

The Key to a Healthy, Happy Life is...

Last fall, *The Atlantic* ran an article entitled “[Dorms for Grownups: A Solution for Lonely Millennials?](#)” In essence, the article explained how a search for community and connection was inspiring living arrangements designed to facilitate relationships between millennials.

As a new article from [The Washington Post](#) explains, if millennials don't get their act together in the relationship department, they shouldn't expect to live a long and happy life.

The *WaPo* references a recent [Ted talk](#) by Harvard researcher Robert Waldinger. Dr. Waldinger is the fourth director of a 75-year-old study tracking the lives of American men from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. After years of research, the study concluded that the happiest, healthiest, and longest living men are those who have strong relationships with others.

In his talk, Dr. Waldinger makes three observations:

1. **Loneliness kills.** The way to avoid death by loneliness, Waldinger notes, is to be well-connected socially to family, friends, and community.
2. **Quality over quantity.** The trick here is not to go out and get 1,000 Facebook friends. Instead, the relationships that promote a long and happy life are those that are thoroughly cultivated and foster a sense of trust.
3. **Mental protection.** For those concerned about contracting dementia in later life, Waldinger has good news: foster good relationships now and you'll likely retain your mental sharpness into your eighties!

Although research like this is supposedly new and groundbreaking, the concept is simple common sense that individuals like John and Abigail Adams could have explained. Their letters (as the quote below demonstrates) were full of affection for one another and good communication. The results? In a time where the life expectancy was [37 years-old](#), Abigail lived to age 74 and John lived to age 91.

‘Nuff said.

“I really think this Letter would make a curious figure if it should fall into the Hands of any person but yourself – and pray if it comes safe to you, burn it.

But ever remember with the tenderest Sentiments her who knows no earthly happiness eaquel [sic] to that of being tenderly beloved by her dearest Friend.” – [Abigail Adams to John, 1777](#)

Image Credit: Mo Riza bit.ly/1jNlqZo