

CITES AND QUOTES ON OLD AGE AND WELL-BEING

1. BENJAMIN DISRAELI (1804-1881), twice Prime Minister of England said and I quote "Youth is a blunder; manhood is a struggle and old age is a regret"-unquote.

But in today's modern world it is somewhat different: youth is also the fountain of power, manhood is the lesson of life and old age is an opportunity never seen before. Many of us have remained so busy that we never lived well but only survived so far. Use therefore now any available opportunity specially in old age to relax and ponder how to live and be happy.

2. OLD IS GOLD BUT NEW IS ALSO GOLD

Those of us who remember will have lived in an era that no one will ever experience. Ethical living, simple food, physical labour, clean air, joint families & committed friends gave us wellbeing & happiness. In the modern new era, advances in medical sciences & socioeconomic progress are doing the same good to us. But let us not strive for a society lost on values and where pizza reaches before an ambulance or where sim card is free but the onion costs Rs. 50/- per Kg.

3. UNLESS SERIOUS STEPS ARE TAKEN, ongoing rapid ageing of population will greatly multiply the elderly problems of

Ageism, **B**oredom, **C**oping difficulty, **D**epression, **E** motional marginalisation, **F**alling status, **G**enerational disconnect, **H**ealth problems, **I**nsecurity, & **J**oblessness. Therefore, all stakeholders i.e. societies, families, communities, governments & elderly individuals themselves need to come together to conquer these problems.

4. MULTITASKING IS STRESSOR, NOT STRESS BUSTER

"Killing two birds with one stone" is no longer a proverbial achievement because in the modern busy world, all pervasive addicting habit of multitasking often gives a similar sense of accomplishment.

Greeting visitors, answering phones & attending to computer simultaneously in office or watching TV, surfing the internet while eating at home or talking on phone, yelling at others while driving on street is every task half done. Contrary to belief, a lifetime of multitasking is anti-productive, anti-performance & a stressor. Overuse of technology can cause E-MENTIA, a term that encompasses stress, anxiety, depression, insomnia & premature ageing. Let us therefore ensure our well-being by converting ourselves to mindful uni-taskers at least outside our office. The smarter way to do many things is to prepare well & do

only one thing at a time with full attentiveness. “By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fall” (Benjamin Franklin).

5. ABSTRACT ENEMIES OF AGEING.

In the war on ageing, abstract enemies stare at old age but when power of robust mental health stares at them, many of these make a quick retreat. Some ABSTRACTS are: *A*pprehension *B*ereavement sorrows, *S*cepticism, *T*orpidity, *R*eluctance, *A*lienation, *C*ynicism, *T*ermination, *F*ear from the unknown.

6. HUMAN CHARACTERISTICS AND WELLBEING

Denial of perennial youth by nature and brevity of remaining life paves the way for strengthening many human characteristics in old age that are conducive to one's mental health and wellbeing.

There is evidence that human characteristics like F orgiveness, O ptimism, R epentance (R for resilience also), G ratitude, I ntrospection, Veneration (including obedience & worship), E mpathy (or compassion) impart health benefits and wellbeing.

7. TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR HAPPY AGEING.

Passion of work should be so strong that you and others would not know whether you are working or playing and thereby deriving happiness.

Hobbying or volunteering to any of the countless hobbies of interest is satisfying in old age.

Meticulousness promotes prudence, persistence and perfection and therefore satisfaction.

Zest keeps the elderly continuing to be amazed. Life-long repeated feelings of amazement is a source of joy.

Networking not only with friends and relatives but with younger generations gives happiness.

Nostalgia, the good memories of the past are always a source of pleasure.

Self-caring of personal hygiene and health provides a sense of satisfaction.

Heed the head to feel the sense of happiness and therefore mind needs to remain sharp by constant mental activity.

Love and serve by helping, caring, teaching and empathizing. Service to other is service to oneself.

Ensure the future by saving to stand by yourself in old age and by only bequeathing your property, not parting with it.

8. RAISE YOUR physical quotient (PQ) by healthy life styles, intelligence quotient (IQ) by life-long learning, emotional quotient (EQ) by social skills, spiritual quotient (SQ) by community service and thereby discover the key to a luminous body and a happy mind.

9. HEALTHY AGEING PRINCIPLES

Based on five Hindi words beginning with letter S (English translation in brackets).

Satvic bhojan (Traditional simple diet) means natural, pure diet containing foods based on Ayurveda and yoga and includes freedom from any substance abuse.

Shramta (Physical labor) means any form of physical activity or exercise.

Sakriyata (Remaining active) means participating in any paid or unpaid work including hobbying and recreation.

Samparkta (Social interaction) means any form of social involvement or social enrichment and avoidance of all forms of aloofness and loneliness.

Sadacharita (Good conduct) means practicing positive attitudes, righteousness and moral values and these can be facilitated by yoga and meditation and other methods.

10. CHANGES OF AGEING

Someone asked one of his friends who had crossed 60 & was heading to 70. What sort of change he was feeling in him? He sent the following very interesting lines.

After loving my parents, my siblings, my spouse, my children, my friends, now I have started loving myself.

I just realized that I am not "Atlas". The world does not rest on my shoulders.

I now stopped bargaining with vegetables & fruits vendors. After all, a few Rupees more is not going to burn a hole in my pocket but it might help the poor fellow save for his daughter's school fees.

I pay the taxi driver without waiting for the change. The extra money might bring a smile on his face. After all he is toiling much harder for a living than me

I stopped telling the elderly that they've already narrated that story many times.

After all, the story makes them walk down the memory lane & relive the past.

I have learnt not to correct people even when I know they are wrong. After all, the onus of making everyone perfect is not on me. Peace is more precious than perfection.

I give compliments freely & generously. After all it's a mood enhancer not only for the recipient, but also for me

I have learnt not to bother about a crease or a spot on my shirt. After all, personality speaks louder than appearances.

I walk away from people who don't value me. After all, they might not know my worth, but I do.

I remain cool when someone plays dirty politics to outrun me in the rat race. After all, I am not a rat & neither am I in any race.

I am learning not to be embarrassed by my emotions. After all, it's my emotions that make me human.

I have learnt that its better to drop the ego than to break a relationship. After all, my ego will keep me aloof whereas with relationships I will never be alone.

I have learnt to live each day as if it's the last. After all, it might be the last.

I am doing what makes me happy. After all, I am responsible for my happiness, and I owe it to me.

11. POWER OF MUSIC

Sound came to the world before the man arrived & over the centuries, man appreciated, realized & converted it to the wonder of present day music.

Music is not simply an entertainment but it can help improving many disorders like stress, anxiety, depression, dementia & even stroke & Parkinsonism through its influence on our attention, mood, emotions, memory & cognition. It may act as an immune booster also. No wonder, some countries hire music therapists for hospitals, day care centers, OPDs, psychiatric institutions, correctional facilities & centers for de-addiction, rehabilitation, respite & palliative care etc. One may therefore ponder to harness this power of music through professional guidance.

12. DOCTORS PLEASE

For holistic well-being & health, not only diseases but symptoms of ageing process also need to be cared for.

In the elderly, some of the DISEASES that can occur are (alphabetically): **A**lzheimer's disease, **B**rain stroke or paralytic stroke, **C**ancer, **D**iabetes, **E**ssential high BP, **F**railty (weight loss, gait problem, fatigue), **G**eriatric infections, **H**ear disease, **I**njuries & falls.

In the elderly during ageing, some of the SYMPTOMS of ageing also can occur both in the presence or absence of diseases are (alphabetically): **A**ches & pains, **B**lurred or reduced vision, **C**onstipation & difficulty in passing stool, **D**epression & loneliness, **E**xhaustion & reduced fitness, **F**orgetfulness even without Alzheimer's disease, **G**as in stomach or flatulence, **H**earing difficulty, **I**nsomnia or disturbed sleep.

13. Unconsciously focusing on others' weaknesses & mistakes is a barrier to my own sense of well-being because the more I develop the habit of noticing goodness and only holding on to goodness in others, the more my own sense of well-being will rise.

14. If anyone has done good to you, keep this memory for ever, like writing on stone and not writing on sand where it may disappear by wind. You will feel happy and on repaying that debt, you will feel satisfied.

15. Most people say that as you grow old, you have to give up things, I think you get old because you give up things."

Senator Theodore F. Green at 87, American politician

16. "Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter."

Mark Twain, American writer

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