

# CMS HEALTH CARE

PRESENTS

## HOME HEALTH NEWS



### When It's Time for a Nursing Home

Barry J. Jacobs

When the phone call finally came, I gasped in shock. It was a social worker from the nursing home where my mother had been on a waiting list for admission for a year and a half. The social worker said the words that I'd both yearned for and dreaded: "We have a bed for your mother. Can she move in tomorrow?"

I knew it was time. During the previous nine months, my mother had been hospitalized three times for confusion, as well as for injuries from falls. It was clear to me she was no longer safe living alone in her apartment.

For reasons of privacy and incompatibility, neither of us had wanted to live together (plus, the stairways in my home made her moving in near impossible). Instead, we scraped together the funds to hire home health aides to be with her for seven hours a day. But that still left 17 hours when disaster could and did still occur. I never stopped worrying — whether I was by her side, at work or on the basketball court. Would the aides show up? (Not always.) Would my mother fall even when an aide was present? (Yes.) Was I being a good son? (Each subsequent fall made me more doubtful.)

A bed in a facility with 24-hour supervision would

ensure greater safety, but also less freedom for her and more guilt for me. Would my mother feel like I was dumping her there? Fortunately, she didn't see it that way. That night, when I offered her the choice of moving into the nursing home or staying in her apartment, she quickly opted to move.

Many family caregivers anguish over nursing home placement. Some regard it as a failure of will or effort to honor a parent's wishes to stay at home until the end. Others see it as the ultimate loving and responsible act when safety becomes paramount. Some hold both views and feel powerfully conflicted. Here are ideas for dealing with the many emotions that arise around this difficult family decision:

**Don't make promises you can't — and shouldn't — keep.** I've heard many caregivers say they won't even consider a nursing home for a parent. This sounds noble but could have untoward consequences. If the parent should have a sudden downturn — for example, a broken hip or stroke — then the family is caught unprepared when the hospital staff insists the parent can't return home and needs a nursing home facility. To prevent this, I suggest that

care giving families plan for all contingencies, including the potential need for 24-hour supervision some day. Ideally, parent and adult child should visit local nursing homes, weigh options and indicate preferences before an emergency requires a rushed decision.

**Your job is to provide the right care — but not always in the form a parent wants.** The "right care at the right time" is always open to debate. It shouldn't, however, be solely defined by a parent's unchanging wishes in what are usually fluid situations. A "right" plan should meet a parent's needs now and in the future, while taking into account the needs and capabilities of other family members. If the care that best meets that formula is nursing home placement, then that is the prudent choice for everyone.

#### Expect a cascade of emotions.

When my mother agreed to go to the nursing home, I felt a palpable rush of relief mixed with onerous guilt that I somehow hadn't been able to do more to prevent this move. And I felt deep sadness.

**September 2016**

It was awful that my mother had deteriorated to the point that 24-hour care was crucial. Then, like her, I began worrying about what nursing home living would actually be like. These feelings were very strong and uncomfortable, but normal.

**Care giving changes but continues.** In the last few months, my mother has been adjusting to her new living situation and so have I. I no longer pick her up off the carpeting or sit with her in the emergency room, but I make sure her nursing home room is clean, her nurse's aides are responsive to her and that she is reasonably content. And I still live by the same imperative I have for five years: to help my mother live as fully and safely as possible as she gets older.

### Special People Deserve A Special Day...



Grandparent's Day is Tuesday, September 13

## Why You Should Consider Living Like 'The Golden Girls'

Sharon Greenthal

Roommates were a constant part of my life during college and in my twenties. Financially it would have been impossible for me to live on my own, but just as important as money was my desire to not come home to an empty apartment every night. Some roommates were great, like the three girls I lived with in a four bedroom condo minutes from the Pacific Ocean. Others, like the guy who spent a half hour flossing his teeth with the door open in our shared bathroom each morning and

evening, left something to be desired.

Traditionally, living with roommates has been the lifestyle primarily of the young and single, but more and more people in their 50s and beyond are turning to home sharing to ease the high cost of living and reduce the isolation that can occur when older adults live on their own. Karen Venable started her company, Roommates4Boomers, after a terrific experience sharing a home with a roommate after her midlife divorce. Seeing the need for a service to match roommates

both looking for a place to live and looking for someone to share their home, Karen has created a website where women can search for a living situation that suits their needs.

Widowed, divorced, never-married, childless — there are many reasons why boomers in their 50s, 60s and beyond will find themselves living on their own as they age.

Living with a roommate at midlife and beyond can be a challenge. Lifelong habits and rituals must be respected, even as relationships are built between virtual strangers. I would be interested in this idea if I was suddenly single after a lifetime of roommates and a husband, because I can imagine it would be difficult to live on my own after always having companionship. Searching for just the right situation would not be easy, but Roommates4Boomers would simplify it. With detailed information on the profile of each user, potential room-

mates can narrow down their choices. There are questions on topics ranging from cleanliness to political beliefs, with a 4-star rating for how important a topic is to the applicant. For example, I work at home, so I would prefer to have a roommate who goes to work each day, giving me the quiet I need to get my job done.

The boomer population is aging, and women may decide that living in a senior community is not what they want, but being alone isn't a good choice, either. Home sharing is an excellent compromise, ensuring companionship and security, especially if there is a health or personal emergency. With living expenses extremely high in some of the country's biggest cities, Roommates4Boomers offers the chance to stay in a beloved home while reducing the monthly costs.

*Roommates4Boomers is available in every state except North Dakota and Montana.*



### This Month's Employee All Stars



Raedel  
RN, MSN  
3 Years



Le Ann  
PT  
22 Years



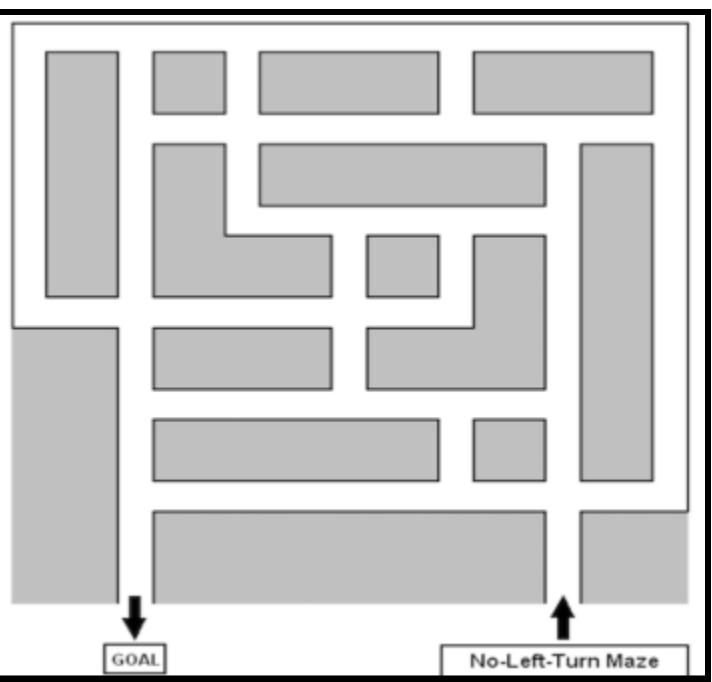
Luana  
RN  
21 Years



Sam  
COTA  
3 Years



Brandy  
RN  
3 Years



My doctor told me to  
spend at least one hour  
a day on the treadmill.



Heart Of Texas  
Network

At the Brownwood  
Chamber of Commerce



## Alzheimer's Support Group



Redstone Park  
Retirement & Assisted Living

2410 Songbird Circle, Brownwood - 325-643-9056

## 5 Dangerous Eldercare Myths

Phyllis Staff, Ph.D.

Myths associated with selecting quality nursing home care suggest quick and easy ways to identify quality care. In fact, relying on these myths can lead to disastrous results. I have identified a few of the most common myths in hopes of helping you avoid some of the problems commonly found in many nursing homes.

### 1. The Smell Test

You've heard it repeatedly: "The best way to determine the quality of care a nursing home provides is to be alert to bad odors when you visit the home."

It seldom, if ever, works. Why? Nursing home administrators have heard the very same advice. As a result, they are particularly sensitive to unpleasant odors in any area that might receive visitors. Almost all will do their best to remove offensive odors as quickly as possible, even when it means shirking their primary responsibility to their residents.

### 2. The Personal Recommendation

Recently, I heard a guest on a radio talk show state that the very best way to find great

nursing home care is to get recommendations from a friend. As with all myths, there is a grain of truth here, but you must check whether your friend has had extensive interactions with the nursing home recommended. Often that is not the case.

Last weekend I dealt with an emergency call from Jim, a reader who had placed his mother in a nursing home recommended by a friend. Although she was recuperating from a stroke, no nurse or aide checked on her condition for more than 14 hours. Jim discovered her in the morning with many cuts and bruises, her bed sheets soaked in blood. He was astonished that anyone would recommend such a poor care facility.

"My friend said her grandmother was in this particular nursing home," he reported. "So, I thought it would provide good care."

"How often does your friend visit her grandmother?" I asked.

"I didn't think to ask," he responded.

"And did you check the latest survey for that nursing home?"

"No," he answered. "I thought a personal recommendation was all I needed."

### 3. You Get What You Pay For

Nowhere is this statement less applicable than in elder care. In fact, I'd replace it with another shibboleth — "Buyer Beware." Our own research, encompassing more than 6000 nursing homes and more than 100 assisted living facilities shows no relationship between cost and quality of care. You may find quality care in an expensive facility, or you may not! Similarly, the fact that a facility is low-cost does not indicate whether you'll get poor, average, or quality care. You have to do your homework. Relying on price as the sole indicator of quality care can lead to disastrous results.

### 4. Adequate Staffing Equals Quality Care

A recent report by the Senate's Special Committee on Aging indicated that quality care for a single nursing home resident requires more than three hours each day of nursing and nursing aide time. However, statistical analysis of the latest federal database on nursing home deficiencies shows no relationship between quality of care and staffing levels.

What should you look for, then, in nursing home staffing levels?

There is a level below which nursing homes are so understaffed that quality care cannot be provided. I'd suggest that you not consider any home pro-

viding a level lower than two hours per day per resident. For levels greater than this, I'd focus not on the number of hours available for care but on the motivation of the staff who actually provide care. Those who are motivated to care for the elderly will do so. Those who are motivated only by a paycheck will probably provide shoddy care regardless of their numbers.

### 5. A Well-Known Chain Will Provide the Best Care

This is another myth that can lead to tragedy. Sometimes, well-known companies provide top-quality care. In other instances, however, a quick review of newspapers and magazines will show you companies with long records of legal troubles stemming from accusations of neglect and abuse. One such company has been sued simultaneously by several states' attorneys general.

How will you know? The company is not likely to tell you, so you won't know unless you take the time to look into the company's historical performance.

Now that you're aware of some of the more dangerous myths, what should you do to avoid a poor outcome? There is no substitute for your own personal investigation. With a little research, with personal visits to eldercare properties before you sign anything, you can avoid many of the difficulties that have come to those who relied on such myths.



## Labor Day: A Word Find

[www.DailyMesses.com](http://www.DailyMesses.com)

In honor of Labor Day today, here is a Word Find with different types of jobs! I tried to fit in as many as I could.

HINT: Spaces and punctuation are removed from words in the puzzle.



Accountant  
Architect  
Cashier  
Customer Service  
Dentist  
Engineer  
Garbage Collector  
Lawyer  
Mason  
Mover  
Painter  
Psychologist  
Teacher  
Truck Driver

Administrative Assistant  
Author  
Chef  
Dad  
Design  
Fire Fighter  
Grandparent  
Mail Delivery  
Mechanic  
Nanny  
Photographer  
Sales  
Telemarketer  
Waitress

Anesthesiologist  
Bus Driver  
Clerk  
Daily Messes  
Doctor  
Flight Attendant  
Janitor  
Manager  
Military  
News  
Plumber  
Security  
Translator

Archaeologist  
Carpenters  
Consultant  
Daycare  
Electricians  
Food Preparation  
Law Enforcement  
Marketing  
Mom  
Nurse  
President  
Surgeon  
Travel Agent





## 82-Year-Old Grandpa Goes Back to School, Becomes Classmates With Granddaughter

Marlisce Cepeda

Melanie Salazar, 18, recently started her freshman year at Palo Alto College in California. While starting college is a milestone in itself, her first year is particularly special since one of her classmates is none other than her grandfather, Rene Neira.

The 82-year-old returned to school to complete the last class he needs to get his associate's degree in economics. He told Buzzfeed News that he had attended St. Mary's

University in the '50s, but left after getting married and starting a family. But after Rene's wife died in 2009, he decided it was time to finally graduate. After he completes his associate's degree, Rene plans to get his bachelor's at the University of Texas at San Antonio.

Even though Melanie will only share one semester at college with her grandpa, she's making the most of being able to learn alongside her "best friend." She told Buzzfeed that they sometimes meet for lunch

and head to their classes together. (How adorable are they?!) "It's been pretty awesome. I know it's only going to be for one semester, but I'm going to cherish that while I can," she said.

After Melanie posted a picture of her and her grandpa on their first day at college, the post quickly went viral, and Rene's determination has become an inspiration to many. But no one is more inspired by his story than his own granddaughter. "It makes me realize the im-



portance of getting an education like my grandpa...so I can accomplish something great like him," she said.

Speaking to Buzzfeed about his newfound viral fame, Rene said, "I'm not trying to inspire Melanie, or anybody. I'm glad that's what it's doing, but I'm just doing what I've always wanted to do."

I used to work as a bagger at a small, family owned grocery store while I was in high school. One day a cheerful old woman came through the checkout with a cart full of groceries.

She asked me to double bag the groceries and make each bag as heavy as I could.

A bit of a strange request, sure, but anything that broke up the monotony of the day was welcomed. I started packing her bags with twice as many items as usual.

The customer interrupted me to say: "You can surely fit more than that, right? Make 'em real heavy for me honey."

I raised an eyebrow but carried on, making the bags even heavier and more loaded than before.

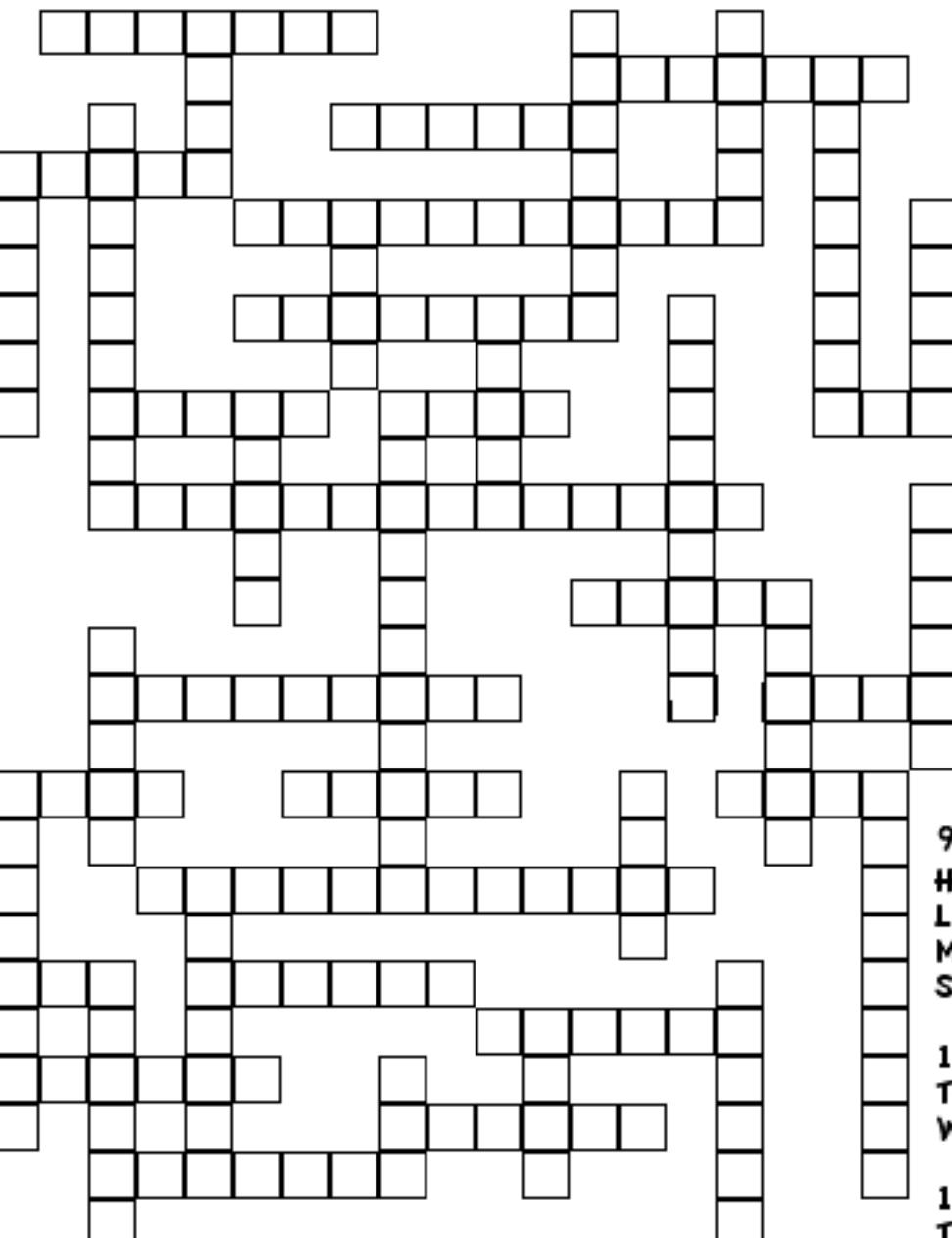
I managed to load her entire cart into three fairly heavy bags and loaded them in to the car. Even I struggled to lift just ONE of the bags.

Then the woman turns to me and says: "In case you're wondering - I just had a fight with my husband and it's my turn to pick up the groceries. Its also HIS turn to unload the car."

Then she winked at me, got in her car, and drove away.



## Autumn Fill In



### **Word List**

#### **3 Letters**

Bus  
Car  
Red

#### **4 Letters**

Cold  
Cool  
Fall  
Loam  
Mice  
Time  
Wind  
Wood

#### **5 Letters**

Boots  
Brown  
Chill  
Cloud  
Fairs  
Geese  
Rainy  
Skate  
Trees

#### **6 Letters**

Apples  
Autumn  
Grains  
Leaves  
Orange  
Raking  
School  
Season  
Slacks  
Yellow

#### **7 Letters**

Harvest  
Hunting  
October  
Sweater  
Walking  
December  
Football  
November

#### **9 Letters**

Halloween  
Labour Day  
Migration  
September

#### **11 Letters**

Temperature  
World Series

#### **12 Letters**

Thanksgiving

#### **14 Letters**

Remembrance Day



## Women Of The Golden Age Of Hollywood

Irish Tinker, funtrivia.com

1. This on screen siren was discovered while sipping a soda at a drug store counter. She became known as "The Sweater Girl". Her off screen life was filled with scandal, she was married 7 times, and her daughter was involved in the fatal stabbing of the actress's lover, Johnny Stompanato. Who is she?

- Lana Turner
- Jean Harlow
- Betty Grable
- Mae West

2. At age 19 she met her 44 year-old on screen leading man and knew he would be her leading man off screen as well. The pair married in 1945, had two children, and made four movies together. Who is she?

- Rita Hayworth
- Ingrid Bergman
- Marlene Dietrich

3. This striking red-head was one of WWII's most popular pin-up girls. She was married 5 times including a marriage to Orson Welles. She once said "Men fall in love with Gilda, they wake up next to me." Who is she?

- Lauren Bacall
- Claudette Colbert
- Lucille Ball
- Rita Hayworth

4. This Paris born actress made her acting debut in 1923 on Broadway. She is best known for her role as Ellie Andrews in "It Happened One Night". When filming for this movie she went on the record as saying that it was the worst movie ever made. That role won her her first Oscar! Who is she?

- Marlene Dietrich
- Claudette Colbert

- Katharine Hepburn
- Ingrid Bergman

5. This actress played a waitress, she played Queen Elizabeth, and every kind of woman in between. A certain feature on this woman inspired a 1982 hit for singer Kim Carnes. Who is she?

- Lauren Bacall
- Bette Davis
- Mae West
- Jean Harlow

6. This actress was the highest paid actress of the early 1930s. She was known for her one liners filled with innuendos such as "I was Snow White but I drifted." The title of her autobiography is "Goodness Had Nothing To Do With It." Who is she?

- Rita Hayworth
- Ava Gardner
- Rosalind Russell
- Mae West

7. This starlet was known for her wise-cracking roles. In 1972 she was awarded the Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award for her extensive charity work. One of her more notable characters proclaimed "Life is a banquet and most poor suckers are starving to death." Who is she?

- Rosalind Russell
- Mae West
- Rita Hayworth
- Betty Grable

8. Born the daughter of a North Carolina cotton farmer, this green eyed beauty had a contract with MGM by age 18. She was married three times - Mickey Rooney, Artie Shaw, and Frank Sinatra. All three unions ended in divorce. Who is she?

- Ava Gardner
- Marlene Dietrich
- Judy Garland
- Carole Lombard

9. This mid-westerner moved to Hollywood at the age of 16 and died just ten years later. She was married three times. She is remembered for saying "Would you be terribly shocked if I slipped into something more comfortable?" in the 1930 film "Hell's Angels". Who is she?

- Mae West
- Lana Turner
- Claudette Colbert
- Jean Harlow

10. This daughter of a doctor and suffragette was born in Hartford, Connecticut in 1907. She was taught to always speak her mind. She won her first of four Oscars for her role in "Morning Glory". Who is she?

- Betty Grable



- Katharine Hepburn
  - Ginger Rogers
  - Claudette Colbert
11. This woman was the first actress to ever win an Oscar and an Emmy. In the 1990s she hit the headlines when her grown daughter (whom the actress always claimed she had adopted abroad) came forward with evidence that she was actually the daughter of the actress and Clark Gable. Who is this actress?
- Lana Turner
  - Carole Lombard
  - Loretta Young
  - Ingrid Bergman
12. This Stockholm born actress is quoted as saying "I prayed to God 'please don't let me have a dull life.' And he obviously heard me." She made the headlines when she had an out of wedlock pregnancy. She won three Oscars one of which was for her role in "Anastasia". Who is she?
- Katharine Hepburn
  - Barbara Stanwyck
  - Marlene Dietrich
  - Ingrid Bergman
13. This Berlin born actress was known for her long, sexy legs. She was studying violin when a wrist injury caused her to switch to acting. Refusing Hitler's request to return to Germany to make pro Nazi films she instead toured with the USO and rallied the troops. She was nominated once for an Oscar, for the 1930 film "Morocco". Who is she?
- Marlene Dietrich
  - Carole Lombard
  - Ingrid Bergman
  - **Greta Garbo**
14. This blonde actress was the star of such movies as "Mr. and Mrs. Smith" and "True Confession". She died at the age of 33 in a plane crash. She was married twice; to actors William Powell and Clark Gable. Who is she?
- Loretta Young
  - Carole Lombard
  - Barbara Stanwyck
  - Lana Turner
15. This actress was the epitome of apple pies, clam bakes, the girl next door and every other All-American thing you can think of. Her over the shoulder pin-up was the most popular pin-up of WWII. Little did the troops know that she posed facing away from the camera to hide her pregnancy. Who is she?
- Jean Harlow
  - Rita Hayworth
  - Ava Gardner
  - Betty Grable
- ANSWERS:**
1. Lana Turner was born in February, 1921 in Wallace, Idaho. She starred in over 65 movies including "Love Finds Andy Hardy" and "Calling Dr. Kildare". Turner died in 1995 of throat cancer.
  2. Lauren Bacall met Humphrey Bogart on the set of "To Have and Have Not" in 1944. The pair married in 1945
  3. Rita Hayworth was born October 17, 1918 in Brooklyn, NY. She was best known for her role in "Gilda". She died in 1987 after a battle with Alzheimer's disease.
  4. Claudette Colbert was born Lily Chauchoin in 1903. She went on to make over 60 films. She died in Barbados in 1996 after suffering a stroke.
  5. Bette Davis was born in Lowell, MA in 1908. She made over 100 movies including such titles as "All About Eve" and "Jezebel". She died in 1989 of breast cancer.
  6. Mae West was born in New York in 1893. She's most well known for "She Done Him Wrong". She died in 1980 from a stroke.
  7. Rosalind Russell was born in 1907 in Waterbury, CT. She is best known for her role in "Mame" and "His Girl Friday". She died of breast cancer in 1976.
  8. Born in 1922, Ava Gardner was the youngest of seven children. She was discovered when her photographer brother-in-law put her photo up in his studio window. Gardner died in England in 1990 of pneumonia.
  9. Jean Harlow was born in Kansas City Missouri in 1911. She died in 1937 of uremic poisoning brought on by acute nephritis.
  10. Katharine Hepburn was born in 1907. She went on to win four Oscars for "Morning Glory", "On Golden Pond", "Guess Who's Coming To Dinner", and "The Lion In Winter".
  11. Loretta Young who was sometimes credited as Grechen Young was born in Utah in 1913. She died of ovarian cancer in 2000. Her daughter, Judy Lewis, published her biography in 1994: "Uncommon Knowledge".
  12. Ingrid Bergman was born on August 29, 1915. She died on her 67 birthday due to complications from breast cancer surgery.
  13. Marlene Dietrich was born in December, 1901. She died in 1992 of kidney failure.
  14. Carol Lombard was born on 6th October 1908 in Indiana. She died on 16th January 1942 when her plane crashed into Table Rock Mountain, Nevada
  15. Betty Grable was born in St. Louis in 1916. She died in 1973 in California of lung cancer.

A clerk at a butcher shop stands five feet ten inches tall and wears size 13 sneakers. What does he weigh?



## Examining Your Own Attitudes About Age

by Virginia Bola, PsyD

A common complaint of the mature is that, in American society, there is far too much focus on youth. We collectively spend a fortune on attempting to look younger and fighting the natural results of gravity, sun exposure, and the poisons that have seeped into our bodies through years of unhealthy eating, drinking, smoking, lack of exercise, and self-neglect.

"Getting old is the pits" we don't want to mumble as we get up slowly from the floor, recalling how we used to spring upright without a second thought. We feel more secure in lower heels and often forget the principles of good posture, our shoulders rounding forward into an aging stoop.

We walk past a shop window and are shocked by the figure we see: "That can't be me. It's my mother (father)!"

We can fight the biological ravages of aging only so

far. Depending upon our budget, we can buy anti-aging creams, vitamins, cover-ups, special makeup, have HGH injections at a few thousand dollars a shot, or a complete makeover by an exclusive (and expensive) plastic surgeon. Some of us, despite the desire for eternal youth, settle into our senior years overweight, wrinkled, stooped over, but content.

If we have limits on what we can do to look physically young, we have an unlimited ability to think young. If we progress into maturity with a positive attitude about aging, we can make sure that we are as productive, attractive, and youthful as our bodies allow. No, we will not have the taut unlined skin of our teens and twenties, nor the athletic energy we recall so fondly, but we will maintain our self-respect, our pride, and a vital sense of our own value.

How many of the following negative attitudes have you already unconsciously

adopted?

1. "Getting older means I can't be active anymore."

In a limited sense this is true. If you performed heavy labor as a youth, it is unlikely that you now want to lift hundreds of pounds throughout the day. If you stood on your feet waiting tables or in retail, your feet and legs will warn you to cut back. However, with the additional free time you gain as children leave home and you look forward to, or move into, retirement, you have the opportunity to expand your activities which was impossible when you were over-committed to work and family needs. Daily walking will keep your joints lubricated, your cardiovascular system healthy, and your mood upbeat. Buy a pedometer and gradually increase the distance you walk. Practice

good posture by walking tall as if there were a string in your head pulling you up, up, up. Check out your community for swimming classes, tennis lessons, tai chi, or yoga. All will leave you feeling younger, more vibrant, with little chance of injury. If you have long participated in vigorous physical activity, such as jogging, aerobics, softball, or racquetball - keep doing it. There is no reason to cut back on activities you enjoy until they become absolutely medically contraindicated, if ever.

2. "I get a headache when I have to read something technical or try to figure out my computer. I just don't concentrate as well as I used to."

The human brain is amazing and inspiring. Its intricacy and ability set us apart from the other creatures of our planet. It has the capability to keep functioning, and growing,



## Examining Your Own Attitudes About Age (cont)

throughout our life cycle. Only when we choose to ignore it, or fail to use it, does it slip into dormancy and slowly wither. Nurture your mind as you did your children. When they thought they would "never get it" at school, you encouraged them and stuck with them until they mastered their assignments. Relish new mental challenges and give yourself that same patient coaching. You may need to read technical information several times before you really understand it. Spend free hours exploring your computer and researching what it does and how it can best work for you. Work on crossword puzzles and word games to maintain your memory and expand your vocabulary. Learn about a new subject which has always interested you but which you never had time to thoroughly explore: history, astronomy, holistic health, genealogy, horse race handicapping, geography, anything that catches your fancy. The goal is not the subject

you study but the mental exercise it affords which will, in turn, improve your mood, provide the daily excitement of new discoveries, and allow you to feel productive and valuable to your prime audience: yourself.

2. "It's time to start acting my age."

What does that mean? Shall we allow our age to be determined by an arbitrary, man-made calendar or by how we feel? Some of us seem "old" by fifty. We give up trying new things, we slow down our activity, we stop thinking creatively. Many of us at sixty or seventy feel as we have always done and are shocked when we look closely in a mirror and see that we have changed. How could our appearance be so different when we still see ourselves as young and vibrant as ever? If we can act the age we feel, calendar age no longer matters. If we love to dance, should we stop because of a date on a calendar? If we like to

work, should we be forced to retire when we have so much to offer? If we feel at our best in shorter skirts and high heels, must we start changing our wardrobe to present the image of a dowager? If we like to play rough and tumble sports, should we move to the sidelines and let the "young set" take over? Are we doomed to wear shawls and scarves and sensible shoes when we don't feel any more "sensible" than we did for the past 50 years? No way! Let our inner attitude shine in public as brightly as it burns within our minds.

Human beings have few limitations. The limits that exist are often self-imposed. A positive attitude about yourself, your refusal to allow the calendar to stifle your physical and mental reach, and frequent self-examination of the myths of aging to which you may be falling prey, can transform the destructive social concept of aging into bright new opportunities for change, growth, and fulfillment.

A man is driving along a highway and sees a rabbit jump out across the middle of the road. He swerves to avoid hitting it, but unfortunately the rabbit jumps right in front of the car

The driver, a sensitive man as well as an animal lover, pulls over and gets out to see what has become of the rabbit. Much to his dismay, the rabbit is dead. The driver feels so awful that he begins to cry

A beautiful blonde woman driving down the highway sees a man crying on the side of the road and pulls over. She steps out of the car and asks the man what's wrong. "I feel terrible," ! he explains, "I accidentally hit this rabbit and killed it."

The blonde says, "Don't worry." She runs to her car and pulls out a spray can. She walks over to the limp, dead rabbit, bends down, and sprays the contents onto the rabbit

The rabbit jumps up, waves its paw at the two of them and hops off down the road. Ten feet away the rabbit stops, turns around and waves again, he hops down the road another 10 feet, turns and waves, hops another ten feet, turns and waves, and repeats this again and again and again, until he hops out of sight

The man is astonished. He runs over to the woman and demands, "What is in that can? What did you spray on that rabbit?"

The woman turns the can around so that the man can read the label. It says: "Hair Spray - Restores life to dead hair, and adds permanent wave."

## Parkinson's Support Group

### OAK RIDGE MANOR

2501 Morris Sheppard Dr., Brownwood, TX



NATIONAL PARKINSON FOUNDATION

For More Information Contact Tina at 325-642-5305

## Feeling Forgetful? Try These Simple Steps to Boost Your Everyday Recall

stayingsharp.aarp.org

Can't find your keys? Misplaced your wallet? Blanked on your new neighbor's name? When we fail to pay close attention, the memories we create are weak and we sometimes have difficulty retrieving them later. So how can you eliminate or greatly reduce such occurrences? Try these seven strategies.

### 1. Remember names

Look, snap and connect, suggests psychiatrist Gary Small, director of the University of California, Los Angeles Longevity Center. When you meet someone, really look at her and listen to her name - too often, we don't pay attention. Now make a mental picture (snap!) of her name and face, and mentally connect them: That's Sandy, lying on a sandy beach. Just met a Mr. Paulson? Picture him shaking hands with Paul McCartney and his son. Our brains are hardwired to remember visual images, Small says. An-

other tip: Use your new acquaintance's name when you say goodbye.

### 2. Get everything on your list

Make up a story using the items you need - the more absurd and dramatic, the better, says neurologist Majid Fotuhi, medical director of the Neuro-Grow Brain Fitness Center in McLean, Va. . "A chicken was eating cornflakes when a car burst through the wall. A monkey was driving, throwing oranges out the window; he honked wildly as he drove off a cliff into a lake filled with milk ..." The narrative will take you from item to item until you reach the end of your list.

### 3. Recall online passwords

Computer experts have a variety of tricks for this. One good one: Create a template that you personalize for each site. For instance, you might start with a word-number combo

that's meaningful to you - say, Binky11, the name of your first dog and your age when you got him. Tack on the initials or first two letters of the website that needs a password: FN for First National Bank, for instance. You'll remember, but a hacker will never guess.

### 4. Find your keys

Sometimes a good memory has more to do with organizational skills than brainpower. If you regularly find yourself searching for your keys, put a basket in the entryway by the door or mount a hook on the kitchen wall. Toss your keys or hang them up as soon as you get home. Routine is a friend to memory; every time you get the keys from the basket, you help reinforce the critical neural connections in your brain.

### 5. Come up with the movie

Chances are you've experienced the "tip of the tongue" phenomenon, in which you know the name of the movie or the word you want but can't quite recall it. Take advantage of the fact that your brain files memories into "neighborhoods," says psychiatrist Small. Can you call up the star of the movie? Use that for a mental picture that will bring up the movie's name next time you want it. Small thinks of Jeremy Irons playing dead with a bunch of rings on his fingers - and

no longer forgets Dead Ringers. The advice Small generally gives: When you are experiencing a tip-of-the-tongue moment, jot down as many associations as you can to the word or title you are searching for. If you recall the word later - as often happens - immediately write it down next to your associations. If you can't recall it later on your own, simply ask someone for help.

### 6. Know where you parked

Use Small's look-snap-connect technique to keep from wandering around the mall's parking lot searching for your car. Step 1 happens as soon as you park: Look to see what section you're in. Step 2: Create a mental snapshot. If you're in section 3D, imagine three dogs chasing each other around your car. Even simpler: Repeat the section number aloud a few times. "The biggest reason we don't remember is that we don't pay attention," Small says.

Never miss a birthday Sure, you can use mental strategies to help track friends' birthdays, but sometimes it makes sense to use technology as part of your memory bank. Facebook will send you an email or a text message reminding you of coming birthdays. Similarly, use your phone's calendar to set up an alert for appointments - you can set it for the morning of the appointment or a short time before it. - Lisa Davis



## When Are You Planning to "Get Old"?

Susan Dunn, M. A.

When are you planning to get old? According to a recent study, you'd better move the date back.

"Contrary to common belief, many people can live well into their 90s without becoming cognitively impaired, study findings indicate." - Neurology 2003; 60: 477-480

But statistics are statistics.

Let me give you some examples from my own coaching practice.

- I have a client who is 72 who's a real estate coach. One of his coaching clients just made her goal, dou-

bling her income to \$100,000 this year. She's a real estate agent and she plans to do it again next year with his help. Her age? She's 80.

- I have a client who says she's having the best time of her life. Her age? She's 78. Her husband? He's 80.
- I have someone who designs websites for my marketing clients. She's the best web designer I've found. Her age? 58.
- I have another client who went from ground zero to fluent in German in the last 3 years. Her age? She's 59.

Most of my clients are over the age of 55 and they are all busy learning new things. The layperson best at the computer I know is 58 and learned it all in the past two years. She keyboards at 100 wpm.

And what's the secret to all this? Al Siebert, Ph.D., has studied resilient seniors for 30 years and has defined some of the characteristics. Among them are:

- Retain a childlike curiosity
- Keep learning
- If you have a victim mentality, replace it with something better that gets you what you want. (Try my Optimism course (<http://www.susandunn.cc/courses.htm> ).
- Learn to tell your 'survivor' stories so they inspire others (don't whine)
- Find meaning in your adversity. If Victor Frank did, you can.
- Stay connected. The single worst thing for your health, mental and physical, is isolation,



and you can be isolated in a room-full of people if you aren't connecting. Isolation is worse for your health than obesity, smoking or high blood pressure.

- Have a sense of humor, remain playful.

A lot of this has to do with your attitude and your emotional intelligence. Living long and well means going through lots of changes, and, alas, some adversity. We build resilience by going through hard times and one of the keys is staying flexible and learning.

According to Siebert, individuals who die in their 5th and 6th decade have this trajectory: study, then work, then leisure. Resilient seniors have combined all three throughout their lifetime.

Key to all this is learning optimism. Optimists live 19% longer, enjoy better health, are more likely to fulfill their potential, and enjoy life more. Would you be willing to trade some of the ways you think now in order to gain those things just mentioned? If so, learn optimism.

When are you planning to "get old"? Apparently it's up to you, and you can get rid of any old stereotypes you've heard.



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