**Aging Gracefully**

**Moses was one hundred twenty years old when he died;**

**his sight was unimpaired and his vigor had not abated.**

***(Deuteronomy 34:7)***

**Dear Abby: “I am a 36-year-old college dropout whose lifelong ambition was to be a physician. I have a good job selling pharmaceutical supplies, but my heart is in medicine. I do volunteer work at the hospital, and people tell me I’d be a wonderful doctor. It will take me seven years to get my degree, go to medical school and do my internship. In seven years I will be 43 years old. What do you think?” -- Unfulfilled in Philly. Dear Unfulfilled: “And how old will you be in seven years if you don’t go to medical school.” *(Rocky Mountain News)***

**No matter how old some people get, they never seem to lose their attractiveness. They merely move it from their faces to their hearts. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**The awful thing about getting old is that you stay young inside. *(Jean Cocteau)*
When Charles Eliot, the former president of Harvard University, was 90 years old, he made his way down the road from his retirement cottage in Maine to the cottage of his neighbors, the Peabodys. Mrs. Peabody greeted him enthusiastically and ushered him into the living room. After some small talk, Eliot asked if he could hold Mrs. Peabody’s new baby. She was a bit surprised, but she lifted her infant son from his crib and tenderly placed him in the arms of the old man. Eliot cradled the baby in his arms for a few moments and then returned him to his mother. With a gesture of thanks he explained, “I have been looking at the end of life for so long that I wanted to look for a few moments at its beginning.” *(Bits & Pieces)***

**In aging, one becomes more foolish and more wise. *(Francois de La Rochefoucauld)***

**Aging is an extraordinary process whereby you become the person that you always should have been. *(David Bowie)***

**Who says you can’t look as young as you feel. *(Christie Brinkley)***

**A 90-year-old man was walking down the street when a friend noticed how happy he looked. “What happened to you?” the friend asked. “I just broke a mirror,” the nonagenarian quickly replied. “But that means seven years of bad luck,” the friend continued. “I know, I know!” came the joyful reply. “Isn’t it wonderful?” *(Herm Albright, in The Saturday Evening Post)***

**A new broom sweeps clean, but the old brush knows the corners. *(Irish proverb)***

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**You can’t help getting older, but you don’t have to get old. *(George Burns)***

**George Burns punctuates this story with a flick of his cigar. “A woman said to me, ‘Is it true that you still go out with young girls?’ I said yes, it’s true. She said, ‘Is it true that you still smoke 15 to 20 cigars a day?’ I said yes, it’s true. She said, ‘Is it true that you still take a few drinks every day?’ I said yes, it’s true. She said, ‘What does your doctor say?’ I said, ‘He’s dead.’”**

**By the time you’re 80 years old, you’ve learned everything. You only have to remember it. *(George Burns)*
\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*A carousel makes me feel four years old again, and I am convinced that the only way to be creative and constructive in our adult years -- especially the later ones -- is to get back in touch with the child we once were. It doesn’t have to be a carousel for everyone. It might be fishing or a picnic or a game of miniature golf or going to the circus or anything else that takes us back in time and grants us a special, child-like freedom in which we accept all our thoughts and memories, sad and happy -- and most of all, frees us from our grownup selves. *(Eda LeShan, in It’s Better to Be Over the Hill Than Under It)*
The social worker’s job was to interview new residents moving into the nursing home. When a particularly bright-eyed 86-year-old man sat down at her desk, she asked, “Did you have a happy childhood?” “So far so good,” he replied. *(Rocky Mountain News)***

**Cheeta, the clever chimp who starred with Johnny Weissmuller and Maureen O'Sullivan in a dozen Tarzan movies, has celebrated his 74th birthday. That puts him in the Guinness Book of World Records as the world’s oldest chimpanzee. Cheeta debuted in Tarzan and His Mate in 1934, he’s been retired since 1967, when he appeared alongside Rex Harrison in Doctor Doolittle. Now diabetic but still with all his teeth, Cheeta lives in Palm Springs, California, with other former showbiz simians; he spends his days painting and drinking the occasional Diet Coke. On his birthday, his caretakers gave him a sugar-free cake, and a delegation of film buffs presented him with the International Comedy Film Festival of Pensacola Prize -- his first award. *(The Week magazine, April 21, 2006)*
Good week for: the sedentary lifestyle, as marine biologist, dredging the seabed off the coast of Iceland, discovered a 405-year-old clam happily living in the muck. The veteran mollusk, which has been siphoning water since the time of Shakespeare, is the oldest living animal ever found. *(The Week magazine, November 9, 2007)***

**All your life you think 60 is ancient, and all of a sudden you find you're 60 and you don't really feel that different. I feel stronger and more engaged. This is the best time of my life. *(Glenn Close, Academy Award-winning actress, in Guideposts magazine)***

**Nola Ochs, a student at Fort Hays State University, took a break from her studies this week to celebrate her birthday. She turned 95. Ochs began attending the school in 1930, but set aside her studies for marriage and kids. She returned this year when she realized she was just 15 hours shy of earning her degree. If she gets if, she’ll go in the Guinness Book of World Records as the world’s oldest college graduate. But Ochs says she’s excited about graduating for another reason. She’ll get to walk into the graduation ceremony alongside classmate Alexandra Ochs, her granddaughter. *(The Week magazine, December 1, 2006)***

**With age, bad concrete gets weaker, good concrete stronger. *(L. M. Boyd)*
The district attorney was cross-examining a young woman in court. “What’s your age?” he asked her. She hesitated, stared at him, looked appealingly towards the bench, began to fidget and move uneasily in the chair. “Don’t hesitate, my dear girl,” the judge said gently. “Remember, the longer you hesitate, the older you are.” *(Irish Digest)***

**As we grow old, the beauty steals inward. *(Ralph Waldo Emerson)***

**Enjoy your age before it's past; don't try to be eighteen so fast. You're only fourteen once, my dears, but you'll be thirty-five for years. *(Elinor K. Rose, in Reader's Digest)*
Only from the entirely old can the entirely new be born. *(Bela Bartok, composer)***

**Feeling young gets to be such a habit that it’s hard to part with. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**Unity co-founder Charles Fillmore certainly knew how to lead a lively life. Even in his later years, he stayed active and taught Truth principles. When he was 93 years old, he wrote one of his most popular affirmations: “I fairly sizzle with zeal and enthusiasm and spring forth with a mighty faith to do the things that ought to be done by me.” *(Unity Daily Word, July 18, 2015)***

**As I was leaving church one Sunday, an elderly couple slowly moved down the narrow walk that led to the parking area. I tried to make my way around them, but they stopped to admire some flowers. When I tried to slip past, the woman bent over to smell a red rose, blocking my passage. Then the man smelled the rose. I waited patiently, along with others. As the man straightened up, he turned to me. “It took us almost a lifetime to learn to do that,” he said, and then moved on. *(John Matus, in Reader's Digest)***

**When asked if there is anything she isn’t enthusiastic about, Ruth answered decisively, “Yes, being on panels about aging.” *(Ruth Gordon, actress)***

**Age gracefully? I think not. Age ferociously instead. Seize everything valuable within reach. Extend. Question. Give. The face will follow. All the cosmetic surgeons in the world could never produce such a face*. (Roger Rosenblatt, in Modern Maturity)***

**My grandmother once told me that she wants to die young at a very old age. *(Nicole Ericson, in Let’s Live magazine)*
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“What are you so happy about?” a woman asked the 98-year-old man. “I broke the mirror,” he replied. “But that means seven years of bad luck.” “I know,” he said, beaming. “Isn’t it wonderful?” *(Bob Monkhouse, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Moira: “I haven’t seen you this happy in ages, Elly. You must be in love!” Elly: “When Michael handed me the baby, my heart just melted. There in my arms was this precious little girl. My son’s first child. If I had to find one word that would describe the way it feels to be a grandmother, I’d say it was. . .” Student: “Old?” *(Lynn Johnson, in For Better Or For Worse comic strip)
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**When grace is joined with wrinkles, it is adorable. There is an unspeakable dawn in happy old age. *(Victor Hugo)***

**On Thomas Jefferson’s appearance in old age: “His dress was simple. He wore what he liked best, sometimes blending fashions of different periods. He wore long waistcoats, when the mode was for short; white cambric stocks fastened behind with a buckle, when cravats were universal. He adapted the pantaloon very late in life, because he found it comfortable, and cut off his queue for the same reason. He did nothing to be in fashion, he considered such independence the privilege of his age.” *(Sarah N. Randolph, in The Domestic Life of Thomas Jefferson)***

**After overhearing a conversation while aboard a Chicago bus, Laura DaMata of the Windy City couldn’t resist sharing it. An elderly woman was seated next to a young woman, Laura explains, and the two chatted until the older woman reached her stop. Before getting off, she offered the young woman this advice: “Never sit around doing nothing or feeling sorry for yourself. Work! Work! Work! You’ll be healthier and happier and live a lot longer. I’m 83 and have a steady job that I like very much.” “Oh?” the younger woman replied. “What do you do?” “I take care of an old lady.” *(Reminisce Extra magazine)***

**Only one person in two billion will live to be 116 or older. *(Kids’Pages)***

**To those who ask how I can write so many things that sound as if I were as happy as a boy, please say that there is in the neighboring town a pear tree, planted by Governor Endicott 200 years ago, and it still bears fruit not to be distinguished from that of a young tree in flavor. I suppose the tree makes new wood every year, so that some parts of it are always young. Perhaps this is the way with some men when they grow old.  I hope it is so with me. *(Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)*
You know you’re approaching maturity: When you have left the remote in the fridge twice in one week. When someone asks your home page address and you can’t say it right without looking in your wallet. When the nicest thing you’ve heard all day was at the doctor’s office: “Why, yes, your deductible is met.” When you keep telling people that recycling in your day was biking back to the store to get what you were sent for in the first place. When your grandkids keep taking your arm at the stoplight. *(Ralph Shaffer, in The Saturday Evening Post)***

**Ours seems to be the only nation on earth that asks its teenagers what to do about world affairs and tells its golden-agers to go out and play. *(Julian Gerow)*
We had just moved to a lovely, quiet area, but my husband and I were a little concerned to discover that the neighbors all seemed to be elderly. We wondered how they would react to our baby and our large, boisterous sheepdog.  My fears were heightened one afternoon when I answered the doorbell to find a frail-looking woman leaning on her cane. Assuming she had come to complain about the infant’s crying, I began to stammer an apology. But she lifted one hand to halt my outburst and said, “I just wanted to know if your dog could come out and play.” *(Nancy Swerdlow, in Reader's Digest)***

**You know you are no longer a kid when: Driving a car doesn’t always sound like fun. You laugh at your parents’ jokes. You don’t buy a new sports car because of the insurance premiums. You actually buy scarves, gloves and sunscreen. You leave ballgames early to beat the crowd. You remember when “Saturday Night Live” was funny. The only thing in your cereal box is cereal. You look into the surveillance-camera monitor at a convenience store and wonder who the overweight guy with the bald spot is, then realize that it’s a shot of you from behind. *(Lyndell Leatherman, in Reader’s Digest)***

**One of my friends is in charge of the part-time help hired by an old-age home run by an order of nuns. She confided to the mother superior, a feisty little nun of 70, that she always felt uncomfortable giving the young girls the obligatory lecture about the need to be careful around certain of the older male patients. The mother superior volunteered to give it for her, and eventually reduced my friend's 30 minutes of embarrassed rambling to a one-liner which has now become famous around the place. "Girls," she announced, "just remember -- old ain't dead." *(Eugene M. Graczyk, in Reader's Digest)***

**I don't know what the big deal is about old age. Old people who shine from inside look 10 to 20 years younger. *(Dolly Parton, in Ladies' Home Journal)***

**Clarence Darrow, late in life, was persuaded to sit for his picture. When it was shown to him, he didn’t like it. Never one for pretense or sham in any form, he told the photographer, “I don’t want it. You have taken out all the lines in my face that it took me fifty years to place there!” *(Bits & Pieces)***

**Paul was in his mid-60s and had just retired. He was planning to landscape his yard and was trying to find some small shrubs or trees. Burleigh, a 90-year-old from across the street, offered Paul some white-ash saplings that were about two feet tall. Paul asked, "How long will it take 'em to be full grown?" "Oh, twenty years or so," replied Burleigh. "No good for me then," said Paul. "I won't be around that long." The 90-year-old shook his head and replied, "We'll miss ya!" *(Clydene Savage, in Reader's Digest)***

**Old age is like everything else. To make a success of it, you’ve got to start young. *(Theodore Roosevelt)***

**Several neighbors had gathered for dinner, and the conversation turned to pets. Our hostess commented that she had the dumbest dog ever. “Any dog that digs up the same rosebush 20 times has to be pretty dumb,” she said. Everyone seemed to agree, until the 75-year-old grandmother of the neighborhood remarked, “I’m not too surprised at the dog, but I am a little concerned about the person who planted the rosebush that many times.” *(Ruth Maddox, in Reader’s Digest)***

**It has been scientifically proven that there is nothing in the body that causes it to age. There are no time-released elements, or alarm clocks set to go off at specific times causing deterioration. The reason people age in appearance and attitude is because they believe they’re supposed to. They’ve programmed themselves subconsciously to look and act a certain way at respective points in their lives. They believe and accept age and therefore get old. (*Jean Walters)***

**Good week for: Seniors, with a new study of 702 people age 58 and older showing that some critical mental faculties become sharper with age. As people get older, the study concluded, their brains are better able “to attend to new information and to focus on what’s important.” *(The Week magazine, September 10 / September 17, 2021)*The elderly were once a rarity on the ski slopes, but so many senior citizens are now zooming down the mountains that top ski resorts are eliminating senior discounts because they are no longer needed as an incentive. *(The Wall Street Journal, as it appeared in The Week magazine, January 20, 2006)*
When tattoos first started appearing on every American between the ages of 15 and 29, you thought tattoos were vulgar. Then you began to think they were kind of cool. Now you’re thinking, “Am I too old to get one?” You’ve also started thinking the same thing about belly-button piercings. Which proves you’re not getting old, you’re already senile. *(Mary Schmich, Chicago Tribune columnist)***

**A number of years ago while I was working here at the Unity Chapel an inner voice came to me and said, “Sig, your tour of duty is over. You can enjoy the rest of your life.” I spoke that word that morning and somebody at the service said, “Does that mean that you’re going to leave the Chapel?” I said, “I don’t know. I think it’s much more important than whether or not I leave the Chapel. It is saying to enjoy life.” *(J. Sig Paulson, Unity minister)
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A man was celebrating his 100th birthday, and a local television reported visited the nursing home to interview him. “Are you able to get out and walk much?” the reporter asked. “Well, I certainly walk better today than I could a hundred years ago,” he answered with a grin. *(Edna McCann, in The Heritage Book)*
Edward Weston walked from New York to California, which is 3,895 miles, in 104 days because somebody said he couldn’t do it. Then, he turned around and walked back 3,600 miles in seventy-seven days. And he was more than seventy years old. *(Derric Johnson, in The Wonder of America, p. 137)***

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**I am not young enough to know everything. *(Oscar Wilde)***

**I don't believe in aging. I believe in forever altering one's aspect to the sun. *(Virginia Woolf)*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***