**The Fountain of Youth: Myth or Mindset?**

The Fountain of Youth is a concept that has existed since the early days of human civilization. People have always been fascinated with the idea of living forever, and it seems like now more than ever we have the resources and technology potentially capable of finding this mythical treasure. But what if there was no need to search for an actual fountain? What if youthfulness is simply a mindset we can learn to access?

You hear it all the time, in commercials and media alike - age is just a number. So why do we associate it with sickness and declining ability to perform everyday activities? Because our bodies change constantly as we age, and with that change comes different requirements for optimal health. Sure, there are some aging processes that are unavoidable due to genetics or nature itself, but there's a difference between getting older and feeling old, and the latter has everything to do with a healthy mind and body. Let’s focus on the mind.

At this point you may be asking, "What does it mean to have a healthy mindset when it comes to aging?" Let's try this exercise together: close your eyes and picture an elderly senior woman. What do you see? Does it follow the stereotype of someone sedentary, maybe in a wheelchair or walker, knitting and having a difficult time stringing together words, fragile bones and hands that shake as they hug you? Now picture a confident senior woman. What do you see? Did your mental image change to someone with more independence, either walking on their own or with a walker, a brightness to them or even a more youthful appearance entirely?

The most important question to ask yourself is: Could those have been the same woman? Absolutely! An individual is considered a senior when they're past the age range of 65-70, but it has nothing to do with how someone feels or presents themselves. All we changed was one word - elderly to confident - and every piece of the image was altered. Imagine viewing yourself in a similar way, changing just one negative adjective to a positive one.

This is what it means to have a healthy mindset in relation to aging - acknowledging the changes that take place but not letting them define who you are or how you feel. In fact, some of those changes may be for the better. Instead of focusing on what you can't do, focus on what you can. Some may think of aging as losing ourselves, but what if it simply allows us enough life experience to become who we were always meant to be? Youthfulness isn't just an idea of being young; it's about having more confidence, engaging in activities with enthusiasm and embracing all that life has to offer. So instead of hunting down a mythological fountain of youth, try turning your attention inward first.