



Heart & Art

Create Longer

Looking for ways to feel better and improve your health? Start by focusing on things that bring you happiness. According to medical professionals, feeling happy and having a purpose in life have been shown to reduce risk for heart disease. However, fleeting moments of happiness are not enough. Lowering your stress levels with a positive outlook and relaxation techniques over time could reduce your risk of heart problems.

Follow these three pathways to long-term happiness:

- **ENGAGING FULLY:** Pursue activities that you can totally immerse yourself in: art, gardening, walking, music, or singing.
- **FEELING GOOD:** Surround yourself with people and activities that bring you happiness and pleasure. Spend time with family or friends that bring you joy.
- **DOING GOOD:** Search for meaning outside of yourself. Participate in purposeful activities: volunteer, give back or teach.

The City That Built Me

Meet Dale, a lifelong artist and learner who continues to immerse himself in the world of art, embodies a heart-healthy approach to wellness. Still painting and drawing, Dale shares his skill with his community through generous donations of his time and talent.



“IF IT WAS ANY OTHER CITY, I’M NOT SURE IT WOULD’VE BEEN THE SAME.”

Few people love their hometown like Dale Perkins. The very first resident to move into The Trousdale, an Eskaton managed senior living community in Burlingame, California, Dale says he owes much of his extraordinary life to the city, including his evergreen art career. While most would argue his incredible work ethic and love of the craft are responsible for his success, he modestly insists it has a lot to do with luck and knowing the right people.

Born in Minnesota in June of 1929, just months before the start of the Great Depression, Dale remembers a childhood spent exploring the outdoors.

Finding he had cognitive differences that caused him to struggle with traditional subjects, Dale gravitated towards more creative interests like drawing and painting. “It just made me feel good. Not that what I was doing was any great masterpiece. But it was my outlet. Some

people sing, dance, write. We all have our own ways.”

With his father frequently looking for work, the only medium the family could afford was basic pen and ink and the smallest of watercolor sets. While some parents might have asked their child to help support the family’s income, Dale’s did the opposite, sending him to the California School of Fine Arts at 12 years old. By 13, he was being mentored by a nationally syndicated cartoonist. Dale says it was the love and support of his parents and others that allowed the budding artist to bloom. “The more help you have from anybody, your parents, your religion, or whoever gives you hope and promise and support—those were all big in my life—that’s all you need.”

“Doors will close, so open more. Find more. Create more. But keep pushing! If things look hopeless, and maybe they are, just keep going. Push, push, push!”

That support led to a college career he never anticipated, attending San Francisco State and then the Academy of Art University in San Francisco on a full scholarship. After graduation, Dale enlisted in the Army Reserves, hoping to join his countryman in Europe after World War II. Stationed at California’s Fort Ord instead, Dale served his nation the best way he knew how, creating artwork and recruitment materials for the Army’s Troop Information and Education service.

A bit of luck and a lot of perseverance eventually led Dale to the town he’d call home for over 50 years. Teaching in Oakland in 1960, overloaded and near burnout, he heard of a position teaching art to teachers in the Burlingame School District in California’s Bay

Area. “The nation, not just where I was, but everywhere, was just starved for the arts. Music, art, they just wanted more!” Though Dale has taught workshops and classes at some of the most prestigious schools in the nation over the course

of a five-decade career, he says working for the school district was especially meaningful and he attributes that to the city he loves. “It was Burlingame, really.”

It wasn’t just his teaching career that took off in Burlingame—Dale’s art has long been an integral part of the community, popping up all over the city in places like the Burlingame Chamber of Commerce, the Burlingame Public Library, and a variety of local businesses. The Trousdale itself displays two of Dale’s more iconic watercolors on the first floor of the building. Despite this, it seems almost impossible to convince Dale his talent is responsible for such success. “There were people in Burlingame that believed in me, supported me, a lot of people. That means a lot to



Dale Perkins, a resident at The Trousdale in Burlingame.

me.” Indeed, Dale talks about all of his achievements with this same humility and appreciation for those who believed in him. “All accomplishments were beyond dreams I never dared to dream,” he says.

Far from leaving his working days behind him, Dale is still painting and drawing at 90, with both private and corporate clients ordering prints on commission. Though working out of his apartment has its challenges, Dale says it was the beauty of The Trousdale that convinced him to leave his home and studio behind. “We looked around, every place. Six or seven of them. And what we liked about The Trousdale is we liked the light, and the color. I need light. I survive on it!”

More than an artist, Dale is a proud father and grandfather, with two of his grandchildren currently sitting at the top of the Filipino pop charts and boasting the title of “movie star.” The Perkins Twins have been touring the Philippines for the last few years, spreading their message of Christian

faith and values to schools across the country. Dale’s advice to other young people chasing their own dreams is honest and straight-forward.

The walls of Dale’s apartment present a glimpse into Dale’s life as an artist, from the series of delicate floral watercolors to the collection of bold pen-and-ink political cartoons. While the art is evidence of a life filled with talent and dedication to his craft, Dale seems most interested in what lies just beyond the walls of his apartment. Looking out the window of his living room, Dale points out different streets and buildings in Burlingame, talking about each one with deep love and respect. “For 50 years, I lived up the hill. My history is here. It’s a time capsule. And that’s what I’ve tried to do with my room. I tried to remember the things that I did because I’d forgotten them. And I look around the room now, and hey, I feel good about it. I don’t have to show them to anybody, it’s just for me.” He offers a warm smile that reflects his unmistakable enthusiasm for life. “This view is the history of my life. And I am so lucky.”



Dale celebrates more than 50 years with a career as an artist.

Balanced

How Sedentary is Your Lifestyle?

Cultivate resilience through movement

Inactivity not only increases risk of falling, but may impact our health as much as smoking, leading to increased risk of chronic health problems such as heart disease. You do not need have to exercise rigorously. Aim for 30 minutes of movement each day and gradually increase.

How active is your lifestyle, find out:

1.	Are you active for at least 30 minutes a day?	Yes (1 point)	No (0 points)
2.	Do you sit for eight hours or more per day?	Yes (0 points)	No (1 point)
3.	Are you on your feet standing for more than two hours per day?	Yes (1 point)	No (0 points)
4.	Do you have two or more hobbies that include physical activity (i.e. gardening, dance, yoga)?	Yes (1 point)	No (0 points)
5.	Are you recovering from an injury that prevents you from doing physical activity?	Yes (0 points)	No (1 point)
6.	Do you engage in 30 minutes of light physical activity in your daily routine?	Yes (1 point)	No (0 points)
7.	Do you watch TV sitting down for three or more hours per day?	Yes (0 points)	No (1 point)
8.	Do you have pets that you walk or play with daily?	Yes (1 point)	No (0 points)
9.	Do you incorporate stretches into your daily routine?	Yes (1 point)	No (0 points)

Add up your points

Your Score is

7 to 9 Points - Very active

You have a very active lifestyle and are incorporating movement daily. Keep up what you are doing.

4 to 6 Points - Active

You have an active lifestyle. Consider adding one or two more physical activities into your routine.

1 to 3 Points - Moderate

You are moderately active. Consider adding some additional physical activities into your lifestyle.

0 Points - Not active

Your lifestyle is predominately sedentary. Consider gradually adding simple movements into your lifestyle to reduce the risk of falling and improve well-being.

A Heart Healthy Diet

Ready to start your heart healthy diet? Once you know which foods to eat more of and which foods to limit, you will be on your way toward a heart healthy diet.

Opt for fresh, whole ingredients versus processed foods. Eat at regular intervals to keep your blood sugar levels even. Supply your body with the nutrients to help it thrive. These strategies will help you stay energetic, alert, and reduce your risk of heart disease.



Fruits and Vegetables

Vegetables and fruit are good sources of vitamins and minerals. They are low in calories and rich in dietary fiber. Like other plants and plant-based foods, fruits and vegetables may help prevent cardiovascular disease.



Whole Grains

Whole grains are good sources of fiber and other nutrients that play a role in regulating blood pressure and heart health. Increase the amount of whole grains in a heart-healthy diet by making simple substitutions for refined grain. Try: **Quinoa, Barley, Oatmeal (steel cut or regular)**



Plant-based Protein

Legumes and high protein vegetables are good sources of protein and contain less fat and no cholesterol. For example try: **Lentils, Chickpeas, Quinoa**



Reduce Sodium

Eating a lot of sodium can contribute to high blood pressure, a risk factor for heart disease. Reducing the amount of salt added to food at the table or while cooking is a good first step. Canned or processed foods, such as soups, baked goods and frozen dinners are loaded with salt.



ESKATON[®]

Transforming the Aging Experience

INDEPENDENT LIVING - ASSISTED LIVING - MEMORY CARE - SKILLED NURSING
THERAPY - HOME CARE

[ESKATON.ORG](https://www.eskaton.org)



Disclaimer: The information provided is for educational and informational purposes only. It is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical, financial, health, social or environmental advice.