

Volume 4, Issue 11

MOTIVATED

THE MAGAZINE THAT MOVES YOU!

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There's one thing that every person on earth has to do and can't get around—and that's growing older! Our birthdays are our yearly reminder of that. Some people welcome them, especially in their younger years, others, who are "getting up there," dread them, and then there are those who seem indifferent and say they don't care—but do they?

With my own birthday coming up (and no, I am not going to tell you how "young" I will be), I wondered, "Why is it that getting older can be such a big thing for most of us? Why can't we celebrate our birthdays with gusto and look forward with positivity to the next year of our lives even as we age?"

Of course, getting older can present challenges. Perhaps there are health issues, or we can't do as much or the same things as we did in our younger years—still there are also many things we can celebrate.

The articles in this issue of *Motivated* shed a wonderful, positive light on growing older. Whether you're turning 30, 40, 50, 80, or 90, I hope when you're done reading, you will feel rejuvenated and grateful for whatever age you're at or turning. In the words of George Burns, "You can't help getting older, but you don't have to get old."

And for those of you who are still young, I hope you will read this issue anyway and will come away from it with a new appreciation for loved ones and others around you who are growing older. After all, we will all, one day, be there too!

Christina Lane
For *Motivated*

Why You Aren't Dead Yet

By Michael Hyatt, adapted



Several weeks ago, I had lunch with a friend I hadn't seen in years. He had just turned eighty years old. His mind was as sharp as ever—witty, inquisitive, and focused. He was also a great listener. When he spoke, wisdom dripped from his lips like honey.

In a moment of genuine humility but uncertainty, he asked me, “Michael, do you think I have anything left to contribute? Are my best days over?” Tears welled up in his eyes.

I admit, his question caught me off-guard. I thought to myself, *Here I am with one of the wisest men I have ever met. He is a living treasure. I would pay for the privilege of sitting at his feet and listening to his stories, and he is asking me whether he has anything left to contribute?* I was flabbergasted.

I leaned in, grasped his hand with mine, and said, “Jimmy, listen to me carefully: your best days are ahead of you. I am not saying this just because I like you—and I do like you—but because it is the truth. I can prove it to you.”

I then began to make an argument that I first learned in *The Noticer* by Andy Andrews. In the book, Jones, the personification of wisdom, makes six points to Willow, a seventy-six year old woman, who had given up hope that she had anything left to contribute:

🎀 God has a purpose for every single person.

🎀 You won't die until that purpose is fulfilled.

🎀 If you are still alive, then you haven't completed what you were put on earth to do.

🎀 If you haven't completed what you were put on earth to do, then your very purpose hasn't been fulfilled.

🎀 If your purpose hasn't been fulfilled, then the most important part of your life is still ahead.

🎀 You have yet to make your most important contribution.

Jones goes on to say, “If the most important part of your life is ahead of you, then even during the worst times, one can be assured that there is more laughter ahead, more success to look forward to, more children to teach and help, more friends to touch and influence. There is proof of hope ... for more.”

My friend, Jimmy, sat back in his chair and was silent for a full minute. I could tell he was taking it all in. Finally, he said, “Then I better get busy. It sounds like I have a lot of work to do.”

You may be old. You may be sick. You may be divorced. Your kids may not be speaking to you. You may be out of work. You may be broke. You may be discouraged.

But you're not dead yet—and that's proof that you still have not completed what you were put on earth to do. 🎀



How I Made Peace with Turning 30

By Katie Galvin, adapted

When I was a little girl, 30 seemed too old and too far away to imagine. I always wanted to be an adult, but mostly so that I could wear makeup. Back then, I had no idea what being a grown up really meant, or what I'd be like by the time I actually reached my (gasp!) 30th birthday, or if the two were supposed to go together.

By the time my birthday came around that summer, I was anxious. For whatever reason, I had chosen to torture myself with everyone else's opinion on the subject (but my own), which left me feeling out of sorts and indifferent. I even began pointing out each and every insecurity I could find about myself in the days leading up to my birthday.

My amazing girlfriend (who is also six years my senior) sensed my impending doom. She reminded me that I'd been through a lot in my 20s and that I had so much more to look forward to in the coming decade.

She encouraged me to start focusing on the positives, like all of the new and exciting things I could do in the next ten years that I'd never gotten around to doing in my 20s, and to challenge myself to look forward to even more personal growth one day at a time.

Thanks to her sound and loving advice, I decided that the best plan was to

(a) accept turning 30 and (b) embrace it with a full and open heart!

Not only was I able to find a “happy place” despite all the emotions I'd been feeling, but I discovered that turning 30 wasn't such a bad gig after all. I spent my birthday hiking, taking a swim in the ocean, and enjoying a dinner with a few wonderful people who love me for who I am at every age.

Whether your big day is just around the corner or you've just joined the 30-something club, there are plenty of reasons to look forward to starting a new chapter and to saying goodbye to your 20s.

Ten things to think about when coming to terms with turning the big 3-0:

1. It's possible to look better than you did 10 years ago. Thanks to a love of carbonated drinks and a regular dinner of Mac 'n Cheese, I weighed 190 pounds for most of my 20s. As I approached 30, I knew it was time to get serious about making real changes for my health and well-being. By implementing a more healthful diet, regular exercise, and a little discipline, I've been able to drop the extra weight and feel comfortable in my own skin for the first time in my life.

2. Your weird quirks are the best parts about you. Those sweet dance moves, your hidden talent for origami, or in my case, that crooked front tooth, are all things that make us unique. Let 30 be the year you embrace the real YOU!

3. You know your worth and what you deserve. By 30, chances are someone's done you wrong and/or you've survived a broken heart, but they say that all growth comes from pain and, thanks to those experiences, you know what you want, you know what you need, and you're ready for what lies ahead.

4. You've learned how to forgive. Anger and resentment block the spirit of love and joy in our lives. If you haven't mastered the art of forgiveness yet, why not make this the year you learn to let go of the past? Learning how to forgive and respect others begins with learning how to forgive and respect yourself and now's as good a time as any to get started.

5. You get to change your mind. Whether it's your favorite band, a career path, or the people that surround you, it's always okay to change your mind. Self-discovery is all about exploring what works for you, so don't worry if you're a completely different person now than you were at 20.

6. Less friends doesn't mean less friendship. By the time I reached 30, I was ready to say goodbye to the drama and chaos of my 20s and start eliminating anyone or anything that brought negativity into my life. Today it's about quality, not quantity, and the friendships I've maintained have only gotten stronger over time and continue to provide me with a source of love and support.

7. Going on a spiritual retreat is an acceptable weekend activity. Self-care and meditation are two of the most important aspects of my life today, and I can't say that was true of my 20s. Getting away, getting silent, and getting centered are all ways to nurture your soul and are essential to finding balance in your daily life. Don't be afraid to take that time!

8. You try new things, you wild risk-taker you! Something about turning 30 left me feeling fearless and confident like never before. I'm about to complete my second half-marathon, I took my first trip to Europe, and submitted my first article to a magazine... I hardly recognize myself these days! Dare to step out of your comfort zone; it's where all the fun happens.

9. You know what it means to be grateful. Some people will never get to see 30. Looking back, you've probably experienced some tragedy, lost someone close to you or, in my case, hit rock bottom. It's taken a lot of love, support and help along the way for me to get to where I am today and I'm so grateful for all the challenges I faced along the way and the opportunities I've had to overcome them.

10. It's all about progress, not perfection. My 20s had plenty of bad habits, bad outfits, bad interviews, and bad ideas. These days, it pays to be responsible (literally) and being the best version of me means making healthy choices on a daily basis. But at the end of the day, all that matters is that I did my best.

We may not be where we thought we'd be at 30, but does it really matter? Let's stop comparing ourselves to others and start finding our own truth. Our future self will thank us! ❄️



5 Ways to Age Gracefully and Healthfully

Web Reprint, adapted

Most of us say we would like to age gracefully, but the concept seems pretty much out of our hands or in the hands of a plastic surgeon. We say we aren't going to take those drastic measures, but then many of us end up doing so. Why? Because we didn't just take the simple, natural measures we could have taken daily while we were still young.

Did you know that only ONE-THIRD of what controls how gracefully we will age is determined by genetics? It's shocking, I know. Maybe your dad's gray hairs that popped up at the age of 30 or your mom's arthritis doesn't have to be a major panic point for you after all. One-third is genetics. That means there is an entire two-thirds that are completely based on your own choices. Keep reading to find some of the healthiest ways to approach these choices and learn how to age gracefully.

The pursuit of happiness

It shouldn't end with career, marriage, and family. Keep active and involved. Happiness is easier to cultivate than you

think. Believe that life still has enjoyable experiences to offer you. Even if you just don't see how you can be happy as you age, force yourself to go to events, to gatherings, to dinner with friends. You'll usually be pleasantly surprised with what you find and positive attitude and optimism are linked to longevity. If you're not sure what makes you happy, learn. Take notes at times when you feel particularly uplifted, and those times when you feel anxiety-ridden. Where are you? Who are you with? What are you doing? Adjust your daily activities accordingly.

Don't run from novelty

The brain loves new experiences and sensations. Have you ever really regretted trying something new? So long as it didn't harm you, what you probably felt most of the time was a rush. It feels good to know you have the guts to put yourself in unfamiliar environments and try things you aren't necessarily skilled at. Sometimes you have to fumble in order to have a new, enjoyable experience. But what you remember

more than getting it wrong is how exciting it was to try something new.

Contrary to what many people believe, your brain has the ability to continue building neural connections throughout life. So don't be afraid of new phenomena that simply didn't exist when you were younger. Jump head first into social media classes, or try a new food trend everyone is raving about. Doing so will cultivate curiosity, creativity, and an open mind, additional traits linked to longevity.

Be your own cheerleader

We are always harder on ourselves than others. We'll spend hours cooking a healthy meal for a friend on the weekend; meanwhile we take ourselves through fast-food drive-thru's during the week. We tell our friends how gorgeous they are and make self-deprecating comments about ourselves.

It may be harder than ever to do so now that you're aging, but it's also more important than ever to love yourself. Tell yourself you are fabulous. Make yourself fabulous by dressing up, standing up straight, and quitting those self-deprecating thoughts and comments. Do the things that make you happy more often, and remind yourself it's because you deserve to. Why? Because your body becomes stressed when you have thoughts like, "I'm not good enough." And we already know stress is bad for body, mind, and soul.

Become a social butterfly

Research shows that those who are more socially connected—that doesn't just mean going to activities and events

but actually cultivating friendships from them—live longer. This is just another way to ward off depression.

As we age and can no longer do the things we used to do, we begin to feel "useless." But something you can always offer is a set of ears, some good advice, and if anything, the ability to make someone laugh. Think about how much the friends who do that for you mean to you. You mean just as much to them. You may not be a doctor, actor, or entrepreneur anymore, but through all of those years of work, you also became the unique, entertaining and wise individual you are. That is something you will always have to offer.

Exercise

I saved it until the last point to keep your attention. I know you've heard it before, but it can't hurt to hear it again. Exercising regularly makes you less likely to develop diabetes, heart disease, dementia, osteoarthritis, depression, and obesity. One study found that people who walk briskly for just 5 hours a week have a 76% higher chance of aging gracefully and healthfully, with less physical and mental impairment. Of course, if you are aging, you can't exactly run an hour a day or rock climb like you used to (if you used to at all). Look into low impact workouts like walking, resistance training, tai chi and yoga.

You can't control every biological process that goes on in your body as you age, but what you can always control is your outlook and the lifestyle choices you make. Turns out that's more than half the battle. About 66%, to be exact! ❧



Attitude Is Everything

The gracious and dignified Maurine Jones

By Cheri Musick, adapted

The 92-year-old, petite, well-poised and proud mother-in-law of my best friend, who is fully dressed each morning by eight o'clock, with her hair fashionably coifed and makeup perfectly applied, even though she is legally blind, moved to a nursing home today. Her husband of 70 years recently passed away, making the move necessary.

Maurine Jones is the most lovely, gracious, dignified woman that I have ever had the pleasure of meeting. While I have never aspired to attain her depth of wisdom, I do pray that I will learn from her vast experience.

After many hours of waiting patiently in the lobby of the nursing home, she smiled sweetly when told her room was ready. As she maneuvered her walker to the elevator, I provided a visual description of her tiny room, including the eyelet sheets that hung on her window.

"I love it," she stated with the enthusiasm of an eight-year-old having just been presented with a new puppy.

"Mrs. Jones, you haven't seen the

room ... just wait."

"That doesn't have anything to do with it," she replied. "Happiness is something you decide on ahead of time. Whether I like my room or not doesn't depend on how the furniture is arranged ... it's how I arrange my mind. I already decided to love it.

"It's a decision I make every morning when I wake up. I have a choice; I can spend the day in bed recounting the difficulty I have with the parts of my body that no longer work, or get out of bed and be thankful for the ones that do.

"Each day is a gift, and as long as my eyes open, I'll focus on the new day and all the happy memories I've stored away, just for this time in my life.

"Old age is like a bank account...you withdraw from what you've put in. So, my advice to you would be to deposit a lot of happiness in the bank account of memories."

The original story appeared in the Park Cities People, a weekly publication in Dallas, Texas. Maurine's time on earth has ended, her wisdom lives on. ❧❧

How to Stay Young

- ✓ Try everything twice. The epitaph on one woman's tombstone read, "Tried everything twice.—Loved it both times!"
- ✓ Keep only cheerful friends. The grouches pull you down.
- ✓ Keep learning. Learn new things. Never let the brain get idle.
- ✓ Enjoy the simple things.—A good meal, a sunset, a walk in the park.
- ✓ Laugh often, long, and loud. Laugh until you gasp for breath.
- ✓ Tears happen. Endure, grieve, and move on. LIVE while you are alive.
- ✓ Surround yourself with what you love. Whether it's family, pets, keepsakes, music, plants, or hobbies.
- ✓ Cherish your health. If it is good, preserve it. If it is unstable, improve it. If it is beyond what you can improve, get help.
- ✓ Don't take guilt trips. Take a trip anywhere else, but NOT to where the guilt is.
- ✓ Tell the people you love that you love them.—At every opportunity.
- ✓ Forgive now those who made you cry. You might not get a second chance. ❧

Letter from a Mother

Author Unknown, Translated from Spanish by Sergio Cadena

PARENTING
FROM THE HEART



My dear girl, the day you see I'm getting old, I ask you to please be patient, but most of all, try to understand what I'm going through. If when we talk, I repeat the same thing a thousand times, don't interrupt to say, "You said the same thing a minute ago." Just listen, please. Try to remember the times when you were little and I would read the same story night after night until you would fall asleep.

When I don't want to take a bath, don't be mad and don't embarrass me. Remember when I had to run after you, and trying to get you to take a shower when you were just a girl?

When you see how ignorant I am when it comes to new technology, give me the time to learn. Remember, honey, I patiently taught you how to do many things like eating appropriately, getting dressed, combing your hair, and dealing

with life's issues every day. The day you see me getting old, I ask you to please be patient, but most of all, try to understand what I'm going through.

If I occasionally lose track of what we're talking about, give me the time to remember, and if I can't, don't be impatient. Just know in your heart that the most important thing for me is to be with you.

And when my old, tired legs don't let me move as quickly as before, give me your hand the same way that I offered mine to you when you first walked.

When those days come, don't feel sad. Just be with me, and understand me while I get to the end of my life with love. I'll cherish and thank you for the gift of time and joy we shared.

With a big smile and the huge love I've always had for you, I just want to say, I love you, my darling daughter. ❧

Cranky Old Man

When an old man died in the geriatric ward of a nursing home in an Australian country town, it was believed that he had nothing left of any value.

Later, when the nurses were going through his meager possessions, they found this poem. Its quality and content so impressed the staff that copies were made and distributed to every nurse in the nursing home.

One nurse took her copy to Melbourne. The old man's sole bequest to posterity has since appeared in the Holiday editions of magazines around the country and numerous magazines for Mental Health. A slide presentation has also been made based on his simple, but eloquent, poem.

This old man, with nothing left to give to the world, is now the author of this anonymous poem winging across the world via the Internet.



*What do you see nurses? What do you see?
What are you thinking
when you're looking at me?
A cranky old man, not very wise,
Uncertain of habit, with faraway eyes?
Who dribbles his food, and makes no reply,
When you say in a loud voice,
"I do wish you'd try!"
Who seems not to notice
the things that you do.
And forever is losing a sock or shoe?
Who, resisting or not lets you do as you will,
With bathing and feeding the long day to fill?
Is that what you're thinking?
Is that what you see?
Then open your eyes, nurse,
you're not looking at me.
I'll tell you who I am as I sit here so still,
As I do at your bidding, as I eat at your will.
I'm a small child of ten,
with a father and mother,
Brothers and sisters who love one another.
A young boy of sixteen with wings on his feet,
Dreaming that soon now a lover he'll meet.
A groom soon at twenty
my heart gives a leap.
Remembering, the vows
that I promised to keep.
At twenty-five now, I have young of my own.
Who need me to guide
and a secure happy home.
A man of thirty my young now grown fast,
Bound to each other
with ties that should last.
At forty, my young sons
have grown and are gone,
But my woman is beside me
to see I don't mourn.
At fifty, once more babies play
'round my knee,*

*Again, we know children,
my loved one and me.
Dark days are upon me;
my wife is now dead.
I look at the future.
I shudder with dread.
For my young are all rearing
young of their own,
And I think of the years and the
love that I've known.
I'm now an old man and nature is cruel.
It's jest to make old age look like a fool.
The body, it crumbles,
grace and vigor depart.
There is now a stone
where I once had a heart.*

*But inside this old carcass,
a young man still dwells,
And now and again my
battered heart swells.
I remember the joys,
I remember the pain.
And I'm loving and
living life over again.
I think of the years, all too few,
gone too fast,
And accept the stark fact
that nothing can last.
So open your eyes, people,
open and see
Not a cranky old man.
Look closer, see ME!*

Next time we meet an older person and are tempted to brush them aside, let's remember the young soul within, and that we will all, one day, be there too! ❧❧

Some Things That Get Better With Age

By Michele Thompson, adapted excerpts

Before you get down about getting older, think about it—many things improve with age. Here are some of them. Read on, and gain a new perspective.

Tangibles

Antiques and collectibles: Their worth is not only in monetary value, but the sheer sentimentality of cherished possessions that have been treasured for so many years.

Money-saving perks: Can you say “senior discount”?

Clothing: Whether it's your favorite pair of blue jeans or a good pair of boots, it gets more comfortable with every wear.

Collection of photos and mementos: If you kept them, they mean something to you, and remembering the times and places they represent enriches your life.

Family and Relationships

Marriage: According to 77-year-old Maggie Scarf, author of *September Songs: The Good News About Marriage in the Later Years*, older couples are more affectionate and say “I love you” more.

Grandkids: There is something uniquely wonderful about watching your grandkids grow up.

Friendships: They deepen with age as you further recognize and value the joy of companionship. ❧❧

Getting Older

NOTABLE
QUOTES



Nobody grows old merely by living a number of years. We grow old by deserting our ideals. Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul.—Samuel Ullman

You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubt; as young as your self-confidence, as old as your fear; as young as your hope, as old as your despair.
—Douglas MacArthur

Age is mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter.—Mark Twain

It's important to have a twinkle in your wrinkle.
—Anonymous

Wrinkles should merely indicate where smiles have been.—Mark Twain

Do not regret growing older. It is a privilege denied to many.—Author Unknown

There is always a lot to be thankful for, if you take the time to look. For example, I'm sitting here thinking how nice it is that wrinkles don't hurt.
—Author Unknown

The key to successful aging is to pay as little attention to it as possible.—Judith Regan

Inside every older person is a younger person wondering what happened.—Jennifer Yane

The sun shines different ways in summer and winter. We shine different ways in the seasons of our lives.
—Terri Guillemets

You can't turn back the clock, but you can wind it up again.—Bonnie Prudden

Age is opportunity no less,
Than youth itself, though in another dress,
And as the evening twilight fades away,
The sky is filled with stars, invisible by day.
—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

