

Beyond Guilt, Beyond Hype

Hardly any other topic has such a contradictory focus as that of health. On the one hand, classic health promotion and disease prevention: terms that actually mean care, but in practice often come across as a moral index finger. Who doesn't know it, that quiet voice in your head: "I should do more sports." "I would have to drink less alcohol." "Why don't I finally do this or that?" Prevention thus suddenly becomes a duty to deliver, health a compulsory exercise, in which failure seems almost pre-programmed.

On the other hand, there is the longevity movement. A market that has literally exploded in recent years, with biomarkers, supplements, wearables and coaching programs that promise a long, vital life. Unlike classic prevention, longevity rarely comes with a guilty conscience, but with optimism, self-empowerment, sometimes also with a certain promise of status. Those who optimize themselves are part of it. The problem is that much of it is strongly consumption-driven, some is scientifically questionable, and the line between a legitimate interest in one's own health and expensive self-optimization is becoming increasingly blurred.

It gets interesting when you compare both movements. On closer inspection, health promotion, disease prevention and healthy longevity basically pursue the same goal: to live as well as possible for as long as possible, i.e. without disease / NCD. They differ above all in the tone with which they address us. One admonishes, the other beckons. Both can lose sight of something essential: that health is not a state that you achieve once and then possess, but a daily practice that cannot be shortened – neither by a guilty conscience nor by the next supplement.

Two movements, two completely different emotional worlds – guilt on the one hand, promise on the other. And yet, soberly considered, both are based on the same, surprisingly unspectacular cornerstones: little alcohol, no smoking, a balanced (Mediterranean) diet, sufficient sleep, ample social contacts and regular exercise. None of these six measures require a subscription, a wearable or a guilty conscience. They are old, unspectacular, and yet – or precisely because of this – they still seem the most reliable. Oral health, to which AVOLA has been committed since then, also fits seamlessly into this picture: If you brush your teeth and between your teeth properly and daily, do not smoke and eat a balanced diet, you are automatically doing something good for the rest of your body. One body, one health – on a small and large scale.

This is exactly where this issue of THE ESSENCE comes in. We do not want to moralize or market, but invite: to rediscover the always same, solid basis of health and longevity, beyond feelings of guilt and beyond the hype. Not as a duty, but as an invitation. Not as a consumer good, but as something that we can give ourselves – day after day, in small steps.

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