

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.

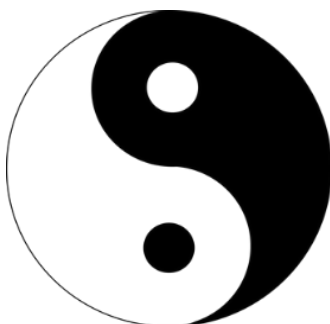
Receiving Graciously

“’Tis better to give than to receive.” spoke Jesus. That adage together with the spirit of rugged individualism often makes us feel guilty to receive. That’s not true of ritual giving and receiving, of course. At Christmas and with birthdays we receive gifts and know enough to thank the giver. At formal weddings and funerals, the bride and groom or bereaved stand and have a receiving line in which they get congratulations or condolences. That kind of receiving is easy because it is ritual.

We, most of us, do have a problem when it comes to receiving help. That probably stems from the feeling that we ought to be able to handle things on our own. When healthy and hearty that makes some sense (at least until it comes to digital electronics). When it comes to raking and bagging leaves in the yard or replacing a bulb in a ceiling fixture, we can do it ourselves. Until aging occurs.

Eastern traditions include the yin-yang symbol shown below. It has been shrouded in mystery, but it shouldn’t be. The image simply indicates that there are two aspects at work in the world. A complete day, for example, requires both night and sunlight. Applied to giving, it means that every gift goes to a recipient and for every giver there must be a receiver. Receiving is a natural part of life. It completes life. Consequently, there is no reason – ever – to feel guilty for receiving help.

If it is good to give, then it is equally good to receive.



Resting Graciously

“When your spirit is resting, your emotions are calmer, your mind is clear, and your will is at peace with nature which – in winter – is resting as well.”

Adapted from a quote by Joyce Meyer

December 21, 2021 is the winter solstice. Shortest day. Longest night. According to some indigenous cultures, it is the death of the old sun and birth of the new. More importantly, it is the beginning of winter, the time when nature rests. Trees have dropped their leaves. Plants known as annuals have died back leaving seeds on the ground. Some mammals hibernate. Insect colonies such as ants go dormant. It is a time to rest.

Only human beings, conscious and thinking animals, are energized. Christmas and New Year's are times to celebrate and party. It is the time that theaters put on concerts and plays. Snow play is taken up by many: downhill and cross-country skiing, skating, sledding, snowmobiling.

Yet it is the ideal time to cozy up in the evening. Listen to music. Read a good book. Have a long conversation with spouse, partner, friend. Or devote some time to yourself in meditating or perhaps daydreaming. After all, *solstice* means “stand still,” not rush around.

The sun and heat will return soon enough. The days will be longer. There will be temptations and duties that only occur in warmer weather.

From the quote above: rest your spirit, calm your emotions, clear your mind, be at peace with nature.

“Wisdom is knowing when to have rest, when to have activity, and how much of each to have.”
Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

Lifespan and Wellness Span

Lifespan obviously is how long we live. Wellness-span is how long a person lives without chronic illness or pain. Data from 2019 showed the average lifespan was 84.6 years. Wellness only 78.1. That indicates the average person will spend about six years not feeling well before dying.

Ponder

What is my destiny?

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