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PROFILE

At His Best

Good looks start with self-care and an active lifestyle

Paul Majka summarizes his impetus for fighting the aging process this way: "I always want to look younger than my chronological age," says this 58-year-old. "I want to look as good as Harrison Ford, who is the same age as I am, and as good as Paul Newman when I reach my 70s."

Fortunately, Paul began taking steps some 20 years ago to help him end up looking more like Harrison Ford than others who are not so well endowed. It wasn't that Paul embraced rigorous exercise, or totally revamped his diet—it was that he discovered the benefits of vitamins. Paul's passion for reading articles on health led him to try an assortment of vitamins and minerals in the early 1980s, including high potency multiple vitamins and vitamins A, C, D and E. "It helped that I was always open minded and willing to look for the truth outside of the establishment," he recalls. "And I'm not afraid. This stuff won't kill you, what will kill you is not doing anything to improve your overall condition."



From those basic vitamins he moved on to selenium, which he continues to take, eventually graduating into anti-aging therapies such as enzymes and hormone replacements. Without realizing it, he stumbled on to what would become the mainstay in his age-reversing arsenal — L-glutathione. "Usually, if anything says 'anti-aging,' I buy it," he says. "I got lucky this time. I bought it and it turned out to be incredible."

He credits this regimen with helping him hold his own in a field—high technology fiber optic networks—that's largely dominated by the young, and in a position—sales—that requires him to look his best, stay focused and be "on" every second that he's working the phones in his Chantilly, Virginia office. As one of the oldest staff members at his company, Paul is keenly aware of what he believes is age discrimination within the high-technology industry (though not in his own company). It's something he hopes to see change as the workforce in this country continues to age. "People over 40 will make up the majority of the workforce in just a few years, and senior level people can be great assets in the sales arena," he maintains. "These are trustworthy people who have an old-fashioned work ethic."

Paul's work ethic includes staying abreast of all the latest developments in his industry, which is no small feat considering the pace of change. "I have to keep up with the latest technology and that literally changes overnight," he says. "I read at least 12 magazines a week to stay cutting edge in everything from simple telephony and telephone systems, to basic cabling, routers, switches, operating systems, web applications and the newest software languages: Java, C++, XML, you name it..."



Generous daily doses of a variety of brain enhancers likely help Paul keep his C++ lingo straight from his XML. He takes choline with inositol for mental acuity, then adds some Ginkgo biloba for good measure. “If I don’t take them for a couple of days, I notice it,” he says. “Most people’s minds are slowing with age, but mine seems to be getting faster.” He uses ginseng to give him a shot of energy and maintain his vitality during the day.

In addition to L-glutathione, his age-reversing regimen includes DHEA, which he has been on for five years now, and pregnenolone, which he refers to as “the mother of all hormones.” Then there’s RNA, DNA and SOD (super oxide dismutase)—another mainstay because of its ability to activate his own natural growth hormone production. “Biologically, I think I look 48 or 50 years old,” he says. “It can actually be embarrassing at times—I have to show my I.D. in order to get senior discounts and a waiter once tried to kick me out of my high-school reunion dinner because he thought I was sitting with the wrong class.”

For general good health, Paul turns to plenty of antioxidants, including CoQ10, grape seed extract and green tea extract. The mixture is so powerful that he jokes he can cure people of colds and the flu simply by sneezing on them. He also uses omega-3 and -6 fatty acids, including salmon and flaxseed oil, again for general health. A typical day’s worth of vitamins and supplements amounts to about five handfuls, which he takes in the morning. Twice a week, he’s apt to cut back to just the basics (1 ½ handfuls) so as not to overwhelm his system.

It’s rare that he ever gets sick, but when he does a combination of vitamin c, zinc and echinacea usually brings him back to health. Paul also gets a flu shot every year, noting that “you’ve got to work with regular medicine occasionally.” To help stay slim—Paul packs a scant 180 pounds onto his 6’ 2” frame, which is just 10

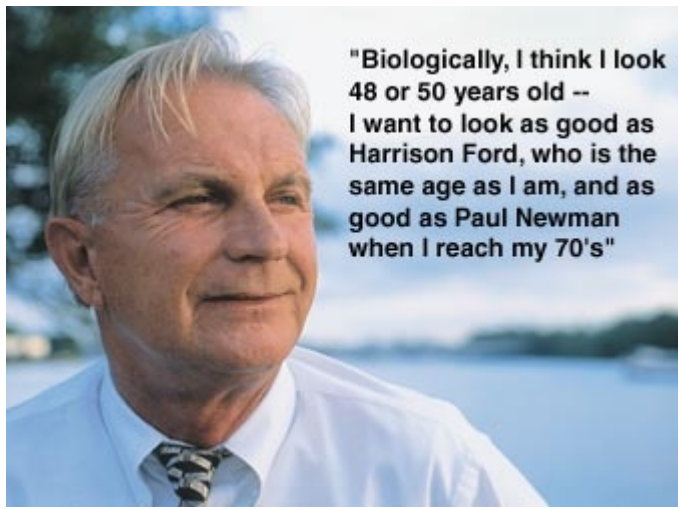
pounds more than his high school weight—he takes chromium picolinate to convert fat into energy and lecithin to keep the fat moving out of his system. Grapefruit juice also helps excrete fat, he says, but it has to be the sourest kind available for maximum acid content.

Though Paul tries to maintain a balanced diet, his hectic lifestyle often makes a weekly stop or two for fast food unavoidable. He tries to counteract these occasional lapses through his daily barrage of vitamins, minerals and enzymes. “I can’t help it,” he says of his stops at local fast-food drive-ins. “I’m single and I have to eat on the run.” Still, when conditions permit, he sticks to vegetables, fruits, fish and, in an endorsement of a high-protein diet—red meat and, every once in awhile, liver. He scrupulously avoids alcohol.

Though exercise is important to Paul, he doesn’t stick to any kind of regular schedule. “I let it happen,” he says. “It’s no big deal.” He likes to walk—sometimes up to 18 miles along the Delaware and Maryland beaches near his home or even just around the neighborhood in Arlington, Virginia—but he doesn’t run. Sometimes he swims, when he has the ambition, but he favors the Atlantic Ocean over the local pool. He exercises with the thicker exercise bands to give his arms and chest a good work-out, but he skips any kind of weight lifting. Then there’s dancing, which he loves, whether it be the boogie woogie or the shag. “You’ve got to know what you’re doing out there,” he explains, referring to the dance floor. “And, it’s a lot of work.” Despite his low-key approach to physical fitness, he claims a high proportion of muscle mass, which he attributes to his regular use of DHEA.

Constant activity also builds muscle. “My idea of torture would be being tied down in one place,” says this transplanted New Yorker. “I’m the type of person who would go bonkers if I weren’t doing anything. I really have ants in my pants.” Paul spends most weekends exploring the surrounding Northern Virginia countryside and the Delaware shoreline. He also takes full advantage of the cultural offerings nearby in Washington, D.C., whether they be historic events, arts and crafts festivals, or a recent exhibit on Tibetan culture. Then there are the social events. Paul attends plenty of singles dances and other group functions, noting that he far prefers to spend his time this way than “sitting around in bars.”

Though Paul would love to find a soul mate—and is actively seeking one—he wouldn’t change much else about his life. “I want to work at least until I’m 65 and probably even beyond,” he says. “I have to be involved in the real world—you aren’t really living unless you’re involved with real people in the real world.” —Twig Mowatt



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