

Milestones-Growing Old Is A Better Option

The problem with growing old is that just when you get your mind straightened out, your body falls apart. Growing old can be hectic but it's still the best alternative.

One thing I have *especially* learned is this: AGING is like living in the body of an old car that shakes, rattles and rolls; needs a tune-up, the spark is out of the plugs, hard to get started, getting rusty, exhaust pipe pops and erupts from time to time, difficult to switch gears, has slower speed, gas problems (since gauge doesn't work), a noisy rumble seat and many times, it is discounted—not worth much. An overhaul would be great, including a new engine. Yep, some of us seem to have a lot in common with that old car.



It appears that my get up and go has got up and went. I once had a photographic memory and could memorize a full half hour TV show script in an hour.

Now, there are only two things I cannot remember, only problem, I can't remember what those two things are. It is somewhat of a challenge but there are solutions. For instance, my wife and I wear name tags.

There are benefits to getting old. You can take your teeth out to brush them without having to jam that toothbrush in your mouth.

I remember when social security was first implemented. F.D.R. started it in 1935 and began paying benefits in January of 1940. In the late 1940's when I was in school, many very young girls still in their early teens were marrying old men, which perplexed those of us in high school. We young studs could not figure this out.

Here is the true story. The reasoning was, since the old codgers would die soon, these kid brides would get a pension (which passed on to the wife), setting the young chickadees up for life.

One problem: We were told that immediately upon marriage, the young brides felt old age creeping up on them. But we suppose the old codgers died happy.

Health problems seem to be part of old age. This writer just came out of three years of severe illness...so sick that my life insurance man came and took his calendar back. I did come through it and am still on this side of the ground. Cheers!

There are four natural seasonal changes that govern our life on earth—spring...summer...fall...and winter, each of which invoke distinct memories that stimulate specific moods within us.

We are deeply affected by each of these seasons as those memories are ignited and identified by the particular time of year they took place. The memories can be good, bad, or sad. We are deeply moved by all of them. It is like music that has been part of each season of life.

The spring is a time of new beginnings, like a new birth, when the barren trees sprout buds that become leaves; plants and flowers grow as the mild weather gently caresses them. It is a season that compels one to go on day trips to find new insights and adventures to explore. It is a feeling of constant renewal of youth.

The summer brings warm temperatures to hot weather, casual clothing, outdoor activities, barbecues, baseball games,

swimming, picnics, sunburn and pesky mosquitoes. It is a time when days are longer and a time when you feel mature and settled.

The fall enters with refreshing cool air subtly announcing that winter is on its way. Leaves become bouquets of magnificent colors as they blend into a symphony of 'fall foliage' in dazzling shades before falling to the ground. New energy is felt as the sights and sounds of the approaching holidays begin to emerge.

The winter sweeps over what had become a barren landscape with leafless trees that become re-activated, as mother nature upholsters them with radiant white snow transforming the world into a winter wonderland. It is bundle up time, snow tires, skiing, snow-boarding and ice skating, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years parties where family and friends gather.

There is a similar four seasons in the personal lives of each of us.

Our spring is when we are birthed. During that time we are wobbly as we learn to walk while feeling somewhat top heavy, reaching for something with not much coordination to back up the effort, knocking things over, spilling something from a glass and falling down. We need help getting dressed, eating and getting ready for bed. Sometimes that is a bummer since everyone tells you what to do.

The plus side is that it is a season of beginning, curiosity and discovery. It is a time where everything is done for you since you have no responsibilities.

Our summer is a time of growing, development, personalities, beginning to learn basic skills, discovering music, with the most important activity, playtime.

Our fall is adolescence...going to school, testing the limits, making friends...finding a path in life, which can be good or bad...learning who we are, what we are, and who we might become while dealing with raging hormones that we don't know what to

do with.

We often run into obstacles that seem to thwart our ambitions or anything that might be fun.

The cause of these obstacles might be someone in authority or even a bully who seems determined to make your life miserable. *This is a bummer.*

The plus side is that the mystery of life gradually disappears as everything becomes clear with an inkling of what could lie ahead, accompanied by the excited anticipation of accomplishing a goal.

The winter, or fourth season, is young adulthood where we put into practice what was learned in school, college, university...and instinctively following the abilities accomplished as we prepare for a career.

The bummer is the stress of preparing and passing the final exams and those who are jealous and stand in your way. It is a time when the years accumulate.

The plus side is that this fourth season leads to maturity, becoming older...a time of reflection...kicking back in retirement or determining to find something productive and useful with which to occupy ourselves or maybe even a new career.

There are exciting aspects to every season...along with real bummers to deal with. And this...is life.

At this time in my own life, I am in that fourth season even though there are many reflections of that first season, which I partly am still in, meaning Spring, where I am a bit wobbly (due to a stroke), use a cane, have fallen down, and often require assistance in everyday things that are no longer simple. The upside is that I actually have no responsibilities. I can kick back in retirement or follow an enduring passion, writing.

The main thing to have learned is to stay with God and He will

take you through every new season of your life. Never lose the joy of anticipation of new things to see, learn and enjoy.

You may be wondering how old I am...the answer, 84. I would have been 85, but I was sick a year. Even so I eagerly look forward to the years ahead and the new adventures to come.

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