

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Op-Ed | The Circle of Life

Opinion / **Published On May 13, 2019 11:58 AM /**

Staff **May 13, 2019**



An African American senior couple hiking through the woods. They are wearing pants and plaid shirts, carrying walking sticks and backpacks. The focus is on the woman who is walking a few paces behind the man.

Early in the morning at Magen's Bay one can witness noticeable groups of seniors exercising, which is awesome. There is another group that swims at Brewer's Bay from what I heard, at about 5 o'clock am daily, commendable. These activities serve two major purposes: promotion of health and human interaction. Two of which are essential in the literal survival of people.

According to the National Institute on Aging, there are four types physical activities that are essential for the aging individuals; they are, endurance, strength, balance and range of motion/flexibility. Each activity promotes good health in the individual and assures a much longer life of independence, which many elderly people fiercely defends.

Lastly, human interaction. This writer is sorry to report that a phone call to “granny on Mother’s Day is not enough, a card to grand-dad on Father’s Day is not enough. People sacrificed much for you to be where you are today and even if they didn’t give you a dime, they gave you life. The following excerpt is taken from an AARP article and it really touched my heart and I am confident if it will resonate with the readers. “Loneliness is harmful to your health. If you feel lonely -- whether you live alone or with someone, have lots of friends or none -- you are more likely to get dementia or depression. Seniors who report feeling left out and isolated have more trouble with everyday tasks like bathing and climbing stairs. They also die earlier than less-lonely folks do. Researchers found that lonely people have higher levels of stress hormones that cause inflammation, or swelling, linked to arthritis and diabetes. Another study found more antibodies to certain herpes viruses in lonely people, a sign of stress in their immune system”.

In essence, commit to being involved in your aging parents and family members life. Build a regular schedule of contact so that your time with them can be preplanned with vital activities such as doctor appointments as well as relaxing activities movies, church, family visits and visit any of our beautiful beaches through out the Virgin Islands.

Submitted last week by Clarence Payne, a St. Thomas resident.