

Dr Angelos Rodafinos, Mind-ologist and Author of 'Idiots are invincible' and 'Prince to Frog and vice-versa.'

Interview by Kathryn Lukey-Coutsocostas [kathryn@the.forthnet.gr]

What are some of the health dilemmas that women face?

Compared to men, women face more demands, imposed from everyone around them, to look and act elegant, every minute, every day, and all year round. To do so, they have to constantly take care of themselves. Living in Greece has its advantages and disadvantages compared to other parts of the world. The first include a vibrant social life (some times too vibrant) and the potential for a healthy nutrition. The second include abstaining from smoking (when every other person smokes) and exercising (when every one else doesn't exercise).

What role do different factors - like age/sex/level of fitness/psychological wellbeing/work/marital status/being foreign - play?

Health is the result of a complex interplay between factors such as genetics, environment, and behaviour. We often do not have a lot of control over the first two factors. Yet, 50% of diseases are the result of our behaviour, over which we have a lot of control. Unlike plants and trees we have been given the freedom of choice over where to live, what to eat, what to think, what to do. Now, getting married to a Greek reduces women's choices by about 95 percent ...

What are some practical tips for women to remain healthy?

Advice is easy to give, so here is some. Take care of your physical and mental diet. On the physical side: No doubt we'll all grow old. Make sure you age nicely. Join a fitness club (and show up). Say 'NO' to cakes. Don't fill up the fridge with delicacies, chocolates, and candies – it's difficult to resist. Eat fruit and salad first. Avoid late night meals. Robbins suggests: don't go out to dinner with your husband. He eats a lot and you will get carried away. Let him go out with someone else. She will get fat and he will come back to you. Follow the moto: *Nothing tastes as good as thin feels!* On the mental side. Follow the method 'Ro': when facing a challenge, take a time-out to examine a) whether you can actually do something about the issue, as well as how much time and energy you are willing to invest, depending on its priority compared to other issues, or b) whether it is something you should I accept and focus your energy on something else. Ask yourself questions such as: How am I doing on my number one task/value? How is my present behavior helping me to accomplish my goals? Read a good book (mine for instance). Use your expensive crystal wine glasses every day. Savor moments, inject social relationships with passion.

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