

# Ageing Gracefully

Quotations from  
the archives of  
Dr Lionel Hartley



Inside every older person is a younger person wondering what the heck happened.

- Cora Harvey Armstrong

For the first half of your life, people tell you what you should do; for the second half, they tell you what you should have done.

- Richard Needham

Birthdays are good for you.

The more you have, the longer you live.

- Anon. Cited in You've Got Joke Mail by David Ludwick p206

The mind that is active stays together.

- Anonymous - (Based on "The family that prays together, stays together"

- Anon)

As I grow older, I pay less attention to what men say. I just watch what they do.

- Andrew Carnegie

Age mellows some people; others it makes rotten.

Old age isn't so bad when you consider the alternative.

- Maurice Chevalier

Middle age is when your broad mind and your narrow waste change places.

- Dr Lionel Hartley, FreEzine Magazine

Men grow old. Pearls grow yellow. There is no cure for it.

- Chinese proverb

The spiritual eyesight improves as the physical eyesight declines.

- Plato

Wisdom doesn't necessarily come with age.  
Sometimes age just shows up all by itself.

- Tom Wilson

### How To Stay Young

1. Throw out nonessential numbers. This includes age, weight, and height. Let the doctors worry about them. That is why you pay them.
2. Keep only cheerful friends. The grouches pull you down.
3. Keep learning. Learn more about the computer, crafts, gardening, whatever. Never let the brain idle. "An idle mind is the devil's workshop." And the devil's name is Alzheimer's.
4. Enjoy the simple things



Continued ...

5. Laugh often, long and loud. Laugh until you gasp for breath.
6. The tears happen. Endure, grieve, and move on. The only person, who is with us our entire life, is ourselves. Be alive while you are alive.
7. Surround yourself with what you love, whether it's family, pets, keepsakes, music, plants, hobbies, whatever... Your home is your refuge.
8. Cherish your health: If it is good, preserve it. If it is unstable, improve it. If it is beyond what you can improve, get help.
9. Don't take guilt trips. Take a trip to the mall, even to the next county; to a foreign country but not to where the guilt is.
10. Tell the people you love that you love them, at every opportunity.

Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.

- Anonymous

Old age comes at a bad time.

- San Banducci

The time to begin most things is ten years ago.

- Mignon McLaughlin



Some people try to turn back their odometers. Not me, I want people to know "Why" I look this way. I've traveled a long way and some of the roads weren't paved.

- Anonymous

When you are dissatisfied and would like to go back to youth, think of Algebra.

- Anonymous

You know you are getting old when everything either dries up or leaks.

- Anonymous

I don't know how I got over the hill without getting to the top.

- Anonymous

One of the many things no one tells you about aging is that it is such a nice change from being young.

- Anonymous

Ah, being young is beautiful, but being old is comfortable.

- Anonymous

Old age is when former classmates are so gray and wrinkled and bald, they don't recognize you.

- Anonymous

If you don't learn to laugh at trouble, you won't have anything to laugh at when you are old.

- Anonymous



First you forget names, and then you forget faces. Then you forget to pull up your zipper. It's worse when you forget to pull it down.

- Anonymous

Long ago when men cursed and beat the ground with sticks, it was called witchcraft. Today, it's called golf.

- Anon. Cited in You've Got Joke Mail by David Ludwick p199, 200



Old age is the most unexpected of all the things that happen to a man.

- Leon Trotsky

Intellectual blemishes, like facial ones, grow more prominent with age.

- François de la Rochefoucauld

"I intend to die young, as late in life as possible!

- Dr Lionel Hartley

In spite of illness, in spite even of the archenemy sorrow, one can remain alive long past the usual date of disintegration if one is unafraid of change, insatiable in intellectual curiosity, interested in big things, and happy in a small way.

- Edith Wharton

Age is an ugly thing, and it goes on getting worse.

- Diana Cooper

The gardener's rule applies to youth and age:  
When young "sow wild oats," but when old, grow sage.

- H. J. Byron

(Elsewhere someone has said, "My wild  
oats have turned to shredded wheat.")



Our church has a custom that people celebrating birthdays come to the front of the auditorium. There they give an offering in thankfulness for life, while the congregation sings "Happy Birthday."

Sometimes, rather than go forward, shy people give an anonymous offering to the Sunday school director. One Sunday, the director came forward and proclaimed, "I have here an ominous birthday offering."

A grey-haired man spoke up, "Aren't they all?"

- Anita Heistand, Galena, Kans. Christian Reader, "Lite Fare."

To me, old age is always fifteen years older than I am.

- Bernard Baruch

Consider well the proportion of things. It is better to be a young June bug, than an old bird of paradise.

- Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens)

Life is half spent before we know what it is.

- Herbert, 1651

Middle age . . . when a man is at the peak of his yearning power.

- Wall Stress Journal

Life is a long lesson in humility.

- James M. Barrie

Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards.

- Soren Kierkegaard

Is it not strange that desire should so many years outlive performance.

- Shakespeare, 2 Henry IV 3.4.283

Few people know how to be old.

- François de la Rochefoucauld

The ageing process could be slowed down considerably if it was handled by Parliament or a committee.

- Anonymous

God gives nuts to those with no teeth.

- Arabic proverb

If I'd known how old I was going to be I'd have taken better care of myself.

- Adolph Zukor (on approaching his hundredth birthday)

In youth we run into difficulties; in old age difficulties run into us.

- Josh Billings

The follies which a man regrets most in his life are those which he didn't commit when he had the opportunity.

- Helen Rowland

The first half of life consists of the capacity to enjoy without the chance;  
the last half consists of the chance without the capacity.

- Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens)

The older we get, the fewer things seem worth waiting in line for.

- Anon. Cited in You've Got Joke Mail by David Ludwick

Find an aim in life before you run out of ammunition.

- Arnold Glasow

Never too old to learn

- Latin proverb

If youth knew; if age could.

- Henri Estienne



A man must have grown old and lived long in order to see how short life is.

- Arthur Schopenhauer, *Parerga und Paralipomena*

We get too soon old and too late smart.

- Pennsylvania Dutch proverb

As we grow older we grow both more foolish and wiser at the same time.

- François de la Rochefoucauld, *Maximes*

By the time we've made it, we've had it.

- Malcolm Forbes, *The Capitalist Handbook*

Ageing: Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.

- Anon. Cited in *You've Got Joke Mail* by David Ludwick



At twenty we worry about what others think of us;  
At forty we don't care about what others think of us;  
At sixty we discover they haven't been thinking about us at all.  
- Anon

Life is available to anyone no matter what age. All you have to do is grab it.  
- Art Carney, Actor

*Enigiemand wat argumenteer dat ons nie rede nodig het nie, moet probeer om dit te wys sonder om rede te gebruik.*

- Lionel D C Hartley, Rhodes Huis (Rhodes House), SA Press, 1977  
(Anyone who argues that we don't need reason should try to show it without using reason.)

Common sense is the collection of prejudices acquired by age eighteen.  
- Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

What a wonderful life I've had! I only wish I'd realized it sooner.

- Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette, Cited in Age Doesn't Matter Unless You're a Cheese, by Kathryn and Ross Petras

The main thing wrong with the younger generation is that we aren't in it.

- Anonymous

"Seen it all, done it all, can't remember most of it."

- Anonymous

"Don't worry about avoiding temptation - as you grow older, it will avoid you."

- Anonymous

"By the time a man is wise enough to watch his step, he's too old to go anywhere."

- Anonymous

"It's hard to be nostalgic when you can't remember anything."

- Anonymous

"Four-poster bed, 101 years old. Perfect for antique lover."

- Anonymous advertisement

"Have several very old dresses from grandmother in beautiful condition."

- Anonymous

"At my age, flowers scare me."

- Anonymous

"What is youth except a man or a woman before it is ready or fit to be seen?"

- Evelyn Waugh - English novelist & satirist (1903 - 1966)

"The 5 B's of being (age) fifty are: Broad, Bald, Bi-focals, Bunions and Bad Breath."

- Dr Desmond Ford, The Feast and the Fast (radio broadcast) Part 4

"If you live to be one hundred, you've got it made. Very few people die past that age."

- Anonymous

An older gentleman was on the operating table awaiting surgery and he insisted that his son, a renowned surgeon, perform the operation.

As he was about to get the anesthesia he asked to speak to his son.

"Yes, Dad, what is it?"



"Don't be nervous, son; do your best and just remember, if it doesn't go well, if something happens to me your mother is going to come and live with you and your wife...."

- Anon. Cited in You've Got Joke Mail by David Ludwick

"Nice to be here? At my age it's nice to be anywhere."

- Anonymous

"Age is not an interesting subject. Anyone can get old. All you have to do is live long enough."

- Anonymous

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

- Anonymous



"I'm at an age when my back goes out more than I do."

- Anonymous

"That's the formaldehyde. That's why Granny is so well-preserved."

- Anonymous

"Old age is no place for sissies."

- Anonymous

A distraught senior citizen phoned her doctor's office.

Is it true," she wanted to know, "that the medication you prescribed has to be taken for the rest of my life?"

"Yes, I'm afraid so," the doctor told her.



Continued ...

There was a moment of silence before the senior lady replied, "I'm wondering, then, just how serious is my condition because this prescription is marked NO REFILLS."

- Anon. Cited in You've Got Joke Mail by David Ludwick

"Age is... watching other people get angry for you."

- Mike Hartley

"If you don't learn to laugh at trouble, you won't have anything to laugh at when you're old."

- Ed Howe (1853-1937)

"Age is something that doesn't matter unless you are a cheese."

- Anonymous



Egbert's wife bought a new line of expensive cosmetics guaranteed to make her look years younger. After a lengthy sitting before the mirror applying the "miracle" products, she asked, "Darling, honestly, what age would you say I am?"

Looking over her carefully, Egbert replied, "Well, Maggie, judging from your skin - twenty, your hair - eighteen; and your figure - twenty five."

"Oh, you flatterer!" she gushed.

"Hey, wait a minute," Egbert interrupted, "I haven't added them up yet."

- Dr Lionel Hartley, *A Counsellor's Mirthbook: Comedy from my Casefiles*, Dayspring Health Services, 1989

Dr Lionel Hartley says of himself, "When I die, I want to be run over by a truckload of dirt while sitting in a taxi reading a funny book. The truckload of soil is to save having to bury me, the taxi is so that someone else foots the bill, and the funny book is so that I die laughing. Seriously though, I intend to die young - as late in life as possible!"

- Youthful Ageing Seminar (Salubrity™ Seminars)



Many people think old age is a disease, something to be thwarted if possible.

But someone has said that if any period is a disease, it is youth. Age is recovering from it.

- T. C. Myers

By the time a man reaches forty, he is responsible for what he looks like.

- Cardinal Mercier - Cited by Leon Joseph Cardinal Suenens, *Vie quotidienne, Vie chretienne*, published by Desclee de Brouwer, Brussels, 1961, p74, Translated by Lionel Hartley

When I look at the younger generation, I despair of the future of civilisation.

- Aristotle (300 BC)

You're old when you forget you're young.

- Dr. Barnaby Fulton (Actor Cary Grant), *Monkey Business* (Movie, 1952)

You only hurt yourself when you're not expanding and growing. Many people can't stand the thought of ageing, but it's the crystallised thought patterns and inflexible mind-sets that age people before their time. You can break through and challenge your crystallised patterns and mind-sets. That's what evolution and the expansion of love are really about.

- Sara Paddison, *The Hidden Power of the Heart*

"If I had to live my life again, I'd make the same mistakes, only sooner."

- Anonymous

"When putting it into memory, remember where you put it."

- Anonymous

Do you realise that the only time in our lives when we like to get old is when we're kids? If you're less than ten years old, you're so excited about ageing that you think in fractions.

"How old are you?"

"I'm four and a half."

You're never 36 and a half.... You're four and a half going on 5.

You get into your teens; now they can't hold you back. You jump to the next number.

"How old are you?"

"I'm gonna be 16."

You could be 12, but you're gonna be 16 eventually.

Then the great day of your life; you become 21.

Even the words sound like a ceremony. You become 21.... Yes!

Then you turn 30. What happened there?

Makes you sound like bad milk. He turned; we had to throw him out.

What's wrong? What changed?

You become 21; you turn 30.

Then you're pushing 40... stay over there.

You reach 50.



**Continued ...**

You become 21; you turn 30; You're pushing 40; you reach 50; then you make it to 60.

By then you've built up so much speed, you hit 70.

After that, it's a day by day thing.

You hit Wednesday...You get into your 80's; you hit lunch, you hit 4:30.

My Grandmother won't even buy green bananas. "Well, it's an investment, you know, and maybe a bad one."

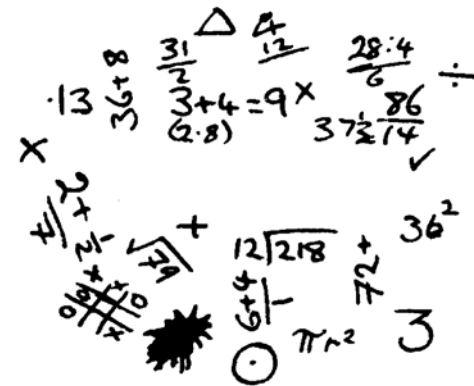
And it doesn't end there.... Into the 90's, you start going backwards.

"I was just 92."

Then a strange thing happens; if you make it over 100, you become a little kid again.

"I'm 100 and a half."

- Anon (Attributed to George Carlin)



Wrinkled was not one of the things I wanted to be when I grew up.

- Anonymous

Life is like a roll of toilet paper; the closer it gets to the end, the faster it goes.

- Anon. Cited in You've Got Joke Mail by David Ludwick

I'm here for a good time, not a long time.

- Anon (Contributed by Marguerita Morrison )

That a certain young man is wise beyond his years was proven when he paused before answering a widow who had asked him to guess her age.

'You must have some idea?' she said.

'I have several ideas,' the young man said, 'the only trouble is that I hesitate whether to make you ten years younger on account of your looks or ten years older on account of your intelligence.'

- Anonymous

## A Crabby Old Woman?

When an old lady died in the geriatric ward of a small hospital near Dundee, Scotland, it was felt that she had nothing left of any value. Later, when the nurses were going through her meagre possessions, they found this poem. Its quality and content so impressed the staff that copies were made and distributed to every nurse in the hospital. One nurse took her copy to Ireland.

The old lady's sole bequest to posterity has since appeared in the Christmas edition of the News Magazine of the North Ireland Association for Mental Health.

This little old Scottish lady, with nothing left to give to the world, is now the author of this "anonymous" poem winging across the Internet. Remember this poem when you next meet an old person who you might brush aside without looking at the young soul within. We may one day be there, too!



Continued ...

What do you see, nurse, what do you see?  
What are you thinking when you're looking at me?  
A crabby old woman, not very wise,  
Uncertain of habit, with faraway eyes?

Who dribbles her food and makes no reply  
When you say in a loud voice, "I do wish you'd try!"  
Who seems not to notice the things that you do,  
And forever is losing a stocking or shoe....

Who, resisting or not, lets you do as you will,  
With bathing and feeding, the long day to fill....  
Is that what you're thinking? Is that what you see?  
Then open your eyes, nurse; you're not looking at me.

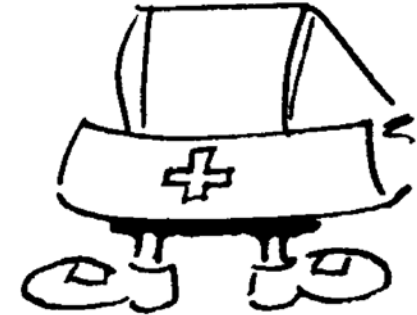


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I'll tell you who I am as I sit here so still,  
As I do at your bidding, as I eat at your will.  
I'm a small child of ten...with a father and mother,  
Brothers and sisters, who love one another.

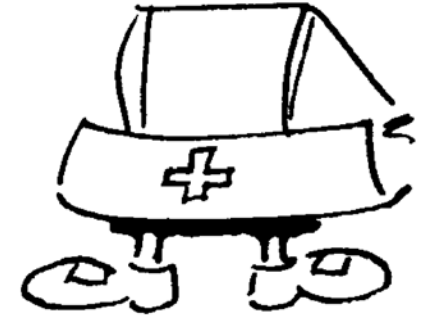
A young girl of sixteen, with wings on her feet,  
Dreaming that soon now a lover she'll meet.  
A bride soon at twenty - my heart gives a leap,  
Remembering the vows that I promised to keep.

At twenty-five now, I have young of my own,  
Who need me to guide and a secure happy home.  
A woman of thirty, my young now grown fast,  
Bound to each other with ties that should last.





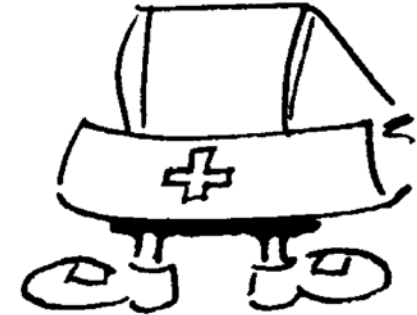
At forty, my young sons have grown and are gone,  
But my man's beside me to see I don't mourn.  
At fifty once more, babies play around my knee,  
Again we know children, my loved one and me.  
Dark days are upon me, my husband is dead;  
I look at the future, I shudder with dread.  
For my young are all rearing young of their own,  
And I think of the years and the love that I've known.



I'm now an old woman...and nature is cruel;  
'Tis jest to make old age look like a fool.  
The body, it crumbles, grace and vigour depart,  
There is now a stone where I once had a heart.

But inside this old carcass a young girl still dwells,  
And now and again my battered heart swells.  
I remember the joys, I remember the pain,  
And I'm loving and living life over again.

I think of the years... all too few, gone too fast,  
And accept the stark fact that nothing can last.  
So open your eyes, nurses, open and see...  
Not a crabby old woman; look closer...see ME!  
- Anonymous



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