

Young at Heart

Secrets to a Long, Happy Life

By Glenn Plaskin



Spanish explorer Ponce de León spent 10 years searching for the mythical Fountain of Youth. The quest continues today as scientists doggedly seek the magic bullet that will extend life significantly beyond the American average of 76.9 years. Until they succeed, a healthful diet, exercise, stress reduction, regular checkups, a positive attitude, family support, and meaningful activities seem to be the best overall prescription for longevity.

FAMILY CIRCLE talked with three remarkable Americans, all of an age when many of their contemporaries are either ailing or retired. Renowned chef Julia Child, *60 Minutes* veteran Mike Wallace and *Titanic* actress Gloria Stuart are fully immersed in life, their energy and outlook proof positive that you don't have to be young to feel that way. What fountain are *they* drinking from? Here's what they told us.

Julia Child, master chef

"Watching me on TV, I think people thought, *If she can cook, I certainly can!*"

Age: 89

Born: August 15, 1912

Resides in: Santa Barbara, California

Bio: The author of 11 cookbooks—most recently, *Julia's Kitchen Wisdom* (Knopf)—and trailblazing TV chef, Julia has just made a life transition. She moved from her Cambridge, Massachusetts, house to a retirement community in California—where she has no intention of retiring.

Julia says: "For me, the real secret of staying healthy is life itself—being interested in the people and things around you. What gives me the most pleasure is my work, family and friends. I've been lucky to be in a profession where everyone I know loves what they're doing. Very stimulating. People often ask me, 'What has all the success meant to you?' And I say, 'As long as I can get clothes that fit (I'm 6' 2", the shortest one in my family) and shoes (I have big feet), I'm happy!"

"Living a long life has a lot to do with having the right grandparents. My grandfather was 93 when he died; my

Contributing editor Glenn Plaskin frequently reports on human interest and celebrity subjects.