



Aging Proudly and Positively

Returning to space as an astronaut at age 77, Senator John Glenn gave new meaning to the phrase “act your age.” Though our physical capabilities obviously decline in our later years, most of us can enjoy long, active lives if we believe we can and if we make smart choices. Don’t let the advance of years be an excuse for setting unnecessary limits on yourself. Keep dreaming; live your life with gusto.

Old age brings difficulties. In the words of President Jimmy Carter, “It is a sign of maturity when we can accept honestly and courageously that frustrated dreams, illness, disability, and eventual death are all normal facets of a person’s existence—and that despite these, we can still continue to learn, grow, and adopt challenging goals.”

Many blessings also come with growing old, but in its fear of old age our culture fails to see them. We spend millions of dollars on creams, laser treatments and pills that disguise the physical changes of growing old.

We fail to appreciate the look of aging. Doesn’t white hair and weathered, wrinkled skin have a majesty of its own? Who says that old is not beautiful? We need to open our eyes and hearts and begin to view old age in a new way.

If you want to succeed, consult three old people. — A Chinese Proverb

How well we age is largely in our own hands. Our lifestyle choices—diet, exercise, meaningful activities, friendships—play a major role in successful aging. Our attitudes are also critical.



**INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF
◆ OLDER PERSONS ◆**

See the world with eyes of wonder and appreciation, and listen carefully to the whispers of your heart. Focus on your blessings and develop an eagle eye for goodness and beauty. Take time to smile and chuckle and play. Even during difficult times, look for the bright spots and scatter kindness and love wherever you go.

As we advance in age, our remaining years are fewer and therefore more precious. Each moment becomes a treasure, filled with opportunity.

Bring to mind an older person who inspires you and ask yourself, “What is it about him or her I admire the most?” Invite others you know to do the same thing, and then share your answers. What do wise elders, such as these people we have thought of, teach us about living proudly and positively?



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