



Cameron, Preach!

Hollywood's leading ladies are D-O-N-E talking about the challenges of "getting older"—and none more so than Cameron Diaz. Her latest project, *The Longevity Book*, dives deep into the aging process and how women can (and should) totally own it. Pay attention, people—she's talking truths here first.

By Hannah Morrill

On the surface,

Daichan, a Japanese restaurant in Studio City, is nothing special. Wedged inside a squat strip mall, between an Armenian deli and a nail salon (think cheap acrylics, not fancy gel manis), it's the kind of place you'd breeze right by—unless, like Cameron Diaz, you knew it served some of the best damn udon in Los Angeles. It's where she's requested we meet, and as I wait for her to arrive (the L.A. traffic is no lie, friends), it hits me that the venue is quite fitting.

No fuss, no frills, 110 percent realness—that's Cameron's MO these days. As a working actress, the 43-year-old realizes that, yes, appearances matter. At the same time, she'll tell you point-blank that what's on the outside only carries you so far. "The most important things in my life are my relationships and my well-being—where I'm going as a human being in my development mentally, emotionally, and physically," she says. "Everybody talks about aging, but I was like, 'Where does it actually start in our bodies?'"

The question brought out cool-girl Cameron's inner nerd. Curious about the biology of aging, she did what any modern sleuth would do

and got to googling. While some of us would quickly lose focus and fall down the Internet wormhole of funny animal videos, Cameron voraciously read up on geroscience (the study of aging and its related diseases) and soon called Sandra Bark, her coauthor from 2013's *New York Times* best-selling *The Body Book*, to convince her to collaborate on a new science-driven project, *The Longevity Book* (out this month).

"Getting to know yourself on the smallest cellular level is so empowering," says Cameron. "I want women to understand their own journey and be prepared for it." Which is to say that, at its core, this is very much a practical book. This is not a book about which

foreskin stem cell treatment you should apply to soften your crow's-feet. Cameron isn't about reversing time.

Want proof? Take a good long stare at the close-up on the *Longevity* cover (page 54), which shows her face with just a touch of powder, a swipe of lip gloss, and gorgeously crinkled laugh lines in full color. Peel that cover back and you'll see submissions from real women, whose photos Cameron crowdsourced on social media. "The skin is important—it's the largest organ your body has. But the superficial—the wrinkles, the outer—is what people get caught up in," she says, pointing out that the external signs of age we see are a direct result of all our internal cells getting older. "That's why the book talks about the bones, the muscles, the heart, the brain."

Whoa—sh-t just got real, and we've barely cracked open our menus. Cam has some thoughts on that too. "So they

have this nabeyaki udon, which is basically a big bowl of noodles with chicken and vegetables and egg, and it's hot and delicious and it's my favorite," she enthuses. "Oh! You know what's really good with the nabeyaki? Beer. The Japanese don't drink it super cold, so I pour it over ice. Do you want to split one?" Well, that's a no-brainer. We will share a Sapporo.

Once the waitress scurries away with our order, Cameron continues, waxing poetic about the researchers she and Sandra met with at the National Institutes of Health during the writing process. "They invited us into their labs and took the time to really explain the science," she says. What struck her most was that every doctor, no matter his or her discipline, cited the same things when asked what people can do to live longer, healthier lives: physical fitness, sleep, stress release, strong relationships, and proper nutrition.



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BACK TO BASICS

Cameron's beauty philosophy is all about fundamentals.

- 1. Seriously, guys, stay out of the sun.**
"I'm done with beaches," she says. She keeps to the shade as much as possible and religiously slathers on Neutrogena SPF 45 to protect against collagen-obliterating UV rays.
- 2. Clock those Zs.** While researching her book, Cameron found that not getting enough rest can exacerbate skin probs, especially eczema and rosacea. She has trained herself to get seven to eight hours nightly by adhering to good sleep hygiene (eating lightly and early, keeping electronics out of her room).
- 3. Meditate to manage stress.** The actress points out that stress can accelerate graying because the hormones released can damage the melanin that gives your hair its color. Transcendental meditation ("easiest thing I've ever learned," she swears) helps her keep her cool.

DECADES, BY DIAZ

Her crucial advice for life's major stages

20s

"Bone mass is really important in your twenties—after that, we don't build much bone anymore. So your twenties are your best chance to build bone through nutrition, physical activity, and strength training."

30s

"After 35, most women's eggs start to dwindle. There's no way of knowing until you test yourself. That might be something you want to do in your early thirties if your fertility is important to you."

40s

"Make connections, make friends, join communities, and really honor yourself. You're getting ready to make that transition to menopause, so pay attention to where you're at emotionally, physically, and mentally. The women who stress have it longer and harder, but the ones who accept it have it shorter and less severe."

CAM'S MINDSET SHIFT The star (and sage) reflects on her transition from clueless up-and-comer to wellness warrior.



◆ 1994

"This was promoting my first film, *The Mask*. I was 21 years old, eating fast food every single day and smoking like a chimney. And I didn't work out at all."



◆ 2000

"On *Charlie's Angels*, I was pushing myself so hard. I felt newly in my body. My muscles are more defined."



◆ 2002

"Here I'm getting more athletic. I remember thinking, *I'll never not be strong again. I'll never not take care of my body.*"



◆ 2007

"I was just training consistently, and my nutrition was better. I had dyed my hair brown for *Being John Malkovich* and loved it, so I went back."



◆ 2010

"Here I'm almost 38 and couldn't wait to turn 40. Once I was 39, I started saying I was 40. [I realized] it's not a given."



◆ 2015

"I was a late bloomer in marriage. My husband [Benji Madden] and I love to do as much as we can together, but we're individuals and we have our own lives."

RED CARPET LOOKS FROM LEFT: RON GALELLA/LTD.; S. GRANITZ/GETTY IMAGES; S. GRANITZ/GETTY IMAGES; JEFFREY MAYER/GETTY IMAGES; STEVE GRANITZ/GETTY IMAGES; N. LOUBOUTIN SANDALS; MICHELLE B. CUFFE, BORGIONI CUFFE



That last one reinforced her own intuition about health. Cameron admits she “had the instincts” for eating right but often relied on fast food when she first started working on film sets. “I was pushing my body so hard, but I wasn’t eating for it,” she says, recalling how she’d crave nuts but fuel herself with pork buns from craft services because she never brought her own snacks. “Eventually I realized

I liked good food, and my trainer taught me to eat protein after my workouts.”

That doesn’t mean she never indulges. She cops to eating a cheeseburger at least once a month, and judging from the steaming bowls of broth noodles that arrive at our table, our girl ain’t afraid of a little gluten either. “I don’t beat myself up,” she says. “I’ve already had the conversation about this meal with myself.

I ate great this morning; I’m happy to have this meal. And tonight, when I’m making the choice for what I want for dinner, I know exactly where I’m at.” (Speaking of where we’re at, as Cameron talks, she notices me struggling to maneuver a tangle of udon into my mouth and—ever

the teacher—jumps in with tips: “Draw it over into this side bowl, then add a little broth-poo and eggy-poo.”)

Her whole POV when it comes to well-being centers on good habits and tuning in to what your mind and body need. The majority of the time she eats a clean diet, so if she deviates, she knows it won’t knock her system off-kilter. Clearly, she’s taken the research for her books to heart—or, perhaps more accurately, to gut. “I’m obsessed with the microbiome,” she enthuses. “I found out about it while we were writing the first book—all these little microbes secreting hormones that talk directly to our brain. That’s going to be the biggest thing in the future for medical research.” (Indeed, scientists can’t stop talking about how the gut affects every system in the body.)

There’s an extra spark in her crystal-blue eyes when she talks about this idea of connectivity, that no part of your body is separate from the others no matter how old you are. “It’s all one organism that depends on the health of everything working together,” she says. “If you consistently don’t give your body proper nutrition, if you consistently don’t move your body or get good rest or release stress, you’re damaging yourself.”

People who accept aging and understand it, she says, actually do it better. They live longer, they live healthier, they live stronger. “So do we keep punishing other women and ourselves for growing older, for doing something that’s perfectly natural? Or do we pat each other on the back

and say, ‘You’re doing amazing?’” We vote the latter. ■

◆ **Get it, girl!**

The Longevity Book, by Cameron Diaz and Sandra Bark (HarperCollins, \$28), is available April 5.

