

FREE • FROM 100-YEAR-OLDS

The Healthy Decades Scorecard

12 at-home checks that show whether you're still

1 STRONG

2 SHARP

3 INDEPENDENT



With Doña Trina, 106 — one of the 9+ people over 100 I've sat down with.

Find out in about 10 minutes. Then fix the **one** area that needs you first.

24

points

3

areas

12

checks

0

equipment

Kent Dang • Healthy Decades

9+ interviews with people over 100 • 5 months living with a strong 85-year-old in Ikaria, Greece • 3 months of field research in Costa Rica • I wrote a book about what I found

Before you score anything

My grandmother is 97. She still cooks for herself, sweeps her own porch, and walks to church before sunrise every single morning. Nobody helps her up. Nobody drives her.

That is what I want for you. Not a number on a lab report. The ability to run your own life, for as many decades as you get.

I'm not a doctor. I'm a former desk worker who spent 20 years in front of a computer, then went looking for the people who age best. I've sat down with 9+ people over 100, lived 5 months with a strong 85-year-old on the Greek island of Ikaria, and wrote a book about what I found.

Here's what surprised me most: **none of them talked about their bloodwork.** They talked about what they could still do. Carry the basket. Walk to church. Cook the meal. Get up off the floor.

So this scorecard doesn't ask about your cholesterol. It asks what you can still do — 12 simple checks you can run in your own kitchen in about 10 minutes.

The one rule

No lying to the scorecard. Score the last 30 days — not your best week ever, and not the person you plan to become in January. The honest number is the useful number.

Please read before the physical checks

- Do them next to a sturdy counter or chair, with someone nearby if you can.
- Skip any check that feels unsafe today. A skipped check scores 0 — that's useful information, not a failure.
- If you have balance, joint, or heart concerns, or you've fallen in the last year, ask your doctor or physical therapist before trying them.
- This is a snapshot of habits and abilities. It is not a diagnosis, and it doesn't replace your healthcare team.

3 areas. 12 checks. 24 points. One answer.



STRONG

Your body

Checks 1–4 · Floor, chair, grocery bags, daily movement

0–8 points



SHARP

Your mind

Checks 5–8 · Walk-and-talk, learning, sleep, people

0–8 points



INDEPENDENT

Your life

Checks 9–12 · Balance, pace, errands, your reason

0–8 points

- 1 Run the 12 checks.** Each answer is worth 0, 1, or 2 points. Tick one box per check and write the points on the line.
- 2 Add up each area** on page 10. Maximum 8 per area, 24 total.
- 3 Find your lowest area.** Not your total. Your lowest area is the answer this whole scorecard exists to give you.
- 4 Run that area's 30-day experiment** from page 11, and track it on page 12.
- 5 Re-score on day 30.** Decide with evidence, not feelings, whether the habit earned a permanent place.

Why the lowest area, and not the total?

Because things fail at their weakest point, not their average. A 7 on Strong and a 2 on Sharp is not a healthy life with a small gap. It's a body getting stronger inside a life getting lonelier — and the research on social connection says that's the wrong trade. Fix the weakest area first. Then re-score. Then fix the next one. That's the whole method.



1 The Floor Test

Sit down on the floor, then stand back up. Use as little help as you can — hands, knees, or furniture.

- ☐ **0** I can't do this safely, or I need another person to get me up.
- ☐ **1** I can do it, but I need a hand on the floor, a knee, or a piece of furniture.
- ☐ **2** I can get down and back up with no hands — or just one quick touch.

★ **I met them in person** On the Greek island of Ikaria, I watched Popi, 85, carry a basket of dirt I could barely lift — and I was 44 and working out every day. Her life trained her. The ground was her gym.

Why it matters: Brazilian researchers found that the ability to sit down on the floor and rise again is associated with survival in adults aged 51–80 (Brito and colleagues, *European Journal of Preventive Cardiology*, 2014).

My points for check 1: _____ out of 2

2 The Chair Test

Sit in a firm kitchen chair. Cross your arms over your chest. Stand up and sit back down 5 times in a row.

- ☐ **0** I can't do 5 without pushing with my hands — or I can't do 5 at all.
- ☐ **1** I can do 5, but it's slow or hard, or I need my hands for the last ones.
- ☐ **2** 5 in a row, arms crossed, without much trouble.

★ **I met them in person** Pachito, a Costa Rican cowboy I met, was still riding his horse at 105. Legs that can lift you out of a chair are legs that can lift you onto a horse — or up your own front steps.

Why it matters: Chair-stand tests are the standard way researchers and clinicians measure leg strength and fall risk in older adults (CDC STEADI toolkit; Guralnik and colleagues, Short Physical Performance Battery).

My points for check 2: _____ out of 2



3 The Grocery Test

Carry two full grocery bags from the car (or the front door) to the kitchen counter without setting them down. Or: open a brand-new jar on the first try.

☐ **0** I need help with bags and jars — or I avoid them.

☐ **1** I can, but I stop to rest, or jars take a real struggle.

☐ **2** Bags and jars are no problem.

★ **I met them in person** My grandmother is 97. She still peels her own onions, cleans her own squid, and cooks her own meals. Hands that keep working are hands that stay strong.

Why it matters: In a study of about 140,000 adults across 17 countries, weaker grip strength was associated with higher rates of heart disease and death (Leong and colleagues, *The Lancet*, 2015).

My points for check 3: _____ out of 2

4 The Daily-Movement Check

Think about the last 7 days. On how many did you move for at least 30 minutes — walking, gardening, chores, anything that isn't sitting?

☐ **0** 0–1 days. Most of my day is a chair, a couch, and a car.

☐ **1** 2–4 days.

☐ **2** 5 or more days. It's just part of my life.

▫ **From documentaries & books** Yohena Shige of Okinawa, 100, told a film crew: “Even when it rains, I go out for a walk.” Every centenarian I've met moves — not at a gym, but in a garden, a field, a church aisle.

Why it matters: Regular physical activity is one of the most consistently reported factors associated with healthier aging across large studies (U.S. *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*, 2nd edition, 2018).

My points for check 4: _____ out of 2



5 The Walk-and-Talk Test

Walk down a hallway at your normal pace while counting backward from 50 by 3s, out loud: 50, 47, 44, 41...

- ☐ **0** I have to stop walking to think — or I can't keep the count going.
- ☐ **1** I keep going, but I slow down a lot, or I lose the count once or twice.
- ☐ **2** I keep my pace and my count.

★ **I met them in person** My friend Dinh is 90. At 68 he nearly died of a heart attack. Today he walks and talks with me over tea for an hour without ever losing his thread. The mind and the legs are a team.

Why it matters: “Walking while talking” tests are used by researchers because slowing down or stopping is associated with a higher risk of falls in older adults (Verghese and colleagues, *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, 2002).

My points for check 5: _____ out of 2

6 The Beginner Test

Are you learning something new right now that makes you feel clumsy — a language, an instrument, a card game, a craft, a recipe, a phone app?

- ☐ **0** No. I stopped being a beginner at anything years ago.
- ☐ **1** I dabble — a video here, a puzzle there.
- ☐ **2** Yes. I'm practicing something hard, and I'm still bad at it.

▫ **From documentaries & books** Joanna Proyu of Ikaria was still teaching her weaving craft at 95 and working her loom past 100. When her son wanted to take the loom apart, she asked him why she should sit on the porch and watch people walk by.

Why it matters: Older adults who spent 3 months learning demanding new skills — digital photography, quilting — showed memory improvements that easy, passive activities did not produce (Park and colleagues, *Psychological Science*, 2014).

My points for check 6: _____ out of 2



7 The Sleep Check

Most nights, how long do you sleep? And do you wake up at about the same time every day?

- ☐ **0** Under 6 hours, or my schedule is all over the place.
- ☐ **1** 6–7 hours, fairly regular, but often cut short.
- ☐ **2** 7–8 hours, with a steady wake time — even on weekends.

★ **I met them in person** Pachito and Ramiro, the two Costa Rican cowboys I met at 105 and 101, went to bed at dusk and woke at dawn. No alarm. No screen. The sun was their clock.

Why it matters: In large long-term studies of adults over 50, both very short and very long sleep were associated with faster memory decline (Ma and colleagues, *JAMA Network Open*, 2020).

My points for check 7: _____ out of 2

8 The Two-People Check

In the last 7 days, how many real conversations did you have — not small talk — with people who matter to you? And do you belong to a group that meets regularly?

- ☐ **0** Rarely. Most of my talking is to the television.
- ☐ **1** About once a week, and I belong to something loosely.
- ☐ **2** Several times a week — and there's a group that would notice if I didn't show up.

▫ **From documentaries & books** Itokazu Iwao of Okinawa, 101: “My main secret is my family.” Every long-lived community I visited had this in common. Nobody aged alone.

Why it matters: A review of 148 studies found that people with stronger social relationships had a 50% greater likelihood of survival over the study periods (Holt-Lunstad and colleagues, *PLoS Medicine*, 2010).

My points for check 8: _____ out of 2



9 The One-Leg Test

Stand next to a counter. Lift one foot a few inches off the floor and hold it for 10 seconds without grabbing anything. Then switch legs.

- ☐ **0** Under 5 seconds on either leg — or I don't feel safe trying.
- ☐ **1** 5–9 seconds, or 10 seconds on one leg but not the other.
- ☐ **2** 10 seconds on both legs, no grab.

★ **I met them in person** My grandmother, 97, leaves the house at 3:45 every morning and walks to church in the dark. Balance isn't a party trick. It's the difference between a walk and a fall.

Why it matters: In a 12-year study of adults aged 51–75, being unable to stand on one leg for 10 seconds was associated with a higher risk of death from any cause (Araújo and colleagues, *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, 2022).

My points for check 9: _____ out of 2

10 The Pace Test

Walk for 10 minutes at a brisk pace — as if you're a little late — without needing to stop. If you have a walking partner, can you keep up?

- ☐ **0** I can't walk 10 minutes without stopping — or I've stopped going.
- ☐ **1** I can, but I'm noticeably slower than I was a few years ago.
- ☐ **2** 10 brisk minutes, no problem — and I can keep up.

▫ **From documentaries & books** Vasiliy Sivolapov, a Russian centenarian, walked about two miles a day to a war memorial and back, snow or not. His whole philosophy fit in three words: “Always keep going.”

Why it matters: Walking speed is so closely tied to survival that some researchers call it the “sixth vital sign.” In a pooled study of more than 34,000 older adults, faster walking speed was associated with longer survival (Studenski and colleagues, *JAMA*, 2011).

My points for check 10: _____ out of 2



11 The Errand Test

Who does your shopping, cooking, cleaning, bills, and medication sorting? Be honest.

- ☐ **0** Others do most of it for me.
- ☐ **1** I do most of it, with some help.
- ☐ **2** I do all of it myself — and I'd rather keep it that way.

▫ **From documentaries & books** Evangelia Karnava of Ikaria, 99: “I don't need help yet. I wash my floor, my dishes.” Doing your own chores isn't a burden. It's daily strength training with a purpose.

Why it matters: Researchers call these “instrumental activities of daily living.” They are the standard measure of whether an older adult can keep living independently (Lawton and Brody, 1969).

My points for check 11: _____ out of 2

12 The Reason Test

Finish this sentence out loud: “I'm staying strong so that I can _____.”

- ☐ **0** I honestly can't answer that.
- ☐ **1** Something vague — “be around,” “enjoy retirement.”
- ☐ **2** Something specific, with a face or a date attached.

★ **I met them in person** Four of the five Costa Rican centenarians I interviewed told me God gave them their long life. My grandmother reads 150 prayers before sunrise. The reason is different for everyone. Having one is not.

Why it matters: In a study of nearly 7,000 adults over 50, a stronger sense of purpose in life was associated with a lower risk of death over the following years (Alimujiang and colleagues, *JAMA Network Open*, 2019).

My points for check 12: _____ out of 2

Add it up

Area	Checks	My points
STRONG — your body	1 + 2 + 3 + 4	_____ / 8
SHARP — your mind	5 + 6 + 7 + 8	_____ / 8
INDEPENDENT — your life	9 + 10 + 11 + 12	_____ / 8
TOTAL	All 12 checks	_____ / 24

My lowest area is:

☐ **STRONG** ☐ **SHARP** ☐ **INDEPENDENT**

This is your first 30-day project — whatever your total says. Tied? Pick the one you've been avoiding.

What your total says

21–24

Ahead of Aging

Rare, and worth protecting. Don't chase perfect. Take your lowest area from good to excellent — and keep an eye on Sharp and Independent. That's where strong people quietly slip while their bodies still look fine.

15–20

Holding Strong

The most common result, and the most fixable. One area is quietly dragging the others down. That area is your next 30 days. Not a life overhaul. One area.

8–14

Warning Lights On

Some part of you already knew — that's why you printed this. Don't try to fix everything at once; that's how people quit by week three. Pick your lowest area, run its 30-day experiment on page 11, and re-score.

0–7

Start With One Step

Two things, in order. First, if any physical check felt unsafe or scored 0, bring page 14 to your doctor or physical therapist — that's the right next move. Second, you don't need a transformation. You need one habit. A 10-minute walk after dinner counts.

One experiment. 30 days. Then re-score.

Each of these is deliberately small and deliberately boring. Boring is the point. Boring is what survives a real week with real grandchildren, real appointments, and real weather.

If your lowest area is **STRONG**

The Chair Habit

Before every meal, stand up and sit down 5 times from your chair — arms crossed if you can. That's 15 a day. No equipment. About 2 minutes.

Optional add-on: Add a 10-minute walk after your biggest meal.

How you measure it:
Days done out of 30.

If your lowest area is **SHARP**

One Walk, One Voice

Every day, take a 10-minute walk while talking with someone — a neighbor beside you, or a friend on the phone. Movement, conversation, and walk-and-talk practice in one habit.

Optional add-on: Pick one beginner skill and give it 10 minutes, 3 times a week.

How you measure it:
Days done out of 30.

If your lowest area is **INDEPENDENT**

Brush on One Leg

Every time you brush your teeth, stand on one leg with a hand near the sink. Switch legs halfway. Twice a day, 30 days. Wobbling is the exercise.

Optional add-on: Write your Reason sentence on a card. Put it on the fridge.

How you measure it:
Days done out of 30.

Why 30 days — and not 90, or “forever”?

Because “forever” is how habits die. Thirty days is long enough to feel a real change and short enough that your brain doesn't revolt. On day 30, re-run the 12 checks and decide with evidence whether the habit earned a permanent place. Then move to your next-lowest area. One at a time. That's how every centenarian I've met built a life — one ordinary habit, kept.

Cross off a box every day you do it

My experiment:

Start date:

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30

Day 30 — re-score the 12 checks

STRONG ____/8 **SHARP** ____/8 **INDEPENDENT** ____/8 **TOTAL** ____/24

What changed in 30 days (in your own words):

My next-lowest area is: _____ so my next 30 days start on:

Six rules they live by

I've sat with centenarians on three continents. I've also learned from dozens more through documentaries and books. I keep the two clearly separated —  means I met them;  means I learned from a recording. Nothing here is a scientific proof. It's what I saw and heard.

"Always keep going."

Vasiliy Sivolapov, 100, Russia

 documentary

Walked about two miles a day, including through winter snow.

"When I'm lying down, I become sick. You should move."

Joanna Proyu, Ikaria, Greece

 documentary

Said to the nurse who kept telling her to rest. She lived to 112.

"Even when it rains, I go out for a walk."

Yohena Shige, 100, Okinawa, Japan

 documentary

Weather is not a reason. It's an excuse.

"Carry your own basket."

Popi, 85, Ikaria, Greece 

I lived with her for 5 months. She out-lifted a man half her age because her daily life demanded it.

"Don't let anyone retire you."

Pachito, 105, Costa Rica 

Still riding his horse the year before I met him. Nobody told him to stop, so he didn't.

"Even if your house catches fire, do not worry. There are worse things."

Grandfather of Kostas Spanos, 101, Ikaria

 documentary

Passed down for three generations. Most of what we worry about never happens.

The pattern underneath all six

Not one of them "exercised." Their lives demanded movement, and they refused to let anyone take that demand away — not a nurse, not a well-meaning son, not the rain. The scorecard you just filled in measures exactly that: how much of your life still demands something of you.

For your doctor or physical therapist

The physical checks that scored 0, or felt unsafe, were:

Three questions I want to ask:

1. Is it safe for me to practice this at home? What should I avoid?
2. Would a physical therapist or a balance class help me with this?
3. Do any of my medications affect my balance, strength, or energy?

Clinicians are the right people for screenings, medications, and anything that worries you. My job is different: I translate what the research and the centenarians say into habits you can actually keep. Use this scorecard to have a *better* conversation with your healthcare team — never instead of one.

What happens next

1. **Tell me your two numbers.** Reply to the email that brought you this with your total and your lowest area. I read every reply, and the patterns decide what I research next.
2. **Run one 30-day experiment.** Page 11. One area. Then re-score on page 12.
3. **Watch for the next video.** I'll send you the deeper dive on your lowest area — the evidence, its honest limits, and the exact routine, the way I'd explain it to a friend over tea.

healthydecades.com

youtube.com/@KentDang-Longevity

The honest fine print

This is a habit and ability inventory, not a diagnosis, a prognosis, or a prediction. The research behind each check is mostly about *association*: these habits and abilities are linked with healthier aging in large studies. “Associated with” is not “guarantees.” A perfect 24 doesn't make you invincible, and a 4 doesn't doom you. Scores measure things you can influence — that's their only job. If you're managing a condition, taking medication, or worried about any answer you gave, bring it to a professional. I sell no supplements, no protocols, no miracle anything.



Kent Dang

Former desk-bound data professional turned longevity field researcher. 9+ interviews with people over 100 · 5 months living with a strong 85-year-old in Ikaria, Greece · 3 months of field research in Costa Rica · wrote a book about what I found. Original experience, transparent sources, visible corrections. — **Now fix one area.**