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'In a few years, 80 will be the new 40'

Terry Grossman is one of the new-age gurus of longevity. He shot into fame after penning a book on how 'to live forever' with Ray Kurzweil, futurist and chief engineer at Google. They are confident that science is going to end death — people will live for centuries if not indefinitely, and that this is not some dream of the distant future but a certainty by the middle of this century. Grossman has been practising what he preaches at his clinic in Denver, US, and claims he feels youthful at 68. He was full of zing talking to Subodh Varma

Why do you say that we have reached a point after which lives will be longer and healthier?

In the year 1900, life expectancy was 47 years. By 2000, it had jumped to 72 years. In 2015, in some places like Japan, people's average life is 82 years. On an average four-five months are being added to life every year. Very soon, one year will be added for every year that passes. We are poised at a point when life expectancy will grow exponentially. Aubrey de Gray, the Cambridge biomedical and aging scientist, calls it the "longevity escape velocity" when life will be extended by periods larger than the time passed. This has happened because medical science is increasingly merging with information technology, which grows exponentially. By focusing new medical research on stopping the aging process, human life will be extended to centuries — and this will happen within decades.

But do we want to live for, say, 200 years in an old, diseased condition? That's not desirable!

The concept of 'old age' keeps changing. A few decades back, 65-70 years was thought of as 'old'. Now it is considered 'young old' as compared to 85 years, which is 'old old'.

What is going to happen in the coming years is that youthful life will be extended. Eighty years will become the new 40. 'Old' people will have such healthy bodies that they will be able to go surfing or mountain climbing or do other activities associated with youth. I believe that in the next 10-12 years these dramatic changes will become more visible. **So, what do you prescribe for extending a healthy life?**

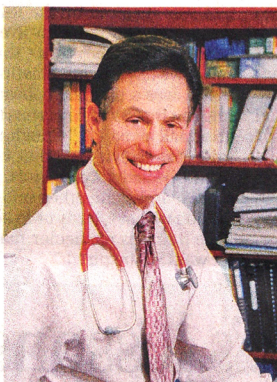
In my book **TRANSCEND — Nine Steps To Living Forever**, written with Ray Kurzweil in 2009, we describe the whole system. TRANSCEND stands for: Talk with your doctor; Relaxation, Assessment, Nutrition, Supplements, Calorie reduction, Exercise, New Technologies, Detoxification. The book explains how people can take full advantage of the available information to help eliminate their chances of disease and to drastically slow down the aging process. Note that when I say "Talk with your doctor", I mean consult an anti-aging special-

ist. That's because most doctors are trained to detect and treat diseases, not prevent them. Also, while doing an "assessment" by getting various tests like cholesterol or liver function done, I don't go by just 'good'. I want to see best or optimal numbers. New research is constantly coming out and technologies are constantly improving. These changes also need to be taken on board.

Do you keep updating the programme as new research comes in?

Yes, here are some examples. I now recommend interval training rather than continuous training. Instead of, say, jogging at a constant pace for five minutes, it has been found that a minute of slow jogging

followed by a minute of fast and so on gives better results. Various testing parameters also change as new research results come in. New drug properties are found. I have myself started taking metformin, which is a well-known antidiabetic drug. But I am taking it because it has an effect on a master enzyme called AMKP which, in turn, helps reduce calories and lessen the risk of cancer. Stem-cell therapy, which was projected in the future in the book,



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is already being used at my clinic. We are also using nanotechnology-based products for better delivery of supplements. I am also using a cranial electro-stimulator which has the same effect as meditation — it calms and relaxes the brain.

All this sounds very expensive. Will people be able to afford it, especially in the Third World?

Everything is expensive when it is first introduced. An LCD TV or monitor was beyond reach earlier but now everybody has it. After a time lag, products become accessible. The same thing will happen with life extension technologies. Testing prices will come down, devices will become cheap. Already, I can download apps on my smartphone that can test blood sugar, hypertension or even take an ultrasound. Self-monitoring will become the norm. Meanwhile some other new expensive product will enter the market, but over time that too will get cheap. In the long run, the whole of humanity will benefit.