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# OLLI TIMES

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM THE MEMBERS AND STAFF TO THE MEMBERSHIP

[www.lli.fsu.edu](http://www.lli.fsu.edu)

NOVEMBER 2019

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## **AGING EXPERT TO SPEAK AT FSU ON “ELDER ABUSE AND THE OPIOID CRISIS”**



### **Dr. Karen Roberto will also lead community talk at Killearn United Methodist Church**

The public is invited to hear Dr. Karen A. Roberto of Virginia Tech University address “Elder Abuse and the Opioid Crisis” in a talk at Florida State University and join her and a panel of experts in a community dialogue on older individuals and the risk of neglect and abuse.

Her FSU talk, which is sponsored by FSU’s Institute for Successful Longevity, in

partnership with the Pepper Institute on Aging and Public Policy and OLLI, the Osher Lifelong Living Institute, will be at **4 p.m. November 8 in the Broad Auditorium of the Claude Pepper Center, 636 W. Call St.** Free valet parking will be provided, and the Tallahassee Senior Center will provide free transportation to the Pepper Center. The van will leave the Senior Center, 1400 N Monroe St., at 3:30 p.m.

“Elder Abuse: A Community Discussion” will be at 2 p.m. Nov. 7 in the Fellowship Hall of Killearn United Methodist Church, 2800 Shamrock Street South, Tallahassee. Joining Roberto on the panel will be:

- Alice Pomidor, physician and professor in the FSU College of Medicine.
- Lauchlin T. Waldoch, a Tallahassee elder-law attorney.
- Neil Charness, director of FSU’s Institute for Successful Longevity.

Community participants will get an opportunity to offer questions to the panelists. The community dialogue is

sponsored by the Department of Geriatrics in the FSU College of Medicine, the Pepper Institute on Aging and Public Policy and the Institute for Successful Longevity. Dr. Roberto, who holds a doctorate in human development from Texas Tech University, is director of Virginia Tech’s Institute for Society, Culture and Environment. She is a University Distinguished Professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Sciences and Senior Fellow at the Center for Gerontology.

Her research interests include the psychological aspects of aging, older women and chronic health conditions, family relationships and caregiving, rural elders and elder abuse.

## ELDER ABUSE: WHAT IT IS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

By National Institute on Aging, 2016

Gerald, 73, had a stroke, which left him unable to care for himself. His son offered to help, and Gerald moved in with him and his family. But Gerald's son and daughter-in-law worked all day and were busy with their kids in the evenings. Gerald hated being a burden on them and tried to take care of himself.

One day, Gerald's friend Carmen came to visit. She was surprised to see food stains on his clothes and sores on his heels. His room smelled like urine, too. Gerald seemed depressed and withdrawn—not at all like the jolly, witty friend she'd known for years. Carmen worried that Gerald's family was neglecting him.

Abuse can happen to anyone—no matter the person's age, sex, race, religion, or ethnic or cultural background. Each year, hundreds of thousands of adults over the age of 60 are abused, neglected, or financially exploited. This is called elder abuse.

Abuse can happen in many places, including the older person's home, a family member's house, an assisted living facility, or a nursing home.

### Types of Abuse

There are many types of abuse:

- **Physical abuse** happens when someone causes bodily harm by hitting, pushing, or slapping.

- **Emotional abuse**, sometimes called psychological abuse, can include a caregiver saying hurtful words, yelling, threatening, or repeatedly ignoring the older person. Keeping that person from seeing close friends and relatives is another form of emotional abuse.
- **Neglect** occurs when the caregiver does not try to respond to the older person's needs.
- **Abandonment** is leaving a senior alone without planning for his or her care.
- **Sexual abuse** involves a caregiver forcing an older adult to watch or be part of sexual acts.

## Money Matters

### Jasper's Story

After his mother died, Victor started looking after his 80-year-old grandfather, Jasper. Because of his failing eyesight, Jasper could no longer drive to the bank. So, Jasper permitted Victor to withdraw money from the bank every month to pay bills. Lately, it seems the bank balance is lower than it should be. Jasper wonders if Victor is keeping some cash for himself.

**Financial abuse** happens when money or belongings are stolen. It can include forging checks, taking someone else's retirement and Social Security benefits, or using another person's credit cards and bank accounts. It also includes changing names on a will, bank account, life insurance policy, or title to a house without permission from the older person. Financial abuse is becoming a widespread and hard-to-detect issue. Even someone you've never met can steal your financial information using the telephone or email. Be careful about sharing any financial

information over the phone or online—you don't know who will use it.

**Healthcare fraud** can be committed by doctors, hospital staff, and other healthcare workers. It includes overcharging, billing twice for the same service, falsifying Medicaid or Medicare claims, or charging for care that wasn't provided. Older adults and caregivers should keep an eye out for this type of fraud.

### Who Is Being Abused?

Most victims of abuse are women, but some are men. Likely targets are older people who have no family or friends nearby and people with disabilities, memory problems, or dementia.

Abuse can happen to any older person, but often affects those who depend on others for help with activities of everyday life—including bathing, dressing, and taking medicine. People who are frail may appear to be easy victims.

### What Are Signs of Abuse?

You may see signs of abuse or neglect when you visit an older person at home or in an eldercare facility. You may notice the person:

- Has trouble sleeping
- Seems depressed or confused
- Loses weight for no reason
- Displays signs of trauma, like rocking back and forth
- Acts agitated or violent
- Becomes withdrawn
- Stops taking part in activities he or she enjoys
- Has unexplained bruises, burns, or scars
- Looks messy, with unwashed hair or dirty clothes
- Develops bed sores or other preventable conditions

If you see signs of abuse, try talking with the older person to find out what's going on. For instance, the abuse may be from another resident and not from someone who works at the nursing home or assisted living facility. Most importantly, get help.

## **Who Can Help?**

Elder abuse will not stop on its own. Someone else needs to step in and help. Many older people are too ashamed to report mistreatment. Or, they're afraid if they make a report it will get back to the abuser and make the situation worse.

If you think someone you know is being abused—physically, emotionally, or financially—talk with him or her when the two of you are alone. You could say you think something is wrong and you're worried. Offer to take him or her to get help, for instance, at a local adult protective services agency.

Many local, State, and national social service agencies can help with emotional, legal, and financial problems.

The Administration for Community Living has a National Center on Elder Abuse where you can learn about how to report abuse, where to get help, and State laws that deal with abuse and neglect. Go to <https://ncea.acl.gov> for more information. Or, call the Eldercare Locator weekdays at **1-800-677-1116**.

Most States require that doctors and lawyers report elder mistreatment. Family and friends can also report it. Do not wait. Help is available.

**If you think someone is in urgent danger, call 911 or your local police to get help right away.**

## **Caregiver Stress—You're Not Alone**

Caring for an older person can be rewarding. It's also demanding, difficult, and often stressful work. The caregiver may need to be available around the clock to fix meals, provide nursing care, take care of laundry and cleaning, drive to doctors' appointments, and pay bills. Often, family caregivers have to give up paying jobs to make time for these new responsibilities.

It may be hard to keep a positive outlook when there's little hope of the older person's physical and mental condition improving. Over time, the demands and stress of caregiving can take their toll. A caregiver might not even know he or she is being neglectful or abusive.

If you are a caregiver, make sure you have time to rest and take care of your needs. You can ask a family member or friend to help out for a weekend, or even for a few hours, so that you can take some time for yourself. Some community service organizations provide caregivers a break, called respite care. Visit the ARCH National Respite Network and Resource Center's National Respite Locator to find respite services in your area. Caregiving support groups may also help. Exercise could even help with stress.

## **What Is the Long-Term Effect of Abuse?**

Most physical wounds heal in time. But, any type of mistreatment can leave the abused person feeling fearful and depressed. Sometimes, the victim thinks the abuse is his or her fault. Protective services agencies can

suggest support groups and counseling that can help the abused person heal the emotional wounds.

**For More Information About Elder Abuse and Where to Get Help**

**Eldercare Locator**

1-800-677-1116 (toll-free)

<https://eldercare.acl.gov>

**National Center on Elder Abuse**

1-855-500-3537 (toll-free)

[ncea-info@aoa.hhs.gov](mailto:ncea-info@aoa.hhs.gov)

<https://ncea.acl.gov>

**National Adult Protective Services Association**

1-217-523-4431

[www.napsa-now.org](http://www.napsa-now.org)

**National Domestic Violence Hotline**

1-800-799-7233 (toll-free, 24/7)

1-800-787-3224 (TTY/toll-free)

[www.thehotline.org/get-help](http://www.thehotline.org/get-help)

**U.S. Department of Justice**

1-202-514-2000

1-800-877-8339 (TTY/toll-free)

[elder.justice@usdoj.gov](mailto:elder.justice@usdoj.gov)

[www.justice.gov/elderjustice](http://www.justice.gov/elderjustice)

## **OLLI AT FSU TO EXPAND TO PANAMA CITY CAMPUS**

After months of discussion, OLLI at FSU is expanding to the FSU campus in Panama City.

A meet-and-greet was held on Monday, October 28 at the WaterColor Inn and Resort in Panama City. The community was invited to attend this session from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

A group of South Walton residents have been working with FSU in Tallahassee and with the FSU Panama City campus to establish an OLLI tailored to lifelong learners in that area. “The group we have been working with are keenly aware that OLLI offers educational non-credit courses as well as entertainment through classes, field trips, socials, special events, and travel, and they are very much interested in bringing these kinds of involvement to the Panama City area,” said Debra Herman, OLLI Executive Director. “They know that our courses cover a wide range of topics including art, sports, history, literature, science, music, etc. It is stress-free learning - no homework, no grades, no

required degrees,” she added.

At the meet-and-greet, attendees were made aware that OLLI is designed as a member-centered organization that allows students to expand their intellectual horizons, engage in social activities, participate in volunteer opportunities and hold key leadership positions within the organization. International study abroad programs and other travel is also available.

“OLLI at FSU is a scholarly and exciting program of classes targeted to mature adults who want to learn in a stress-free environment where there are no tests and no homework: Learning for the fun of learning! No college required! OLLI – short for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute – is a network of programs that partner with universities such as Florida State,” Herman said. People in the Panama City area can follow [OLLI at FSU PC30A](#) on Facebook for updates on local programs, meeting and courses.

# *SPECIAL LECTURE SNIPPETS*

## **LECTURE ON IMPEACHMENT OF ANDREW JOHNSON SET FOR NOVEMBER 18**

By Susan Yelton  
Special Lectures

Mark your calendar for November 18<sup>th</sup> – 9-10:30 a.m. Broad Auditorium. I know it is early and a Monday morning, but it will be worth getting up for a special lecture by Dr. Jim Jones and FSU Associate professor, Dr. Katherine Mooney. Their topic is: **The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson**. This lecture compliments the Jim Jones lecture classes about the pre- and post- Civil War.

Did you ever wonder who became president when Lincoln was killed? Why did the Radical Republications want to impeach him? What were the grounds of

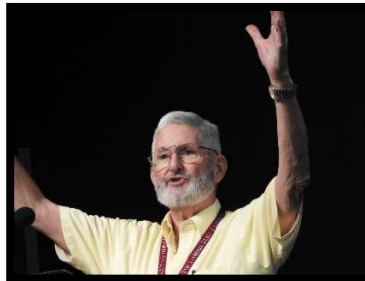
impeachment? Stay tuned for a very important story about our American history.

I'll write more in the next OLLI Times about the February lectures, but I do want to give you a "heads-up" about the week of February 10<sup>th</sup>. Next year is a time to celebrate the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, when women finally got the right to vote in every state. Mark your calendar for February 11<sup>th</sup>, for a Lunch and Learn at the Maguire Center. We have four fabulous speakers who will share history, trends and personal experiences about women as voters.

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## *THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER*

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John Kilgore, President, OLLI Members Advisory Council  
kilgorejhn@comcast.net

The OLLI Members Advisory Council is made up of the Officers, the Member Representatives, The Recording Secretary,

the Executive Director, and the Committee Chairpersons. This will conclude the talk that I started in October about the Committees.

**Inclusivity Committee** (Sylvia Byrd, Carroll Bewley, Co-Chairs). The Inclusivity Committee was created to assist in broadening OLLI's membership base to all residents in the area. They have assisted the Curriculum Committee in expanding the class offerings, have planned activities that attracted a more diverse participation and educated the members, and have increased awareness of community educational opportunities.

**Volunteer Committee (Mary Irvine).** When the Staff needs help, when the Council needs help, or an instructor needs help, the Volunteer Committee is our go-to source. The Committee is a good place to learn about OLLI before you consider moving up to a leadership role.

**Communications and Marketing** (Fran Conaway, John Van Gieson). Every organization needs to talk to the world. This committee prepares press releases,

works on keeping our name before the public, and represents us in the community.

**Social Committee** (Denise Zabelski-Sever). This Committee is not an official Council Committee, but they are one of our most important committees when we want to have a social gathering. They manage the weekly Wednesday night Happy OLLI all year long, provide the planning and leg work for the Holiday Party and All Member Reception, and are called upon as needed.

All the committees that I have discussed, this month and last, need volunteers. For example, there were almost 60 volunteers at the Fall Showcase. You can volunteer to support any of the committees that I have described. To get started, there is a volunteer page on the website (Support Us/Volunteer). We can use your help.

## **OLLI'S FOURTH ANNUAL HOLIDAY BASH SET FOR DECEMBER 11**

OLLI's Fourth Annual Holiday Bash will be held Wednesday, December 11 from 6:00 to 9:30 p.m. at the University Center Club at FSU, 403 Stadium Drive, Building B. Music will be provided by Hot Mess. There will be hors d'oeuvres and beverages from a cash bar.

Partygoers who want to participate in the holiday fun are asked to bring a wrapped new or used "white elephant" gift to share with your OLLI friends. There will be door prizes awarded throughout the evening from such businesses as Backwoods Bistro, Brown's Kitchen Center, Edison Restaurant, A's

Restaurant, Osaka Restaurant, Outback Restaurant, San Miguel's Mexican Restaurant, McGowan's Hops & Grapes, Wahoo Restaurant, and more. Dress is festive holiday attire. The cost is \$30 to members; \$35 for guests. Register online by going to the OLLI website. This event is sponsored by Capital Health Plan.

We will also be collecting new and gently used unwrapped children's books for the OLLI Book Club book drive. If you wish to bring a guest, please select the appropriate cart. Contact Denise Zabelski-Sever, [gethappyolli@gmail.com](mailto:gethappyolli@gmail.com)



# OLLI MEMBERS TOUR TALLAHASSEE FIRE STATION NO. 1

**A group of OLLI members toured Tallahassee Fire Station No. 1 on Adams Street, and learned first-hand what it takes to be a firefighter.**



Sixteen OLLI members toured the area where the trucks are parked; the kitchen and pantry; and the physical training/exercise area.

Firefighters are not limited to putting out fires. They are also trained as EMTs to provide lifesaving service.

Several firefighters explained what each of the several trucks contain, and were shown the 50-pound Jaws of Life that is used to cut the doors off vehicles or cut through vehicles to rescue trapped persons. Each truck carries hundreds of gallons of water and are maintained to respond immediately when a call comes in.

The group learned that the determination of which trucks and equipment respond to a call is dependent on the nature of the call.

For example, a call about a house fire will result in one type of response, whereas a call about a forest or brush fire will necessitate a different type of response.

The training requirements are the same for men and women; the Tallahassee Fire Department has both male and female employees. The spouse of one of the male firefighters who conducted the tour is herself a firefighter. All are required to maintain top physical condition and the exercise area is large enough to provide all types of gym equipment for them to stay in shape.

The full-service kitchen is stocked with plenty of food, although it may be necessary to toss the food should the firefighters have to answer a call. The firefighters pay for their own meals.

The Tallahassee Fire Department provides fire protection and Advanced life support first-response emergency medical services to the city of Tallahassee, Florida and Leon County. The department dates back to 1902, when the first fire department was established by the city.

Today TFD has 16 Fire stations serving approximately 702 square miles incorporated and unincorporated land in Tallahassee as well as parts of Leon County with over 278,000 residents.

The department is staffed by more than 250 certified firefighters and responds to over 22,000 incidents annually. The group came away with a better understanding of what firefighters must do to both become and maintain their status, and what a day in their life is like.

A special thank you to Randy Soule for arranging this tour.



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# CLUB NEWS

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## MONDAY BOOK CLUB ANNOUNCES DECEMBER PROGRAM; PLANS FOR 2020

The Monday Book Club's next meeting will be December 9 at 11:00 a.m. at the LeRoy Collins Library, second floor, Magnolia Room. "Our book for December is My Brilliant Friend by Elena Ferrante," Ramona Bowman said.

"To enable more choices for our membership, the Monday Book Club members agreed during this past summer to move the meeting day to Monday, rather than continue with two book clubs meeting the same day each month, from September to June," she said.

"We remain, more or less, the same in membership. For the ones we inconvenienced, we are saddened but hope to regain your participation in future months when you may have been able to re-arrange your schedule to match our Monday meeting time.

We are all busy/involved people and most of us have been a part of OLLI (formerly The Academy at FSU, a couple of variations on that theme prior) for more than 15 years. We are proud to have four former member presidents of OLLI in our group. Thus, if we don't know the answers immediately, we know where to find them. We are open to new members and know that many of you have also read a lot and for most of your lives.

We wholeheartedly invite you to join us. We have gained at least

four new members already and hope to have more join us," she added.

"We are following the same book list as our younger sibling, the Wednesday afternoon club, most of the time. Actually, we nominated at least half of those books on the list currently being followed. For October we did change to The Nickel Boys because of our having heard Colson Whitehead on NPR, the book had become a big seller, had read his immediate former book and because this story had happened in our neighborhoods. We will remain flexible, enabling us to take advantage of 'at the moment' subjects of interest," she said.

"If change is made, we will notify of such in the next OLLI Times and on the OLLI calendar. We will probably attempt to have a list of our own next fall.

This, too, will allow more choices for our members who do enjoy reading and then discussing with others. We are set up to meet on the second Monday of each month. Come, join us. OLLI membership is the only criterion for joining," she concluded.

Questions about the book club may be directed to Ramona Bowman, [rbowman0721@gmail.com](mailto:rbowman0721@gmail.com)

# OLLI FRIENDSHIP FORCE SETS TWO NOVEMBER MEETINGS; SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

OLLI Friendship Force's next social get together will be held on **Tuesday November 12th at 6 p.m.** at the Westminster Pool House. Those planning to attend are asked to bring a covered dish to share.

Our guest speaker will be Manju Kundra, who will be giving us information on how to electronically share photos with each other from our trips. Contact Jane Hudson, social chair for more information [jhudson\\_98@yahoo.com](mailto:jhudson_98@yahoo.com)

On **Friday November 22nd at 3:00 p.m.** at the NE Library, we will be having an organizational work meeting to prepare for our next inbound group from Shelby, North Carolina. They will be here during our spring break, March 14-20, 2020. Do you have any ideas where we can show our Shelby guests special places off the beaten track in Tallahassee? Come help plan our schedule and get involved.

## How to get involved

Be a **home host**. A member of the visiting club will stay in your home and you will be responsible for providing breakfast each morning. You also will join your guest

during the week on the events planned each day around the Tallahassee area. You will be invited to participate in the welcome, farewell and also the small dinners which are provided by OLLI members for you and your guest.

Be a **day host**. A day host helps out the home host by taking their guest for a day when the home host has another obligation which prevents them from participating in the day's activities. This is a great way to get involved on a more limited basis. As you can imagine, it's difficult sometimes to completely free your calendar up for a 6-day visit. Day hosts are a vital part of our program in Tallahassee.

Be a **Small dinner host**. During the visitors stay, we try to give them the opportunity to meet other OLLI members. OLLI members are asked to host between 2-6 people (visitors and their home host/s) for a dinner in their home to facilitate friendships in a small group setting.

It takes a lot of **OLLI volunteers** to make this program successful.

## **WE NEED VOLUNTEERS**

Please contact Wendy Johnston, at [mrswendyjohnston@gmail.com](mailto:mrswendyjohnston@gmail.com).

# SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

## HOW DO I SCAM THEE? LET ME COUNT THE WAYS.....



By Lucy Morgan  
Former Chief of the Capital Bureau (Tallahassee)  
St. Petersburg (Tampa Bay) Times (2019)

The voice on the telephone belonged to a young woman.

“Gramma,” she began. “I need help. I was in a car that got stopped for having a broken tail light,” she began. “The driver had a fake I, and police found cocaine and a loaded handgun in the car. I tried to tell them we had nothing to do with the gun or the drugs. But we’ve been here two days now. I’m not too sure when I’ll be coming back.”

Since we have eight grandchildren, it would have been easy to believe that one of them could be in trouble. But from the very start of the call something seemed off. We speak to our grandchildren enough to recognize their voices and this one didn’t sound familiar. My antenna went up.

We’ve played this game before.

My husband took a call from a young tearful male calling him “Grampa” who told him he had been in a minor traffic accident in Canada and needed \$400 to pay for the damage before they would let him leave the country. Husband made the mistake of asking if the caller was Christopher, a grandson who lived in Philadelphia and the caller immediately became “Chris.”

Senior citizens like us are prime targets for con artists and these kinds of calls. We have special soft spots for grandchildren, too.

The first time one of the calls came, my husband declined to send the money, but did call our daughter to see if one of her sons was in Canada.

Of course not. The call, tears and all, was a total fake.

Fortunately, we did not bite and wire money to Canada. Over the few years that have elapsed since that first call, we've received at least a half dozen additional calls from fake grandchildren.

When the young woman called, I sort of played along until she got her entire story out. Then I asked her to tell me the names of her sister and brother, knowing that my granddaughter had two brothers and no sister. She flunked the test and I hung up with a lecture on the evils of trying to scam old people.

I suspect many kind-hearted senior citizens have dutifully wired money to thieves like this.

There was a recent Facebook post from a police captain who happened to take one of these calls while sitting at her desk in the police department. She played along until the end before advising the caller he could be in "big trouble" and shared a video of the call on the police department's Facebook page.

Capt. Ann Stephens took the call on her cellphone at her desk at police headquarters in Apex, N.C. The caller wanted her Social Security number and information about her bank accounts and told her she was going to be charged with drug trafficking and money laundering unless she cooperated.

After the officer played with the caller for a few minutes and refused to cough up personal information, the scammers threatened to have her arrested and hung up the phone, apparently unaware he was talking to a law enforcement officer. The department has used the video of the call to help educate consumers.

It is a great lesson in handling scam calls.

Florida is expected to have a population of 23.5-million people with more than 28 percent over 60 by the end of this year. The state's Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services recently distributed [a list](#) of some of the top scams that target senior citizens. The grandparent scam is on the list for fraud attempts that include pretending to be a grandchild who needs money in an emergency and for claims to have kidnapped a grandchild for ransom. Some people actually respond with cash, only to regret it later.

Most of us have become quite familiar with some of these scams.

There is the IRS scam. A caller claims that you owe back taxes and penalties and demands immediate payment with a warning that you could be arrested or lose your home if you don't respond.

The IRS does not call you. Its demands more often come by mail if it's a real debt. Then there is the Social Security Scam. A voice tells you that your Social Security account has been compromised and seeks information such as your SS number, bank account, or your date of birth. It's mostly an effort to steal your identity and use it for something else.

The caller also says your SS benefits have been canceled. But don't be fooled and don't ever disclose personal information to the caller. Social Security and other government employees don't call you up and threaten to take away your benefits.

We often get the "Tech Support" scam at our house. A caller who says he is with Microsoft calls and wants access to our computers to fix a problem with a virus or some other

problem. Once he gains access, he has your credit card numbers, access to your bank account and other information.

I have noticed that this scam frequently features a heavily accented male voice – someone who obviously does not speak good English. That’s a clue. And at our house Microsoft is not the principle supplier of computer programs, so that’s another clue.

There is also a Medicare scam. The caller poses as a Medicare representative and makes an effort to get your Medicare number and other identifying information he can use it to seek payment for unnecessary services.

If you listen carefully, it is clear many of these calls are being made from a room crowded with other people who are also on nearby telephones making similar calls.

Some folks have also reported what state investigators call the “Romance Scam,” when fraudsters contact seniors through social media, strike up a relationship, and ask for money for some kind of emergency or a trip to visit the senior citizen.

If you are a woman on Facebook, you likely have received friend requests from people who use pictures of reasonably good-looking fellows with a request for friendship. Most of the time they have few, if any, other friends and supposedly have jobs in foreign

countries. Don’t bite. Mostly they want your money and not your company. Ignore them.

The easiest thing to do is hang up on suspicious calls. If the caller is legitimate, he or she will find another way to contact you.

Play it safe. Don’t divulge sensitive information unless you are sure who you are giving it to and know they are legitimate. Don’t believe promises of easy money or fall for that bouquet of beautiful flowers on his Facebook page.

And don’t pay any attention to the caller ID. Fraudulent calls are often made by faking the name and phone number of a legitimate company or agency.

And check your bank accounts and credit card statements frequently so you are sure what is being charged or withdrawn.

If you suspect fraud you can also call Consumer Services at 1-800-HELP-Fla (435-7352) or visit [FloridaConsumerHelp.Com](http://FloridaConsumerHelp.Com).

Or log onto Google and describe the details of the suspected call. You will often find lots of news stories about those that are scams. Sadly, many of them are about elderly victims who lost a lot of money.

Be safe out there.

# EIGHT STRATEGIES FOR FINDING HAPPINESS IN YOUR SENIOR YEARS

BY Tim Truzy

Rehabilitation counselor, educator, and former dispatcher from North Carolina.

## **Growing Older**

Growing old can present challenges, but happiness can be achieved in the later years. Although experiencing declines physically and mentally can take a toll on people psychologically, several approaches can be used to mediate the transition from middle age to the golden years. Research has suggested developing a positive perspective on old age can be beneficial in reducing the occurrence of some age-related diseases. For these reasons, learning strategies to cope with the changes of the twilight years are rewarding.

## **Eight Strategies for Finding Happiness in Your Senior Years**

I've worked with older adults as a counselor, and these are some approaches we explored. These strategies are not exclusive and should be applied based on the needs, abilities, and resources available to you.

### **1. Exercising**

Some studies have shown that exercise can benefit older individuals physically, mentally, and socially. They may engage in dance or simply take walks together. Some older individuals may spend time at a pool, like shown in the photo, to relax and swim.

### **2. Discovering or Renewing Interests in Similar Activities**

After you retire opportunities may present themselves which were not there before. With the change in physical and other attributes, you may not be able to do the same

activities. However, people who are older learn to transfer their skills and lifetime of experience to new and/or similar pursuits to maintain or obtain a level of happiness. For instance, a carpenter may decide to spend time learning about new tools. A librarian may decide to collect coins. The essential knowledge and skills developed over a lifetime of employment are put to work in a different way in this strategy. You may wish to do the same.

### **3. Staying Active Cognitively**

Research has shown the brain can grow neurons into old age. Having hobbies such as photography, sewing, or writing also enhances positive feelings while keeping the brain stimulated. Some individuals who are elderly may join bird watching groups or form clubs to stay engaged with others and maintain a good outlook on life. A study also demonstrated taking college courses can be beneficial for delaying the onset of dementia.

### **4. Taking Life into New Areas**

During old age, you may want to do things time did not allow at an earlier point. For instance, you may decide to see other parts of the globe to find happiness. You may even move to another country, state, or province for emotional satisfaction. Learning to play instruments or reading novels are also pursuits you may want to do. Many elderly people could find happiness through cooking. The options for refocusing life are as diverse as the individual allows them to be. (Remember: Former President George Bush participated in sky diving at an older age.)



## **5. Sharing Knowledge with Family, Friends, and Others**

Exchanging knowledge is another way to maintain happiness in the later years. You may want to mentor youth, communicate online, or help a school by substituting as a teacher. You may desire to spend more time with grandchildren, telling stories and playing, to increase your happiness. The opportunities for sharing with various groups are vast.

## **6. Limiting Distractions**

As you age, call upon the wisdom of what is really important. Recognize time in life is not limitless. Enjoy your golden years at peace and not living with regrets. In order to focus on happiness, avoid frequent worry and frustration.

## **7. Keep a Positive Perspective on Life**

Accept the idea that problems will arise. When situations become too stressful with negative results, the outcome should be accepted. The same should apply to positive outcomes. To achieve happiness in older age, knowing things are not always going to be perfect or to your liking is crucial.

## **8. Volunteering**

Many people find happiness volunteering for nonprofits or participating in community events. Your final years can be filled with helping others. This strategy helps many people achieve happiness.

## **Older People at Work and Worship**

Religion and finding a job can be beneficial for individuals in the twilight years. Religion refers to organized worship with traditional structure, and more than 90 percent of people in their senior years participate in some form of religion, making up half of all participation, according to one finding. Religious participation tends to have these mental health benefits, including: coping

with disability and loss, development of positive attitudes about aging, and giving older individuals a sense of meaning and a purpose in life. In addition, religion allows for volunteering and building social networks. Volunteering provides chances to help with various functions, such as picnics or weekly meetings, can fortify a feeling of accomplishment and promote a sense of self-worth. Truly, volunteering or working can be useful ways to enjoy the final years of life.

Coincidentally, some people over 65 may find happiness by seeking employment. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, older Americans are choosing to work part-time or for short-terms after retiring.

A variety of reasons could exist for an older individual to seek employment. These senior citizens can be found in different types of jobs, such as taxi drivers, working in the retail industry, and even in food service. Here are some factors which have brought older people back to the work force:

## **Factors Which Can Influence People to Find Work After Retiring**

- Primarily, if a person has grown up with a strong work ethic, he/she may want to continue to contribute to society to feel happy after retiring. In Addition, older individuals may need to meet financial obligations, such as medical insurance or simply to pay bills. Also, waiting for retirement or Social security benefits to increase brings older Americans back into the work force.
- Finally, if they are able to succeed in their objectives financially, then they have a sense of accomplishment, contributing to their overall sense of well-being and happiness.

Working helps to reduce boredom. Interacting with others lessens the feelings of isolation which could impact happiness. Indeed, some older people enjoy working for

the sake of it. But nothing is more fulfilling than meeting your needs in order to stay happy regardless of how it is done.

## **STUDY SHOWS ELDERLY CAN BUILD MUSCLE AS EASILY AS HIGHLY-TRAINED PEERS**

**The researchers had expected that the first group of "master athletes" would have an increased ability to build muscle due to their superior levels of fitness over a prolonged period of time.**

**By Jerusalem Post Staff 2019**

New research from the University of Birmingham's School of Sport and Exercise Science in England, has shown that older people who do not take part in sustained exercise regimes are able to build muscle as easily as highly-trained athletes of a similar age.

The isotope tracer showed exactly how proteins were developing. The researchers had expected that the first group of "master athletes" would have an increased ability to build muscle due to their superior levels of fitness over a prolonged period of time. The results showed that both groups actually had an equal ability to build muscle in response to exercise. "Our study clearly shows that it doesn't matter if you haven't been a regular exerciser throughout your life, you can still derive benefit from exercise whenever you start," said Dr Leigh Breen, the lead researcher.

The study, published in the journal *"Frontiers in Physiology"*, compared the muscle-building ability in two groups of older men. The first group were labelled as "master athletes" and comprised of people in their 70's and 80's who have exercised for many years and still compete at the top levels of their sport. The second group comprised of healthy individuals of a similar age, who had never participated in a structured exercise regime before. Each participant was given an isotope tracer, in the form of a drink of 'heavy' water, and then proceeded to complete a round of exercise, involving weight training.

"Obviously a long-term commitment to good health and exercise is the best approach to achieve whole-body health, but even starting later on in life will help delay age-related frailty and muscle weakness. "Current public health advice on strength training for older people is often quite vague," Breen said. "What's needed is more specific guidance on how individuals can improve their muscle strength, even outside of a gym-setting through activities undertaken in their homes – activities such as gardening, walking up and down stairs, or lifting up a shopping bag can all help if undertaken as part of a regular exercise regime."

The researchers took muscle biopsies from the muscle tissue of each participant in the 48 hours before and after the exercise, and examined the data to look for signs of how the muscles were responding to the exercise.

# SMART DIETING: IT'S NOT ONLY WHAT YOU EAT, OR HOW MUCH, BUT WHEN YOU EAT

Eating less improves health. We have all heard this — and scientists have known this — for decades. From portion control to calorie counting, recommendations on nutrition and dietary choices often focus on limiting our intake of what we eat daily. But new research suggests that when it comes to healthy eating for healthy aging, it's not just what you eat or how much you eat, but *when*.

The first evidence of the impact of dietary timing has been seen in mice studies. Mice are the standard laboratory mammals from which we learn much of what we know about human biology. In a typical mouse study to explore how reducing calories can improve health, the control group of mice always has food available. This group nibbles throughout the 24-hour day.

The other “dietary restriction” group typically gets about 60-70 percent of the amount of food the control group eats. Because they are always hungry, mice on this restricted diet gobble their daily food allotment almost immediately when it arrives. They don't get another meal for more than 23 hours, which means that they “fast” for more than 23 hours. For years in studies, researchers have observed that these dieting mice show numerous signs of improved health and resilience and have attributed those effects to reduced calories. Now, it turns out the 23-hour fast may be as important as the reduced calories. One of the known benefits of mouse dietary restriction is that they recover faster and more completely from surgery than fully-fed mice.

However, mice who fasted for two days prior to surgery recovered just as well as mice fed a restricted diet for a month. Mice who fasted for only two days are also much more resistant to the toxic side effects of drugs, such as those commonly used in cancer chemotherapy. As a result, clinical trials are now ongoing to see if fasting hastens recovery from surgery and reduces side-effects of chemotherapy in people, too.

## **Do Fasts and Timed Diets Work for Humans?**

Led by researchers supported by The American Federation for Aging Research (AFAR), discoveries about the advantages of short-term, periodic fasts in mice have led to a number of fasting-based diets that are now being tested for their health-enhancing effects in humans. One approach is the “fasting-mimicking diet” developed by AFAR expert Valter Longo, who is the director of the Longevity Institute at the University of Southern California. Longo's approach starts at the cellular level. The cells of our bodies are exquisitely sensitive to the food we eat. We have nutrient sensors in all of our cells that turn on or off hundreds of genes when they are triggered by food. Nutrients in food can be better or worse at triggering those sensors.

As explored in his book The Longevity Diet, Longo has developed diets that avoid triggering these nutrient sensors, which is why they are “fasting-mimicking.” These diets have shown some remarkable effects on reversing diabetes in mice. As with various

other fasting regimes, studies are underway to assess possible health benefits in people.

Another body of dietary recommendations builds on research on the timing of what we eat relative to our natural body rhythms. Virtually every living creature undergoes daily body rhythms dependent on the day-night, light-dark cycles. Hormones are secreted at certain times of the day, our immune system is more active at certain times compared to others, our blood pressure, digestive system and our body's ability to repair itself, all have daily or circadian cycles.

**Follow Your Circadian Rhythms** Satchin Panda of the Salk Institute has studied these

rhythms for years and has concluded, among other things, that one pathway to good health is by timing our meals in alignment with our daily body rhythms.

In his book, The Circadian Code, Panda documents that most people eat over a 15-hour or longer time period each day, almost like mice with unlimited food. The most healthful way to eat, he suggests, is to have all your meals within an eight-to-10-hour period, stretching from early morning to early evening. Notice that by doing this, you are actually fasting 14 to 16 hours each day. So this “time-restricted feeding” has elements of fasting associated with it.

## BEWARE OF THESE REVERSE MORTGAGE SCAMS

BY AMY FONTINELLE  
INVESTOPEDIA 2019

Of all financial con artists, reverse mortgage scammers are arguably the worst. They abuse their standing as trusted advisors or lenders – or supposedly professional contractors – to take advantage of elderly folks who need funds.

They convince them to sign up for a financial product that's complicated even for well-educated, fully cognizant people to wrap their heads around, much less someone whose mental capability may have diminished with age.

Then they steal the proceeds, leaving the borrower with little but new debt on his or her home, and even – worst-case scenario – the loss of it.

There are situations for which a reverse mortgage is a good solution. There are many others when this kind of financing is a terrible choice. In this article, we'll tell you about some common reverse mortgage scams so you can avoid them and warn others, too.

## **Vendor and Contractor Fraud**

In this scam, unscrupulous home-improvement vendors and contractors target the elderly with a scheme that involves trying to sell them repairs, a remodeling project or another home-improvement service. When the target expresses concern about paying for it, the scammer has the solution: a reverse mortgage. True, it might be a great way for the vendor or contractor to get paid, but it might not be in the homeowner's best interest.

If you truly need home repairs and have no other way to pay for them, a home-equity loan or home equity line of credit can be a far less expensive and less consequential option than a reverse mortgage. Any home-improvement vendor or contractor who suggests that you pay for the work with reverse mortgage proceeds probably isn't someone you want working on your house. Who knows: Their work could be as shoddy as their advice.

## **Fraud by Relatives, Others**

Similar to vendor and contractor fraud, fraud by a financial planner or other investment advisor involves someone trying to sell you a financial product you may not need and suggesting you take out a reverse mortgage to pay for it.

If this person is unscrupulous or ill-informed enough to suggest a reverse mortgage to finance the purchase of stocks, an annuity or whole life insurance, they probably aren't selling you something that's in your best interest.

Be careful about giving out your—or a loved one's—the power of attorney. This document enables the holder to conduct financial affairs on your (or their) behalf, including taking out a reverse mortgage on your/their house.

Children and other people whom seniors have entrusted to manage their affairs have secured reverse mortgages in the senior homeowner's name, then diverted the proceeds to their own accounts. Some swindlers have even managed to secure reverse mortgages for dead relatives.

## **Flipping Fraud**

In this reverse mortgage scam, smooth-talking realtors seek out seniors and get them to take out a reverse mortgage to buy a lower-cost house, without having to put any money down. Unfortunately, these homes are often distressed properties that have been given a facelift but are really in poor condition. The scammers help the homeowners get a special type of reverse mortgage called a "Home

Equity Conversion Mortgage (HECM) for purchase" to pay for the house, then find a way to divert some or all of the proceeds to themselves. The seniors think they're getting housing through a Housing and Urban Development program when they're really being taken to the cleaners.

### **Robbing Peter and (Not) Paying Paul**

In July 2009 in Orlando, a title insurance company confessed to stealing \$1 million in reverse mortgage proceeds from seniors. Instead of transmitting the money to pay off borrowers' regular mortgages, as it promised, the firm kept the money. The result was those reverse mortgage holders who thought part of their loan proceeds were being used to pay down their debt and increase their equity in their homes, unexpectedly and ironically ended up in foreclosure because they had defaulted on their mortgage payments.

### **Other Misleading Tactics**

While high-pressure sales are not necessarily scams or frauds, they aren't in your best interest, either. Taking out a reverse mortgage is a decision that requires careful consideration and a complete understanding of the details and consequences. If a reverse mortgage

lender is making you feel rushed, stressed out or uncomfortable in any way, turn around and find another lender; they aren't that hard to come by. Also know that, should you go through with the deal and immediately regret it, you can cancel within three business days of closing the loan under your right of rescission by notifying your lender in writing.

False or misleading advertising that convinces a homeowner to get a reverse mortgage without fully understanding the implications – or when another solution might provide financial security without sacrificing the home – continues to plague the marketplace.

A report by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) states that many of the nearly 100 reverse mortgage advertisements it analyzed "contained confusing, incomplete, and inaccurate statements regarding borrower requirements, government insurance, and borrower risks."

In focus-group interviews with 59 homeowners old enough to qualify for a reverse mortgage, the CFPB found that the celebrity spokespeople some reverse mortgage lenders used could create a false sense of security about reverse mortgages. The study also found that some ads didn't make it clear that a reverse mortgage is a loan; that ads made it seem like it's impossible for a borrower to lose his



home (not true); and that reverse mortgages are government-funded and -operated (also not true, though the most common type, Home Equity Conversion Mortgages (HECM), are insured by the Federal Housing Administration).

### **The Bottom Line**

Law enforcement sometimes fails to catch or to adequately punish reverse mortgage scammers. As a result, some have been able to go from state to state

or even stay within the same city while committing reverse mortgage fraud repeatedly over many years and accumulating dozens of victims. Be especially wary of anyone who approaches you about taking out a reverse mortgage or who pressures you to close the deal.

And if you do decide that a reverse mortgage might make sense for you, first read *Picking the Right Reverse Mortgage Lender*.

## **COGNITIVE HEALTH AND OLDER ADULTS**

From the National Institute on Aging, 2017

Cognitive health—the ability to clearly think, learn, and remember—is an important component of brain health. Others include:

Motor function—how well you make and control movements. Emotional function—how well you interpret and respond to emotions

Sensory function—how well you feel and respond to sensations of touch, including pressure, pain, and temperature

This brief guide focuses on cognitive health and what you can do to help

maintain it. The following steps can help you function every day and stay independent—and they have been linked to cognitive health, too.

- Take Care of Your Health
- Eat Healthy Foods
- Be Physically Active
- Keep Your Mind Active
- Stay Connected

### **Take Care of Your Health**

Taking care of your physical health may help your cognitive health. You can:

Get recommended health screenings.

- Manage chronic health problems like diabetes, high blood pressure, depression, and high cholesterol.
- Consult with your healthcare provider about the medicines you take and possible side effects on memory, sleep, and brain function.
- Reduce risk for brain injuries due to falls and other accidents.
- Limit use of alcohol (some medicines can be dangerous when mixed with alcohol).
- Quit smoking, if you smoke.
- Get enough sleep, generally 7-8 hours each night.

### **Eat Healthy Foods**

A healthy diet can help reduce the risk of many chronic diseases, such as heart disease or diabetes. It may also help keep your brain healthy.

In general, a healthy diet consists of fruits and vegetables; whole grains; lean meats, fish, and poultry; and low-fat or non-fat dairy products. You should also limit solid fats, sugar, and salt. Be sure to control portion sizes and drink enough water and other fluids.

Researchers are looking at whether a healthy diet can help preserve cognitive function or reduce the risk of Alzheimer's. For example, there is

some evidence that people who eat a "Mediterranean diet" have a lower risk of developing mild cognitive impairment.

Researchers have developed and are testing another diet, called MIND, a combination of the Mediterranean and DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diets. One study suggests that MIND may affect the risk of Alzheimer's disease.

Get more information about healthy eating for older adults.

### **Be Physically Active**

Being physically active—through regular exercise, household chores, or other activities—has many benefits. It can help you:

- Keep and improve your strength
- Have more energy
- Improve your balance
- Prevent or delay heart disease, diabetes, and other diseases
- Perk up your mood and reduce depression

Studies link ongoing physical activity with benefits for the brain, too. In one study, exercise stimulated the human brain's ability to maintain old network connections and make new ones that are vital to cognitive health.

Other studies have shown that exercise increased the size of a brain structure

important to memory and learning, improving spatial memory.

Aerobic exercise, such as brisk walking, is thought to be more beneficial to cognitive health than non-aerobic stretching and toning exercise. Studies are ongoing.

Federal guidelines recommend that all adults get at least 150 minutes of physical activity each week. Aim to move about 30 minutes on most days. Walking is a good start. You can also join programs that teach you to move safely and prevent falls, which can lead to brain and other injuries. Check with your healthcare provider if you haven't been active and want to start a vigorous exercise program.

For more information, see *Go4Life*<sup>®</sup>, NIA's exercise and physical activity campaign for older adults.

### **Keep Your Mind Active**

Being intellectually engaged may benefit the brain. People who engage in meaningful activities, like volunteering or hobbies, say they feel happier and healthier. Learning new skills may improve your thinking ability, too.

For example, one study found that older adults who learned quilting or digital photography had more memory improvement than those who only socialized or did less cognitively demanding activities.

Lots of activities can keep your mind active. For example, read books and magazines. Play games. Take or teach a class. Learn a new skill or hobby. Work or volunteer. These types of mentally stimulating activities have not been proven to prevent serious cognitive impairment or Alzheimer's disease, but they can be fun!

Scientists think that such activities may protect the brain by establishing "cognitive reserve." They may help the brain become more adaptable in some mental functions, so it can compensate for age-related brain changes and health conditions that affect the brain. Formal cognitive training also seems to have benefits.

In the Advanced Cognitive Training for Independent and Vital Elderly (ACTIVE) trial, healthy adults 65 and older participated in 10 sessions of memory training, reasoning training, or processing-speed training. The sessions improved participants' mental skills in the area in which they were trained. Most of these improvements persisted 10 years after the training was completed.

Be wary of claims that playing certain computer and online games can improve your memory and other types of thinking.

Evidence to back up such claims is evolving. NIA and others are supporting research to determine if

different types of cognitive training have lasting effects.

### **Stay Connected**

Connecting with other people through social activities and community programs can keep your brain active and help you feel less isolated and more engaged with the world around you. Participating in social activities may lower the risk for some health problems and improve well-being.

So, visit with family and friends. Join programs through your Area Agency on Aging, senior center, or other community organizations.

We don't know for sure yet if any of these actions can prevent or delay Alzheimer's disease and age-related cognitive decline.

But some of them have been associated with reduced risk of cognitive impairment and dementia.

## **SENIORS WITH A STRONG SENSE OF PURPOSE OFTEN LIVE STRONGER**

Judith Graham, Kaiser Health News 2017

After making it through the maelstrom of middle age, many adults find themselves approaching older age wondering “what will give purpose to my life?” now that the kids have flown the nest and retirement is in the cards.

How they answer the question can have significant implications for their health.

adults with a higher sense of purpose tend to retain strong hand grips and walking speeds — key indicators of how rapidly people are aging. Why would a psychological construct (“I feel that I have goals and something to live for”) have this kind of impact? Seniors with a sense of purpose may be more physically active and take better care of their health, some research suggests.

Over the past two decades, dozens of studies have shown that seniors with a sense of purpose in life are less likely to develop Alzheimer's disease, mild cognitive impairment, disabilities, heart attacks or strokes, and more likely to live longer than people without this kind of underlying motivation.

Now, a report in JAMA Psychiatry adds to this body of evidence by showing that older Also, they may be less susceptible to stress, which can fuel dangerous inflammation.

“Purposeful individuals tend to be less reactive to stressors and more engaged, generally, in their daily lives, which can promote cognitive and physical health,” said Patrick Hill, an assistant professor of psychological and brain sciences at Washington University in St. Louis who wasn't associated with the study. But what is

purpose, really? And how can it be cultivated? Anne Newman, a 69-year-old who splits her time between Hartsdale, north of New York City, and Delray Beach, Fla., said she's been asking herself this "on a minute-by-minute basis" since closing her psychotherapy practice late last year.

Building and maintaining a career became a primary driver in her life after Newman raised two daughters and went back to work at age 48. As a therapist, "I really loved helping people make changes in their lives that put them in a different, better position," she said. Things became difficult when Newman's husband, Joseph, moved to Florida and she started commuting back and forth from New York. Over time, the travel took a toll, and Newman decided she didn't want a long-distance marriage.

So, she began winding down her practice and thinking about her next chapter. Experts advise that people seeking a sense of purpose consider spending more time on activities they enjoy or using work skills in a new way. Newman loves drawing and photography. She has investigated work and volunteer opportunities in Florida, but nothing has grabbed her just yet. "Not knowing what's going to take the place of work in my life — it feels horrible, like I'm floundering," she admitted, in a phone interview.

Many people go through a period of trial and error after retirement and don't find what they're looking for right away, said Dr. Dilip Jeste, senior associate dean for healthy aging and senior care at the University of California-San Diego. "This doesn't happen overnight." "People don't like to talk about

their discomfort because they think it's unusual. And yet, everybody thinks about this existential question at this time of life: 'What are we here for?'" he noted.

Newman's focus has been on getting "involved in something other than personal satisfaction — something larger than myself." But that may be overreaching. "I think people can get a sense of purpose from very simple things: from taking care of a pet, working in the garden or being kind to a neighbor," said Patricia Boyle, a leading researcher in this field and professor of behavioral sciences at the Rush Alzheimer's Disease Center at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago. "Even small goals can help motivate someone to keep going," she continued. "Purpose can involve a larger goal, but it's not a requirement."

Older adults often discover a sense of purpose from taking care of grandchildren, volunteering, becoming involved in community service work or religion, she said. "A purpose in life can arise from learning a new thing, accomplishing a new goal, working together with other people or making new social connections when others are lost," she said.

Tara Gruenewald's research highlights how important it is for older adults to feel they play a valuable role in the life of others. "I think what we often lose as we age into older adulthood is not a desire to contribute meaningfully to others but the opportunity to do so," said Gruenewald, chair of the department of psychology at California's Crean College of Health and Behavioral Sciences at Chapman University.

Her research has found that people who perceive themselves as being useful had a stronger feeling of well-being and were less likely to become disabled and die than those who didn't see themselves this way. "In midlife, we contribute to others partly because it's demanded of us in work and in our social relationships," Gruenewald said.

"As we grow older, we have to seek out opportunities to contribute and give to others." Some researchers try to tease out distinctions between having a sense of purpose and finding meaning in life; others don't. "Practically, I think there's a lot of overlap," Boyle said.

After Barry Dym, 75, retired a year ago from a long career as an organizational consultant and a marriage and family therapist, he said, "I didn't ask myself did I have a larger purpose in life — I asked myself what gives meaning to my life. Answering that question wasn't difficult; certain themes had defined choices he'd made throughout his life. "What gives meaning to me is helping people. Trying to have an impact. Working with people very closely and helping them become much better at what they do,"

Dym said in a phone conversation from his home in Lexington, Mass. In retirement, he's carrying that forward by mentoring several people with whom he has a professional and personal relationship, bringing together groups of people to talk about aging, and starting a blog.

Recently, he said, he wrote about discovering that he feels freer now to "explore who I am, where I came from and what meaning things have to me than at any other point of my life."

And therein lies a dilemma. "I feel of two minds about purpose in older age," Dym said. "In some ways, I'd like to just shuck off that sense of having to do something to be a good person, and just relax. And in other ways, I feel deeply fulfilled by the things I do.

Research, again with mice, has shown that eating in this time restricted fashion improves health, even when the mice are eating an unhealthy fat-and-sugar laden diet. Several short-term human studies with this dietary approach have found it to be an excellent way to control weight, but it also seems to have health benefits beyond its impact on weight.



# *BOOK REVIEW*

## **EIGHTYSOMETHINGS**

### **A Practical Guide to Letting Go, Aging Well, and Finding Unexpected Happiness**

By Katherine Esty, PhD

This book is written by an eightysomething for eightysomethings...and for those who will become eightysomethings, including their family and friends.

It's a relatively short book--205 pages covering 20 brief chapters and two appendices. However, the author, an 84-year-old social psychologist and practicing psychotherapist, covers the aging process quite thoroughly.

She addresses aging stereotypes, coping, holding and letting go, grandparenting, caregiving, health issues, loss, happiness, friendships, dementia vs, memory loss, survivor skills, facing death, aging wisely and other subjects that embrace the aging process in all its manifestations. The appendices cover "50 exciting things for eightysomethings to do" (OLLI membership includes many of them) and writing legacy letters to family members as a way of transmitting wisdom, values and experiences from one generation to others.

The author interviewed 128 eightysomethings and 26 adult children of eightysomethings. Dr. Esty discusses the lives of ordinary eightysomethings through the double lens of the super seniors and their children—their attitudes, activities, feelings, worries, purposes, and joys. Their stories illustrate how real people in their eighties are living and how they are handling their daily lives.

To make the book interactive, the author includes, at the end of each chapter, conversation starters in the form of questions, and tips for families in dealing with their eightysomethings.

The overarching theme of the book is the need to discard the false presumptions about aging and recognize that, unless eightysomethings are actively dying, they are quite capable of finding ways to stay engaged in life. Dr. Esty notes that "(m)ost experts today believe that as we age, we have the potential to grow and develop in ways that were

not imagined in the past.” (p. 82)

Indeed, seniors are living longer, healthier and happier than at any time in recorded history, she says. And despite their many losses and multiple health issues that are part of the aging process, *eightysomethings* “find themselves naturally living in the present. Even better, they find themselves at peace.” (p. 93)

(In discussing dementia, Dr. Esty presents a wonderful way to distinguish between dementia and normal memory loss: “normal memory loss is when you lose your keys. Dementia is when you put the keys in the freezer.” (p. 96))

On aging and independence, she believes that “Americans put too much emphasis on the importance of independence and staying in their own homes even when they will be isolated and lonely. We are social animals and we thrive when we are in community.” (P. 110)

Dr. Esty explores the importance of purpose or reasons for living (**see article on purpose immediately above**), decision-making, living in the moment, and accepting change.

Old age isn’t what it used to be; yet the false perceptions about the aged continue to exist. Hopefully, Dr. Esty book emphasizing that more and more people are living into their eighties, and are living healthier lives for a longer period of time, will resonate. *Eightysomethings* emphasizes the importance of regarding old age as both a time for reflection and a time for continued growth—as part of the continuum of active, meaningful living.

For those in the 80s; for those who are nearing 80; for those who hope to live long enough to become *eightysomethings*; and for their families and friends, this is a must-read. Remember, with knowledge comes wisdom.

**Reviewed by “seventysomething”  
George Waas**

For publication in the OLLI times send your information to George and Harriet Waas  
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