

Make It Happen with Emily Kimball
.....Creative Aging Expert.....

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1. Shirley MacLaine Sounds Off!

Q: How is it to be in your 70's?

A: Oh, it's just fabulous! As long as you can walk and sleep well and don't have some congenital sickness. Now I'm really lucky that I only have a hiatal hernia and allergies that make me cough. You're proud of the years and also proud of the respect that you've garnered. You have the right to claim it, which is what is so hard for women to do.

Q: Why do you suppose women find that so difficult?

A: No matter what you do, unless maybe you're a Madeleine Albright or one of the great authors or Mother Teresa, it's such a youth-revering culture. In the ancient cultures elders were the ones who were revered because of their wisdom. Now I'm at the point where, in grocery stores, at gas stations, people think that because I'm a senior citizen they don't need to pay any respect. But in about 10 minutes they do because I demand it. Of course, if they hear who I am, then they really start paying attention because I might know the future or something!

Interview, AARP Sept/Oct 2005

2. Exciting Volunteer Opportunity in China

Native English-speaking conversation teachers are urgently needed in schools throughout China. The Commission on Voluntary Service in Action (CVSA), a nongovernment organization that promotes full-time volunteer service, has been co-sponsoring a program since spring of 2004 in the

city of Xinyu, Jiangxi Province, in southeastern China. Volunteers are needed to help improve the English teaching programs for children in the public schools.

The teachers, parents, and administrators in Xinyu are wonderful hosts to those coming to help and the school system provides comfortable housing, meals, local transportation, a living stipend, and airfare there and back for commitments of 5 to 6 months during the fall or spring school terms. There are also terms for the summer 7 week program.

Learning to speak English is a national priority in China. English is now being taught in the primary and secondary schools. You do not need a teaching degree to participate. While college students as well as those with a college degree are preferred, anyone with work experience that has involved teaching or working with people as a leader or instructor can apply. The most important credentials are respect for China, love for children, and an interest in friendship between the people of China and the U.S. For more information or to apply to for this opportunity, contact CVSA at 646-486-2446. Or email Susan at CVSA@bway.net

3. Does Your Trainer Know the Aging Body?

The International Council on Active Aging (ICAA) has released questions to ask a personal trainer before signing on. A few samples: Have you had experience training clients of my age? How do you decide on an exercise program for my age and activity level? Have you worked with people with my medical condition? Have you had formal education about physical changes that happen to people as they age? How do you stay current about exercise and aging issues?

I have several friends that have injured themselves while exercising under supervision. It is important to know your trainer's background, and his or her familiarity with the aging process. For more information go to:

<http://www.icaa.cc/FacilityLocator/Public/PTquestions.htm>

4. Bill Moyers on His Retirement

“I am not leaving because anyone is pushing me, but because something is pulling me. I turn 70 this year, and while there’s no marker at the border, I know I’m entering unfamiliar territory. It’s as if some imaginary trip wire breaks and the little odometer on your psychic dashboard starts clicking faster and faster....All of a sudden you want to get to know the person who’s been sitting there in the seat beside you all these years, when the only thing zipping by faster than the traffic was life itself.”

For the full text visit:

www.whyy.org/widerhorizons/documents/MoyersRetirement.DOC

5. Is This Billboard Ageist?

Every Tuesday and Friday as I drive to my senior’s tennis game I pass a large billboard which pictures an older woman working out. The text reads, “Be Young.” I think to myself – I could work out until I’m blue in the face and I am still going to be 74. The message irritates me. I want it to say, “Be Active – Live Longer,” which is more accurate. I don’t think we should be encouraged to be younger than we are.

In correspondence with the billboard’s sponsor, a health club, the CEO informs me that “your body will in all likelihood sustain the condition of much younger person by incorporating exercise into your lifestyle.” He then refers to athletes like Lance Armstrong, 34, who “has the body age of someone in their mid 20’s.” He continues, “The billboard communicates the feeling and appearance of being younger which everyone longs for and am quite certain everyone who drives by that billboard will get that message. We will not be making any changes to this aspect of the campaign.”

One friend who I asked for feedback on this interchange said, “To me the saddest part about the advertiser telling someone to ‘Be Young’ is the fact that so many people, young and old, seem to think that poor health is necessarily associated with old age and good health only with young folks. ‘Be Young’ is another euphemism for ‘Be Healthy.’ My sister, who at age 71 is still leading an aerobics class, is not trying to be younger. She just wants to stay healthy as long as possible.”

In my opinion the CEO just doesn't get it. Do you think I'm making a mountain out of a mole hill? How do we begin to attack ageist messages when the messenger is so unaware? Love to hear your feedback on this one. Etkimball@aol.com

6. Inspired Not Retired

Ken Dychtwald, CEO of Age Wave, helped direct an international study on the Future of Retirement. The major finding was the overwhelming agreement among those surveyed that they do not want to be judged by their age alone: they also want to be judged by their energy, their attitude, and what they are contributing to the world. People rejected the notion of retiring, but also of "just more of the same." What they wanted were new beginnings with new challenges. They wanted to be involved, productive, and connected within the new lifestyle. Dychtwald concluded, "I don't think it's aging that frightens people. It's the fear of becoming uninspired and unwilling to try new things. In essence opening yourself up to new experiences and making new friends is the ideal anti-aging medicine. Full report: www.hsbc.com/futureofretirement.

7. Unique Gift for Aging Adventurers

My updated booklet (2005) *A Resource Guide for Aging Adventurers: Unusual and sometimes inexpensive opportunities for volunteering, learning, traveling and adventure* would make a great holiday gift. It is full of interesting ways to see the world and the U.S. while volunteering in exciting projects, or driving someone else's car to your destination, or swapping houses, or carrying documents abroad for very low airfare, or caretaking someone's house for a free stay in an interesting, new place, and more. If you know a potential adventurer this booklet will open up a world of opportunities for them. To order send \$12.60 to PO Box 472, Chesterfield, VA, 23832.

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