Epigenetics Self Help Book Full Of Empty Promises

By Julianna LeMieux — March 16, 2017

Undoubtedly, you have heard dozens of pieces of advice, telling you how to lead a healthier and potentially longer life. You know you have - even if you don't follow them: exercise and sleep more, eat less, but add in more fiber and vegetables, etc. The list goes on and on.

And, perhaps like most things, those same messages have grown tiresome over the years. Because people like Sara Gottfried keep taking the old standards, repackaging and reselling them (in hardcover.) She re-gifts them, so to speak.

And, that would be fine if it were not based on a premise that does not exist - that we know how to turn our genes off or on (or 'reset' them, as she says) through our activities. But, who cares if the scientific community is lagging behind her advice when there are books to sell?

In her article in the Daily Mail [1], Gottfried seeks to tell us how we can tweak our genes to have longer, healthier lives. In fact, she claims that to counter all of the bad news that comes along with the aging process, "the good news is middle age offers you a profound opportunity to reprogramme your genes and your body." She goes on to state that "even if you have fewer of the good genes and more of the bad genes (as I do), you can still lose weight, improve your skin and change how your DNA controls your body and mind (as I have done)."

The problem is that no one can do this, whether you read her book or not. And, there is no way for her to verify that she has done that, either. The other problem is that her advice is the same old advice, just wrapped up in a new book. Does any of this sound novel...?

- Keep a food journal to avoid overeating
- Try not to snack and stick to three meals a day
- Exercise and eat a high fiber, low carbohydrate diet
• Get eight hours of sleep a night

Wow - revolutionary stuff. On top of writing books, Dr. Gottfried has her own website that, (surprise!) sells her line of shakes, bars, supplements, etc. None of which are necessary, of course, to follow the same nutritional advice that we have known for years.

The last pieces of her advice boil down to drinking red wine and going to the spa to 'reset' your DNA. Well, I feel great after I do both of those things, but, not because I have altered my gene expression. It's because I have a nice buzz and just spent time in a sauna.

Look - there may be a lot of things that change when that fortieth birthday rolls around and brings with it a mid-life crisis. And, her advice to sleep more and eat more fiber is not bad. But, it's also not new, and there is simply no scientific evidence that supports the idea that her suggested activities change DNA.

Lastly, she advises that you try to 'think yourself young.' Which, although not very useful, will at least not cost you the $15.00 that you could waste by buying her book.