

LIFE CAN BE "More Interesting Every Day"!

by Judy Hargus, JPTA Program Coordinator, Riverside County

A friend of mine decided many years ago to learn, grow, improve and give because that way of living made life become more interesting everyday. The following suggestions may help make the quality of life in later years much better by establishing the groundwork early.

- ***Establish a Pattern of Honest and Moral Living.*** Set-up guidelines of honesty and morality that you can model to your family and those around you. Forgive and extend mercy and graciousness to someone everyday. You can make a difference in your world!
- ***Use Memory Aids.*** Which of us has not misplaced keys at one time or another, or worse, locked ourselves out of the house or car? Many people use association to boost their recall and create routines so things aren't forgotten. You may find that having a certain place for an item will help, like the keys always on the hall credenza. Check-lists and calendars are great too for helping us complete essential chores and remember birthdays and appointments. It's not necessary to make lists or associations for everything, but they do enable us to procrastinate less and accomplish more.
- ***Be a Lifetime Learner.*** If we never stop learning, we increase our options and make life more enjoyable. If physical limitations prevent us from playing a musical instrument we may derive pleasure from attending concerts, listening to the radio or recorded music. If we can't do outside gardening, we might try growing favorite herbs or flowers in a window box. If vision has dimmed, many bestselling books are available on cassette tape. Helen Keller was such an inspiration because she chose to continue learning even though she was deaf and blind.
- ***Develop Interesting Hobbies.*** Collectors of stamps, coins, dolls, statuary, books, whatever, can expand and keep active interests from 8 to 80 and beyond. Hobbies may produce a source of income and help you to meet people of similar interests. We can read to someone in a convalescent hospital, tell stories to pre-schoolers, take a neighbor who no longer drives to the grocery store or to doctors' appointments. Hobbies enable us to break down age or racial barriers and promote lasting friendships.
- ***Good Health Habits.*** Everything in moderation is a good creed. Everyone requires some form of exercise to remain agile and alert. Can't jog? Try walking around a mall with friends or family or do isometric exercises while reading the newspaper or watching TV. Just keep moving some part of your body on a regular basis. Yes, even toes like to wiggle!



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- ***Be Flexible.*** Change is an inevitable part of life - enjoy it! Career, income, family size, friends and neighborhood will change. My advice is don't let life's experiences cloud your ability to dream, hope and flex with the changes. As someone has said, "Turn your scars into stars, turn your lemons into lemonade and when life melts your chocolate bar, make fudge!"

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