

# AGING *GRACIOUSLY*

A Newsletter for UUCGV Seniors and Near-Seniors  
Honoring Duane Carr who exemplified living graciously and started an Aging Graciously group.

Gracious: Amiable, compassionate. Congenial, considerate. Courteous, good natured, loving, benevolent, big hearted, charitable, merciful, obliging.

## Graciously Beautiful and Handsome

“Beauty is in the eye of beholder” is a cliché. In fact, judgment of beauty or handsomeness are dictated by social and cultural norms. Most of those norms are based on the appearance of young adults to perhaps those in their 40s. Older adults, at least some, try to maintain the looks they had back in those earlier days. That is total denial of the effects of aging. There is an alternative

A design aesthetic borrowed from the Japanese, *Wabi Sabi*, takes a different stance regarding beauty in design whether it be interior design or architecture. *Wabi Sabi* arose among Taoist Monks who lived in humble abodes. They found beauty in the simple and ordinary.

What then is Wabi Sabi in humans? Signs of age - wrinkles, sags – are Important because age represents experience. Perhaps some degree of wisdom. Wrinkles have been earned. Fingers bent with arthritis are symbols of hard work. A cane is a sign of miles and miles of walking. Gray hair in man or woman helps to look distinguished. These signs of aging are marks of beauty! Revel in them. Don't hide them or apologize.



Beautiful aged hands

“Anyone who keeps the ability to see beauty never grows old.” ~ Franz Kafka

## Small Sacks

The renowned tenor Luciano Pavarotti wrote in his autobiography that stage performers must carry with them “a small sack of encouragements.” We could enlarge that and apply it to older adults. All of us should create and carry along with us - the remainder of our lives - a small sack of good deeds done, “thank yous” and compliments received. Then we can dig into the sack – when needed – to feel good.

## Minimizing Tumor and Cancer Risk

Back in the 1930s, Otto Warburg investigated the difference between healthy and cancerous cells. He found that cancerous cells no longer depended on oxygen for metabolism but instead fermented glycogen which is the way the body stores carbohydrates and is the basis for blood sugar, glucose. He won the medical Nobel Prize for the discovery. Recently there has been increased interest in this “Warburg effect.”

Studies have been done on animals and humans that indicate a way to minimize the risk of cancer or tumors. Short intensive exercise is the answer. It is also termed anaerobic exercise and is the opposite of aerobic exercise which takes place over longer periods. The difference is between sprinting or running a marathon.

Seniors need not worry about having to sprint! Anaerobic exercise only requires raising the heart rate enough for a period of **10-30 minutes**. A brisk walk will do this. Hiking uphill will do it. Walking on a treadmill at a setting of 2.5-3 MPH also is sufficient. And swimming laps works. Pick one that suits your body, health, and fitness.

All you need to do is know the target heart rate. Your maximum heart rate is 220 minus your age. Your target heart rate is 70-80% of maximum. Here are the numbers: **70** years old, target HR 105-120; **75**, 102-116; 80, 98-108; **85**, 95-108; **90**, 94-104.

This kind of exercise also increases bone strength, helps maintain weight, increases metabolism, protects joints, and boosts energy.

## Ponder

“The unwise wonder at the unusual. The wise person wonders at the usual.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson\*

*\*Emerson was an ordained Unitarian Minister but spent most of his life writing essays and giving talks.*

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