

“ Turning Possibilities into Realities ”

Building a Global Movement for Change [UNSG]: The Promise (part 68)



"Working Hard at Working Smart" (part LXXXVIII)

Unity of Purpose: Aging Gracefully: Honoring Our Elders



Courtesy of Seychelles Nation

I feel very lucky to have grown up having interaction with adults who were making change but who were far from perfect beings. That feeling of not being paralyzed by your incredible inadequacy as a human being, which I feel every day, is a part of the legacy that I've gotten from so many of the adult elders.

Marian Wright Edelman- An American Activist For The Rights Of Children.

The future we want: The Promise: The Force Beyond

What Most 60-Year-Olds Just Don't Get

Nancy Alcock Hood

Much advice has been given to 20- and 30-somethings, but at 87 years old I think it's the 60-and-over set who could use a few **life lessons**.

And here they are:

You're not as young as you look. You're as young as you feel.

I have known grumpy, stick-in-the-mud 30-year-olds, and I have known incredibly adventurous 90-somethings. It is your attitude and optimism that define your spirit. Look at life as a gift and focus on what advantages you have, not what you are lacking. Be optimistic!

'Staying connected' doesn't mean being glued to the TV or that Smartphone.

Spend one day a week without TV or email. Don't fill your retirement with screen time. Socialization is a big factor in keeping your mind engaged, and reducing the danger of cognitive decline. Make an effort to reach out and dine with neighbors or friends; create a book group or coffee klatch. You will reap mental and social benefits, and it is much less depressing than a steady diet of "if it bleeds, it leads" TV news. A positive approach works wonders.

It's never too late for love. Seriously.

I should know. I married the love of my life at age 82. And yes, it was my first marriage. I would have never imagined, as a scientist in Tasmania that I would meet a retired neurosurgeon from Pennsylvania. But we met at RiverWoods, the continuing care retirement community where we both live, as colleagues on the Resident Council, and friendship bloomed into life-changing love. It is never too late.

Change happens, so choose your change.

A few things are certain -- death, taxes and, I would add, change. No matter what, your life is going to change. I know we all want to control our lives, but

staying in the same house, shutting yourself off from company, and griping about the new neighbors with the loud kids, is not healthy. Go forward and embrace the change that you see in front of you -- **plan what you want your retirement to look like**. Travel, explore new interests, move to a retirement community sooner rather than too late, and make new friends. Look forward to your future. After all, some people don't have the future days and years that you have.

You may move slower, but that's a good thing.

Don't be fooled into thinking you can do what you once did. Everything's a little harder at this age, and takes longer. A harmless tumble at 30 can become a major injury risk after 60. If you're going to challenge your children or grandchildren at anything, stick to board games, cards, and trivia contests.

You can get back into shape no matter how old you are, if you do it right.

Sure, you're slower, but you can build stamina with a common sense approach to exercise. You'd be amazed at what your body can do. Remember, "slow and steady wins the race?" You're no longer the hare. You're the tortoise. Deal with it. A little routine activity, walking or other appropriate physical exercise, is good for the soul.

Look forward.

Memories are wonderful, but don't get stuck in reverse. Cherish the people and places you've known, but make new memories. Family relations will strengthen.

You can't take it with you.

Ditch the stuff that's tying you down -- donate it or dump it. De-clutter your home, your yard, your life. Part with unwanted 'stuff.' You'll feel liberated. Enjoy.

Mend fences now, before it's too late.

Got a feud going with a family member or a friend? Kiss and make up now, before one of you dies. Think I'm kidding? At your age, it's a real possibility, so take the first step, extend a hand, and apologize (even if it's not your fault).

Time is a friend, not a foe.

You've made it to 60, so appreciate the accomplishment and use all that experience and, yes, wisdom, to enjoy the next 10, 20, 30 years. Share what you know with others. Pass it forward.

As human beings we value the experience that comes with age. We are reminded over and over again with statements like 'older and wiser' and 'respect your elders,' promoting age as something to be cherished and respected.

Jenna Morasca

Thinking About It...

Thinking About... Honoring Our Elders

Ways to acknowledge and celebrate our elders all year long

1) Spending Quality Time – Whether you work in a long term care facility with older people or have older loved ones living with you or in their own homes, carve out some special time to be with them. Spending uninterrupted time devoted to that particular person acknowledges their significance in our lives. Quality time can involve joining him or her in something they enjoy doing like gardening, taking a walk, or playing a favorite game. If your loved one or residents in your facility enjoy children, be sure to include the kids.

Social interaction between seniors and children can provide health benefits to both of them. Sitting and talking with the person is another simple, yet fulfilling way to spend quality time. Be sure to listen actively while they are speaking, giving your full attention to their words and expressions. Our lives can be enriched by getting to know our elders better. We can reap mutual benefits by encouraging them to share their stories, experiences, and their most important life lessons learned over the years.

2) Showing Appreciation – There are numerous ways to show appreciation to our elders. Are you thankful for the many things they've taught you? Maybe you're grateful for how they encourage and inspire you, or how they make you laugh. Be sure to let them know through your words and deeds. **Gratitude** can be expressed with a simple thank you, a warm embrace, or a small gift. Don't forget to be specific about why you are showing your appreciation. You might want to share a specific memory of an event. Be prepared for a response from your recipient's perspective. Remember, *thank you's* can be contagious.

3) Supporting or Assisting with Special Requests – If you work in long term care, you're well aware of the different types of support or assistance an elderly person may require. However, an individual's need for assistance with activities of daily living does not preclude them from desiring other things in life. There may be unspoken wishes of things they'd like to do but do not have the means to do them on their own. Spending quality time with a senior may help you to identify some of those wishes. The best way to find out is to ask. The special request may require some improvisation (like a tropical vacation) or it may be as simple as making a phone call to a missed family member. Your assistance with the special request can support your loved one in having a more fulfilled life.

Here's to honoring our elders all year round! I hope you find this information helpful because I've really been ***Thinking About It***.

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The journey continues...