

Employee Assistance Program

Aging Purposefully

Now more than ever, opportunities are even greater for realizing one's full potential later in life. It used to be that life was a straight trajectory that involved obtaining an education, working at the same job for 40 years and then retiring. Now people are circling back for more education, trying out different professions, and learning new skills. If you knew you'd live to 100, how would you look at your life? We have a great deal of control over how we live and age.

- **Accept that aging will come with challenges.** Although there have been, and continue to be advancements in medicine that address physical conditions related to aging, people still experience changes related to their appearance, mobility, memory and processing speeds. Some of these things are just inevitable and part of life. Choosing to accept that your body will change, embracing this, and seeing it as a natural process is a healthy mindset to adopt. This doesn't mean that you shouldn't remain active and get proper nutrition to optimize what your body can do.
- **Longer lifetimes mean an opportunity to deepen our lives.** People are living longer and with greater independence. What you do after 50 can be even more fulfilling as what you did before 30. There are less societal restrictions being placed on what older adults can do. If you want to go to medical school or learn to surf, you can. Some use this phase in life to connect more with loved ones.
- **Getting older comes with many positive things.** Decisions often come easier with the wisdom that has been accumulated through life. You know yourself better, what you gain energy and joy from and what is typically not worth your time investment. You may not be as concerned about other's opinions as you once were. You may tend to not sweat the small stuff like you used to.
- **Set goals for yourself and develop a plan to reach them.** How do you define success? Is it wealth, a happy family, spending time with friends and connecting with others, or helping others? Do you have a cause that is important to you? How are you spending your time now? Are you involved in things every day that are going to get you to those goals? If not, make a plan to get yourself there. Connect with at least one person a day, go to a concert, travel, try a new hobby, learn a new language, sport or instrument, meditate and take care of your spiritual needs, volunteer, write a memoir, or organize family memories.
- **Recognize your value and what you can do with your time.** Ask yourself "what will I do with my remaining time"? Think about the qualities you've developed throughout your life. Can you make a difference by becoming a mentor for someone who could really benefit from your wisdom and the choices you have made? Continue to evolve while also enjoying the present.

Are you finding yourself struggling with a life transition? Your Employee Assistance Program is here to help. Contact us at the phone number below.

References

Scarf Merrell, Susan. "Getting Over Getting Older", Psychology Today, June 9, 2016. Retrieved from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/articles/199611/getting-over-getting-older>

"The New Normal." AARP. March 5, 2018. <https://www.aarp.org/disrupt-aging/video-disrupt-aging/info-2018/living-to-100-video.html?intcmp=AE-DA-STR-DIS-HUN-FTR>



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