



The Mosaic

A Masterpiece Living Network Newsletter About Living Well

From Invisible to Invincible

By: Teresa Beshwate

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Ageism - discrimination due to age - is an epidemic in our society and often targeted at older people. It is so rampant that it is normalized and most often flies under our radar. Like fish in water, we hardly recognize its existence in our culture. A prime example is the greeting card aisle: finding a birthday card that honors aging requires a needle-in-haystack search. And well-intended comments like “You look great for your age,” and “You don’t look 55” just adhere to the old-is-bad, young-is-good philosophy of ageism. Perhaps even more harmful is the ageism that plays on loop in our own minds...

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Is Alcohol Good or Bad for Our Brains and Memory?

By: Dr. Rob Winningham

Is alcohol good or bad for our brains and memory? It depends. It largely depends on how much one drinks, genetics, and maybe even gender. There is evidence that one to two drinks a day can have a protective effect on the brain, in terms of a reduced likelihood of developing dementia or having a stroke (strokes can lead to vascular dementia, which is the second most common type of dementia, after Alzheimer’s).

In a widely publicized study known as the Rotterdam Study, researchers followed thousands of older adults and found a significant decrease in their chance of getting dementia if they consumed a small amount of alcohol most days relative to people who almost never drink, but the risk of dementia increased for heavier drinkers. In a 2009 study, researchers combined the data from many published studies and reported a 25%-28% reduction in dementia relative to abstainers. The beneficial effects of alcohol may come from reducing inflammation, increasing HDL cholesterol, and increased insulin sensitivity. Alcohol, particularly red wine, is also high in antioxidants, which could increase the longevity of our cells. *(Continued on Page 2)*

Transformation: Prose, Poetry and Other Thoughts

By: Danielle Palli

Dee Deeter has always lived a life of service. As a former RN, she spent two years in Japan as a surgical nurse in the Air Force. She remembers having saved at least three lives to date (though we suspect it was many more than this). She doesn’t shy away from trouble. She looks for ways to lend a hand.



Recently, Dee learned that many residents in her community were having trouble paying their rent. One day, she happened to be rifling through a book of poetry she’d compiled from years of writing. She had it stashed in a drawer since moving into Someren Glen, and Dee was struck by an idea.

With the help of her husband, Jack, and residents Susan Lucern-Lawton, and Margaret Lindzback, she hatched a plan. Dee decided to publish her collection of poetry, which includes her reflections on the past and thoughts for the future. She titled it, *Transformation: Prose, Poetry and Other Thoughts*. *(Continued on Page 2)*

(Is Alcohol Good or Bad for the Brain? - Continued from Page 1)

But, like many drugs, there are always risks that need to be weighed relative to possible benefits. And, it is important to note that currently there isn't compelling evidence that starting to drink after years of abstaining is going to have beneficial effects. Particularly worrisome, is the fact that heavy alcohol consumption can even cause cognitive impairment.



For example, Wernicke-Korsakoff Syndrome is a type of dementia that is caused by heavy drinking over a long period of time. It appears that this type of dementia occurs because of a thiamin or Vitamin B1 deficiency that is common in heavy drinkers and that deficiency leads to atrophy in an important brain structure involved in making new memories (note low Vitamin B absorption can be the cause of a number of memory disorders, regardless of alcohol consumption).

Older adults are also at increased risk of falling if they abuse alcohol. And, certain health conditions might be worsened by heavy drinking including diabetes, high blood pressure, congestive heart failure, liver problems, osteoporosis, mood disorders, and it may even increase breast cancer risk in women.

Is alcohol good or bad for our brains and memory? Clearly, it depends on many factors, especially the quantity of alcohol. Maybe the old cliché, "everything in moderation" applies here as well.

How Do You #MasterTheMoment2020?



#MasterTheMoment2020 begins Nov 1. Master the Moment is a new campaign by Masterpiece Living that encourages and challenges participants to capture the small moments that bring them joy and gratitude. Share your special moments with us! [CLICK HERE](#) for details.

(Transformation: Prose, Poetry and Other Thoughts - Continued from Page 1)

Margaret transcribed, Susan did the major editing, and everyone collaborated on what to include and the layout. Dee marketed and managed sales, and even held a book signing where she signed each copy. Her books have sold out, and the team has raised \$1,135 for the Resident Assistance Fund so far.

The best part? Dee published her first book at age 87. Dee feels that Masterpiece Living inspires her to help people and give to those in need. "Masterpiece Living is a springboard to everything we do at Someren Glen," she told the Mosaic. "It keeps us involved, active, and our minds growing."

Transformation
Prose, Poetry and Other Thoughts

All proceeds will benefit the **Resident Assistance Fund** helping qualified Someren Glen residents in financial need.

Dee Deeter

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"Hello, sun in my face. Hello you who made the morning and spread it over the fields. Watch, now, how I start the day in happiness, in kindness."
—Mary Oliver, poet

“At my age I shouldn’t –”

“People my age can’t –”

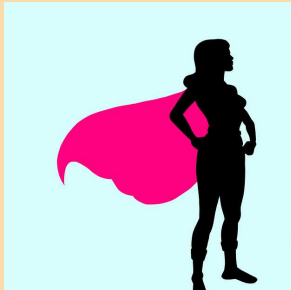
“I will never learn that.”

“My time has passed.”



Research has proven that ageism has a dramatic impact on health and longevity. Those who view aging negatively suffer significant consequences physically and mentally. On the flip side, their counterparts with more positive views on aging live 7.5 years longer, with less illness, better functional health, better brain health, better psychological wellbeing and they exhibit healthier behaviors.

A young-is-good, old-is-bad, anti-aging culture creates many toxic effects for older people, not the least of which is invisibility. It isn't uncommon for society to stop seeing older people ... literally ... and to stop seeing their worth, knowledge, experience and potential. For older adults, feeling invisible is to feel undervalued, irrelevant and out of date. These feelings are not only painful but predictive of a less-than-ideal future.



Interestingly, as I was talking with my friend Pat about invisibility, she said adamantly, “It isn't other people's job to make me feel visible.”

A powerful statement.

Indeed, letting any circumstance determine how we feel is relinquishing our power. In this case, the circumstance is how others treat us, but it's true of every circumstance. It is always our thoughts about that circumstance that produce our feelings.

Thoughts are tricky. Like ageism, they too fly under the radar. Eavesdropping on our thoughts is like cleaning out a closet – we can be surprised by what's in there and then we get to throw out the junk.

Getting our thoughts on paper gives us the opportunity to ask some important questions:

- *“What if I'm wrong about this?”*
- *“If I didn't believe this, what would I do next?”*
- *“Does it serve me?”*
- *“What results do I get if I believe it?”*
- *“Is this thought current or outdated?”*
- *“Do I want to keep it?”*

What thoughts might you choose to think on purpose that would make you feel visible? What actions might you take? What if you chose to volunteer, mentor someone, or otherwise find a need and fill it? What if you discovered a new purpose for your life and pursued it? What if you had the courage to be a beginner?

Imagine the power that comes from recognizing that other people's words and actions were never about you in the first place. Imagine believing that your chronological age is something to be proud of; as it is the subtotal of the life lessons, experiences and wisdom you've gathered to date. Only when we harness the power of our thoughts can we truly go from invisible to invincible.