



**George E. Vaillant, M.D.**  
Professor of Psychiatry  
Harvard Medical School

Professor George E. Vaillant, M.D. is a prominent psychoanalyst and a research psychiatrist. He is one of the pioneers in the study of adult development. Professor Vaillant is a professor at Harvard University and directed the Harvard Grant Study for thirty-five years.

A graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Medical School, Dr. Vaillant did his residency at the Massachusetts Mental Health Center and completed his psychoanalytic training at the Boston Psychoanalytic Institute. He has been a Fellow at the Center for the Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, and is a Fellow of the American College of Psychiatrists. He has been an invited speaker and consultant for seminars and workshops throughout the world. A major focus of his work in the past has been individual adult development; more recently he has been interested in positive emotions and their relationship to community development.

In 2007, he was awarded the American Psychiatric Association Distinguished Service Award. He is currently on the Steering Committee of Positive Psychology and serving on the editorial boards for the Asian Journal of Psychiatry and the World Psychiatric Journal. Professor Vaillant's published works include *Adaptation to Life*, 1977, *The Wisdom of The Ego*, 1993, *The Natural History of Alcoholism-Revisited*, 1995, *Aging Well*, 2002, *Spiritual Evolution*, 2008 and his latest book *The Triumphs of Experience* was published in 2012.

In the 2014 Edith Dominian Lecture Professor Vaillant will discuss his work as the Principal Investigator of the Harvard Grant Study. Begun in 1938, it charts the physical and emotional health of over 200 Harvard men for over 75 years. Professor Vaillant's book, *The Triumphs of Experience: Men of the Harvard Grant Study* looks at the findings of the study, highlighting the importance of longitudinal study to understanding adult development and the importance of relationships to health, resilience and successful aging.

In an interview for The Atlantic, Professor Vaillant stated, "The only thing that really matters in life are your relations to other people." The research study has shown that it was the capacity for intimate relationships that predicted flourishing in all aspects of the men's lives. At the heart of such emotional intelligence was the finding that, empathic involuntary coping mechanisms mattered even more than a warm childhood. Men with the most empathic coping mechanisms when young were three times as likely to have good marriages and rich social support at the end of life.