

3.2.2.3.5.4.3 Engineering youth

Now having reached a considerable age myself, and taking all efforts to fight its ill effects, I can attest to the fact that age in itself is nothing. It's not a disease, anyway.

What we have been thinking of as ageing in terms of decline is just the sum of individual ailments. Reduced muscular strength is an ailment. The decline of memory functions is an ailment. Decreased sexual appetite is an ailment. Age is not. We could be living 500 years or more, and at the age of 400 appear as youthful as 20-year-old specimens of the current legacy wetware. It's really all just a matter of technology, of engineering.

My children, or my grandchildren, or my offspring in the third, or fourth, or fifth generation, stand a good chance of reaching that age. However, one never knows. One is never too old to give it a try to live longer. Just do everything right in engineering for yourself, on the current level of technology, the best level of youth as is possible.

A good number of recipes to that end have been known for quite some time. Apart from that, new technologies are developed every day.

Of course, the great breakthrough will be in genetic engineering. We only experience a decline when having reached a certain age (lets say, the mid-thirties) because nature has genetically programmed us to do so. It wouldn't have to be like this. We could just as well be genetically programmed to live for hundreds of years, such as some parrots and turtles, or for more than a thousand years, such as some trees and other plants.

Though, the breakthrough will be in genetic engineering, we shall not think of it, and will not experience it, as a singular victory over the aging process itself. Genetic engineering will provide a series of solutions for specific ailments. There will be a genetic engineering solution for Alzheimer's and for diabetes, a genetic engineering solution for dysmenorrhea and erectile dysfunction, a genetic engineering solution for osteoporosis and one for obesity. The future is bright. We are almost there.

Until then, we have to rely on other technologies for engineering youth: pharmacology, prevention medicine, dietetics, surgery, exercise, commonsense.

Why commonsense A part of the decline of an individual life is the consequence of largely avoidable events. Accidents, for example.

A life span of 90 years is a realistic prognosis for anyone alive today, provided that person applies currently available technologies. We tend to think of technologies as something high-tech. While this is justified because it corresponds with common usage of the term technology, I willfully use the term technology for many a low-tech approach, just in order to save these simple techniques from being forgotten when youth engineering is discussed.

Such simple techniques include eating wisely, observing a regimen of daily exercise, not smoking and avoiding other pleasure poisons, good sleep.

All of these prescriptions go a long way, but of course they only go so far. You will need more. Cosmetic surgery, for example, to get rid of the visual signs of aging.

You will have to do something pharmacological to ensure that neurotransmitter levels and functionality will be at youthful levels. Fortunately, there is an ever increasing arsenal of pharmaceutical agents which are either dopaminergic or serotonergic.

Not all pharmacological means of engineering youth (within limits) are new discoveries. A herbal medication (tongkat ali) that, for example, keeps testosterone levels in men at a youthful levels, has recently been rediscovered by modern science, though it has been around for thousands of years. The traditional equivalent for youthful female hormone levels, kacip fatima, is still in the research pipeline.