

Getting Old

Even though I'm only 64, everyone is beginning to look so young to me. The clerks at the drug store where I shop for Advil and buy my denture cream don't look a day over 11 years old. And when the repair person showed up to clean my furnace last week, I had all I could do not to ask, "Why aren't you in school today."

My wife thinks I'm beginning to act like an old man. Actually, she thinks it began some years ago in my forties. The other day I passed through the living room and noticed the piano was dusty, so I dusted it. I had no idea where the special dusting cloths might be stored, never wanting to become a slave to a clean house, so I took off my sweatpants and used them to bring the piano up to a nice lustrous sheen. What's wrong with that? Who knows what I'll use at 80?

The only good thing about this age is that pretty young woman flirt with me when they want a favor, because they think I'm harmless. Unfortunately, they're right. But I enjoy it anyway and feel more comfortable with them than I did when I was younger.

I had a test done at the hospital earlier this year and, after my attire was

reduced to a shirt and shorts, a pretty young technician put what appeared to be a very large blood pressure cuff on my entire leg. As she stepped through the procedure she twice took a pulse rate from wherever on my person that happened to be convenient. Below the waist. Of course I didn't mind, not one bit. I presume she thought we were good enough friends at that point and this was no doubt fairly routine for her. But still, I was miffed that she thought she could act with seeming impunity and go places she would have avoided had I been younger.

Mornings are rough and it takes a couple of hours before I begin to feel like I don't have some kind of wasting disease. I'm hoping I'm in a period of low-energy transition and that my vim will get more vigorous as I get older. That's the hope, anyway. My friend Willard is 84 and going strong. He tells me his orthopedist is ordering him a special back brace so he can continue to mow his back field, bouncing along on his 1949 Farmall Model M. I can't even rake my garden. So I'm kind of hoping I'll feel a lot better as I get older because of Willard's example. His gave me some good advice. He said to just keep breathing and don't buy a John Deere.

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