



AGEING

By Wayne Visser

~ As much as age is an inescapable reality, it is also an ethereal illusion ~

Is ageing a blessing or a curse?
Do you rejoice or bemoan your age?
Do you look forward to getting older or fear the prospect?

We all have to make that journey through time, from starting point to destination, from birth to death.

And yet our travel experiences are all unique.

Most of us will pass through the same landscapes – of infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood and maturity.

And yet how we each view the scenery will be different.

Each stage en-route has its own virtues and vices:

The innocence and dependence of infancy;

The curiosity and tantrums of childhood;

The passion and rebellion of adolescence;

The productivity and routines of adulthood;

And the wisdom and aches of maturity.

And yet these traits refuse to be neatly confined to our age-boxes:

There is as much wisdom in youth as there is rebellion in old age;

Adults are no strangers to tantrums and children are productive in their own ways.

We have mythologized the life cycle, drawing on timeless archetypal images to bring meaning to the process of ageing.

At any one time, we represent the child, the warrior, the mother, the king, the old crone or the wise man.

We do not have to be defined by these symbols, but we can tap into their power any time we choose.

Which mantle are you wearing right now, irrespective of your age or socially defined role?

We tend to be conditioned about what is expected of us at any given age.

We are told to grow up or to act our age.

When we are young we covet maturity and when we are older we reminisce about youth.

It's almost as if there is an unwritten law – thou shalt at all times be dissatisfied with thine age.

Why do we buy into this rhetoric?

Ageing is not only natural and unavoidable, it is also wonderful and beautifying.

Each passing year is an accumulated treasure of experiences.

Each new year brings fresh opportunities to learn from.

Of course every age has its restrictions and downsides, but these only overshadow the freedoms and upsides if we allow them to.

Ageing is as much a mental game as a physical one.

"How old are you?" is not nearly as revealing and important as "How old do you feel?"





You may no longer have the effervescent energy of a child, but what is stopping you from looking at the world with the awe of constant discovery?

You may not have the bottled insecurity of a teenager, but you are never too old to fall head-over-heels in love.

You may don all the trappings of a responsible adult, but you don't have to lose the passion of your mercurial dreaming.

You may make the perfect picture of a doting grandparent, yet still be growing rapidly in mental and spiritual terms.

For as much as age is a wrinkling of the skin and a greying of the hair, it is a stretching of the mind and a colouring of soul.

Ageing is to be joyfully embraced, despite what the commercials try to brainwash us into believing.

Your age tells the story of who you are, what you've done, where you've been.

It is a fascinating story, compelling in its details, every twist in the tale worthwhile.

You need to be proud of your age, even while you refuse to let it define who you are.

For age is never static, never predictable.

Age is the flow of time.

And the only age that is real is the present.

Your true age is now.

Why not celebrate it?

Now.



Part of the EVERYDAY INSPIRATION series

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