

Learning in Families Together:

Aging*

We tend to focus on the negative aspects of aging.
Many of those are the exceptions, not the rule.

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Active Aging Secrets

Complete these sentences:

Aging is ...

The biggest challenge of growing older is ...

When I get old, I will ...

Active aging, aging gracefully, aging in place, and growing old with attitude are goals for today's active, older adults. Using adaptive devices, eating special diets, and paying attention to health are to be expected; however, staying active is key.

- Staying involved offsets boredom and provides social interaction, cognitive exercise, physical exercise, and personal enjoyment.
- More than 85 percent of elderly people have one or more chronic conditions but continue to stay active.
- Volunteering, talking with friends, and spending time with younger people help to sustain a healthy attitude.

Reading, listening to recorded books, creating artwork, taking up a new hobby, and traveling are ways to stay active.

Aging Facts

- Adults older than 65 represent about 13 percent of the U.S. population or one in every eight Americans.
- In 2010, 53,364 Americans were age 100 or older.

Take Time

Older adults can keep moving and take care of themselves by:

- Getting regular health checkups and eating healthy.
- Maintaining important roles, returning to previous hobbies, and adopting new activities are all worth exploring.

Maintain friendships and stay connected with family. The nature of relationships may change, but human connections are essential to wellness.

Learning Time

It is never too late to start a new hobby or learn a new skill. For example:

- Take time to write down family histories and favorite recipes. The next generation will cherish these.
- Organize family photos, adding dates and names.
- Learn something you always wanted to know.

Being well after age 65 involves focusing on what one does well and engaging the whole person. Aspects include:

- Accepting oneself and coping with stress.
- Continuing to use the mind.
- Having an active lifestyle.
- Keeping harmonious relationships.
- Making meaningful contributions.

*Source: "Well-Being and Older People: A Review of the Literature." 2003. Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy 70 (February): 51-59.