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Dwelling on the past can make you sick

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People who look back at their past experiences full of regrets about missed opportunities or with bitterness about how they have been treated are more likely to fall ill and generally have a poorer quality of life, a new study has found.

According to the study, conducted by researchers from the University of Granada, those who look back in anger are also more sensitive to pain, it found.

It also suggested that focusing too

much on the future does not harm health but can stop people enjoying what they have.

The researchers also suggested that the happiest and healthiest people are those who manage to enjoy the here and now, while making time to learn from the past and plan for the future.

In the study, 50 men and women were asked about their feelings about the past and future, as well as their physical and mental health and quality of

The guestions included how often they think about things they should have done differently, whether they worry about not getting things done on time and whether they live life a day at a time.

An analysis of the answers revealed that those who dwelt on the bad things that had happened to them tended to be in worse health.

"According to what we have observed, the most influencing dimension is the perception of the past," the Daily Mail quoted Cristian Oyanadel, coauthor of the study as saying.

"We have observed that when people are negative about past events in their life, they also have a pessimist or fatalistic attitude towards current events.

"This generates greater problems in their relationships and these people present worse quality of life indicators," he said.

Explaining this, Oyanadel said that such people find it hard to make a physical effort in their day-to-day activities, are more limited physically at work, more sensitive to pain and more likely to become ill.

"Furthermore, they generally tend to be depressive and anxious," he said.

Looking to the future is not necessarily bad for our health, the experts added, but quality of life suffers because such people tend not to enjoy what they have.

"People who are more future-focused?" those who put their personal goals before everything ?" forget to live pleasant experiences and are not very connected to their positive past experiences.

"They are not physically or mentally unhealthy but have a lower quality of life than the well-balanced group," he said.



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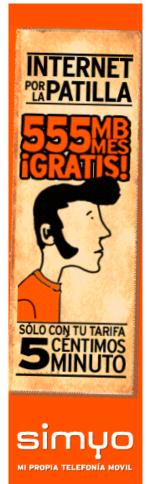
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sensible sorts who have a nostalgic view of the past and manage to learn from it, rather than let it drag them down. This means they plan for the future but do not neglect the present.

The study has been published in the journal Universitas Psychologica.



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