



# Senior Series

A partnership between Ohio State University Extension  
and Ohio Aging Network professionals



For more information, visit the Ohio Department of Aging web site at: <http://www.state.oh.us/age/>  
and Ohio State University Extension's "Aging in Ohio" web site at: <http://www.hec.ohio-state.edu/famlife/aging>

## Positive Aspects of Aging

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Isn't it ironic that the idea of having birthdays appeals to most everyone, but the idea of getting older doesn't appeal to nearly as many people? Birthdays are truly a celebration of life. However, straining to see through the nearsighted eyes of a youth oriented society, many Americans tend to consider every birthday past 29 as a forerunner for loss.

Growing older does offer challenges, but it also provides rewards. To assist in dispelling negative stereotypes of aging, we may need to be reminded of the positive aspects of aging.

**You Are Wiser:** It has been said that there is a mysterious ingredient that occasionally accompanies aging—wisdom. This must be qualified by the fact that aging is a process of becoming more of what we have been. Hopefully, we have learned how to live what we have learned. The first 40 years of life give us the text, the next 40 years supply the commentary.

**You Are Mellow:** Coping skills have become better. We are more tolerant of the little aggravations of life. We have learned that it is better to take things in stride. This can bring about a reduction in anger, anxiety, and impulsiveness. It is better to be kind than to be right.

**You Are Confident:** Later years can be a time to enjoy the benefits of experience from the life that has been lived. Many people get satisfaction and security out of reflecting on their accomplishments and realizing they have something to offer others.

**You Are Your Own Person:** Generally, you don't experience an identity crisis. You know who you are, and

you know what you like and don't like. You don't take rejection as personal. It can be liberating to realize the way people treat us is often a reflection of their own insecurities.

**You Become a Grandparent:** Grandchildren can remind us that we need to nourish the child that is within each of us. Grandchildren provide us with an opportunity to be curious, to be excited about life, and to be playful. As Michael Prichard says, "You don't stop playing because you grow old; you grow old because you stop playing."

**Your World Broadens:** By fostering friendships and making new ones, there can be a network of old friends and new friends as well as the extended family. It is rewarding to reach out to others and to stay involved in life.

**You Are More Motivated:** There is an increased awareness of how precious time is and a desire to use it more wisely. There is time for pursuing a variety of interests—such as lifelong learning, leisure activities, and volunteerism. Vital absorbing interests can promote good health and extend life.

Aging may be inevitable, but disease and disability are not. We're not getting older, we're getting better.

## References

Administration on Aging: [www.aoa.gov/elderpage](http://www.aoa.gov/elderpage)

National Institute on Aging: [www.nih.gov/nia](http://www.nih.gov/nia)

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