



**SPOTLIGHT on Dr. Walter Bortz**  
**by Marsha Robertson, San Francisco Village newsletter**

*“Exercise for a young person is an option. Exercise for an older person is imperative.”*

When Dr. Walter Bortz sets goals, he doesn't fool around. As an advisor to San Francisco Village and one of America's most distinguished scientific experts on aging and longevity, the 79-year-old Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine at Stanford's School of Medicine will run the Boston Marathon in April of 2010. It will be his 40<sup>th</sup> marathon in 40 years.

You read that right. Forty marathons. “I started running at age of 40 after my father died, a sort of ‘grief exercise’, said Dr. Bortz in a recent conversation,

His wife, Ruth Ann, will also run the race in Boston next year -- a day in the park for a woman who ran 100 miles in less than nine hours when she was 55 years old.

The author of numerous books including *Dare to be 100*, *We Live Too Short and Die Too Long*, *Living Longer for Dummies*, and *Diabetes Danger*, Dr. Bortz may sound like Superman to most of us -- but in fact he's only human. True, he has extraordinary energy and years of medical wisdom, but his books present very practical advice about the importance of lifelong learning and the importance of physical exercise on the way to robust aging.

There are 99 gems of wisdom in his book *Dare to be 100* and the overall prescription he recommends is an acronym that's easy to remember. “D is for diet, A is for attitude, R is for renewal (rest, recreation, retirement) and E is for exercise”. Although he proposes that D, R and E are the biological compass point, “the truth is that A – attitude is the most important.”

In *We Live Too Short and Die Too Long*, Dr. Bortz asks, “What is the Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) for exercise?” He clarifies the difference between recreation (golf) and cardiovascular conditioning (swimming, running, hiking, etc) Today, while recognizing that not everyone will train for a marathon, he recommends an exercise diet of 10,000 steps per day, five days per week.

One of his most potent suggestions is “Use it or lose it.” That applies to all our bodily functions – digestive, cardio-vascular, respiratory, sexual and mental. And when it comes to exercise, the inspirational Dr. Bortz has a favorite phrase, “It's never too late to start but it's always too early to stop.”

Please visit his website ([www.walterbortz.com](http://www.walterbortz.com)) and learn more about what you can do to redefine the road ahead!