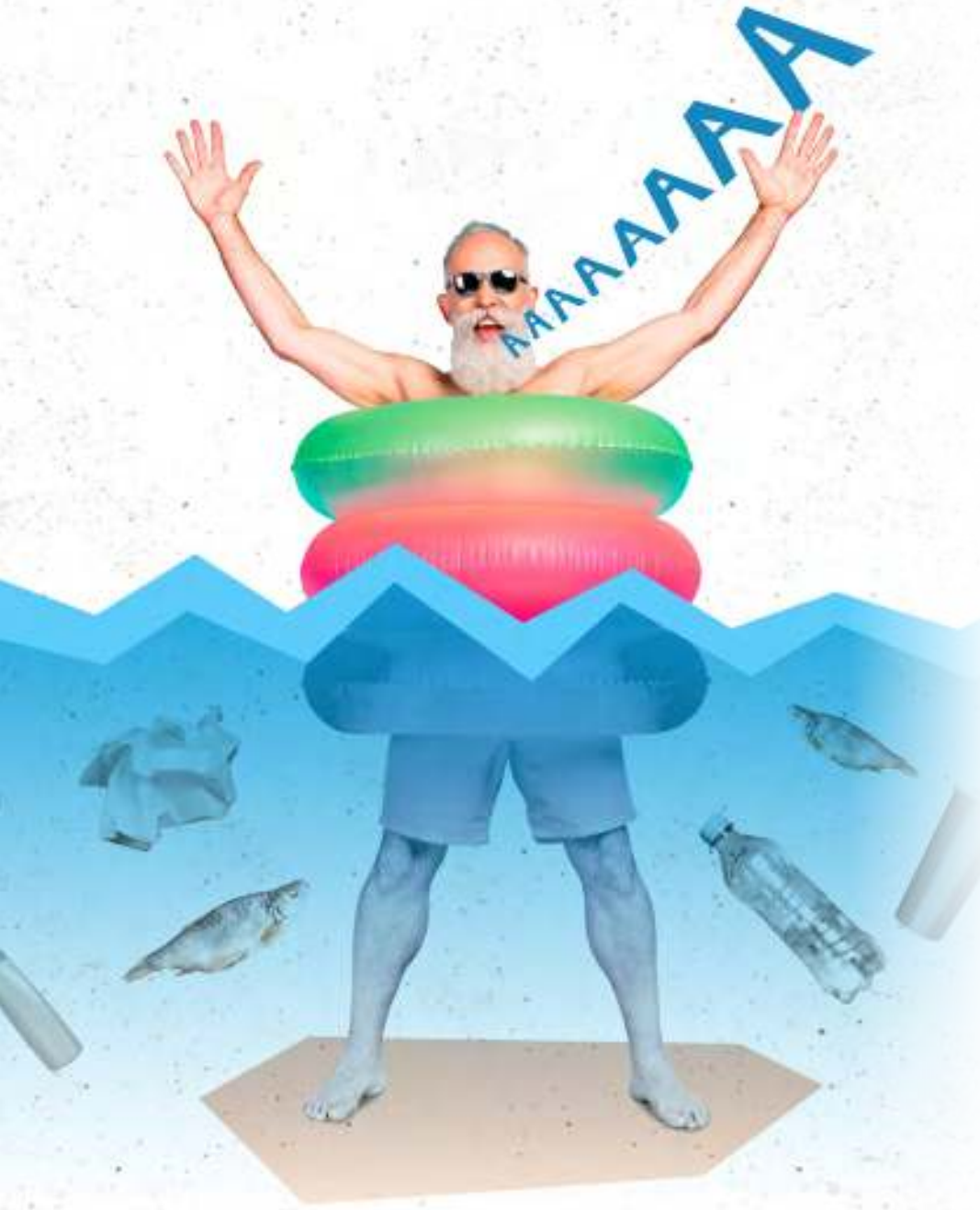
Today's pollution is strongly associated with the environment. *Britannica Encyclopedia* defines it as the introduction of harmful substances or energy into the environment "at a rate faster than it can be dispersed, diluted, decomposed, recycled, or stored in some harmless form."

The major kinds of pollution, typically categorized by their respective environments, include air pollution, water pollution, and land pollution. In recent years, people have been increasingly concerned about particular forms of pollutants, including noise pollution and plastic pollution. Each of these can have detrimental effects on a person's health and may even lead to death to some degree.

Air Pollution

Air pollution refers to the degradation of air quality due to the presence of smoke particles and toxic gases. The primary culprits are carbon oxides, nitrogen, and sulfur. Instances of air pollution encompass: the combustion of fossil fuels such as oil, gas, or coal; the emissions from vehicles; the improper handling of landfill waste resulting from garbage pollution; the detrimental odors or off-gassing associated with plastic manufacturing and paints, among other sources; as well as nuclear incidents or radiation leaks.





Air pollution is hazardous to your health, according to various studies. As Eddie Bernice Johnson puts it, "The health effects of air pollution imperil human lives. This fact is well-documented."

The Geneva-based World Health Organization (WHO) reports that air pollution claims seven million lives each year. "Air pollution impacts our vital organs and can lead to strokes, diabetes, heart diseases, lung cancer, and respiratory diseases," the United Nations health agency says. "It also impacts pre- and neonatal health."

Around 90 percent of people go through their daily lives breathing harmful, polluted air, which has been described by the United Nations health agency as "the most important health issue of our time."

In the Philippines, air pollution is the third highest risk factor driving death and disability due to non-communicable diseases, said the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA). It is also the leading environmental risk to health.

"Our research found that air pollution was responsible for 66,230 deaths in 2019, of which 64,920 deaths were estimated to be adults and 1,310 children," CREA said. "This is significantly higher than previous estimates made for the country."

Water Pollution

Water pollution takes place when detrimental substances—typically chemicals or microorganisms—taint a stream, river, lake, ocean, aquifer, or any other water body, diminishing water quality and making it hazardous to humans or the ecosystem.

"Water is life," the old proverb insists. Not in the Philippines, recent studies have shown. "Heavy inorganic pollutants have made water increasingly a threat to life," here, according to a report released by the Manila-based Asian Development Bank (ADB) some years back.

The study done by Greenpeace Water Patrol Investigation backed up the claim. Five out of the 18 artesian wells in Benguet and Bulacan were found to contain nitrate levels well above the drinking water safety limit issued by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Drinking water with high levels of nitrate can cause serious health problems, particularly among children. The greatest risk of nitrate poisoning is "blue baby syndrome," in which affected infants develop a peculiar blue-gray skin color. They may become irritable or lethargic, depending on the severity of their condition. The condition can progress rapidly to cause coma and death if it is not recognized and treated appropriately.

"About 80 percent of all diseases and more than one-third of all deaths in developing countries are caused by contaminated water," deplored Elizabeth Dowdeswell when she was still the executive director of the United Nations Environment Program.

Here's a startling facts and figures from the UN: "Every eight seconds, a child dies from a water-related disease; 50 percent of people in developing countries suffer from one or more water-related diseases; 80 percent of diseases in developing world are caused by contaminated water; 50 percent of people on earth lack adequate sanitation; 20 percent of freshwater fish species have been pushed to the edge of extinction from contaminated water."

Land Pollution

Land pollution refers to the accumulation of solid or liquid waste materials on the surface of the land or beneath it, which has the potential to contaminate both soil and groundwater, pose risks to public health, and create unattractive conditions.

"Many types of materials can pollute the land," *National Geographic* reports. "Items such as litter come from a variety of sources and can be big or small, from household garbage to industrial and construction waste. Some pollutants can be exceptionally small, even microscopic. Chemicals like pesticides, heavy metals and microplastics are examples of these tiny pollutants."

Exposure to land pollutants can present considerable dangers to human health, according to the Institute for Environmental Research and Education. Contaminated soil can have a direct impact on human health through physical contact. For example, skin exposure to contaminated soil may result in rashes, irritation, and potentially more severe health complications.

Ingesting contaminated soil or water can result in gastrointestinal disorders, neurological issues, and even cancer. On the other hand, inhaling dust particles from polluted soil can lead to respiratory complications and other health concerns.

Food chain contamination is also a significant issue. This occurs when individuals consume crops or livestock that have been in contact with contaminated soil or water, thereby introducing pollutants into the human body.

Land pollution poses a significant risk to human physical safety. In the year 2000, a substantial landfill located near Quezon City experienced heavy rainfall that triggered a trash landslide, resulting in the deaths of over 200 individuals. Numerous people resided on the slopes of the landfill, earning their livelihoods by recycling and selling items found within it.

Noise Pollution

Noise pollution represents a hidden threat. Although it is not visible, it exists both on land and beneath the ocean. Noise pollution is defined as any undesirable or disruptive sound that impacts the health and welfare of humans and other living beings.

Sound levels are quantified in decibels (dBA), and specialists concur that noise levels of 85 dBA or greater are deemed harmful. "Listening to sounds at 85 dBA or more for more than eight hours at a time can lead to hearing loss, and that time decreases as noise level increases," says the University of California, Los Angeles Health.



"Land pollution poses a significant risk to human physical safety. In the year 2000, a substantial landfill located near Quezon City experienced heavy rainfall that triggered a trash landslide, resulting in the deaths of over 200 individuals"





However, regarding other health implications, the evidence remains ambiguous. Although a direct correlation between duration of exposure and other health complications has not been established, experts generally agree that prolonged exposure to noise can be detrimental.

A study published in the *European Journal of Public Health* indicates that continuous exposure to high noise levels from various sources can result in a spectrum of cardiovascular diseases, with increased exposure correlating to a heightened risk.

But the most prevalent cardiovascular consequence of noise pollution is an increase in blood pressure. Blood pressure may elevate due to the body's stress response, particularly when loud sounds provoke stress and activate the "fight-or-flight" response.

Noise pollution can also lead to mental health problems. *The Journal of Exposure Science & Environmental Epidemiology* highlights multiple studies that link exposure to road traffic noise with mental health issues. It has been found to elevate the risk of depression by four percent and anxiety by 12 percent.

Plastic Pollution

Plastic pollution refers to the accumulation of plastic materials and particles within the environment. This issue arises from extensive production and inadequate disposal methods, leading to plastic waste gathering in oceans, on land, and even in the atmosphere, where it degrades into enduring microplastics that infiltrate the food chain.

Today, plastic pollution stands as one of the most urgent environmental challenges. Its effects are particularly evident in developing Asian nations (including the Philippines), where waste collection systems frequently lack efficiency or are entirely absent.

"We produce around 430 million tons of plastic a year, two-thirds of which are short-lived plastics, which soon become waste. Plastic pollution can have devastating impacts on our ecosystems and wildlife, our health and wellbeing, and the global economy," explained Jyoti Mathur-Filipp, the Secretariat's Executive Secretary of the International Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution, to the United Nations News.

Exposure to plastic is generally not associated with immediate, acute mortality for the average consumer. Instead, the risk is more accurately characterized as chronic, low-level exposure that may lead to the onset of severe, life-threatening diseases over many years.

One significant report has drawn parallels between the health effects of plastic pollution and those of air and lead pollution, highlighting that plastic is responsible for causing "disease and death from infancy to old age."

Once in the ocean, sunlight, wind, and wave action decompose marine plastic pollution into tiny particles referred to as microplastics. These microplastics are further disintegrating into even smaller fragments known as nanoplastics.

"Microplastics are usually less than five millimeters across; nanoplastics are between one and 1,000 nanometers across," explains Mohan Qin, assistant professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. "For comparison, an average human hair is roughly 80,000 to 100,000 nanometers wide."

According to the United Nations Environment Program, microplastics have been detected in human livers, kidneys, and placentas. On the other hand, the International Union for Conservation of Nature indicates that carcinogenic substances present in plastic products can leach into drinking water, potentially resulting in developmental, reproductive, neurological, and immune system disorders.

Meanwhile, the prevailing scientific consensus suggests that plastic is a major factor contributing to the global burden of non-communicable diseases. ●

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph



TO TAKE OR NOT TO TAKE

Are Expired Drugs Still Safe?

By Henrylito D. Tacio

Last week, I retrieved a bottle of low-dose aspirin from the medicine cabinet. I purchased it in the United States, and it contains 500 enteric-coated tablets. I believe I have already taken more than 100 tablets.

Given that there are still a significant number of tablets remaining, I attempted to check the expiration date. It indicated: September 2026. I was curious whether I could continue taking the tablets after the expiration date and if they would still be effective.

Are expired medications still safe for consumption? To obtain firsthand information, I consulted my friends who are medical professionals. Their responses left me even more perplexed.

A heart surgeon stated that expired medications are safe to use "up to a few years." However, he added, without further clarification, "It depends."

On the other hand, an emergency physician responded negatively. "It's akin to food; they 'spoil' in a sense," he elaborated. "Medications are expected to lose their efficacy once they expire."

A gastroenterologist said he would not allow his patients to take expired drugs. "Their efficacy or safety may be affected," he pointed out.

An orthopedic physician who admitted that he is not an expert on the subject said he would not advise patients to take expired drugs in general. "Many factors come into play," he said. "Molecular level, production, quality of the medicines, storage and handling."

A Filipino physician currently residing in Canada mentioned that expired medications could still be consumed, although their efficacy may not be at its peak. "I often take expired Tylenol or Advil at home, and they still work," he noted.

Dr. Rafael R. Castillo, a cardiologist and columnist, believes expired drugs could still be taken, but with precaution, as some may already have toxic ingredients. "But if it's only less than 30 days expired, it should still be safe," he said. "The efficacy, however, is no longer guaranteed after the expiration date."

Sam Hendrick Amatong, a pharmacist who works in several hospitals in Davao, said it depends on the drug. He explained,



"There are drugs that, after their shelf life, their active ingredients turn into toxic derivatives, most especially when they expire under harsh storage conditions (poor ventilation, exposure to sunlight, etc.), or when the preservative added to the drug loses its supposed function, creating bacterial or fungal growth on the active ingredient."

What Are Drugs?

So, what really is the score? Before probing, let's talk first about drugs. The term "drug" is derived from the Middle Dutch word *droge*, which translates to "dry," pertaining to dried medicinal herbs and wares. This term made its way into the English language through Old French in the late 14th century.

Drugs are defined as substances that modify the normal operations of the body or mind. They may be utilized for medical or therapeutic purposes, recreational or psychoactive use, or for various other applications, such as research, diagnostics, or cultural practices.

Drugs can yield both harmful and beneficial effects, and the decision-making process regarding their therapeutic use necessitates a careful consideration of the associated benefits and risks.

By law, drugs are divided into two categories: prescription drugs and nonprescription drugs. "Prescription drugs – those considered safe for use only under medical supervision – may be dispensed only with a prescription from a licensed professional with governmental privileges to prescribe," says *The Merck Manual of Medical Information*.

Nonprescription drugs, on the other hand, "are those considered safe for use without medical supervision." Generally, these are sold over-the-counter like aspirin.

For millennia, humans have utilized medicinal plants, such as opium poppy and willow bark, yet these early treatments relied on whole plant materials without the isolation of specific active compounds. Ancient cultures, including the Sumerians, Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, recorded the application of these natural substances for alleviating pain, reducing fever, and addressing various ailments.

A pivotal moment in the history of pharmaceuticals occurred when German pharmacist Friedrich Sertürner successfully isolated the active alkaloid from opium between 1804 and 1805. He designated this substance as morphine, named after Morpheus, the Greek deity of dreams, owing to its powerful hypnotic and analgesic properties. This isolation facilitated standardized dosing, establishing morphine as the first drug with a consistent and measurable effect, thus heralding the advent of modern pharmaceutical chemistry.

In the wake of morphine, the 19th century witnessed the emergence of the first synthetic medications. Chloral hydrate, synthesized in 1869, became the inaugural synthetic sedative-hypnotic drug. Subsequently, acetylsalicylic acid (aspirin) was synthesized in 1897, offering a stable and mass-producible pain reliever derived from willow bark. These advancements transitioned drug discovery from natural extractions to chemical synthesis, thereby laying the groundwork for the contemporary pharmaceutical industry.

Why An Expiration Date Is Necessary

All drugs, whether prescribed or not, have an expiration date, the final day that the manufacturer guarantees the full potency and safety of a medication. These dates often say "Do not use after…" or "Discard after…"

"Expiration dates on medical products are a critical part of determining if the product is safe to use and will work as it was intended," says Ilisa Bernstein, a pharmacist with the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

According to a report updated by Dr. Leigh Anderson for the Johns Hopkins Health Alert website, the drug expiration date is generally two to five years from the production date. "For example, if a company chooses a two-year expiration date, it does not have to test beyond that for prolonged effectiveness."

Sheryl Ubelacker, writing for *The Canadian Press*, said the best-before date for drugs is when they are still in an



"Medical professionals indicate that determining the effectiveness of an expired medication is challenging, as well as the potential risks associated with their consumption. According to the Cleveland Clinic, medications that have surpassed their expiration date may lose potency, rendering them ineffective in addressing the intended medical condition"

unopened container. "Once a dispensing pharmacist or patient has opened a bottle or package, exposing the contents to the elements, manufacturers no longer consider original expiry dates in force," she wrote.

Phil Emberley, director of pharmacy innovation at the Canadian Pharmacists Association, explains: "If you have a bottle that, say, expires in five years, as soon as it's opened, technically it expires in less than five years. A lot of people keep their medications in their bathrooms, where they're exposed to heat and humidity, and there is evidence to suggest that it speeds up the degradation process."

Are Expired Drugs Safe?

So once the drugs expired, are they still safe to take? "Once the expiration date has passed, there is no guarantee that an expired medicine will be safe and effective," Bernstein points out. "If your medicine has expired, do not use it."

Medical professionals indicate that determining the effectiveness of an expired medication is challenging, as well as the potential risks associated with their consumption. According to the Cleveland Clinic, medications that have surpassed their expiration date may lose potency, rendering them ineffective in addressing the intended medical condition.

In addition, some expired drugs could harbor harmful bacteria due to the degradation of their preservatives. In certain cases, these medications may also lead to further health complications, such as antibiotic resistance, if they lack the necessary strength.

Taking Expired Drugs

As stated earlier, expired medications may still be utilized, although their effectiveness is not guaranteed to be 100 percent. However, there are several factors to consider. For instance, taking some expired ibuprofen for a headache is likely acceptable. But using expired insulin for diabetes or nitroglycerin for angina presents a different situation.

"Contact your provider right away if your medication has expired and you have a serious health condition like diabetes or heart disease," Dr. Simon Hodes, a family physician at the Cleveland Clinic, advises. "Insulin and nitroglycerin are two medications in particular that degrade quickly once they reach their expiration date. Having the wrong dose of these types of medications could lead to a medical emergency."

In certain circumstances, expired medications may be preferable to having no treatment at all. For instance, using expired epinephrine for anaphylaxis is better than having no medication available.

On the other hand, liquid medications are more prone to bacterial growth compared to solid pills. Examples of liquid medicines that should not be used past their expiration date include eye drops, ear drops, and certain antibiotics.

"Liquids easily become contaminated," Dr. Hodes shares. "Anything you put in your eyes or ears should be sterile, so avoid expired eye and ear drops. Medications you swallow, such as liquid antacids or antibiotics, also have a higher risk of breaking down quickly."

This does not imply that expired solid pills are always safe; however, they generally carry a lower risk of becoming ineffective shortly after their expiration date.

"Don't take any meds that don't look or smell like they normally do, regardless of what type of medicine it is. And always be sure to check the storage and disposal details," Dr. Hodes stresses.

Avoiding The Expired Drug Dilemma

According to the Cleveland Clinic, the most effective way to prevent the risk of consuming potentially hazardous expired medications is to ensure that expired medications are not present in your home. You can achieve this by:

Refraining from bulk purchases. Resist the urge to buy medications in bulk sizes, as it may seem like a more economical choice. Dr. Hodes emphasizes, "Most people don't need to keep a giant bottle of pain reliever or antacids on hand. Wasted medication is common and adds to our carbon footprint."

Maintaining current prescriptions. If you are prescribed medications, avoid obtaining extra refills. "Many people end up with different medications or a change of dose over time," Dr. Hodes points out. "Loading up on your prescription refills could leave you with medications you can't use."

Conducting annual cleanouts. "Go through your medicines at least once a year and take expired medicines out," Dr. Hodes suggests. "If you do get rid of any medications, make a note to get a fresh supply from your pharmacy or healthcare provider." ●

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph

Don't Miss Your Child's Growth Window:

Why Vitamin D3 Matters for Your Child's Height and Bone Development

Every mom wants to give her child every possible advantage to grow tall, strong, and healthy. But many parents don't realize that a child's growth doesn't happen forever. There is actually a limited window of time when children experience their most important height and bone development. During these growing years, the body needs the right nutrients to support healthy bone growth. By understanding how growth works, and by providing the right nutritional support early, moms can help their children reach their full height potential.

Dr. Kevin L. Bautista, a pediatrician and professor from UP - Philippine General Hospital, shares expert insights to help parents better understand the important role of growth and nutrition in their child's development. Here, he answers some of the most common questions moms ask about children's growth and how proper nutrition can help support it.



What does "growth" really mean?

Growth refers to the increase in a child's height and bone length. Growth spurts occur most prominently during childhood and early adolescence, when the body undergoes rapid increases in height, weight, and overall physical development. Once growth stops, height can no longer naturally increase. This is why supporting children while they are still growing is so important.

What are growth plates and why do they matter?



Growth plates are soft areas of developing cartilage found at the ends of long bones. They are the areas where new bone forms, allowing bones to lengthen and children to grow taller. Growth plates are widely open at around 6–12 years old, which is the optimal window for growth and when growth spurts commonly happen.

As children grow older, these plates gradually harden and close during late puberty. This typically happens earlier in girls than in boys.

Is there really a "growth deadline"? When exactly do kids stop growing?

The growth deadline refers to the point at which the growth plates close. Prior to this stage, children have the highest growth potential. But once the plates close, missed growth cannot be recovered, which is why early support is important.

What helps support healthy growth?

Healthy growth is supported by several important daily habits:

- Balanced nutrition
- Adequate sleep
- Regular physical activity
- Key vitamins and minerals for bone development, especially Vitamin D3.

Why is Vitamin D3 important for growth?

Vitamin D3 is essential because it helps the body absorb calcium, which is necessary for building strong and long bones. Without enough Vitamin D3, bone growth may not be optimal.

How can parents maximize their child's growth window?

Parents can help maximize this growth window by supporting children early with the right nutrients. Ensuring consistent daily intake of essential vitamins and minerals helps maintain continuous bone growth during this critical stage of development.

Help your child reach their full height potential during the important growth years with proper daily nutrition and essential vitamins. Make sure to give them Vitamin D3 which supports healthy bone development. By nourishing their growing bodies with the right nutrients, you can help build stronger bones, promote healthy development, and help them grow taller and stronger every day.





By Henrylito D. Tacio

LOOKING FOR VITAMIN C

Get It From These Fruits And Vegetables

Today's generations may not have heard of scurvy, a major health concern in the past, especially among sailors and explorers. Scurvy claimed the lives of over two million sailors from the era of Christopher Columbus's transatlantic journey until the advent of steam engines in the mid-19th century.

The initial symptoms comprised lethargy, joint discomfort, swollen extremities, and skin bruising. As the illness advanced, the symptoms intensified, resulting in gum disease, inadequate wound healing, and ultimately death due to infection or hemorrhage. Scurvy accounted for more fatalities at sea than storms, shipwrecks, warfare, and all other illnesses combined.

At that time, shipowners and governments estimated a 50 percent mortality rate from the disease for their sailors on any significant voyage. So much so that the quest for a remedy became what historian Stephen Bown refers to as "a vital factor determining the destiny of nations."

Long before the principles of science were comprehended, numerous sailors and medical practitioners observed that fresh fruit appeared to "magically" alleviate the illness. During his expedition to India, Vasco de Gama noted that his crew regained their health after consuming oranges supplied by local inhabitants in East Africa.

As early as the 1500s and 1600s, notable medical figures such as Aleixo de Abreu and John Woodall explicitly advocated for the use of lemons, limes, and oranges to promote naval hygiene.

However, the true "active ingredient" remained an enigma until the early 1900s. In 1907, researchers Axel Holst and Theodor Frölich inadvertently induced scurvy in guinea pigs, establishing the first animal model for research. Between the years 1928 and 1932, Hungarian biochemist Albert Szent-Györgyi successfully isolated "hexuronic acid," which was subsequently recognized as vitamin C (ascorbic acid)—the vital nutrient that prevents scurvy.

Today, health professionals have identified that vitamin C serves multiple additional purposes. For one, it bolsters the immune function of the body. It enhances the activity of white blood cells, aiding the body in combating infections and sustaining a robust immune system. Consistent consumption may marginally lessen the intensity and duration of colds and facilitate recovery from illnesses.

As a potent antioxidant, vitamin C counteracts free radicals and reactive oxygen species, alleviating oxidative stress

that can harm cells and lead to chronic conditions such as cancer, heart disease, and arthritis.

Vitamin C is likewise essential for the synthesis of collagen, the primary structural protein found in skin, bones, cartilage, tendons, ligaments, and blood vessels. Sufficient collagen levels contribute to skin elasticity, promote wound healing, and support tissue repair.

Most importantly, vitamin C enhances the absorption of non-heme iron from plant-derived foods, which is vital for preventing anemia and maintaining overall energy levels.

Vitamin C can be sourced from numerous fruits, vegetables, and dietary supplements. However, why purchase those superfluous supplements when you can get it from natural food sources? Below is a compilation of the top sources of vitamin C:

Citrus Fruits

The vitamin C content in citrus fruits can differ significantly based on various factors, such as the type, size, ripeness of the fruit, and growing conditions. Below are some approximate values for the vitamin C levels found in common citrus fruits: orange: 70–90 milligrams (mg); grapefruit: 80–100 mg; lemon: 30–40 mg; and lime: 20–30 mg.

"Just one orange or grapefruit can meet your daily vitamin C requirement," said registered dietitian Devon Peart from the Cleveland Clinic.

Calamansi, commonly known as Philippine lime or calamondin, is also recognized for its substantial vitamin C content. A 100-gram serving contains reportedly 27 mg of vitamin C (values vary), which plays a crucial role in meeting the daily recommended intake for adults.

Guava

Guava, locally known as *bayabas*, is touted to be the apple of the tropics. "It has more vitamin C than citrus; the edible rind alone has five times the vitamin C of an orange," wrote Bill Daley in an article that appeared in the *Chicago Tribune.*

Guava is an exceptionally abundant source of vitamin C, offering approximately 230 mg per 100 grams (values can vary by variety and ripeness), which exceeds double the daily recommended intake. Among fruits, guava is distinguished by its elevated vitamin C levels.

A medium-sized guava, weighing about 55 grams, delivers nearly 140 percent of the recommended daily value for vitamin C, while 100 grams of guava provides around 230 mg, satisfying roughly 200 percent of the daily requirement for adults. This positions guava as significantly richer in vitamin C compared to oranges and other prevalent fruits.

Mango

The Philippines is famous for its mangoes, especially the Carabao variety, which is known for its remarkable sweetness and international acclaim.

Mangoes serve as an excellent source of vitamin C. A whole mango contains approximately 122 mg of vitamin C, which equates to about 136 percent of the recommended daily intake for adults, indicating that even consuming half a mango exceeds two-thirds of the daily requirement.

For smaller portions, one cup of sliced mango (approximately 165 g) offers around 60 mg of vitamin C, fulfilling about 67 to 100 percent of the daily recommended intake. On a per 100-gram basis, fresh mango provides roughly 36–37 mg of vitamin C.

Papaya

Deliciously sweet with musky undertones and a soft, butter-like consistency, it is no wonder the papaya was reputably called the "fruit of the angels" by explorer Christopher Columbus.

Papaya is a versatile ingredient in Filipino cuisine. Ripe papaya is frequently consumed fresh or incorporated into desserts, whereas unripe papaya is typically utilized in savory dishes, salads, and pickles.

This fruit serves as an excellent source of vitamin C. A single cup of papaya cubes (145 grams) contains roughly 88 mg of vitamin C, which satisfies or surpasses the daily requirement for the majority of adults. As such, papaya is comparable to other fruits rich in vitamin C, such as oranges and strawberries, while also offering low calories, fiber, and carotenoids like beta-carotene and lycopene.

Pineapple

The Philippines ranks as the second-largest producer and exporter of pineapples globally, featuring a variety of types and a robust industry primarily located in Mindanao and Luzon.





"A typical fruit contains approximately 75 percent water, which contributes to skin hydration and a glossy appearance when consumed. As a low-calorie option, it is an ideal selection for individuals aiming to lose weight"

All varieties of raw pineapple provide approximately 47.8 mg of vitamin C per 100 grams, which is about 80 percent of the recommended daily allowance (RDA) for an average adult. Certain sweeter varieties, such as the extra-sweet pineapple, may contain as much as 56.4 mg per 100 grams, which is nearly 94 percent of the RDA.

A standard serving of one cup of pineapple chunks (165 g) offers around 78.9 mg of vitamin C, surpassing the daily requirement for most adults.

Strawberries

A typical fruit contains approximately 75 percent water, which contributes to skin hydration and a glossy appearance when consumed. As a low-calorie option, it is an ideal selection for individuals aiming to lose weight.

Unknowingly, they are packed with vitamin C, too. "Strawberries are an excellent source of vitamin C," says Toronto-based registered dietitian Madeleine Edwards.

On average, 100 grams of fresh strawberries offer around 58.8 mg of vitamin C, whereas a cup of whole strawberries (roughly 144 grams) provides around 85 mg. This shows that strawberries are more dense in vitamin C per gram compared to many oranges.

Watermelon

"Despite popular belief that watermelon is made up of only water and sugar, watermelon is actually considered a nutrient-dense food, a food that provides a high amount of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants for a low amount of calories," wrote Megan Ware, a registered dietitian and nutritionist, in an article published by *Medical News Today.*

One cup of watermelon will provide 17 percent of vitamin A, 21 percent of vitamin C, two percent of iron and one percent of calcium needs for the day. Watermelon also contains thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, vitamin B-6, folate, pantothenic acid, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, zinc, copper, manganese, selenium, choline, lycopene and betaine.

Cruciferous Vegetables

Cruciferous vegetables are characterized by their unique, cross-shaped flowers. Many of these vegetables provide a significant portion, if not the entirety, of your daily vitamin C requirements.

Consider the following: broccoli (one cup, chopped) contains 80 mg; kale (one cup, chopped) also has 80 mg; brussels sprouts (one cup) provide 75 mg; red cabbage (one cup) offers 50 mg; and cauliflower (one cup, chopped) contains 48 mg.

Sweet Pepper

Sweet peppers, commonly referred to as *atsal*, *kampana*, or *lara,* are appreciated for their crunchy texture, vivid colors (green, yellow, orange, violet, red, and brown), and rich nutritional value. They are frequently utilized in *pinakbet*, stir-fries, and as a seasoning component in a variety of dishes.

The vitamin C content in sweet peppers varies according to their color and ripeness. Green bell peppers, which are unripe, have approximately 80 mg of vitamin C per 100 grams, or around 120 mg per cup. As they mature, their vitamin C levels rise, with yellow sweet peppers containing about 184 mg per 100 grams and red sweet peppers providing roughly 190–213 mg per cup. Orange sweet peppers may have even higher levels, reaching up to 237 mg per cup.

Tomato

Tomato, known as *kamatis* in the local dialect, is essential in Filipino cooking for preparing sour broths (*sinigang*), dips (*sawsawan*), and a variety of sautéed dishes.

A medium raw tomato usually contains between 17 and 24.9 milligrams of vitamin C per 100 grams. This quantity may vary slightly based on the specific type and ripeness of the tomato. For reference, a 100-gram portion of raw tomatoes typically provides around 13.7 to 21.36 milligrams of vitamin C.

Some experts say cooking tomatoes diminishes their vitamin C content. When cooked, a 1/2 cup serving yields approximately 27.4 mg of vitamin C, according to the Center for Health Protection. ●

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph

MAHALAGANG PAALALA: ANG FLOTERA AY HINDI GAMOT AT HINDI DAPAT GAMITING PANGGAMOT SA ANUMANG URI NG SAKIT

Sensitive ka ba tiyan?

Flotera®

Probiotic Food Supplement

GUT CHA COVERED!

NOW IN A SULIT 9+1 PROMO PACK!

With *L. reuteri ProTectis®* that **helps improve digestion** with proper diet and exercise

- It's naturally occuring in the gut
- 250+ clinical studies with 22,000+ participants, kids and adults
- Recognized by local & international gastroenterology medical guidelines



Flotera®

Probiotic Food Supplement

Available at all mercury drug stores nationwide

Promo Period: July 1, 2025 - July 1, 2026
Per DOH-FDA CFRR Permit No. 0377 s. 2025
ASC No.: U0036P032426F



By Arthur Dominic Villasanta

LOVE IS HEALTH

Loneliness and Love exert an enormous influence on the sanity and physical health of the elderly. They're probably the most powerful forces shaping their emotional lives. *Lola* and *lolo*, especially if they live apart from their children and grandchildren, are constantly beset by loneliness and need all the love in the world.

Loneliness and Love are also the Yin and Yang of healthy aging. While both occupy opposite ends of our emotional spectrum, they're inseparable and contradictory, but complementary forces that can only coexist to have meaning.

They constantly transform into one another to maintain the harmony or *chi* that governs our emotional, physical and mental wellbeing. A balanced flow of chi indicates good health and vitality. An unbalanced chi is believed to cause illness, if we interpret this in the philosophy of Chinese Taoism.

Love (Yang) is the "bright force" of connection and purpose. Loneliness (Yin) is the contrary and "dark force" that becomes isolation at its worst. Loneliness and Love can be considered the two teardrop-shaped halves in the *Taijitu* (the Yin and Yang symbol). The curved line between them means there can be no absolute separation between these emotions, which are always in balance and interconnected.

The mutual dependence between Loneliness and Love is also underscored by the small dot of the opposite color at the center of each teardrop. The dots indicate that Love bears the seed of Loneliness, while Loneliness bears the seed of Love. Each force is one.

Cosmic Balance

When in sync, these contrary but interdependent forces spawn what one might call a "cosmic balance" that keeps the elderly hale and hearty in mind and body. This balance is often upended by an older person's state of mind and health.

A dysfunction might give rise to maladies such as chronic loneliness (too much loneliness) and obsessive love disorder (too much love). Health consists of maintaining a cosmic balance.

This cosmic balance is more physical than it is spiritual, however. It's triggered by the brain's neurons releasing hormones such as oxytocin (the "love hormone") and cortisol (the "stress hormone") into the bloodstream at the command of the neuroendocrine system.

This system is the body's master regulator; it maintains homeostasis (a stable environment needed for survival) by influencing the nervous and endocrine systems. The latter system releases hormones that regulate key processes like mood, metabolism, growth, and reproduction.

Oxytocin combats physical, cognitive, and cellular decline while cortisol accelerates cellular aging. In a senior citizen who feels loved, the brain releases oxytocin and dopamine (the "pleasure hormone"), both of which actively suppress the production of cortisol.

Healthy aging doesn't mean merely maximizing oxytocin and dopamine production and eliminating cortisol. It's a far more complex process where the Yin and Yang represented by these forces intertwine to build the reality of an elderly person's Golden Years.

The Science

Love is a clinical necessity for the elderly because it serves as a form of biological and psychological medicine that improves physical health and mental resilience. Love and companionship activate the body's biological and psychological systems that help keep both mind and body healthy.

Physiologically, love regulates the cardiovascular system, manages inflammation through neuroendocrine pathways, and preserves cognitive function. Emotionally, it's a bulwark against loneliness.

Among the reasons Love is deemed a primary biological determinant of health:

- Love regulates neuroendocrine stress responses (suppresses cortisol, for example).
- It allows the elderly to better cope with death and loss, which are painful events for them.
- It fosters functional independence and mobility.

Love helps create the "functional independence" vital to healthy aging. Functional independence is the ability to do things on your own without assistance from others.

In the elderly, this boils down to performing simple daily tasks such as bathing, cooking and housekeeping. Functional independence greatly influences an elderly adult's quality of life because it confers mobility, autonomy, dignity, and a strong sense of self-worth. It consists of so-called Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) and Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs).

Healthy aging means keeping Loneliness and Love in balance, as if they were passionate couples in a never-ending dance. It starts with the physiological.

A Measurable Event

Doctors and the medical community continue to view aging mostly through the lens of maintaining physical health. A growing body of clinical research, however, has shifted the paradigm towards recognizing that "social connection," which is a fancy term for Love, is a primary biological determinant of health — especially among the elderly.

The reason: Love is now viewed as a measurable biological event similar



to nutrition and physical activity. This connection is being reinforced by studies such as that from psychologists Lisa Diamond and Janna Dickenson at the University of Utah, who found that romantic love is directly connected to the two brain structures that regulate the release of dopamine. These regions are the ventral tegmental area (the primary origin of dopamine neurons) and the caudate nucleus (dopamine, oxytocin).

Love is a clinical necessity. It's a fundamental component of healthy aging, and figures prominently in longevity. Love and companionship trigger the physiological and biological systems that help fashion a healthy mind and body, and a more meaningful life in old age.

Clinical studies show that love supports heart health and helps prevent anxiety. They also confirm that married people tend to live longer and healthier because love can help diminish age-related decline.

Love is also being recognized as a "physiological stabilizer" that influences our health. In terms of elderly health, a stabilizer is a buffer that prevents infections, injuries and other stressors from causing catastrophic health problems. They're also "shock absorbers" that protect the aging body from disease and damage.

Examples of physiological stabilizers are the gut microbiome, which stabilizes the immune system and skeletal muscle mass that helps curb falls and frailty. Stabilizers play a huge role in maintaining "homeostasis," or the body's ability to stay healthy despite external threats from diseases, inflammaging and other harmful factors.

The clinical evidence confirms love is a natural "anti-inflammatory" that helps mitigate the progression of cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) and neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. CVDs such as heart attacks and strokes are the number one cause of death in the Philippines today.

Let Me Count The Ways

Clinical studies continue to show that romantic love among the elderly in their 60s and 70s can, and does, produce palpable mental and physical benefits. Among the most important:

- Romantic love and relationships reduce depression and loneliness.
- It improves cardiovascular health and reduces stress.
- It increases longevity.
- It stimulates the brain and protects cognitive health.
- It restores a sense of meaning and purpose.
- Couples encourage healthier lifestyles.
- Intimacy improves psychological wellbeing.

Taken together, these benefits tell us that relationship satisfaction is the greatest single predictor of physical health. A study found that senior citizens who were most satisfied with their relationships in mid-life tended to be the healthiest when they hit 80. These same happy seniors reported their mood stayed happy even when they succumbed to physical pain.

On the other hand, the elderly wallowing in unhappy relationships or those isolated said their physical pain was magnified by emotional distress. This outcome suggests that romantic love doesn't just add years to life. It adds life to years by alleviating the pain of physical suffering.

Research by N. Lekhak et al. published in the *Journal of Gerontological Nursing* in 2023 reveals that compassionate love in later life is directly correlated with a reduction in depressive symptoms and anxiety. "Our findings underscore





the need for interventions that increase compassionate love to reduce loneliness and improve psychological wellbeing in later life," according to the study.

What the data confirms is that ignoring the romantic needs of the elderly is to ignore one of the most effective and low-cost "treatments" that promote healthy aging.

Touch Me In The Morning

A devoted partner plays an outsize role in healthy aging. A loving partner provides a very special type of love with their daily presence, physical affection and shared purpose compared to romantic relationships among single persons.

Clinical evidence from NSHAP and other studies strongly suggests that romantic partnership isn't a luxury for older adults. Love is, in fact, a lifeline and a path towards healthy aging.

Dr. Robert Waldinger, a clinical professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, was the fourth director of the "Harvard Study of Adult Development," the world's longest-running longitudinal study on human life that began in 1938. He said the most consistent finding of this landmark study is that "positive relationships keep us happier and healthier". The study also found that positive relationships increased longevity.



Waldinger said that the single greatest predictor of physical health at 80 isn't cholesterol levels or blood pressure at 50. It's relationship satisfaction. And one of the main sources of relationship satisfaction is romantic love.

Love and loving relationships can also lead to a meaningful reduction in depressive symptoms while playing a key role in the wellbeing of the elderly. Studies reveal that the protective role of romantic relationships doesn't weaken as we age. Instead, its power intensifies.

Data from the National Social Life, Health, and Aging Project (NSHAP) in the United States found that romantic partners who often touched each other had significantly better neuroendocrine health. There were no comparable associations found for touch coming from friends, family, or neighbors.

NSHAP was conducted in waves from 2005 to 2021. It was a pioneering, longitudinal study examining how social relationships, intimacy, and health factors influence healthy aging in older Americans. NSHAP highlighted connections between social engagement, emotional health, and physical outcomes. It led to interventions that promote healthy aging.

The findings of the Harvard Study and other similar research converge on a single truth: our bodies are wired for love and companionship. The uncontestable conclusion is that love isn't merely supplemental to health. *It is health* in many ways.



“Clinical research increasingly treats loneliness as a public health risk comparable to smoking and obesity in the harm it does to our health. Loneliness also increases the chance of an earlier death”

Lessons From Loneliness

Clinical research increasingly treats loneliness as a public health risk comparable to smoking and obesity in the harm it does to our health. Loneliness also increases the chance of an earlier death.

The Irish Longitudinal Study on Aging (TILDA) found that seniors who are both lonely and socially isolated have a 43 percent higher risk of dying from any cause compared to those who are not. These seniors also had an elevated risk of disease, especially diseases of the circulatory system.

More concerning is the finding that the mortality risk intensifies as death nears. This conclusion supports other findings that social isolation and loneliness are often prevalent in the years prior to death.

Loneliness also elevates the risk for Alzheimer’s disease and other cognitive maladies. Research in PubMed confirms loneliness as a high-risk factor for Alzheimer’s. A 2024 meta-analysis found that loneliness increases the risk of Alzheimer’s by 39 percent and all-cause dementia by 30 percent.

Another noted that social isolation was associated with a 1.26-fold increase in the risk of dementia. A 2024 meta-analysis involving over 600,000 participants found that loneliness significantly increased the risk of all-cause dementia, Alzheimer’s and vascular dementia.

On the other hand, romantic bonding might contribute to reducing the risk of dementia, according to the Kurokawa Study involving community-dwelling (nursing home) adults. Oxytocin can effectively reverse some of the amyloid plaques in the brain that cause Alzheimer’s, said studies from the Tokyo University of Science.

The Cortisol Curse

Cortisol is the primary hormone associated with the physiological experience of loneliness. On the other hand, a dearth of social connection is linked to a drop in oxytocin.

Loneliness isn’t caused by a single hormone such as cortisol or oxytocin. It is, however, the product of a complex interaction of hormones and neurotransmitters that trigger a stress response due to loneliness.

Loneliness is both a cause and an effect of low oxytocin. It can lead to social withdrawal and can suppress further oxytocin production. The end result is to make it harder for a person to feel connected with others.

Oxytocin isn’t the primary cause of loneliness, but it does play a key role in social bonding and mitigating loneliness. Research shows that lonely persons often have reduced oxytocin release during positive social interactions.

Low oxytocin levels also negate the chemical buffer that helps manage stress and emotional discomfort. Feelings of isolation are intensified. Loneliness also decreases the production of both dopamine and serotonin (a mood-stabilizing hormone) while increasing cortisol.

The bottom line is that oxytocin is a key regulator of social motivation and the emotional response to loneliness rather than its main cause.

Healthy aging is aging with grace. This feat demands the strength provided by Love and the acknowledgment that Loneliness reminds us of the inevitable. Keep both forces in balance. Mind your Yin and Yang. ●

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph

Extract Cepae + Heparin Sodium + Allantoin

Contractubex®

Every Home's *Scar Essential*



When it comes to scar care, To C is to believe.

Help fade scars in as fast as **6 weeks** with regular use. Results vary by scar type.

ZUELLIG PHARMA
making healthcare more accessible

For suspected adverse reactions, kindly report to pv_zpt@zulligpharma.com, +63 917 8733201 If you have any concerns, talk to your healthcare provider for further advice. ASC NO. Z0307N121025C, PH-PM-MER-CON-SMP-PUC-000013-12-14-2026

If symptoms persist, consult your doctor.

Available nationwide at mercury drug

A health education service of Mercury Drug

By Rich Valdez

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Starting a new exercise regimen is one of the most positive steps any person can take for their long-term health. The evidence for this is so overwhelming that it barely requires rehearsing: regular physical activity reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, certain cancers, depression, and cognitive decline. It strengthens bones, preserves muscle mass as we age, improves sleep, adds years, and, more importantly, quality to our lives. There is almost no pharmaceutical intervention that delivers the breadth of benefit that consistent movement does.





“For those of us over forty, or anyone returning to exercise after a long absence or a bad illness, this step is especially important. The body’s responses to exercise change over time, and what was an appropriate training load at thirty may represent a serious overreach at fifty-two”



And yet the how matters enormously. Beginning too intensely, choosing the wrong type of exercise for your body’s current condition, or pairing your new routine with an ill-considered supplement or dietary overhaul can produce results ranging from the merely frustrating to the genuinely dangerous. This is not a reason to hesitate. It is a reason to seek advice before you lace up your shoes.

The Case For A Medical Baseline

Before embarking on any significant change to your activity levels, a consultation with your physician is not a formality; it is a foundation. A basic health screening can reveal conditions that would greatly affect the type and intensity of exercise appropriate for you. Undiagnosed hypertension, for example, makes high-intensity interval training a very different proposition than it would be for someone with a clean cardiovascular profile. A history of joint problems, metabolic disorders, or hormonal imbalances all have implications for what kind of movement will help rather than harm.

Your doctor can also establish a baseline: blood pressure, resting heart rate, blood glucose levels, cholesterol, and relevant markers for your age and medical history, against which your progress can eventually be measured. This is more motivating than most people expect. Seeing data move in the right direction over three or six months is a far more reliable source of sustained motivation than looking in your bathroom mirror.

For those of us over forty, or anyone returning to exercise after a long absence or a bad illness, this step is especially important. The body’s responses to exercise change over time, and what was an appropriate training load at thirty may represent a serious overreach at fifty-two.

Why A Certified Fitness Professional Changes Everything

Once you’ve been given a medical green light, the next investment worth making is in a qualified fitness professional, a certified personal trainer, a physiotherapist with an exercise prescription background, or a sports scientist, depending on your specific needs and goals. This is where



many people balk, either at the cost or because they feel they should be able to figure it out themselves. Both responses are understandable. Both tend to be expensive in the long run.

A skilled trainer does several things that no app, YouTube channel, or well-meaning friend can replicate. They assess your movement patterns and identify compensations and imbalances that, left unaddressed, can lead to injury. They design a progressive program that matches your current fitness level while providing enough stimulus to produce proper adaptation. And, critically, they teach you how to perform exercises using mechanics that protect your joints and maximize effectiveness. Poor form during a deadlift or a squat is not a minor issue. Repeated across hundreds of repetitions over weeks and months, it is the architecture of a chronic injury.

Beyond injury prevention, a professional can help you identify what type of exercise is most likely to suit your temperament and lifestyle — a distinction that is underestimated in most fitness discourse but is perhaps the single greatest predictor of whether you will still be training six months from now.

Food As Fuel

Exercise and nutrition are inseparable. The body you are working so hard to build, strengthen, or heal, is made entirely from the raw materials you give it through food. This might sound obvious, but it is remarkable how many people undertake serious physical training without giving enough thought to the nutritional framework behind it, or, conversely, how many of us change our diet so radically alongside a new exercise program that we cannot tell which change is producing which result.

A registered dietitian or nutritionist can help us understand what our body actually needs, given our specific training goals, health status, age, and lifestyle. Protein requirements shift significantly when we are engaging in resistance training. Carbohydrate timing matters for endurance work. Micronutrient adequacy, sufficient iron, magnesium, vitamin D, and B vitamins, among others, helps energy levels, recovery, and the hormonal environment in which adaptation occurs. Eating "healthily" in a general sense is a good instinct, but it is not a plan.

Whole foods should always be the foundation: lean proteins, abundant vegetables, complex carbohydrates, healthy fats, and adequate hydration. This is not a novel recommendation, but it is the one that research returns to with the greatest consistency. Before anything else, before any supplement is considered, the quality and adequacy of our daily food intake deserves honest attention.

Supplements: Promise, Peril, And The Importance Of Guidance

The supplement industry is worth hundreds of billions of dollars and is expanding rapidly. Just walk through any health store or scroll through any fitness account online, and the options are dizzying: protein powders, pre-workouts, fat burners, adaptogens, collagen peptides, omega-3s, magnesium blends, creatine, BCAAs, and dozens more. Some of these products have a good, proven evidence base. Many do not. And some can interact with medications or underlying



Always consult a qualified medical professional before beginning a new exercise, dietary, or supplementation program.

health conditions in ways that are not immediately apparent.

This is exactly why supplementation should never be treated as an afterthought or a matter of following what someone else in the gym is taking. A physician or registered dietitian can assess whether you have genuine nutritional deficiencies that supplementation would address, which products have the research to support their claimed benefits, what dosages are appropriate, and whether anything in your current health picture or medication list deserves caution. Creatine monohydrate, for instance, is among the most extensively studied and generally well-tolerated performance supplement available, but it is not suitable for everyone. High-dose vitamin D supplementation can be genuinely beneficial for those of us who are deficient and harmful for those who are not.

The principle worth holding onto is simple: supplements are exactly that — supplementary. They are additions to a sound base of training and nutrition, not substitutes for it, and they work best when taken with professional input rather than marketing enthusiasm.

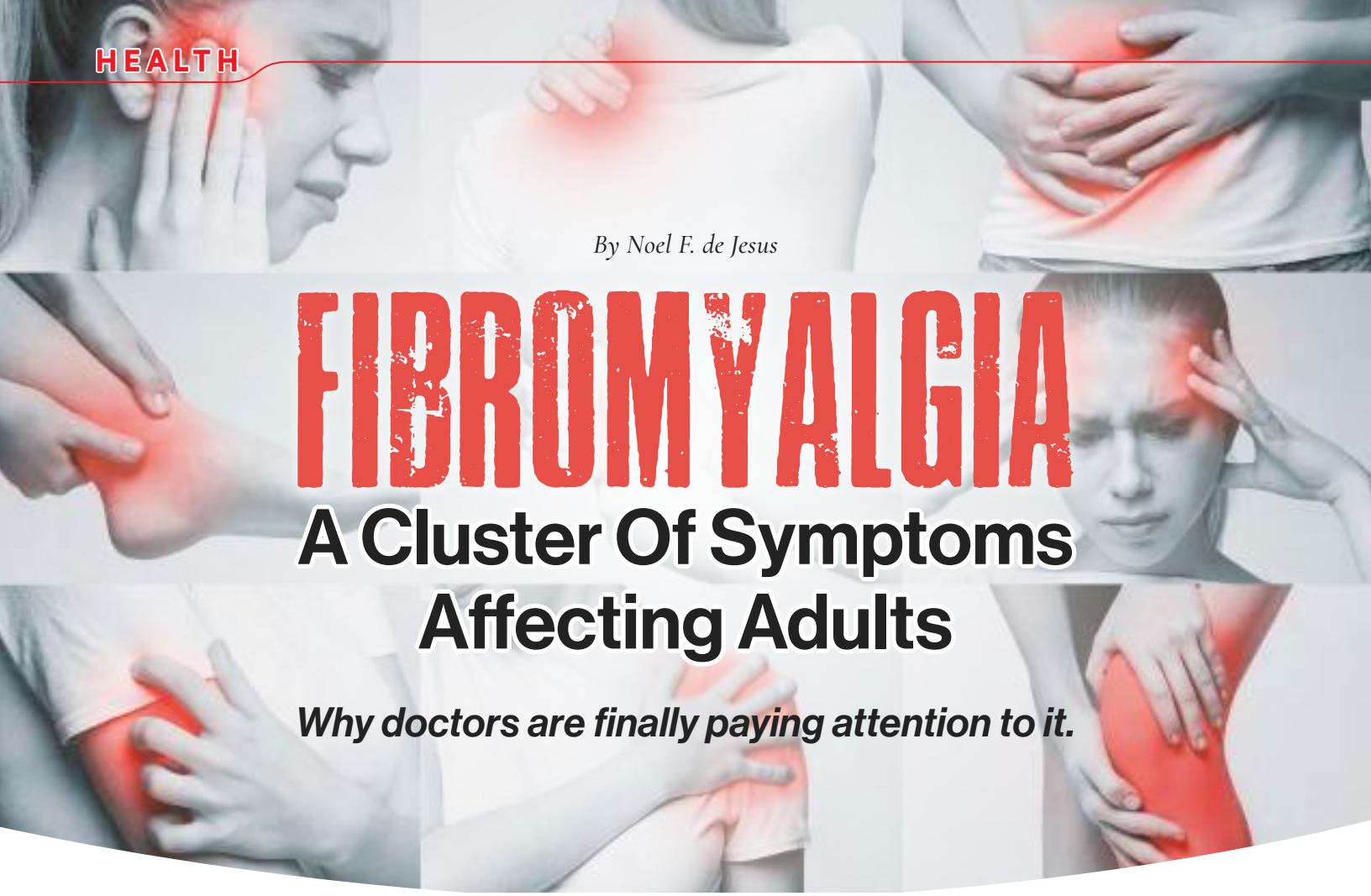
The Complete Picture

What brings these recommendations together is a single underlying idea: that our body is a complex, interconnected system, and that changes made to one part of it ripple through the rest. Exercise, nutrition, and supplementation do not exist in separate compartments. They interact constantly, and those interactions can be synergistic or counterproductive depending on how they are managed.

The good news is that the guidance available to support you has never been better. Sports medicine physicians, accredited exercise physiologists, registered dietitians, and certified personal trainers are more accessible than at any previous time in history. Many operate via telehealth or online coaching, making them easier to work with. The investment required, whether financial and otherwise, is modest compared to the cost of a preventable injury, a wasted program, or a health scare that a screening would have caught.

Our goal, after all, is not simply to begin. It is to build something that lasts: a physical life strong enough, resilient enough, and informed enough to carry us well into the years ahead. That kind of durability does not come from enthusiasm alone. It comes from starting right. ●

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph



By Noel F. de Jesus

FIBROMYALGIA

A Cluster Of Symptoms Affecting Adults

Why doctors are finally paying attention to it.

Still poorly understood by many doctors and scientists, but now an area of widespread research, fibromyalgia is the name for a cluster of symptoms that affects an estimated two to four percent of the world's adults.

The most prominent of these symptoms is widespread pain around the body, unlike arthritis and certain related conditions. It doesn't cause damage to joints, muscles, or other tissues. The pain is usually described as dull, aching, and constant, often without an apparent cause. Sufferers might also experience muscle stiffness, headaches, "fibro fog" (brain fog), and profound fatigue.

Most patients are diagnosed in middle age, although their symptoms often start earlier. Fibromyalgia's exact cause remains unknown. The leading theory is that it is a disorder of the central nervous system, something has gone wrong with the way the brain and spinal cord process pain signals from the nerves. Scientists are also exploring possible roles for genetics, hormone levels, infections, stress, and abnormal sleep patterns.

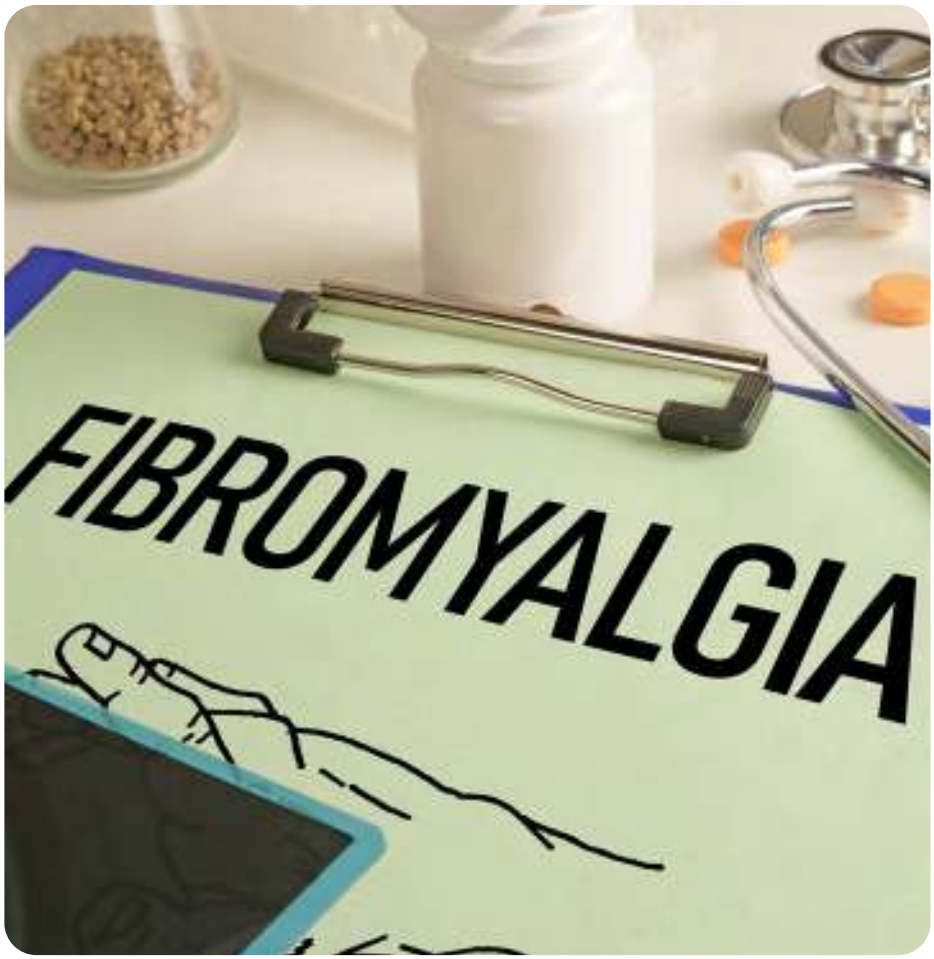
"Fibromyalgia can be challenging to diagnose because its symptoms overlap with many other conditions. Diagnosis is made clinically based on symptoms and physical examination after ruling out other disorders"

Because patients show few or no external signs of their suffering, some doctors once dismissed fibromyalgia as psychological or the result of overactive imaginations. However, this view has become far less common as research has confirmed the condition's reality and prevalence. Most medical authorities, including the World Health Organization (WHO), now officially recognize fibromyalgia.

Unfortunately, there is no known cure. Treatment focuses on relieving symptoms and improving quality of life. Patients are typically encouraged to begin with non-drug approaches, adding medications such as pain relievers, antidepressants, or anti-seizure drugs only when needed.

To date, the most effective single intervention for reducing pain appears to be graded exercise. This involves starting at a comfortable level, sometimes quite modest and gradually increasing intensity and duration, says Dr. Gary Macfarlane, lead author of the European League Against Rheumatism's recommendations for managing the condition. Regular exercise brings at least modest relief to the great majority of sufferers, possibly by boosting endorphins, reducing stress, improving sleep, and increasing blood flow to the muscles.

Another well-supported treatment is cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). It does not eliminate pain, but it equips patients with practical tools for coping, pacing activities, and staying active even on difficult days.





It is important to have realistic expectations. Current treatments tend to bring moderate improvement at best. "There's still a great need to understand this condition better and bring optimal care to these patients," Dr. Macfarlane says.

Symptoms That You Might Be Ignoring

Exhaustion. Feeling tired all the time despite trying obvious fixes such as better diet and more sleep.

Headaches. Frequent or debilitating headaches, sometimes with nausea or vomiting.

Increased sensitivity, Heightened sensitivity to touch, light, sound, or smells; for example, clothes feeling unusually heavy or mild bumps causing significant pain.

Joint and muscle aches. Widespread pain not relieved by ordinary over-the-counter pain relievers.

Feeling cold. Unusual sensitivity to cold temperatures.

Bowel issues. Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), constipation, diarrhea, or difficulty emptying the bowels due to muscle stiffness.

Menstrual pain. Severe menstrual cramps beyond typical levels.

Brain fog. Difficulty concentrating, memory lapses, or a feeling that thoughts are "muffled."

Diagnosis And Research

Fibromyalgia can be challenging to diagnose because its symptoms overlap with many other conditions. Diagnosis is made clinically based on symptoms and physical examination after ruling out other disorders. No single lab test confirms it.

A blood test called the FM/a test was previously marketed to detect certain white blood cell abnormalities, but it is not considered a standard or reliable diagnostic tool by major medical organizations. It is no longer actively promoted following legal and scientific scrutiny.

Some clinical trials have explored repurposed treatments, such as the BCG vaccine, which may influence immune responses and cytokines (including tumor necrosis factor). However, major trials in this area have not shown clear, consistent benefits for fibromyalgia and are not currently recommended as standard care.

New research continues to explore genetic factors, central nervous system mechanisms, and better management strategies, offering hope for improved understanding and future therapies.

Daytime Sleepiness And Dementia Risk

New research finds that a sudden increase in daytime sleepiness could signal early dementia risk in older adults.

It's normal to feel wiped out occasionally. But if you're older and notice you're nodding off more often during the day or your naps are becoming longer and more frequent, it may be worth discussing with a doctor. A 2025 study published in *Neurology* found that sharp increases in daytime sleepiness over time were associated with roughly double the risk of developing dementia. ●

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph

By Glecy G. Gamboa

BOOST YOUR HEALTH WITH FOOD SYNERGY

We know these health stars: vitamin C for immunity, calcium for bones, fiber for digestion and omega-3s for the heart. But real meals don't arrive as isolated nutrients. Foods are eaten and digested together, and often interact in ways that can help the body absorb and use them more effectively.



Experts say that eating healthy isn't just about what we eat but what we eat in pairs.

A squeeze of lemon on your greens, tomatoes cooked in olive oil, or turmeric paired with black pepper. This is called food synergy, the idea that certain nutrients and natural compounds may produce greater benefits when combined than when consumed alone.

That can mean adding citrus to beans to improve iron absorption, pairing vegetables with healthy fats to unlock key nutrients, or combining fermented foods with fiber-rich ingredients to support the gut microbiome.

Learning how everyday foods can help each other is an advantage for healthy eating.

Understanding Food Synergy

Food synergy may be likened to a soccer team. You may have a striker, for example, a vitamin D, but if they're standing on the pitch with no one to pass them the ball, they won't score any goals.

In nutrition, there can be "superfoods," but the reality is that nutrients are designed to play a team game. By pairing the right ingredients, the benefits are multiplied.

At its core, food synergy refers to the interaction between nutrients and bioactive compounds such as vitamins, fiber, and fats in food that produces a combined effect greater than the sum of their individual parts. In simpler terms, it means foods don't act alone in our body; they cooperate and work together for our benefit. These interactions may improve nutrient absorption, enhance antioxidant activity, support metabolism, or contribute to disease prevention.

As Dr. David R. Jacobs Jr., a pioneer in nutritional epidemiology, puts it: "Food, in all its complexity, is a more fundamental unit than any individual nutrient." It's a shift from a "reductive" view of nutrition, where we just count milligrams of one vitamin, to a "whole-team" approach.

We can consider glucose buffering as an example. This means never letting a simple carb like bread or fruit travel without a teammate.

As Lily Nichols, RDN, a leading expert in functional nutrition, explains: "When you pair a carbohydrate with protein or fat,





you slow down the rate of digestion and the subsequent rise in blood sugar."

This "buffering" effect is a game-changer; by pairing a slice of sourdough with smashed avocado or an apple with walnuts, you're providing the fat and protein necessary to turn a quick sugar spike into a steady, slow-burn energy source. This synergy not only manages your energy, but it also ensures your body actually absorbs the fat-soluble vitamins tucked inside the meal.

Recent research, including studies published in *Frontiers in Nutrition*, has explored how combining specific plant proteins with certain fibers such as peas, oats, lentils, or other pulses, can positively influence the gut microbiome and its communication with the brain. This creates a ripple effect that can support mental clarity and steady mood during the day.

Smart Food Pairings That Work

Some of the easiest ways to use food synergy are through everyday combinations that help your body get more from the foods you already eat.

1. Iron + Vitamin C

Iron from plant foods such as lentils, beans, tofu, spinach, and leafy greens is known as non-heme iron, which is harder for the body to absorb than the iron found in meat. Vitamin C helps convert iron into a more absorbable form and can reduce the effect of natural compounds that interfere with absorption.

Examples:
- Monggo with tomatoes.
- Spinach with calamansi dressing.
- Lentils with bell peppers.
- Oatmeal with berries.

These food pairs are especially helpful for people eating mostly plant-based diets or those watching their iron intake.

2. Healthy Fat + Vegetables

Some nutrients need fat to be absorbed. These include vitamins A, D, E, and K, along with carotenoids found in carrots, squash, tomatoes, and leafy greens.

"Some nutrients need fat to be absorbed. These include vitamins A, D, E, and K, along with carotenoids found in carrots, squash, tomatoes, and leafy greens"

Without some fat, your body may absorb less of these compounds.

Examples:
- Salad with olive oil dressing.
- Carrots sautéed in olive oil.
- Avocado with tomatoes.
- Squash with nuts or seeds.

They help unlock nutrients already present in vegetables.

3. Turmeric + Black Pepper

Turmeric contains curcumin, a plant compound studied for anti-inflammatory effects. But curcumin is poorly absorbed and quickly broken down.
Black pepper contains piperine, which helps slow that breakdown and increases curcumin bioavailability. Even a small pinch of black pepper can dramatically increase curcumin's effectiveness.

Examples:
- Curry dishes.
- Golden milk with a pinch of pepper.
- Turmeric-roasted vegetables.

A simple spice pairing can make turmeric more useful.

4. Tomatoes + Olive Oil

Tomatoes are rich in lycopene, an antioxidant associated with heart and cellular health. Also, cooking tomatoes softens plant cell walls, making lycopene easier to access. Pairing them with olive oil improves absorption since lycopene dissolves in fat.

Examples:
- Tomato sauce with olive oil.
- Roasted tomatoes.
- Pasta sauce with herbs.

Sometimes cooked tomatoes offer more usable lycopene than raw ones.

5. Garlic + Onion + Beans or Grains

Garlic and onions contain sulfur compounds that may help improve the availability of minerals such as iron and zinc from grains and legumes. They also add antioxidant compounds of their own.

Examples:
- Beans sautéed with garlic and onion.
- Lentil soup with aromatics.
- Vegetable stir-fries.

Flavor-building ingredients may also improve nutrition.

6. Yogurt + Fruit + Oats

Yogurt can provide protein and beneficial bacteria. Fruit offers polyphenols and vitamins. And oats provide beta-glucan fiber that supports heart and gut health. Together, they create a satisfying meal that supports digestion and steady energy.

Examples:
- Yogurt with banana and oats.
- Yogurt with berries.
- Overnight oats with cultured yogurt.

7. Green Tea + Lemon

Green tea contains catechins, plant compounds studied for antioxidant effects. Adding lemon provides vitamin C and acidity, which may help protect some catechins during digestion and enhance the antioxidant properties of green tea.

You may try these:
- Hot green tea with lemon.
- Iced green tea with citrus slices.

Synergy In The Gut

Some of the most powerful food synergy happens in the gut. Our digestive tract is home to trillions of microbes that help break down food, produce beneficial compounds, and influence metabolism, immunity, and possibly mood. And these microbes thrive on certain fibers found in oats, legumes, bananas, onions, garlic, fruits, and vegetables.

Polyphenols or plant compounds found in berries, tea, coffee, and cocoa also interact with gut microbes. Rather than being fully absorbed in the small intestine, many polyphenols reach the colon, where microbes transform them into bioactive metabolites with antioxidant and anti-inflammatory







effects. That means fiber does more than support regularity; it actually feeds microbial partners linked with better health.

Fermented Foods + Fiber

Fermented foods such as yogurt, kefir, kimchi, miso, and cultured vegetables may supply beneficial microbes. Pair them with fiber-rich foods, and you create a favorable environment for those microbes to thrive.

Try it:
- Yogurt with oats and berries.
- Kefir smoothie with banana.
- Miso soup with vegetables.
- Kimchi with rice and beans.

This relationship is often described as a synbiotic effect: probiotics plus prebiotics working together, which improves gut health, boosts immunity, and reduces inflammation.

Food Synergy At Every Age

Food synergy can also become more important during certain stages of life, when nutrient needs change, and the body may require extra support.

For children and teens, balanced combinations of protein, healthy fats, iron-rich foods, and fruits or vegetables help support growth, energy, and brain development. A simple example is an egg with whole-grain toast and fruit, or oatmeal with milk and berries.

Those with busy schedules may benefit from meals that combine fiber, protein, and healthy fats to support steady energy and satiety. Meals built around whole foods may also help reduce reliance on highly processed snacks and convenience foods.

As we get older, nutrient absorption can become less efficient. Pairing foods strategically may help older adults get more nutritional value from meals. Combining calcium-rich foods with vitamin D sources, for example, helps support bone health, while protein paired with colorful vegetables can support muscle maintenance and overall wellness.

Food synergy also matters for those following plant-based diets. Combining legumes with vitamin C-rich produce, or eating a variety of plant proteins across the day, can help improve nutrient quality and absorption.

The idea is not to create perfect meals for every age group, but to recognize that thoughtful food combinations can support changing nutritional needs throughout life.

Healthy eating does not have to be complicated. Simple combinations, like adding citrus to greens or healthy fats to vegetables, can help your body absorb and use nutrients more effectively.

Instead of focusing only on individual "superfoods," it helps to look at the bigger picture and build meals with variety, balance, and complementary ingredients.

A few smart food pairings can make everyday meals both enjoyable and nourishing. ●

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph

MAHALAGANG PAALALA: ANG PROPAN TLC AY HINDI GAMOT AT HINDI DAPAT GAMITING PANGGAMOT SA ANUMANG URI NG SAKIT.

Propan® TLC

Gana be healthy!

Lysine + B-Vitamins
Tulong para may
GANA KUMAIN

100% RENI Vitamin C
+ Vitamin B-Complex
Tulong sa
LAKAS, SIGLA

At CGF + Vitamin D
Tulong sa
PAGLAKI

with help of proper diet and exercise



mercury drug
NAKASISIGURO GAMOT AY LAGING BAGO

ASC Reference Code: Z0021N042326P
PH-PM-ZUE-PRO-SMPPUC-000003-03-11-2026
For safety concerns, kindly report to pv_zpl@zuelligpharma.com/ /+6391787333201

By Edith Legaspi

THE WORLD GREW QUIET

And So Did I

Living with hearing loss, and the silent shame that came with it.



It happened so gradually that I almost missed it, which, I suppose, is the cruelest part. There was no single morning when I woke up and found the world had gone quiet. Instead, it crept in like fog, muffling the edges of conversation, stealing syllables from the middle of sentences, turning the dinner table chatter I had loved all my life into something resembling a foreign language I had never studied. By the time I understood what was happening, I had already started to disappear.

I am seventy-three years old. For the first sixty-seven of those years, I took sound entirely for granted. My husband's laugh from the other room. The crinkle of a newspaper. Rain on a tin roof. My grandchildren calling me from downstairs. These were the foundations of my daily life, unremarkable precisely because they were always there. Then they began to fray.

The audiologist confirmed what I had been quietly dreading: moderate-to-severe sensorineural hearing loss in both ears, worse on the left. She explained it carefully,



showed me charts and discussed options. I nodded at appropriate intervals and smiled my polite smile. But what I heard (or rather, what I understood) was something else entirely. I heard: you are broken. I heard: conversations will never be easy again. I heard, most loudly of all: people will notice.

And they did notice. Of course they did. The first time I misheard my daughter and answered a question she had not asked, she paused, looked at me strangely, and repeated herself slowly, as one might to a confused child. The heat that rose in my face was not merely embarrassment. It was something closer to grief: for the woman I had been before, who followed every conversation effortlessly, who told the best stories at the table, who never had to lean forward and squint as though straining her eyes might somehow help her ears.

I began to make excuses, not to others, but to myself. The restaurant was too noisy. The television was poorly mixed. The person was mumbling. Anything rather than admit, even privately, that the problem was mine. Because admitting it felt like the first domino in a long, terrible chain: first acknowledgment, then hearing aids, then the stares, then the pity, and finally, worst of all, the slow realization in everyone’s eyes that I was old.

I know how that sounds. I know that hearing loss is a medical reality, not a character flaw. I know that age is not a failing. I know all of this intellectually, the way one knows that spiders are harmless: it makes no difference whatsoever in the moment of encounter. The shame was not rational. It did not respond to reason. It simply sat in my chest whenever I was around other people, a low, persistent weight.

The Arithmetic Of Avoidance

What I did not anticipate (what no one warned me about) was how quickly avoidance becomes its own kind of prison. It starts small. You stop suggesting noisy venues. You decline invitations to group dinners because groups are the hardest, all those overlapping voices fighting each other for airspace. You sit out of conversations that move too quickly, laughing along at moments that seem to require laughter, hoping no one asks your opinion directly.

Then the circle draws tighter. My book club, which had met every third Thursday for nineteen years, became an ordeal I dreaded rather than anticipated. Sitting at that long table, voices bouncing off the walls, I would catch perhaps half of what was said. I smiled and nodded. When the conversation looped back, and someone asked, “Don’t you agree, Margaret?” I would say yes, or sometimes “how interesting,” and watch the slight confusion flicker across their faces before the conversation moved on without me.

After a year of this, I stopped going. I told them I had a scheduling conflict. When the next term came, I let the messages go unanswered. Eventually, as people do, they stopped asking. And I told myself this was for the best: that it was kinder, somehow, to remove myself than to be the person everyone had to slow down for, repeat themselves for, accommodate. What I did not say, even to myself, was that I was terrified. Terrified of being pitied. Terrified of being managed. Terrified of becoming, in their eyes, diminished.

The Loneliness No One Sees

The loneliness that comes from this kind of self-imposed isolation is particularly cruel because it is invisible. I was not housebound. I attended church, went to the market and had Sunday lunches with my children. To anyone watching, I was a perfectly functional seventy-three-year-old woman living a full life. But inside each of those encounters was a quiet performance, a constant effort to track lip movements and facial expressions and contextual cues and piece together sentences I could not properly hear. By the time I arrived home, I was exhausted in a way that had nothing to do with my body.

My husband, God rest him, had always been my ears in difficult situations: a gentle lean-in, a soft repetition, a hand on my arm when I had missed something important. After he died, three years ago now, the hearing loss acquired a new and sharper edge. There was no longer anyone to fill in the gaps. There was no longer anyone who knew, instinctively and without fuss, what I needed. The isolation that had been manageable became something more serious. Some evenings, the silence in my house was so complete it felt less like quiet and more like erasure.

I have since learned that what I was experiencing has a name, several names

in fact. Audiologists call the social consequences of untreated hearing loss "communication fatigue." Psychologists note its strong correlation with depression and accelerated cognitive decline. Studies have documented, with the uncomfortable precision of statistics, exactly what happens to older adults who lose their hearing and do not address it: they withdraw, their social worlds contract, and their mental health deteriorates. I was, without knowing it, a case study.

What Changed

It was my granddaughter, Isla, who said the thing I needed to hear. She was nine years old, visiting on a Saturday, and she had been trying to tell me something: excitedly, the way nine-year-olds tell things, all at once and very fast, and I had missed it entirely. When I asked her to repeat herself for the third time, she did not show impatience. She simply took my face between her small hands, looked directly at me, and said with complete seriousness: "Nana, you should just get the ear things. Ellie at school has them, and they're brilliant."

I laughed. Then I cried, briefly, after she had gone to find her father. Because what she had offered me, without knowing it, was something I had been unable to offer myself: uncomplicated acceptance. No pity. No lowered voice. No careful management. Just a straightforward, nine-year-old solution to a straightforward problem. Get the ear things.

I made the appointment the following Monday. The fitting, when it came, was anticlimactic in the best possible way. The audiologist adjusted the devices while I sat in her chair, and when she asked how they sounded, I heard the faint hum of the air conditioning, the distant rhythm of traffic, and her voice, clear, unambiguous, effortless. I had not realized how much I had been missing until it was suddenly, simply, there.





What I Want Others To Know

I am not going to pretend that hearing aids have solved everything, or that the shame evaporated overnight. There are still moments. There are still restaurants where the noise defeats me, still group conversations I cannot fully follow, still the occasional flash of frustration on someone's face when I ask them to repeat themselves. But the difference, the profound and daily cumulative difference, between participating in your own life and watching it from behind soundproofed glass is not something I can adequately describe.

What I can describe is what I lost while I was waiting. Years of conversations held at full volume, without effort. The book club, which, to their considerable credit, welcomed me back without comment. Sunday lunches where I follow the whole thread, not just the parts that happen to be directed at me. My grandchildren's voices, all of them, all the small and unremarkable details of their days that I had been nodding through and losing.

If you are reading this and recognizing yourself in it, in the smiling and nodding, in the invented excuses, in the creeping withdrawal from the social world you have built over a lifetime, I want to say something to you directly. The shame is not yours. Or rather, it is yours, because it lives in you, but it does not belong there. It was given to you by a culture that has never known quite how to speak about the slower erosions of age without embarrassment on all sides. You did not choose it, and you do not have to keep it.

The silence that hearing loss brings is not peaceful. It is the silence of a room where the conversation has moved on without you, the silence of standing at the edge of your own life, watching it proceed. You deserve better than that. Go and get the ear things. ●

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph

PHYSIOGEL
HYPOALLERGENIC

Sensitive skin won't stop you anymore.
Use Physiogel daily with Biomimic Technology™ to help strengthen your skin's moisture barrier—so sensitive skin doesn't set the rules, you do!



ZUELLIG PHARMA
making healthcare more accessible

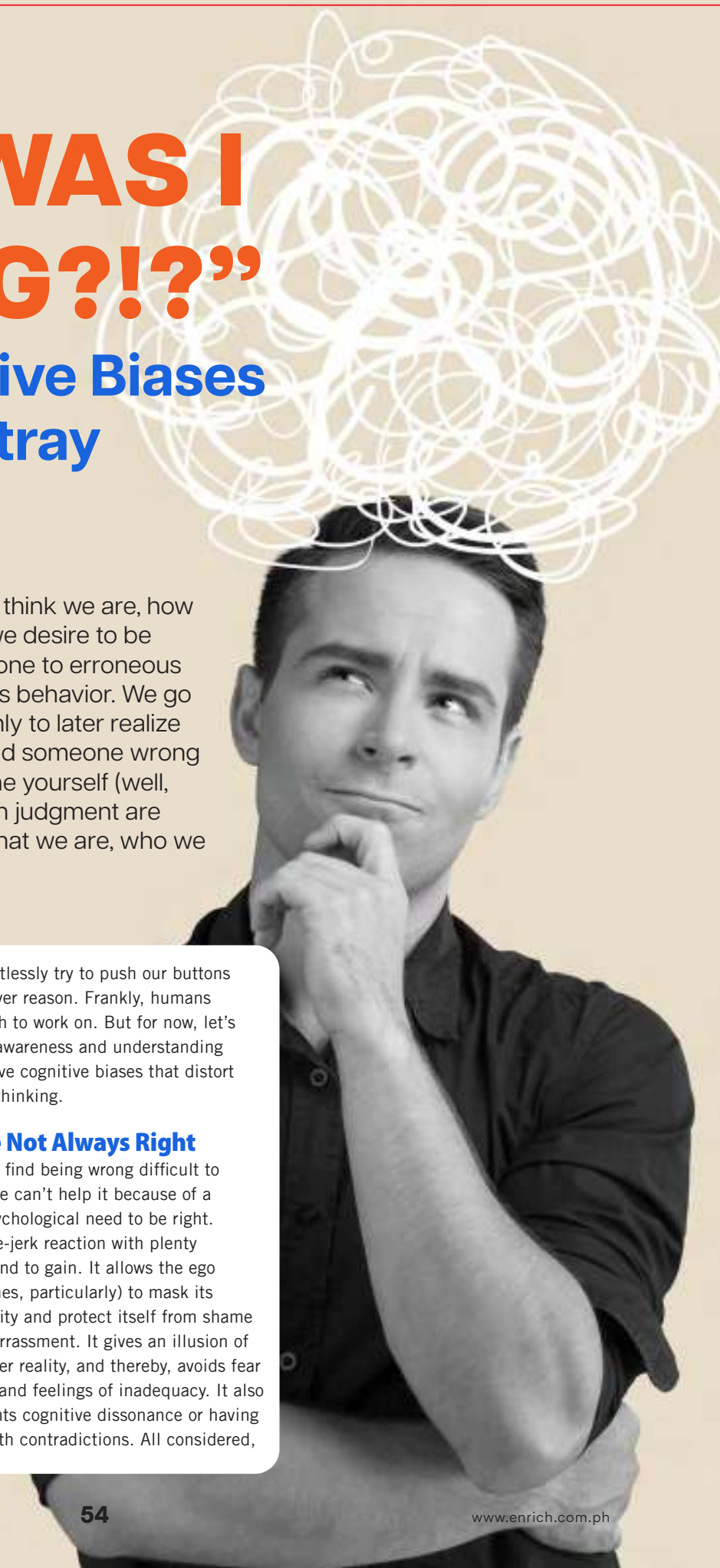
Available at all mercury drug stores nationwide

"WHAT WAS I THINKING?!?"

Common Cognitive Biases That Lead Us Astray

By Dennis V. Gargantiel

Let's face it: Regardless of how smart we think we are, how highly educated we get and how much we desire to be better versions of ourselves, we're still prone to erroneous thinking and undesired or even disastrous behavior. We go about with daily life believing all is well, only to later realize we made a bad choice or unknowingly did someone wrong somewhere along the line. But don't blame yourself (well, not too much, anyway!) because lapses in judgment are naturally bound to happen because of what we are, who we are, and the way the world works.



What we are, or human nature itself, is a work-in-progress. Survival-driven evolution hardwired us to be wary, selfish, prejudiced, tribal, cognitively lazy, emotionally irrational, and susceptible to a long litany of cognitive biases. Who we are, or how we existentially define ourselves, makes us prioritize beliefs, ideas, values, actions and behavior that may not always be appropriate or are merely half-true, and to dismiss outright the beliefs, ideas or opinions of others that run counter. And the world? Well, how fast and disruptive things change today, and the humongous volume of information we have to deal with in this information age is a challenge, especially to the inflexible mind clinging onto old realities. Meanwhile, men and robots with electronic media platforms have learned of these vulnerabilities as they relentlessly try to push our buttons for whatever reason. Frankly, humans have much to work on. But for now, let's focus on awareness and understanding of pervasive cognitive biases that distort everyday thinking.

We Are Not Always Right

We all find being wrong difficult to accept. We can't help it because of a strong psychological need to be right. It's a knee-jerk reaction with plenty for the mind to gain. It allows the ego (fragile ones, particularly) to mask its vulnerability and protect itself from shame and embarrassment. It gives an illusion of control over reality, and thereby, avoids fear of failure and feelings of inadequacy. It also circumvents cognitive dissonance or having to deal with contradictions. All considered,

it is, indeed, a bulletproof vest the mind wears for protection.

Aside from deep psychological need, a mix of interactive cognitive biases distorts our perception of right and wrong. For one thing, we tend to think we are better than average and know more than we actually do. According to a 2019 study, 95 percent of people think they're better than average in terms of abilities, attributes or personality traits, which is, of course, a statistical absurdity. It's called the *better-than-average effect* – something to remember next time you get into a measuring contest! We also tend to overestimate our knowledge of certain things, such as perhaps thinking that fixing a car problem can't be that hard, only to end up making it worse. Overestimating one's knowledge is just a polite way of saying we failed to recognize our own incompetence, and is called the Dunning-Kruger effect.

Many other cognitive biases can make us wrong about a lot of things. To be honest about it, we are often too lazy to think beyond top-of-mind. It is a mental shortcut called the *availability heuristic*, where readily available mental data, because of their recency, vividness, or emotional weight, will naturally trump rational, objective and more helpful ones that take effort and precious energy for our lazy brain to dig up and sort through. Plane crash headlines can make us fear air travel more than car trips, even if far more accidents happen on land in reality. Closely related is the *default effect*, another mental shortcut where we settle for the familiar or the status quo, even though there are better alternatives if we just make the effort to think things through.

"Many other cognitive biases can make us wrong about a lot of things. To be honest about it, we are often too lazy to think beyond top-of-mind. It is a mental shortcut called the *availability heuristic*"



Surprise, Surprise

Have you ever been surprised by how wrong you were about some people? Some turn out to be wolves in sheep's clothing, and others, undercover angels. On social media, a person can turn out to be non-existent! Our view of others can be easily warped by cognitive biases. First of all, it's how we view ourselves. For self-esteem, we like to think we're unique and special. But, spoiler alert, if everybody else thinks that way too! It becomes a problem if we believe we are "more unique" (read: better) than others in terms of trait, behavior, accomplishment, wealth, or social status. Called the *false uniqueness effect*, this cognitive bias can cause people to go about feeling (and acting) privileged, superior, or, as they say in certain cases, "holier than thou."

A cognitive bias that can prove disastrous in social life is called the *halo effect*. It is when one good quality we see in a person will make us assume that they

must be good in other respects as well. A well-behaved student may be regarded as intelligent, and a smartly-dressed employee, competent, although the opposite may be true. Closely related is the *attractiveness stereotype* bias, where we automatically assume someone who is physically attractive must be intelligent, kind, trustworthy or successful as well. It can be just as disastrous when we sell somebody short based solely on one negative trait, or, as they say, judging a book by its cover. You might miss out when you decide not to pursue a friendship just because the other person likes pineapple on their pizza!

Speaking of stereotyping, it is unfortunately a go-to shortcut of the mind when assessing another person. The mind makes sense of the world by sorting, or putting square pegs in square holes and round pegs in round holes. It's the same thing with people; we divide the social world into groups and pin labels on them. When we do this automatically and assign corresponding attributes, it's a cognitive shortcut called *unconscious* or *implicit bias.* Naturally, we treat in-group and out-group individuals differently, favoring the former. We further tend to think of members of an out-group as all the same, such as people from a certain region having a distinctive common trait or alumni of a rival school all being – well, choose your descriptive!



Mental Smoke And Mirrors

The mind has more tricks up its sleeve to avoid distress or heavy lifting. *Confirmation bias* makes us unconsciously seek, interpret, and more easily remember information that conforms with pre-existing beliefs, and ignore or dismiss outright contradictory evidence, no matter how compelling. It also avoids work by relying heavily on the first piece of information





"Planning for the future also has mental pitfalls. For one thing, our minds use inadequate crystal balls to peer into the future. Cognitive biases can make us err widely in how we predict, plan for, and value future events"

that comes to mind or that pops up on an internet search, called *anchoring bias.* Closely related is the *illusion of validity,* or when we feel good about a decision after finding supporting information, but in reality, is inadequate or might subsequently prove to be defective or untrustworthy.

We also get in trouble when we see things that are not there, such as a causal connection between two events that are purely coincidental, called *illusory correlation*. We might, for example, falsely credit a new hire for a spike in sales that was really bound to happen anyway, or keep wearing a "lucky" pair of socks when playing basketball. We also tend to make erroneous attributions when it comes to people, including ourselves. Because of *actor-observer bias*, we tend to blame others or some external reason when we make a mistake, but are quick to blame other people's character or personality (and not external factors) when they make a mistake. An unnecessary cross to carry is *hostile attribution bias*, where actions of others are interpreted as hostile when in reality, they are totally benign, ambiguous, or at worst, accidental.

Planning for the future also has mental pitfalls. For one thing, our minds use inadequate crystal balls to peer into the future. Cognitive biases can make us err widely in how we predict, plan for, and value future events. A common thinking is that the future, whatever it might be, is still a long way off. We put off planning for contingencies in the belief that the current situation, conditions or circumstances would persist. More pervasive perhaps is *projection bias* or assuming that our current physical and emotional states, priorities, tastes and preferences won't change. Moving to a beach house, for instance, is for most of us certainly a dream, until it's not. Like everything that gives pleasure, the novelty fades in time, and if, God forbid, a tsunami comes, you'd probably hear yourself screaming, "What the seashell was I thinking?!?"

The takeaway is it pays to metacognize, or to think about thinking at least every once in a while. Determine for yourself the cognitive biases that might be impacting your family, professional and social lives without your knowing it. Awareness is just the start, because our biases are embedded deep in our very being, managing them takes effort, and then some. Awareness, unfortunately, is not "half the battle" as we often hear, and if you think that having read about it here makes you equipped to overcome them, you probably suffer from yet another bias called the G.I. Joe Fallacy! ●

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph

A LOOK AT PASIG'S DIOCESAN TREASURES

By Eva Angcanan

Within the walls of the Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Barangay Malinao, Plaza Rizal, Pasig City, lies the Pasig Diocesan Museum or Museo Diocesano de Pasig (MDP), filled with religious and cultural treasures.

"The Diocese of Pasig is made up of Pasig, Taguig and Pateros. The Museo Diocesano de Pasig was established after the canonical erection of the Diocese in 2003 to preserve, protect and promote the religious, cultural and historical heritage of the Diocese of Pasig. Its sacred artifacts, vestments, and ecclesiastical memorabilia reflect the deep Marian devotion and Catholic identity of the community," says Professor Jose A. Ballesca, who serves as the Museo's curator.

The museum can be accessed through a dark alley on the right side of the Immaculate Conception Cathedral (if the visitor is facing the altar). Its entrance is a large, old wooden door. The museum is located in one of the original parts of the church during the Spanish times. "It was part of the convent until the Belgian CICM (Congregatio Immaculati Cordis Mariae) Missionaries arrived in 1910. The CICM priests focused on education and established the Pasig Catholic College. Part of the convent became part of the Pasig Catholic College."

As a visitor continues to go up the stone stairs, she visualizes the many priests who have walked up and down these gray stairs since the room upstairs was their convent.

"The museum is made up of three sections: the landing area, the mural room and the main exhibit area."

First Section: Landing Area

Professor Ballesca talks about the significance of some items. The first is the old steel clock that once graced the exterior of the church. Then, he moves toward the molds of the busts (up to the neck only)



Museum Curator Jose A. Bellesca

"The museum can be accessed through a dark alley on the right side of the Immaculate Conception Cathedral (if the visitor is facing the altar). Its entrance is a large, old wooden door. The museum is located in one of the original parts of the church during the Spanish times"



of St. Elizabeth and of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Immediately, the visitor recalls the story of the Visitation, as written in the Holy Bible's New Testament. The Visitation narrates the visit of the youthful Blessed Virgin Mary (who was then carrying Jesus in her womb) to her old cousin Elizabeth (who was also carrying John the Baptist in her womb at an advanced age). The Visitation is the second Joyful Mystery of the Holy Rosary.

The church's original title was La Visitacion de la Virgen Maria (The Visitation of the Virgin Mary), but it was later changed to Immaculate Conception. When the Diocese of Pasig celebrates the velada, it commemorates this title change. The images of St. Elizabeth and of the Blessed Virgin Mary can be found in the church's Visitation Chapel.

Then there is also a pair of images of angels that used to be part of the old altar during the Spanish period.

Second Section: Mural Room

This room can be reached by climbing another flight of old gray stairs. A long list of priests who served the parish is listed on one side of the room, starting with 1572, when the Augustinian priest, Father Alonzo de Alvarado, became the town's first parish priest, and continuing to the present parish priest.

On the other side of the long room hangs a mural that is a visual narration of the history of Pasig and its religious development. Not only should the visitors gaze at and appreciate the mural painted by a local artist, but they should also listen to a tape recording of Pasig's history, focusing on its religious growth. The mural is divided into various sections with a narrative in every section. Here are the highlights:

Pre-Spanish period

Malays, who were merchants, were Pasig's early 15th-century settlers.

Spanish Period

Augustinian Father Alonzo de Alvarado learned the Tagalog dialect so he could communicate the teachings of the Catholic faith well to the residents of Pasig, Cainta, Taytay and Bae.

The Augustinians started a mission church in Barrio Malinao, on the very site where the Immaculate Conception Cathedral stands at present.

In 1632, the image of Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage passed by the Bitukang Manok River in Pasig before it was permanently installed in Antipolo.

British Period (1762 to 1764)

In 1762, the British forces invaded Pasig and stayed there until 1764. The British forces stole items from the church, dishonored holy images and made cannon balls out of the church bells.

Post-British / Spanish Period

During his term in Pasig, Spanish priest Father Manuel Blanco wrote *Flora de Filipinas*, his first comprehensive study of Philippine flowers and vegetation, with illustrations. His work was published in 1837.

In 1898, or two years after the 1896 Philippine Revolution, the Augustinians



Marble baptistry



Belgian candelabras



Father Roy Rosales, STL, Museum Director and Chair of the Diocese of Pasig - Commission on Cultural Heritage of the Church

were removed from Pasig. With no Augustinians left in Pasig, Filipino priest, Presbítero Don Victor Ramos de Aguillon, became acting pastor until the Philippines was turned over to its new colonizers, the Americans.

Valentin, Pasig's local hero, started the revolt against Spain in Pasig.

American Period

Pasig's first Filipino pastor, Father Patricio Calderon (1901 to 1910), had a new image of the Immaculada Concepcion made.

In June 1901, the Second Philippine Commission, under Howard Taft, met at the Immaculate Conception Church to create the province of Rizal, with Pasig as its capital.

The year 1910 marked the arrival of the Belgian CICM Missionaries. They restored the church, baptized residents and taught Catechism. Later on, they established the Pasig Catholic College.

Japanese period (1942 to 1945)

Pasigueños survived World War II and its atrocities because of their strong faith and fervent prayers.

The CICM Missionaries stayed in Pasig until the late 1970s.

Modern Times

Pasig's first Filipino parish priest was Father Manuel Sobrevinas.

Pasig Diocesan Period

On August 21, 2003, the Diocese of Pasig was canonically erected. The diocese's first bishop is His Excellency, Most Reverend Francisco C. San Diego, D.D.

The Immaculate Conception Church was inaugurated as the Cathedral of the Diocese of Pasig (composed of Pasig, Pateros and Taguig).

On August 6, 2008, Pope Benedict XVI granted the request for the canonical coronation of the image of the Immaculate Conception that belongs to the Pasig Cathedral.

Father Roy Rosales, who was then Chancellor of the Diocese, brought a piece of the image's crown to the Vatican for the blessing of Pope Benedict XVI.

December 7, 2008, was the date of the canonical coronation of the image of the Immaculate Conception by Archbishop Edward Joseph Adams, who was then papal nuncio to the Philippines.



Delicately embroidered veil of the statue of Mama Mary



Beaded Garment of the Blessed Virgin Mary by designer Aureo Alonzo

Third Section: Main Exhibit

The most interesting of items on display in this section are: a large replica of the Immaculate Conception Cathedral; vestments of bishops and priests, in particular, the vestment worn by Bishop Francisco San Diego; a delicate hand-embroidered (in gold thread) piña veil worn by the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary that is kept in a transparent glass cabinet; the oldest manuscript printed in the year 1756 which is also kept in a transparent glass cabinet; Belgian candelabra pieces used during the Vatican I period when priests faced the altar instead of the mass goers; a photo of the old altar during the Spanish period; a baptistry made of marble purchased in 1867 for PhP600 in Hong Kong; original columns of the old altar; photos showing the preparation for and during the canonical coronation of the image of the Immaculate Conception in 2008.

Professor Ballesca also mentions the holding of temporary/seasonal exhibits in the Museo, such as Lenten exhibits and Marian exhibits of the images of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

He says that the artifacts on display were acquired through donations from parishes within the Diocese of Pasig; contributions from priests, religious people and lay devotees; turnovers of old or retired liturgical items and from carefully curated collections preserved for their historical and spiritual value.

Invitations

Both Father Roy Rosales, STL and Professor Ballesca encourage everyone to visit the Museo Diocesano de Pasig.

Professor Ballesca says, “Come and experience a deeper appreciation of our spiritual heritage. In every artifact lies a story, and in every story, an invitation to grow in faith and devotion.”

Finally, Father Roy Rosales, STL, the Museo’s director and Chair of the Diocese of Pasig – Commission on Cultural Heritage of the Church, says, “Coming to the Museum is going down to our roots.” ●

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph

MDP’S ADDRESS:
Within the Immaculate Conception Cathedral
Plaza Rizal
Barangay Malinao
Pasig City

OPERATING HOURS:
Thursdays to Sundays; **1:00 p.m to 5:00 p.m.**
For educational tours, please send emails to
museodiocesanodepasig.2022@gmail.com

By Kara Santos

Marinduque By Bike

Cycling in the 'Heart Of The Philippines'

The island of Marinduque is often called "The Heart of the Philippines" because of its shape and geographical location. If you look at it on a map, the island is distinctly heart-shaped. It's also located in the exact geographical heart of the Philippine archipelago, based on mapping surveys and is centrally located between Luzon and the Visayas.



▶ One armed cyclist and Marinduque local Marlon Mariquit at Poctoy White Beach



“I’ll be the first to admit that I’m more of a leisure biker who enjoys scenery and food trips rather than relentless climbs and long-distance rides. This time around, I appreciated being able to choose the segments I wanted to ride while enjoying the camaraderie of being in a large group”

The first time I visited Marinduque in 2018, my husband and I bikepacked for three days to complete the Marinduque Loop. Carrying backpacks loaded with all our clothes, water, and camera gear and more gear strapped to our mountain bikes, we took the bus and ferry to Marinduque and pedaled our way around the island without a clear itinerary or plan.

Our pace was leisurely, and it was a joy to discover vantage points and scenic spots around the island for the first time. We stopped at random eateries along the way during mealtimes. To make the trip more fun, we camped out at the White Beach on our first night and boarded our bikes on a small boat to cross over to Maniwaya Island for beach camping and swimming on our second night.

I still have fond memories of pedaling along empty coastal roads with zero traffic, feeling the sea breeze as we rode, and discovering places at my own pace.

So I felt honored to be invited to join the first-ever Philippine Cyclo Tourism Launch in Marinduque. The unique tourism package aims to introduce organized cycling tours on the island, appealing to cycling enthusiasts who want the convenience of all transportation and boarding arrangements taken care of.

The guided cycling tour, organized by the Tourism Promotions Board under the Department of Tourism (DOT), is run by local tour operator Dream Favor Travel and Tours, which has a network of local bike guides.

Dubbed The Marinduque Cycling Experience, this three-day, two-night cycling journey is designed for riders eager for a different adventure. Those who join can enjoy coastal climbs and lush countryside routes, immerse themselves in rich culture, experience pristine environments, and explore the island on two wheels.

The itinerary was more daunting than my first cycling trip, focusing on distance riding and key sightseeing stops. One day of the tour involved a steep ascent to Luzon Datum, the most historic and extremely challenging spots on the island for cyclists to visit.

Located at the Triangulation Station Balanacan on top of Mt. Mataas (*Mataas na Bundok*) in Barangay Hinanggayon, Mogpog, this primary reference point is considered the “geodetic center” for all land surveys and mapping in the



▶ Putong Ceremony Marinduque

Philippines. Another day of the cycling tour involved biking 120 kilometers, with some stops at historic landmarks along the highway to unlock parts of a tour medal.

What enticed me, however, was that it was a sightseeing tour by bike, and not a race. The highlight is discovering the island's tourist spots like beaches, waterfalls, and local landmarks on two wheels. There's no reward for those who can complete the ride in the fastest time. Tour organizers took care of the transportation to and from Manila, hotel bookings, food, and ferry rides, easing the stress of travel planning. Having a support vehicle throughout the ride also took the pressure off completing every segment.

I wouldn't need to bring my own bike to the island, as I could use the new mountain bikes provided by the tour organizer. It's been a while since I visited Marinduque, and I wanted to see how much the island had changed.

After a six-hour journey by land and sea, what struck me immediately was the warm welcome. Locals greeted us with a *Putong* (or *Tubong*) ceremony, a heartwarming ritual where guests are honored with crowns, flowers, and coins to wish us well on our journey. The first day of our trip involved settling in our hotel, resting, attending launch-related events, and socials.

Biking officially started on the second day of our trip. Our first bike stop was Boac Cathedral, an 18th-century Roman Catholic church with fortress-like walls. Then, we headed to Balanacan View Deck in Mogpog, an uphill roadside vantage point about 11 kilometers overlooking the sea.

Next came the challenging ascent to Luzon Datum of 1911, a historic landmark located on a hill roughly 10.4 kilometers away, which I decided to skip in favor of the support van. The challenging ascent, with multiple hairpin turns and sections reaching 25 to 30 percent grade, is a true test of cyclists' endurance and knee strength. I applauded every biker who conquered it under the noontime heat. Here, visitors can climb 400+ steps to a renovated view deck offering panoramic views of the island.



▶ Marinduque Church

After descending from the hill and a hearty lunch at Poblacion Pares back in Mogpog, our final stop for the day was Paadjao Falls, 11 kilometers away. The waterfall and pool are accessible via a short walk from the road, making it a refreshing spot for post-ride dips. I had the chance to chat with fellow cyclists while taking a dip in the cascades.

The third day of the cycling tour involved completing the Marinduque Small Loop clockwise via a mountain pass. The 120 kilometer route, which starts and ends in Boac, passes through the towns of Mogpog, Santa Cruz, Torrijos, Buenavista, and Gasan.

The first landmark was Mangamnan Bridge, one of the province's four steel bridges, before a steady uphill ascent towards Santa Cruz. Notable landmarks along the way included the Moriones marker honoring the island's famous Holy Week festival.

We also stopped at Rejano's to buy arrowroot cookies (a local delicacy) and had a simple biker's breakfast of *lugaw* and coffee near Santa Cruz Church. After several climbs and rewarding downhills, we reached one of the day's highlights: Poctoy White Beach in Torrijos, a beautiful stretch of white sand framed by mountain views.

We stopped by Tabag's Place, a farm resort where cyclists can relax and enjoy nature. Nearby Hills & View Mountain View offered sweeping vistas before a fun downhill ride toward Malbog Hot Spring, a natural volcanic spring at the base of Mount Malindig known for its sulfuric waters.

Our last stop was Gasan Church, where locals dressed as Moriones (Roman soldiers wearing masks and armor) greeted us, reflecting the island's colorful Lenten traditions. Then, it was the final stretch to Boac, late lunch at Cafe Mamita, and the port to catch the ferry back to Manila.

I'll be the first to admit that I'm more of a leisure biker who enjoys scenery and food trips rather than relentless climbs and long-distance rides. This time around, I appreciated being able to choose the segments I wanted to ride while enjoying the camaraderie of being in a large group.

Having biked the island DIY-style previously with no support, there were certain aspects of being on a guided tour that I appreciated.

Our tour marshals ensured everyone was doing well, and local guides literally boosted up some participants on steeper climbs whenever they struggled. We could easily store our bags in the support van, and cold water and snacks were ready at key stops along remote stretches of road where stores were scarce. A bike hauler van and a bike mechanic were also on standby in case of any mechanical issues and to help transport bikes between key locations.

Whether you prefer to bike on your own or join an organized cycling tour for convenience and security, it's good to know that Marinduque has support services like this to cater to cyclists.

Cycling around the island offers an adventure unlike typical van tours. Biking allows you to really slow down, savor the island's beauty and appreciate the little things more.

Unlike touristy destinations, Marinduque still feels authentic and raw. Beyond the sites and scenery, the island stands out for the genuine hospitality of its people. Everywhere we went, Marinduqueños and fellow cyclists eagerly shared their scenic spots, history, food, and culture.

Looking back, it was the random conversations with locals and their welcoming spirit that revealed the island's heart the most to me, and which I'll remember the most. ●

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph

(PART 2) BUDAPEST
A GOTHIC TALE

By Dimitris Lyritzis

In between visiting the various landmarks and tourist sites, the thing to do in this city is just... walk around. It's almost other-worldly compared to other cities I've been to, and this is down to two things: architecture and space.

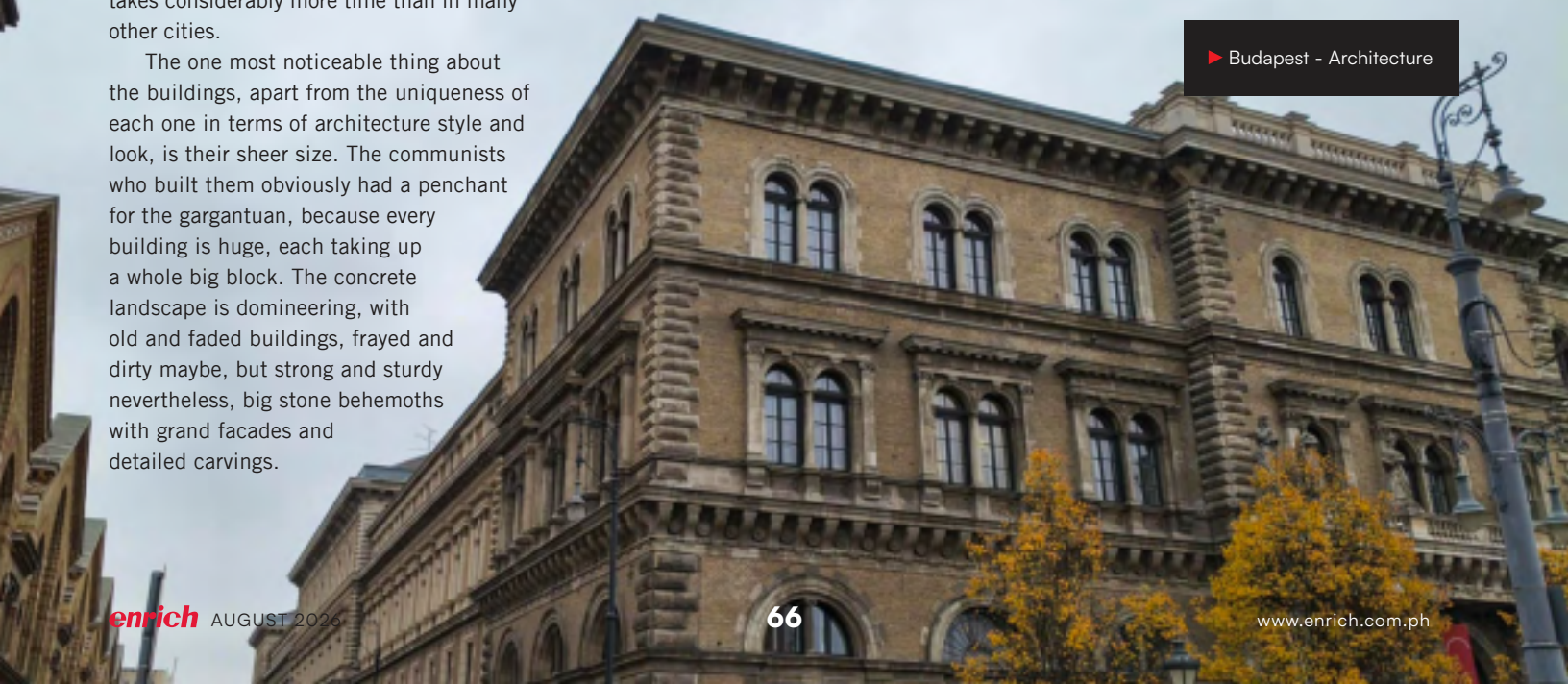
Many of Budapest's streets are lined with 19th-century residential buildings that blend Renaissance, Baroque, and classical elements, which you might call architectural eclecticism, that afford the city a very distinctive character. And you also tend to find little gems, an alleyway-street lined with tiny old-world niche bars, a charming hidden courtyard, a peeling Art Nouveau doorway, an open square filled with food kiosks selling chimney cakes (more of which later), or an unexpected vista of the river framed by grand façades.

Then there's the space. It's a city, but it's not clustered and oppressively overwhelming the way a lot of city centers are with their tall skyscrapers and residential condo blocks; Budapest does not have ridiculously high buildings, and the roads are more boulevard-style than normal streets, with lots of lanes for traffic, big, wide pavements, and lots of space everywhere you look. Crossing the street takes considerably more time than in many other cities.

The one most noticeable thing about the buildings, apart from the uniqueness of each one in terms of architecture style and look, is their sheer size. The communists who built them obviously had a penchant for the gargantuan, because every building is huge, each taking up a whole big block. The concrete landscape is domineering, with old and faded buildings, frayed and dirty maybe, but strong and sturdy nevertheless, big stone behemoths with grand facades and detailed carvings.

A good way to see all this is the tourist hop-on, hop-off bus tour. It does what it says on the tin and takes you to all the right spots, although it's not especially comfortable. One point to disembark would definitely be the Jewish Quarter, which is reportedly the city's most vibrant and atmospheric neighborhood, centered around the impressive Dohány Street Synagogue - the largest in Europe.

A tightly packed series of streets and alleyways, filled with museums, cafés, and hidden courtyards hiding distinctive eateries and saloons, this is the spot where you'll also find many of the famous Ruin Bars; these were old buildings that stood derelict, and which were converted into bars without changing anything, merely by making use of and repurposing the features already there.



▶ Budapest - Architecture





Great Market Hall

We finally made it to the famous Great Central Market, one of Budapest's most illustrious highlights. The building itself, designed in 1897 by Samu Pecz, is huge, and its façade is stately, with terracotta bricks, a wide arcade, and two small towers that frame its main entrance. As you step through the grand arched entrance, you are greeted by a soaring canopy of wrought-iron beams, warm orange brickwork, and sunlight filtering through huge windows and dancing on colorful Zsolnay tiles underfoot; you immediately feel an energy of chaos and trade.

It feels like an iron and brick cathedral, a place where commerce, architecture, and local life intersect in one bustling symphony. Walking beneath the vaulted roof, you feel the mass of history of this place, and, while the neo-Gothic design looks impressive, it's also functional, with iron supports that rise gracefully to support the roof, and glazed tiles that help light the hall in a soft glow.

Once you step inside, you have to commit, because this is a mad and hectic marketplace with all sorts of smells, sounds and people interwoven into one kaleidoscopic bazaar, and it's not for the fainthearted. People are wandering around, bumping into each other, weaving their way between bodies, shouting over the heads and shoulders of others to get their orders in; only the strong survive.

The ground floor is lined with neatly organized aisles overflowing with all manner of freshly harvested local ingredients and produce, with scarlet peppers, plump tomatoes, and crisp greens, alongside cured meats, local sausages, artisanal salamis, strings of garlicky *kolbász* and wedges of sharp sheep's cheese, lots of pots and cute little canvas bags of paprika in vibrant reds, jars of pickled vegetables… It's a feast for the eyes and all the senses.

The mezzanine floor is divided into two sides, with one side crammed full with stalls selling all types of souvenirs, fridge magnets, wooden toys, cups, t-shirts, and a whole host of other trinkets, alongside tables of folk art, hand-embroidered textiles, and clothes rooted in Hungarian tradition. On the other side is a foodie-dream corridor of small kiosks serving all the local favorites: *lángos* (deep-fried flatbreads), mammoth steak-filled sandwiches, hollowed loaves of bread filled

with ghoulash… It's all too much, and you don't quite know when and what to choose. It's all a bit mad, chaotic and frenzied, but it's pulsating with Budapest's culinary heartbeat and traditions. However, it is a bit overpriced.

When you come out of the main entranceway, you can simply cross the road and wander down the pedestrianized Tourist Street (actual name), a wide boulevard where you'll find lots of restaurants with outdoor seating, and many tourist shops selling the same old fare. After a while, you'll come to an open square with more pedestrianized shopping streets leading off on all sides, and food kiosks set up at intervals.

This is one of the best things you could stumble upon, and if you do, commandeer a table, and then plunge into the smorgasbord of traditional Hungarian street food on offer everywhere you look; big-tasting hearty food, foot-long thick sausages in baguettes overflowing with mustard sauce and pickles, paprika chicken with roasted vegetables, pork mixes, skewers of meat, goulash, bowls of chips with bacon and cheese, potato pancakes with all sorts of toppings, and, of course, the famous *Langos.*

More must be said of this. This is deep-fried flatbread made from a soft dough of flour, yeast, water or milk, and salt, stretched by hand into a flat, uneven disc, and fried until golden and crispy on the outside, soft and chewy inside. The flavor you get from just the bread is incredible, and then the simple toppings of garlic sauce or cool sour cream slathered on, and a snowfall of grated cheese, elevate it to something that is perfection in its simplicity.

It's messy eating, especially if you choose to add on any of the other toppings available, like sausage, ham, beef, chicken, or egg, but somehow this makes it even better as you sit there gloriously unrefined and tucking into a mess of deliciousness, headfirst and devil may care. And they are huge, so it is a common sight to see homeless men hanging around in order to pick off the remains from the many who simply cannot finish the whole thing.

The other very notable foodstuff to mention is the ubiquitous Chimney Cake, a golden spiral of sweet cinnamon pastry coated with chocolate spread, coconut or crushed walnuts, crisp on the outside, soft and airy within. This is a feast for the eyes as well as the mouth. This is made from sweet yeast dough wrapped around a rotating spit, slowly roasted and brushed with butter, allowing the sugar to caramelize into a delicate, crackling crust, then served hollow and steaming (the rising heat gives this beauty its chimney-like name). Simply delicious, and found everywhere.



▶ Langos

The open-air food court overflowing with local delicacies is also close to the river, and no description of Budapest can be without a mention of it. The Danube River is Europe's second-longest river, flowing from Germany's Black Forest all the way to the Black Sea, and it passes through or borders 10 countries, which has resulted in the fact that, throughout history, it has played a vital role in European history, trade, and culture. So, no ordinary body of water, and it dominates the city as it snakes through the middle of it, dividing Buda and Pest and serving as a reference standpoint by which every other thing is viewed from.

It's dark and ominous looking, moving slowly under the series of bridges which span its length every few hundred meters or so, and, while it's relatively sparse of traffic, it still has a lot of cruise ships, most of them performing the obligatory tourist boat trip. During the day, it's a pretty bland affair, with just a simple setup of chairs and tables, and a small kiosk canteen serving up limited snack options. At night, however, many of these boats transform into restaurant vessels serving up three-course meals in a low-lit, romantic setting, while the tourists gawp at the brilliantly illuminated Houses of Parliament, along with other notable buildings.

The other feature of the river is the many proper cruise ships/boats sitting dormant for a night before setting off on their way to continue their week-long journeys. They are colossal in length, they

just go on forever, almost the size of a football pitch, extremely long, flat and wide barges converted to mobile hotels, housing literally dozens of cabins.

We also visited the zoo on the outskirts of town, which is just beyond the impressive and vast Heroes Square, wherein sit the famous Széchenyi Thermal Baths, and it was notable for two reasons, aside from the fact that there are very few signposts, which makes it easy to get lost.

First, it does not look like a normal zoo, more like an old college converted into a zoo by sticking a load of bars on windows and erecting lots of fences, with some of the animals housed in very peculiar huts or just large rooms, which you can imagine were once lecture halls. The 'natural' habitat was not at all natural-looking (and the animals did not look all that 'alert').

However, the second point of note is favorable. The outdoor parts were decorated with funky, kaleidoscopic, colorful artworks and unique sculptures depicting all the animals. They look amazing, but I would suggest that they could have positioned them better; place the alligator sculpture outside the alligator enclosure, rather than outside the monkey cages, that type of thing.

There are so many things that are wonderful about Budapest, but it would be remiss not to mention the most notable disappointment, apart from the fact that the stuff on offer at the bakeries, although it looked lovely, was all pretty bland. The thing that left a sour taste in the mouth was the people. While we met some lovely Hungarians, and many who offered help with directions and whatnot, the majority are pretty cold and unfriendly, with a gruff attitude and a reluctance to smile.

I soon realized that this is after-effects of the communist regime, which lasted here until the end of the 1980s. During these times, someone being too friendly with an 'undesirable' dissident could very quickly be labeled with the same brush and punished similarly. It's a shame, but I guess this attitude will take a couple more generations before it's erased from the culture, if it ever is.

With that being said, Budapest was amazing, otherworldly, and full of hidden gems. We thoroughly enjoyed our time here, and there were still lots of things we didn't get to do. The only bad thing was that we left about a stone heavier from stuffing our faces full every day. ●

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph



▶ Zoo Artworks



Is FOGO And FOBO In Your Future, Young One?

By Arthur Dominic Villasanta

For some pre-elderly, the number "6" holds a peculiar horror all its own. This dread has nothing to do with Biblical numerology, i.e., with 6 being the "number of the beast," but with the galling reality that hitting 60 years old means that you're well and truly–and officially–"old".

This single word carries enormous life-changing implications. Depending on your mindset, transitioning into "oldness" can trigger pathological dread, a quiet bemusement, a wistful loneliness for the death of youth, unreasonable rage, or a passive acceptance of the inevitable.

Some might even sigh, *Bahala na!* (Whatever will be, will be!). Others might lose sleep over the phrase, *Laos ka na!* (You're obsolete.)

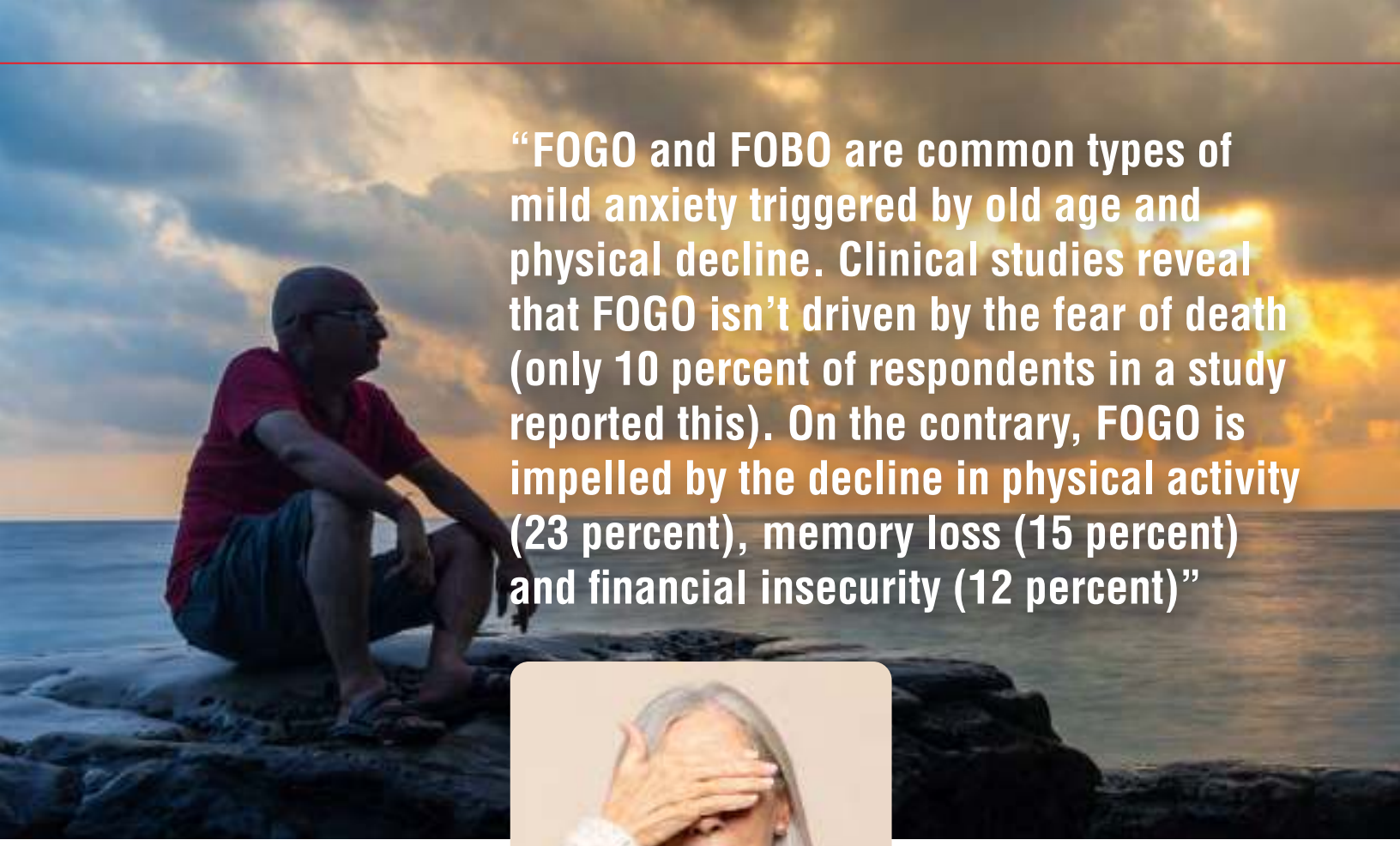
On a more positive note, the pre-elderly can decide to embrace aging by choosing the path to graceful aging. Aging has always been associated with wisdom and kindness. That's why the elderly, in general, are so special to Filipinos who look on their lined and weather-worn faces with a special kind of love. We turn to *lola* and *lolo* for comfort and advice.

The more attuned, however, will try to aim for "mindfulness therapy" and "gerotranscendence." The former is a gentle approach to mental health that helps minimize anxiety, depression, and stress while improving cognitive function. Techniques in mindfulness therapy include tai chi and mindfulness breathing.

Gerotranscendence theory or gerotranscendence proposes that the elderly move away from the prevailing materialistic and rational view of life and embrace a more "cosmic and transcendent perspective." It's claimed this move might diminish our fear of death, boost our life satisfaction, and improve our mental wellbeing.

It could also help the elderly find new meaning in their lives and become less obsessed with their deteriorating physique and appearance. Some psychologists are urging the rebirth of "the child within" to boost self-esteem despite physical challenges. Inside an aging external shell lies the same young person or the child within, with the same youthful hopes, dreams and loves he cherished in his youth. That special part of you never disappeared. The challenge is finding it again.

Perhaps the most realistic recourse will be to accept aging as fate. Going down this route forces one to focus on the truly important (healthy aging, for example)



“FOGO and FOBO are common types of mild anxiety triggered by old age and physical decline. Clinical studies reveal that FOGO isn’t driven by the fear of death (only 10 percent of respondents in a study reported this). On the contrary, FOGO is impelled by the decline in physical activity (23 percent), memory loss (15 percent) and financial insecurity (12 percent)”

instead of living in nostalgia alone and denying reality.

This outlook harkens back to the concept of *Amor Fati* (Love of One’s Own Fate) proposed by Friedrich Nietzsche, the 19th-century German philosopher. Amor Fati demands you unconditionally embrace life and love suffering. Nietzsche called amor fati his formula for human greatness that opens the door to a life without resentment.

Amor fati should allow the pre-elderly to better cope with the inevitable anxiety, depression and pains that come with aging. It should help the elderly focus on what they control, which is mostly their attitude and habits, rather than waste their precious time and energy in a futile quest for lost youth through superficial solutions such as plastic surgery.

Paradox Of Aging

These bewildering emotions comprise the perplexing “paradox of aging.” The pros and cons of senior citizenship create a psychological struggle that might spark FOGO (Fear Of Getting Old) and FOBO (Fear Of Becoming Obsolete). Both are neologisms and milder forms of



“Gerascophobia” (the irrational fear of aging), which is also called aging anxiety.

FOGO and FOBO are common types of mild anxiety triggered by old age and physical decline. Clinical studies reveal that FOGO isn’t driven by the fear of death (only 10 percent of respondents in a study reported this). On the contrary, FOGO is impelled by the decline in physical activity (23 percent), memory loss (15 percent) and financial insecurity (12 percent).

The prevalence of FOGO is the result of our youth-centered and ageist culture that still discriminates against the elderly based on negative stereotypes (useless, burdensome, better off dead). That’s a definition of ageism right there. Left unchecked, FOGO devolves into the irrational fear of aging called gerascophobia.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines ageism as “the stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination against individuals or groups based on their age. It involves unfair treatment, negative assumptions, or systemic barriers affecting people–commonly older adults, but also youth–based on the belief that they are less valuable or capable. It can be intentional, institutional, or internalized.”

FOBO, on the other hand, is today often driven by anxiety over the evils of Artificial Intelligence (AI). It’s an intense apprehension that one’s hard-won professional skills, expertise, and knowledge, amassed over decades, have immediately been rendered obsolete by AI and other new technologies. The most evil of the evils inflicted by AI on the experienced elderly is irrelevance.

FOBO becomes an immense problem for the elderly who want to keep on working past retirement, both for personal and financial reasons. Rapidly evolving

technologies are breeding complexities, culture and a new lingo far beyond the ken of the elderly, whose best years were spent in the 20th century. Obsolete becomes a cruel but apt fear. No senior wants to be disrespected by a "younger" person.

This "alienness" triggers anxiety about irrelevance and loss of purpose. It may force the elderly to feel undervalued and disconnected. It might also worsen existing mental health conditions like depression and compel the elderly into isolation and withdrawal.

A remedy for FOGO, FOBO and gerascophobia can be found in regular exercise, a balanced diet and cultivating mental toughness. You can also accept the inevitability of change and pay heed to "Amor Fati. Aging is not a personal failure. Refusing to accept it is.

"It's not the years in your life that count; it's the life in your years". This popular aphorism, mistakenly attributed to the great American president Abraham Lincoln, is quite apropos for the elderly who choose to go with the flow.

The Filipino equivalent would be *Kalabaw lang ang tumatanda!* (Only carabaos grow old!). True, so very true because a defeated mind and body weaken faster with advancing age. Be like the sturdy kalabaw and plod on with all the strength left in your body. Neglect destroys the body, not age.

These are the choices confronting young adults, mature adults and the middle-aged as they forge relentlessly into elderliness. Life before old age is more wisely spent preparing for life post-retirement. Be physically active daily; eat balanced meals, but don't forget protein, and nourish your mental and emotional health. Decades of positive habits like these will pay off handsomely when you hit the number 6.



But, of course, we're all too busy fighting to survive in a cruel world to do the right thing. That's a cop out. The wisest choice is to act with your best interests in mind. This takes commitment and hard work to ensure your senior years won't be years of pain and suffering.

The Goal

The immediate goal will be to aim for healthy aging into your Golden Years and not mere longevity. Healthy aging has to do with maintaining your physical, mental, and social wellbeing as the years pass. It involves adopting healthy lifestyle choices such as regular exercise, a balanced diet, sufficient sleep, and cognitive engagement (reading, doing crosswords, memory games, learning new skills, for example).

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines healthy aging as "the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables wellbeing in older age." Healthy aging means seniors must develop and nourish the capabilities that allow them to be themselves and do what they value.

Functional ability refers to an elderly person's capacity to perform everyday tasks vital for independent living. Maintaining functional ability is crucial to preserving independence, quality of life, and total wellbeing.

The global United Nations Decade of Healthy Aging (2021–2030) initiative,



launched in December 2020, aims to improve the lives of the elderly, their families, and their communities. It intends to meet these goals through global collective action in cooperation with various stakeholders.

Healthy aging is a complex process influenced by physical, psychological, and social factors. Research has identified three critical issues vital to attaining healthy aging:

- Maintaining muscle mass and physical strength to deter frailty.
- Preventing chronic diseases.
- Preserving cognitive function and mental health to prevent dementia and cognitive decline (frequent memory loss, confusion and behavioral changes).



More Muscle Mass

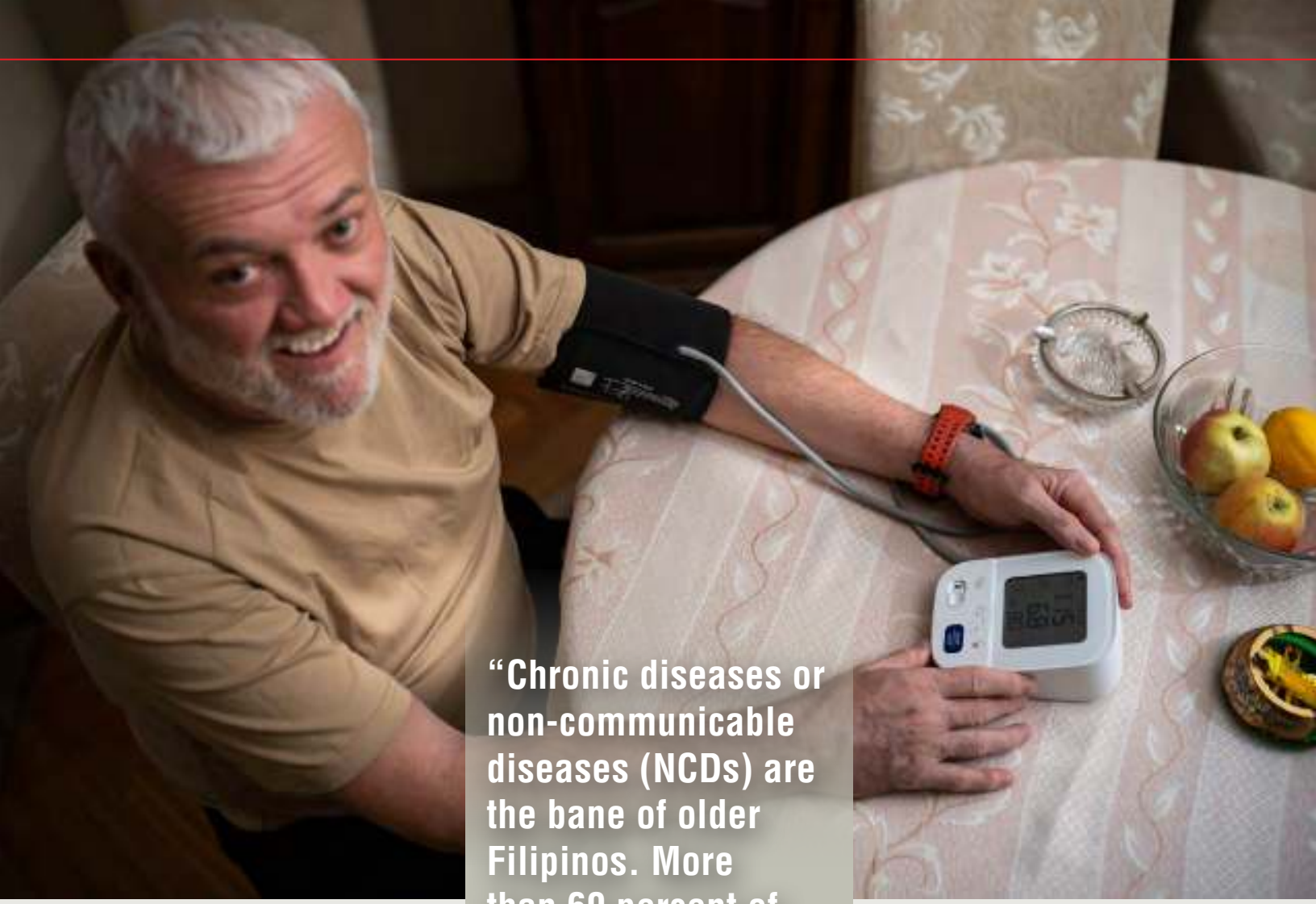
There is a growing consensus among medical professionals who care for the elderly that muscle mass is the key to healthy aging. Our muscles are being rightfully hailed as the "organ of longevity".

Aging inevitably leads to muscle loss and decreased bone density. Maintaining muscle mass is one of the most effective ways of ensuring a long and active life relatively free from disease. It helps prevent frailty, an unwanted medical condition that increases the risk of falls, fractures, disabilities, hospitalizations, and death among the elderly.

Studies reveal that taking time to improve muscle health with regular exercise is the best way for the elderly to ensure longevity, independence, and vitality as they age. Regular physical activity is essential for maintaining muscle mass in both older women and men. It's also good for joint flexibility and cardiovascular health.

Physical exercise helps preserve and grow muscle, reduces the risk of falls, and supports functional independence. Activities like strength training, balance exercises, and aerobic workouts are especially beneficial for the elderly seeking to avoid frailty.

Frailty is a state of health marked by decreased strength, endurance, and physiological function, or natural processes



such as breathing and digestion. It increases an elderly person's vulnerability to health complications and mortality, according to a study by Dr. Linda Fried et al. published in 2001.

Frailty is a geriatric syndrome (a collection of symptoms and signs) closely linked to sarcopenia, or the age-related loss of muscle mass and function. It affects a significant portion of older adults in our country, said the Department of Health (DOH).

Research consistently proves that moderate to vigorous exercise can indeed slow sarcopenia and improve longevity. After 50, adults lose one to two percent of muscle mass per year. This loss can accelerate after the age of 60.

Preventing Chronic Diseases

Chronic diseases or non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are the bane of older Filipinos. More than 60 percent of our elderly suffer from two or more chronic conditions simultaneously, said the government.

"Chronic diseases or non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are the bane of older Filipinos. More than 60 percent of our elderly suffer from two or more chronic conditions simultaneously, said the government"

Unfortunately, these lifestyle diseases rampage on. The DOH and the Longitudinal Study of Aging and Health in the Philippines (LSAHP) reveal that the most prevalent chronic conditions among Filipino elderly are mostly NCDs related to lifestyle and aging.

DOH reported that NCDs are responsible for at least 70 percent of deaths among seniors. The primary causes of death are cardiovascular diseases (CVDs), cancers and chronic respiratory diseases. NCDs account for 70 percent to 80 percent of all deaths in the Philippines among all age groups.

The five most common NCDs among the elderly are high blood pressure (affecting half of older Filipinos), arthritis/rheumatism (affecting 18 percent of the elderly), cataracts/vision impairment, diabetes mellitus and CVDs (of which ischemic heart disease is the leading cause of death).

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that chronic diseases cause seven in 10 deaths among seniors in the United States. The five most prevalent chronic conditions among the elderly in the US are hypertension, high cholesterol, obesity, arthritis, and ischemic/coronary heart disease, said the U.S. National Council on Aging.

A body of clinical studies reveals that strength training helps in the prevention and management of chronic diseases. They consistently show that regular strength training lowers the risk of chronic conditions.

A study by William Kraemer and Nicholas Ratamess, published in 2004, concluded that regular resistance training can significantly improve muscle strength,

enhance functional capacity, and reduce disease symptoms. These positive outcomes lead to better management and prevention of chronic diseases such as CVDs and diabetes.

Strength training also improves insulin sensitivity, blood sugar regulation, and cardiovascular health while reducing inflammation. It alleviates symptoms of arthritis by strengthening the muscles around our joints.

Physical activity reduces symptoms of depression and anxiety, improves mood, and enhances cognitive function. It may also delay or prevent cognitive decline and dementia in older adults.

A landmark 2010 study by Teresa Liu-Ambrose reveals that elderly women who did resistance training twice a week showed good improvements in memory, attention, and executive function compared to those who only did aerobic exercise.

Preserving Cognitive Function

Aging triggers cognitive decline, depression, and anxiety. While aerobics can help mitigate these conditions, resistance training has greater neuroprotective benefits.

The reason: strength training promotes neurogenesis (the growth of new brain cells) and enhances brain neuroplasticity by releasing growth factors like BDNF (brain-derived neurotrophic factor), said a study by R.C. Cassilhas in 2007. Neuroplasticity refers to the brain's ability to reorganize itself by constantly forming new neural pathways.

Neuroplasticity can be a huge boon to an elderly person's mental health. For one, it allows the brain to deal with age-related decline or damage. Another benefit is that it can improve memory and learning. This improvement, in turn, can help mitigate dementia and depression.

BDNF is a protein crucial for brain health among the elderly. As a growth factor, BDNF supports the growth and maintenance of neurons (the brain's nerve cells).

It's vital for cognitive function and memory while protecting against age-related cognitive decline and neurodegenerative diseases like Alzheimer's. BDNF levels can be boosted by exercise, a healthy diet, and cognitive stimulation (reading books, playing a musical instrument, playing chess, and writing, for example).

Resistance training also reduces inflammation in the brain linked to neurodegenerative diseases. It increases levels of dopamine (a "happy" neurotransmitter involved in reward and motivation) and serotonin (associated with feelings of wellbeing and happiness), thereby improving mood and reducing symptoms of depression.

For the elderly, executive function refers to the set of cognitive processes that manage and coordinate their cognitive abilities. Executive functions include planning, attention, decision-making, working memory, and cognitive flexibility, or the ability to shift between different thoughts and ideas depending on a situation.

The main goal for Filipino pre-elderly and the elderly must be Healthy Aging. The consequences of Unhealthy Aging to the elderly are devastating. Forewarned is forearmed. All the pre-elderly have to do is act while they're still young. ●

info@enrich.com.ph • www.enrich.com.ph

Healthy Lifestyle and Living
enrich

SPECIAL PROMO!



Subscribe now for 12 issues of Enrich and get the 13th issue FREE!

☐ YES! I want to subscribe to ENRICH Magazine - The highest circulation magazine in the Philippines.

1 I WOULD LIKE TO SUBSCRIBE FOR

Metro Manila
☐ 6 months Php 375
☐ 12 months Php 750

Provincial
☐ 6 months Php 530
☐ 12 months Php 905

I WANT TO START MY SUBSCRIPTION ON THE MONTH OF _____

SUBMIT THIS FORM AT ANY MERCURY DRUG BRANCH NEAR YOU!

2 SUBSCRIBER'S DETAILS:

* FIRST _____ MIDDLE _____ LAST _____

* ADDRESS _____

* TELEPHONE _____ FAX _____

* EMAIL _____ (*Required)

3 I WISH TO PAY BY:

☐ CASH ☐ CHECK (Payable to Mercury Media Corporation) ☐ MERCURY DRUG CITI CARD
☐ VISA ☐ MASTER CARD ☐ Other major credit cards

ACCOUNT NO.: ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐

EXP. DATE _____/_____ ISSUING BANK _____

For immediate service, visit our Subscription Page at www.enrich.com.ph



Stay up to date with *enrich* every day!

7,498 people like this

+ Add Story

Intro

What's Inside

See all photos



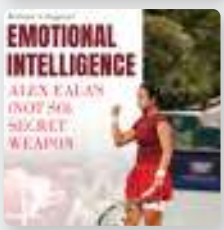


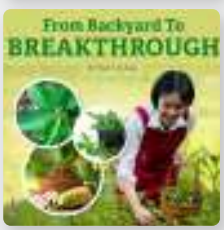












Posts

Enrich Magazine

Each month, ***enrich*** produces a newsletter on specific, relevant health subjects for the month.



To receive your free copy, log on and register at **www.enrich.com.ph**

@EnrichManila @EnrichMagazine

7k

Like Comment Share

NEW

PediaSure Plus®

Abbott
life. to the fullest.

SUPPORTS
2X GROWTH IMPROVEMENT
with three balanced meals and exercise;
vs no supplementation



ASC Ref No. A0072P063025P

Available at all mercury drug stores nationwide
NAKASISIGURO GAMOT AY LAGING BAGO

PINAKAMURA NA,

Based on SRP among Joy bottles

MAS MABISANG LINIS PA

vs. previous formula

NEW

P45

SRP



vs. ordinary Brand X liquid and paste, under test conditions

3X STRONGER CLEANING POWER*

ASC No. P0197P112725J

AVAILABLE AT ALL mercury drug STORES NATIONWIDE

NAKASISIGURO GAMOT AY LAGING BAGO