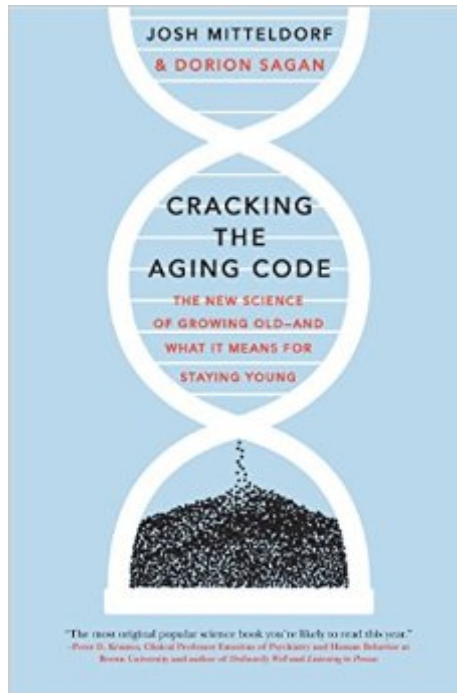


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# Cracking The Aging Code: The New Science Of Growing Old-And What It Means For Staying Young



## Synopsis

A revolutionary examination of why we age, what it means for our health, and how we just might be able to fight it. In *Cracking the Aging Code*, theoretical biologist Josh Mitteldorf and award-winning writer and ecological philosopher Dorion Sagan reveal that evolution and aging are even more complex and breathtaking than we originally thought. Using meticulous multidisciplinary science, as well as reviewing the history of our understanding about evolution, this book makes the case that aging is not something that just happens, nor is it the result of wear and tear or a genetic inevitability. Rather, aging has a fascinating evolutionary purpose: to stabilize populations and ecosystems, which are ever-threatened by cyclic swings that can lead to extinction. When a population grows too fast it can put itself at risk of a wholesale wipeout. Aging has evolved to help us adjust our growth in a sustainable fashion as well as prevent an ecological crisis from starvation, predation, pollution, or infection. This dynamic new understanding of aging is provocative, entertaining, and pioneering, and will challenge the way we understand aging, death, and just what makes us human.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 336 pages

Publisher: Flatiron Books (June 14, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1250061709

ISBN-13: 978-1250061706

Product Dimensions: 6.4 x 1.1 x 9.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (11 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #106,374 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #64 in [Books > Science & Math > Biological Sciences > Biology > Molecular Biology](#) #195 in [Books > Textbooks > Science & Mathematics > Biology & Life Sciences > Anatomy & Physiology](#) #315 in [Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Aging](#)

## Customer Reviews

Wow! This book hit me on so many levels. I know that the echoes are going to continue to affect my thinking for many months to come. A subject as big and as well-studied as aging -- it never occurred to me that Science could just get it wrong. That was just the first jolt from C.T.A.C. Very convincing, and transformative, really. There's stuff that I knew but had never really thought about the

implications. And a lot more stuff that I never knew. Elephants grow 6 sets of teeth in their lifetime, and then when the 6th set wears out, they can't eat. Beetles age backward when they're starved, and can revert all the way to tiny larvae. Octopus moms stand watch over their eggs for years at a time, then drop dead as soon as the eggs hatch. There's practical advice, too. I have cut out the anti-oxidants immediately, and started baby aspirins. Other changes are going to take more time. The only part that I didn't particularly like was where they hired that stoned occupy wall street kid who pooped on the police car to write a few paragraphs (pages 8 and 9) extolling the virtues of big government and government regulation and castigating and dismissing any "achievements" of the 1 percenters! Suggesting all 1 percenters merely inherited wealth from their family....Which if you peruse the fortune richest Americans list you will see that is by far and away the exception to the rule that most 1 %-ers are self made businessmen/women.

An excellent book on a very challenging subject. I enjoyed this book very much, having been a student of longevity for 40 years. Josh's book, among its many other strengths, is a studied examination of evolutionary concepts of aging, and how populations protect themselves from extinction by taking protective measures against overpopulation. I also got some good tips on how we might lengthen our own lives as well as improve the quality of life, so we don't fall prey to illnesses that accompanies aging. I feel that, far from being a flaw, this is a definite asset, in a great book. I was most impressed with the discussion of the Demographic Theory of Aging, Josh's original concept; which explains many questions raised by this most intriguing subject.

What causes us to grow old and die? That's not a simple question. This was a fascinating read about how aging is driven by evolution. The author methodically destroys competing theories such as free radicals causing aging and puts forth his evolutionary thesis in a well-written style. My only complaint was his venture into possible anti-aging remedies which tended to tip-toe into the realm of snake-oil. Otherwise, I found him quite convincing.

Mitteldorf's theory of aging can be summed up as follows. We are programmed to age because it is beneficial to the species as a whole. Aging helps prune the herd and keep the food supply abundant. What does it mean to say that we are programmed to age? It means that the body "knows" how to be young, but chooses to be old. This makes aging a formidable foe since we are deeply wired to age... if some individuals could, through luck, fail to age, they would quickly take over the rest... At the same time, this suggests that if we know enough about how the body keeps

"its aging clock", we could possibly reset it.

This book is full of information, much of it scientific and outside my areas of knowledge. However, the authors' engaging writing and clear explanations have made this otherwise difficult material a pleasure to read. The central idea of "the death program in our genes" is fascinating and convincing. This book has changed some of my foundational assumptions about how the world works.

This is a great book to wrap your mind around. The science, the evolutionary theories and the new ideas (radical even) that are presented in this book are well researched and explained in a very clear way. It definitely has me re-thinking some things about my health and fitness. I also enjoyed interviewing Josh Mitteldorf on the 40+ Fitness Podcast (episode 144). Get this book and open your mind to a new longevity paradigm.

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