

Fill your life with meaning and purpose. Everybody is doing it! Aging is our universal full time job. The real inner you is much more than you ever could imagine yourself to be. The author candidly shares her private struggles that led to success stories with personal transformations. Take this inspirational journey of reading and writing to open the window to your soul, while exploring the depths of past events.

Aging Is A Full Time Job

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Aging Is A Full Time Job

Now is the time to make peace
with your past so you don't mess up the present!



Marcia Casar Friedman

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Don't Worry, Be Happy!

Happiness is a method of traveling rather than a destination. Take it slow and easy to check out many of the wandering roads to find happiness.

There are many stages of happiness, depending on our current phase of life. I giggled with delight as Daddy threw me into the air when I was a baby. My parents bought me a record player with forty-five rpm records for my thirteenth birthday. I was so excited about getting the gift I really, really wanted. I felt overwhelmed by their thoughtfulness. I couldn't stop jumping around with excitement. Records played in the house and enjoyed by the whole family for many years.

When my prom date brought a corsage of yellow sunflowers with large green leaves, disappointment showed in my face and expressive eyes. Oh, good grief, how could I wear that thing and deal with my peers making fun of me?

As we were walking out the door, my boyfriend turned around to walk back to the kitchen. He came out with a broad bright smile, and I a huge wrist corsage of twelve perfect yellow roses to match my pale yellow dress. I was so thrilled with his creativity and caring that I laughed and

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smiled until I couldn't breathe from the happiness and from feeling special. After learning to breathe again, we went to a wonderful high school prom. No other girl in the room had such a huge, gorgeous wrist corsage floral arrangement. I felt special and loved!

Happiness is a joy of various intensities. It swells up from inside and breaks out in the form of smiles, squealing, yelling, giggling, and even throwing up. Yes, I had a friend who threw up when her boyfriend proposed. They have been married for twenty-five years! Happiness is a cheerful, challenging path that can lead to a wonderful emotional experience.

Happiness is on the path to learning more about technology, current events, writing, and psychology. It is seeing and hearing how others are enjoying this moment in time. I choose to be happy now. I know when I feel a happy glow, even if others don't see it in my smiling face. Sometimes it's an inside job!

Memories of happiness never end, especially when they help to increase self-esteem. Keep in mind how those memories felt? How did your body react? What were you thinking? Write it down to experience them again.

Mature happiness is more of a knowing that old stressors don't have to exist anymore. It is no longer a matter of accepting a grueling pace to succeed at work, yet

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telling everyone how great it is to do the job. Happiness is more like a quiet choice to see the good in today and in every moment.

For me, happiness is choosing to wear lavender since it has always been my favorite color, not because it is in favor this season. Happiness is a feeling of acceptance while I enjoy the laughter and noises of the children walking to school every morning. Their cheerfulness is contagious.

If an encore career is in your vision, choose work more like a hobby than a job. At least think of it as a hobby, concentrating on the pleasure it brings to your life. Satisfaction comes when the daily pressure is lifted. Being active and fulfilled daily is a dream come true.

In years gone by, a senior was a retired person or one who reached age sixty-five. Retirement rules have changed, and so has our perception of who is a senior. There are so many rough times during the aging process. Each of us has to face them in our own way.

I'm unique! So lose the titles identifying seniors, such as "youngster" or "madam." Either just talk or ask for my name, then use it. I'm Marcia. Hearing my name gives me a familiar feeling, a special happy glow. I sure wish I had a sense of humor about those cutesy names. Don't worry. Be happy!

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It's important to act silly by making goofy faces, laughing out loud, jumping with enthusiasm at a sports game, kicking autumn leaves, splashing in the rain, applying the gift of optimism to current events, and giving yourself a big, warm hug. Doing these things with someone else spreads the delight even further.

New events can be the path to happiness. As Aunt Edith always told us, when one door closes, another one opens. Often, when we look at a closed door for so long we aren't able to see the new door open and waiting for us. It's never too late to begin again.

When my parents bought a house, we moved about a forty-minute drive from our previous little house. For years and years, I wrote school assignments about how unfair my parents were to take me away from my friends, when I was age twelve. Life definitely changed when I eventually did make new friends. In reality, I did like the newer, bigger house, which was closer to our family. Once I stopped staring at the closed door and opened the door to my new life, my joy blossomed.

Happiness is everywhere for us to enjoy as long as we concentrate on seeing and feeling the delight. Feeling good is such a great place to be. It is worth the challenges! Giving is the best, loving pleasure. Happiness never ends.

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I enjoy seeing and hearing Sammy, our cat, in high spirits. Sometimes I take a can of tuna, with the can opener, over to the kitchen counter, knowing he will appear in the room immediately. Sammy meows and meows to make sure I know he is there, ready and waiting to share my lunch. His meows, along with watching him enjoy the tuna, mean happiness for both of us at the same time. The process causes me to go into a high pitched baby talk while having a one way conversation with the cat. The conversation is cheerful, silly and loving.

Happiness is contagious. Spread it around! Cheerfulness builds relationships, especially when coupled with laughter.

After Mom had her kidney removed, the world seemed to come to a stop when we were told it was cancer. It worried me thinking someone might go into her hospital room with a cloud of gloom and doom hovering over them. In those days, doctors did not believe in telling patients the bad news for fear the patients would become depressed and not try to live. So, we pretended that everything was okay.

I dwelled on the idea of bringing laughter into Mom's room and into her life. I remembered the story about Norman Cousins's proven success with laughter therapy. He was a writer who worked in the medical field and had many

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other successes. He developed a recovery program incorporating a positive attitude, love, faith, hope, and laughter. Cousin's mission in life was to give healing peace. He discovered ten minutes of genuine belly laughter from watching Marx Brothers' films had the anesthetic effect of giving patients two hours of pain free sleep.

When the effects wore off, they would watch another ten minutes of the movie. The key is to promote happiness with good health and laughter.

My creativity came to the fore when I decided to send a special bouquet of flowers to the hospital for Mom. Two florists would not fill my order, saying mom's surgery was too serious for such a silly gift. With great determination, and knowing I was right and they were wrong, I pushed forward until I found a florist who would honor my request. The next day, the florist delivered a silver metal hospital bedpan filled with a variety of bright colored flowers!

Mom loved the unusual, silly, creative idea. It encouraged her to laugh several times a day when she was alone and when someone came into her room. She would point out the flower arrangement to visitors so they could share in the laughter.

Be happy! Laughter is the best medicine!

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The award winning song, “Don’t Worry, Be Happy” has a far-reaching message, telling us to expect some trouble in our lives, however when you worry, trouble will double. Keep the problems in perspective by planning for happiness. Avoid worrying. It can create illnesses from the stress. Worrying does not solve problems, actions do.

Happiness principles:

1. Feel happy! Laughter is the best medicine.
2. Inner happiness can't be taken away.
3. Fill your day with activities that make your heart glow.
4. Give a compliment every day.
5. Smile at yourself in the mirror and give yourself a hug.
6. Forgive and let go. Do not hold a grudge.
7. Appreciate what you do have.

Laughter is like taking a mini vacation. Social interaction stimulates your brain to release *feel good* chemicals like *nor epinephrine*, which leads to contentment. Spend time with compatible friends to discuss what makes each one feel happy.

Mature happiness is a knowing the old stressors don't have to exist anymore. It's no longer necessary to accept a grueling pace to succeed at work competition. It's more like a quiet choice to see the good in today and in every

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moment. Happiness can be found when the daily pressure is lifted. Don't worry, be happy!

Happiness is eating dessert before dinner, acting on an impulse to e-mail old family photos to my cousins, and even buying myself an easy to use knife sharpener.

Gratitude increases satisfaction with life. Express gratitude to everyone you appreciate, especially during times of kindness from others.

Happiness is amplified by talking and writing about it, especially savoring the small pleasures. Sometimes it's an inside job! When was the last time you thanked yourself for being a giving person?

The happiest people spend the least time alone. Not all activities have to be pre-planned and pre-organized. People watching is such a fascinating sport. Go to the local mall, sit down on a bench, then watch the people walking, talking, and window shopping. It's okay to be critical of the mid-lifer who is wearing a too short mini skirt as long as you don't say anything out loud. Find the cutest haircut on a female and on a male. Oh, so many things to observe while people watching. No worries, no cares, just watching and smiling.

When I was unexpectedly downsized out of my last job, I was not prepared to move on with a new life. Trumpeting shock took over at first. Then writing gave me the

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unanticipated opportunity to see life from a different point of view. Once I stopped staring at the closed door, in favor of opening up the door to my new life, my happiness increased.

Giving is the best loving cheerfulness that could ever exist. Happiness never ends. Small forms of giving are much appreciated and easy to provide. A smile for someone who opens the door, “thank you” for the person who picked up your dropped credit card, a show of appreciation with a tip for the plumber who never gets a tip, and giving home baked lasagna for the neighbor who said good-bye to her college bound son today.

Music lovers know the delight of listening to performers, of playing an instrument, and of singing in the shower. Be unique; enjoy your singing in the car, while cleaning the house, getting dressed and while cooking in the kitchen.

Do you worry about what others think about you? Will they like your new shoes, hairstyle, giggle laughter or your passion for apples cut into 8 slices? Those people are so busy thinking about themselves; they don't have the time or energy to think about you. Forget about them! Be accountable to yourself.

You are the only judge of yourself that matters. Honor your true self.

Fill your life with meaning and purpose. Everybody is doing it! Aging is our universal full time job. The real inner you is much more than you ever could imagine yourself to be. The author candidly shares her private struggles that led to success stories with personal transformations. Take this inspirational journey of reading and writing to open the window to your soul, while exploring the depths of past events.

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