



## Between Friends

Thoughts on Caregiving

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# Aging Gracefully

May is Older Americans Month.

How old is old? Some say old is ten years older than whatever age you are. Others say you are only as old as you feel. The U.S. Department of Labor defines an "older worker" as someone age 40 or older. To qualify to play in an "old timers" baseball game, you have to be age 35 - or age 32, if you're a catcher. Old is relative!

In celebration of Older Americans Month, here are some tips on aging gracefully:

**Ask** for help when you need it.

**Be** involved with others. Too much time alone is not a good thing.

**Complain** less – and compliment more.

**Develop** new interests – go for a "listening tour" walk in your neighborhood.

**Eat** a healthy diet. Include at least 5 servings of fruit and vegetables per day.

**Find** new ways to have fun.

**Get** up out of that chair, away from that TV, and get moving! Use it or lose it!

**Help** someone else. You'll both feel better.

**Inject** humor in your life. Laughter is the best (and cheapest) medicine.

**Join** a group – exercise group, book club, support group, or take a class.

**Keep** a gratitude journal. Every day, write down five things for which you are grateful (even if one of them is being grateful for just making it through the day!).

**Learn** to listen. One of the greatest gifts we can give to someone is our undivided attention.

**Make music** part of your daily routine. Bring out those oldies!

**Notice** the good in others (and ignore the annoying). Brighten someone's day with a compliment.

**Offer** to help a caregiver by giving her or him time away from care demands.

**Practice patience** with others, as well as with yourself.

**Quit** smoking, drinking, eating junk food, complaining, not exercising, or whatever your bad habit might be.

**Reminisce.** Share life stories with those you love.

**Seek "spirit moments"** to refresh and renew your spirit, every day.

**Take care** of yourself, so you can enjoy your family and friends.

**Use** adaptive aids (canes, walkers, long handled reachers, etc.) to help maintain your independence.

**Volunteer!** Share your experience of a lifetime.

**Watch** for trip hazards (worn or slippery rugs/carpeting, electrical cords, etc).

**Examine** your attitude, and adjust it accordingly. Attitude is everything.

**Yield** to temptation once in a while. Eat dessert first.

**Zoom** in on developing a zest for life. It's never too late.

The best age to be is the age you are. Celebrate your age!

### A Friend's House Adult Day Services

A program of Catholic Services of Macomb

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