

Audacious Aging: Eldership As a Revolutionary Endeavor

Edited by Stephanie Marohn

Elite Books (2009)

ISBN 97816007000613

Reviewed by Irene Watson for Reader Views (9/09)

As we age we need encouragement from others; the knowing that transformation is natural and we can choose to wallow in some of the changes, or embrace them openly and enjoy the years of wisdom, clarity and empowerment. A group of well-known healers and inspirationalists have given us just that. The compilation of narratives with experiences and how their work contributes to “audacious aging” comes from forty forerunners such as Joan Borysenko, Deepak Chopra, Ram Dass, Larry Dossey, Gloria Steinem and Andrew Weil. Each narrative is powerful, encouraging, and most of all contemplative as well paralleling to our own lives.

Hendrieka Fitzpatrick’s “Move Over, Barbie and Ken” caught my eye immediately and I began to read “To be audacious is to be empowered and independent, spirited and energetic, original and bold. Sadly, not many people think of these characteristics when they think aging. If you ask teenagers about aging, they will use words like shriveling, limping, confused, wrinkly, and feeble. They are just voicing the view of aging that most of us in this society hold.” Fitzpatrick is so correct. How many times have we, as we age, complained of the aches and pains, or look at others and see ourselves just like them - wrinkled and confused? Further in the anthology Fitzpatrick explains to us that there is a “misconception that supports the idea of aging is that once humans reach middle age, development stands still.” Proving this isn’t true, Fitzpatrick and the rest of the contributors tell us differently; life as we know it doesn’t come to a standstill until we transition. The contributors also encourage us to step away from the conceptions and perceptions of aging, and embrace ourselves with faith, confidence, and clarity. As well, the overall theme is to tap into our inner knowledge and accept our wisdom, knowing that we are in our prime of life and to enjoy every minute of it.

Personally, I was encouraged by the narratives and many confirmed what I already knew. Audacious means “to dare” and that is exactly what “Audacious Aging” by Stephanie Marohn is encouraging us to do. Dare to step out of the box created by society and cultures, and live the audacious life we were meant to have. There is no such thing as aging; we are just getting wiser each day.