



LIFE

June 2020

Making Your Home a Longevity Sanctuary

By Dr. Erica Miller

Regardless of your age or how much time you spend in your home, creating the right environment that supports and energizes you is part of living long and well.

Pay attention to how your home provides you with the comfort and peace you seek to minimize the barrage of stressors that occur in daily life. Make it a place where it improves your quality of life every day.

While there's no perfect formula for achieving this, here are 10 ideas to get you started:



1. Choose your place of residence carefully to minimize the need to relocate. Moving — whether it's just a few miles away or to another continent — is a stressful event to be reckoned with, even when the outcome of the move is otherwise positive.

2. Seek to live close to family. Many young people dream of getting out on their own. For them, that means moving as far from their childhood homes as possible.

While the impulse is understandable, especially for a short period of time, research suggests that, when the time comes to get serious about the future, it's a good idea to settle relatively close to home.

3. Reclaim the original purpose for your kitchen and dining room. Too often, people put their kitchen and dining rooms to the wrong use.

They become display centers for beloved place settings and centerpieces that are never intended for actual mealtime use. Or, worse, they become cluttered with papers and other miscellaneous items.

Instead of balancing plates on our laps, eating at the kitchen counter, or taking our meals on-the-go in our vehicles, make the space for mealtime activity mindful.

- 4. Cut down on the distractions.** Enter most homes, and you will notice they are constantly noisy due to the TVs, smartphones, and other media devices.

The “always on” culture is simply unhealthy, and the “chronologically gifted” honor the sacredness of the here and now by making a concerted effort to quiet their homes.

They set reasonable time limits on their consumption of media, and they turn off their devices or put them away while engaged in other activities.

- 5. Add some greenery.** People who live in environments full of plants and flowers enjoy a higher perceived quality of life and exhibit a more positive outlook than those who don't.

There's just something about the greenery and vibrant colors of plant life that stimulate a part of the brain that wants to live and to live well.

- 6. Create a space for entertaining others and use it.** No matter how large or small your home is, make sure there is an area where guests feel welcome and can make themselves comfortable.

We're social animals. By thoughtfully creating a space for entertaining guests, you may discover a new desire to invite company over more often.

- 7. Reclaim the original purpose for the bedroom.** There are only two activities that are supposed to take place in the bedroom, and both are great for longevity.

Watching TV isn't one of them. Neither is catching up on Facebook posts or working out in your home gym.

So it's time to banish everything from the bedroom that could distract you from enjoying sex and getting a truly restful sleep.

- 8. Declutter your space.** Disorganized, cluttered spaces tend to cause stress. Such environments overload your senses, confuse your focus, and impair your creativity.

Parting with objects accumulated over time often lightens the pain centers in the brain.

- 9. Make your priorities known.** When someone first walks into your home, is what's most important to you immediately apparent to them?

If not, then chances are it's not apparent to you, either. Subtly, this could be obstructing rather than reinforcing your life goals.

- 10. Create a meditation space.** Does your home have a special area dedicated purely to your personal serenity? That is, do you have a place where you can go to escape all distractions, focus deeply on your inner self, and reconnect with your higher power?

The chronologically gifted do. It's their favorite place because it's where they consistently retreat from the world and feel at peace.

Create the Environment You Want

Remember your home is 100% yours. Whether large or small, create it for whatever activity or inactivity that helps you feel united with the cosmos. This is where you will sense your smallness in the universe as well as your importance as a human being.

This feeling of connection with something larger than yourself is an engine for longevity.

About Erica Miller

*Dr. Erica Miller holds her Ph.D. in clinical psychology and has written extensively on topics of positive psychology, longevity, overcoming challenges, and living life to its fullest. Her most recent book, *Chronologically Gifted: Aging with Gusto*, made her an international bestselling author. For more information, please visit www.drericamiller.com.*

