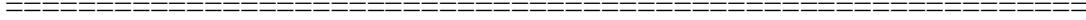


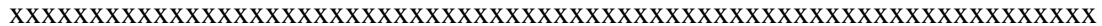
Human Values in Aging Newsletter
Oct. 1, 2017

H.R. Moody, Editor



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THE EVENTS ABOUT TO COME

The Holy One disguised as an old person
in a cheap hotel
Goes out to ask for carfare.
But I never seem to catch sight of him.
If I did, what would I ask him for?
He has already experienced what is missing in my
life.
Kabir says: I belong to this old person.
Now let the events about to come, come!

(From Kabir: Ecstatic Poems, versions by Robert Bly)



YOUR HAIR TURNING GRAY

Hospice leader Frank Ostaseski was at the Zen Hospice in San Francisco reading a book called Japanese Death Poems. A woman dying there asked him about that book and Ostaseski explained the tradition of Zen monks who on the day of their death wrote a poem to convey the essential truth discovered in

their life. This woman, named Sono, said she would like to write her own and did so, asking it to be pinned to her bedclothes after she died and then be cremated with her. Here is her poem:

Don't just stand there with your hair turning gray,
soon enough the seas will sink your little island.
So while there is still the illusion of time,
set out for another shore.
No sense packing a bag.
You won't be able to lift it into your boat.
Give away all your collections.
Take only new seeds and an old stick.
Send out some prayers on the wind before you sail.
Don't be afraid.
Someone knows you're coming.
An extra fish has been salted.

-Mona (Sono) Santacrose (1928–1995)

Thanks to Stewart Brand of The Long Now Foundation and to Frank Ostaseski for this poem. For more on this, see F. Ostaseski, *The Five Invitations: Discovering What Death Can Teach Us About Living* (Flatiron Books, 2017).

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THE RABBI OF KRACOW

There once was a pious rabbi, Eisik of Kracow, capital of Poland, who had a dream in which a voice told him to go to far-off Prague, where under the great bridge to the royal castle he would discover a hidden treasure. This same commanding dream was repeated twice. He finally decided to go, making the long journey by foot. On arriving in Prague he found the bridge; but as there were sentinels posted there day and night, he did not venture to dig.

However, day after day he returned and loitered around, unostentatiously trying to study the situation. Finally, he attracted the attention of one of the guards. 'Have you lost anything, my good man?' he asked. The rabbi told him of his dream. The officer laughed and exclaimed, 'You poor man, to have worn out a pair of shoes traveling all this way only because of a dream! Why I had a foolish dream once. A voice commanded me to go to Kracow and search for the home of a rabbi Eisik, son of Jekel, where I would find a great treasure buried in a dirty corner behind the stove. Imagine believing in such a dream,' and he laughed again.

Rabbi Eisik bowing politely bid the officer farewell. He then hurried back to Kracow. There he dug under the neglected corner behind his stove and found the treasure, thus putting an end to his poverty.

Heinrich Zimmer, in *The Choice is Always Ours*, writes:

'Now the real treasure, to end our misery and trials, is never far away; it is not to be sought in any distant region, it lies buried in the innermost recesses of our own home, that is to say, our own being. And it lies behind the stove, the life and warmth giving center of the structure of our existence, our heart of hearts if we could only dig. But there is the odd and persistent fact that it is only after a faithful journey to a distant region, a foreign country, a strange land, that the meaning of the inner voice that is to guide our quest can be revealed to us.'

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AGE: IT'S BETTER THAN YOU THINK

Remember those lyrics (from The Who)? "I hope I die before I get old." Maybe those lyrics got it wrong. A new independently conducted survey, released by AARP, reveals that younger people (those age 18-39) may be in for a pleasant surprise later in life – getting older may not be as bad as they expect. In fact, it's often a pretty great time of life. However, as the new survey reveals, that's usually not the expectation of younger people, who often image elders are depressed by getting older.

For details see "Cheer Up, Getting Older Is Better Than You Think, New Survey Finds" at:

<http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/english-releases/cheer-up-getting-older-is-better-than-you-think-new-survey-finds-300510121.html>

See also: "Feeling Older? Here's How to Embrace It" at:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2017/09/12/smarter-living/aging-well.html>

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WEB SITES TO SEE

AGING: It's Not What You Expected. Read Margaret Morganroth Gullette's "Problems of Aging Your Mother Didn't Tell You About" (from her new book, *Ending Ageism, or How Not to Shoot Old People*) at: <http://www.nextavenue.org/problems-of-aging-your-mother-didnt-tell-you-about/>

OLDER, WISER, FIERCER: That's one account of conscious aging, by author Carol Orsborn, inspired by Thomas Merton, Zalman Schachter, and Florida Scott-Maxwell. For more visit: <http://carolorsborn.com/>

LEGACY WORK. See "How to Live Forever" a TEDx Talk by Encore.Org founder Marc Freedman at:
<https://www.tedxsanfrancisco.com/talk-marc-freedman>

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BOOKS OF INTEREST

AGING IN AMERICA: A Cultural History, by Lawrence R. Samuel
(University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017).

CRAZY AGE: Thoughts on Being Old, by Jane Miller (Virago, 2012).

DROPPING WOOD, SPILLING WATER: Illness, Disability, and Aging
as Paths for Consciousness and Being, by Robert Shuman (2017).

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COMING EVENTS

POSITIVE AGING: "Gray Pride: The Positive Aging Movement"
(Oct. 1, 2017, New York, NY). Ken and Mary Gergen are keynote
presenters. Fordham University, Lincoln Center Campus, 113 W.
60th Street, 9:45 am to 3 pm. For more information contact Dr. Ruth
Mutzner at (914) 552-2477 or at Rzinz@aol.com Registration at:
http://www.nyspa.org/event/adult_10-1-17

SPIRITUAL ELDER ACTIVISM. (E-course, from Oct. 2 - Oct. 27, 2017). Offers
reflection on the meaning of "spiritual elder activism" from the point of view of tribal elders,
spiritual leaders, and community activists whose lessons can open paths of service today. From
Sage-ing International with Bob Atchley and Pat Hoertdoerfer. For details see:
<http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/ecourses/course/view/10201/spiritual-elder-activism>

SACRED AGING: "The Divine Human: The Final Transformation of Sacred
Aging" (Oct. 3, 2017) Webinar in North America at 2:00 pm PDT/ 5:00 pm EDT.
This webinar with John Robinson is based on his recent book, The Divine Human.
It explores the experience of the Divine Self arising in the New Aging, asking,
"What if we discover in this new time that we are already divine? And what if
this realization transforms our purpose in the world?"
For registration and details visit:
<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07eei6f3f77b8966a4&llr=thw4kyfab>

FILM: "Lives Well Lived" is a feature documentary film by Sky Bergman celebrating the wit and wisdom of adults 75 to 100 years living their lives to the fullest. For more on the film visit: <https://www.lives-well-lived.com/>

Upcoming screenings include:

(Oct. 5-15, 2017, Los Angeles, CA) at:

<https://www.awarenessfestival.org/>

(Oct. 18-22, 2017, Carmel, CA) at:

<http://carmelfilmfest.com/>

AGING WITH GUSTO: Conference (Oct. 5, 2017, Minnetonka, MN). What stereotypes lurk in your unconscious mind? This conference, sponsored by the Vital Aging Network, offers ways to approach and overcome negative ideas about aging. 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, 10201 Wayzata Blvd in Minnetonka.

More information at:

<http://vital-aging-network.org/files/media/AgingGustoFlyer-CEUworkshop10517.pdf>

DEEP ECOLOGY: "The Work That Reconnects: Take Part in the Healing of Our World" (Oct 6-8, 2017, Wallingford, PA). This workshop, at Pendle Hill Retreat Center, is led by Lynne Iser and Mordechai Liebling and is based on the teachings of Joanna Macy. The goal is to turn from despair and apathy into constructive, collaborative action. For details, see:

<https://pendlehill.org/events/the-work-that-reconnects/#.WZxRpj6GPcu>

CREATIVITY THROUGH ILLNESS: "Sky Above Clouds" (Oct. 7, 2017, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada). Wendy Miller offers a conversational reading on the healing power of creativity through illness and adversity. 12th Biannual IEATA International Conference. Fort Garry Hotel, 222 Broadway Avenue in Winnipeg. For information and registration: <https://ieataconference2017.com/>

BRAIN HEALTH. Webinar (Oct. 7, 2017, 12 noon EST). Part of the Boomers and Beyond Special Interest Group. Call-in number is (425) 440-5100, pin 555036# This program features Lynne Berrett, focusing on the Total Brain Health program created for Second Life. For questions contact Dori Mintzer, dorian@dorianmintzer.com

RETIREMENT: "So, You're Retiring, Now What?" (Oct. 7 and 14, 2017, St. Helena, CA). This retreat, 9 am to 3 pm, will address what do with free time and how to give retirement renewed sense of purpose. Seminar explores mindfulness, setting new goals, and managing barriers for change. Each attendee will conclude with a personalized Retirement Renewal Plan. Rianda House in St. Helena. Presented by Kal Edwards, MA, Retirement Renewal Specialist and James Keolker, PhD, certified master teacher of mindfulness and meditation. More details at kall@pacbell.net

