

It's Time to Rethink things ...

By Rod Fraser



Older Man Considering his Life

IT WAS PROBABLY a conversation with Don that got me thinking. He recently purchased an expensive new car, after his son told him he was joining a golf club.

Don reasoned that if his son thought it was a good idea to pay \$30,000 to play golf, then he would rethink his priorities. Why continue to accumulate savings when his children would surely dissipate his estate with their questionable spending?

When we had lunch, Don talked of this from time-to-time. He planned to stop skimping and saving, enjoy himself and focus on the here and now. I wasn't aware he had influenced me in any significant way, until I found myself driving into a local car dealership to take a look at the 2020 cars.

Yes, I had changed my thinking. This spring I hired someone to cut my grass, looked into fixing up my basement and planned to buy a new car in the fall. I was transformed. Frugality was no longer my watchword.

A few days later, Don sent me the following list of suggestions that an older man (or woman) might consider for living better, and more intelligently. I suggest you have a look and form your own conclusions. Keep in mind I have edited this list to keep it terse and pithy. Enjoy!

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1. It's time to spend the money you've saved over the years. Enjoy it. Don't keep it for those who have no notion what it took to earn it.

2. Don't worry about the financial situation of your children and grandchildren. It's up to them to earn their way in life.

3. Keep healthy. Do moderate exercise (like walking every day), eat well and get your sleep. It's easy to become sick, and then it's harder to remain healthy.
4. Don't stress over little things. Don't let the past drag you down. Don't let the future frighten you. Feel good now. Small issues will soon be forgotten.
5. Keep up-to-date. Read newspapers, watch the news. Go online and read what people are saying.
6. Show respect for younger people and their ideas. They may not share your opinions, but they are the future. Give advice (if asked), and avoid criticism.
7. Never become bitter or surly. Life is too short. Spend your time with positive, cheerful people. It'll rub off on you.
8. Do not live with your children or grandchildren (if you have a choice). Being around family sounds great, but we need our privacy. If you've lost your partner, consider finding someone to share your life. Treasure your friends.
9. Keep up any hobbies you may have. If you don't have any, find one. I maintain this website and carve little figures of wood. It keeps me busy, active and gives me something to talk about. There are a million things you could do, including painting, hiking, cooking or reading.



Five Little Figures on a Stove

10. Even if you don't feel like it, try to get out of the house regularly, meet people, and experience something new (or something old). The important thing is to leave the house from time to time. Get out there. It will make a difference.

11. Be a conversationalist. Listen and ask questions. Don't tell long stories. Speak in courteous tones. Try not to complain or criticize. Accept things as they are. People have a low tolerance for hearing complaints. Find some good things to say.

12. Pain and discomfort go hand in hand with getting older. Accept this as a part of the cycle of life. Try to minimize them in your mind. They are not who you are, they are something that life added to you.

13. If you've been offended by someone—forgive them. If you've offended someone—apologize. Don't drag around resentment with you.

14. If you have strong views, savor them. Don't waste time trying to convince others. It will only bring you frustration. Live your life and set an example.

15. Find the humor in things. You have been lucky. You managed to have a long life. So what's not to laugh about?

16. Take no notice of what others say about you and even less notice of what they might be thinking. Let them talk and don't worry. They have little idea of your history, your memories and the life you've lived.

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