

Better With Age: Your Blueprint for Staying Smart, Strong, and Happy for Life

Robin Porter

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This straightforward, empowering, and direct guide is aimed at adults of any age who are interested in preparing for the future.

Better with Age is a sensible guide for navigating common issues seniors face, including legal, financial, health, housing, and relationship decisions. With an upbeat outlook that emphasizes long-range planning and motivational examples of older individuals who sought new directions, Robin Porter offers valuable encouragement for learning to thrive after retirement.

Porter suggests that aging needn't be feared, that longevity presents an opportunity to remake oneself, and that one can enjoy days filled "with meaning and purpose." Chapters are divided by decades, beginning with the fifties and continuing beyond the eighties, and are further subdivided in well-marked sections that span topics such as diet, advanced health directives, sexuality, continuing work, safety measures in the household, and more. An overarching theme of creating a home ("Laying the Foundation," "Building on Experience," "Making Some Renovations," "Adding On") serves as a clever organizing principle and as a familiar image that successfully evokes the secure refuge and comfort many desire.

The book presents an informative overview for adults of any age who are interested in preparing for the future, and it does so without overwhelming. Discussions of living wills and related documents, for instance, do not include templates with detailed explanations; the lucid, concise approach is sufficient for those who are just beginning to contemplate questions they should be asking. *Better with Age* also touches on mental and spiritual health, making a strong case for considering aging from all angles. A few topics expected in elder discussions, such as Alzheimer's, remain absent. The book does, however, include an empathetic section geared toward caregivers.

In addition to featuring concrete suggestions, *Better with Age* provides inspiring sidebars that highlight a belief in lifelong learning. Through models that include Julia Child, Grandma Moses, Laura Ingalls Wilder, and others—all of whom began the work they would eventually become known for later in life—Porter demonstrates that it is not far-fetched to remain productive. Anecdotes from everyday men and women also give welcome insights, often revealing an optimism that equipped them to persevere.

Porter's writing on wellness is straightforward, empowering, and direct. "We can take matters into our own hands. Aging may be inevitable, but how we age is largely up to us," she writes. This solid compendium balances between pragmatism and acceptance of the unknown. Even the best plans may require revision; Porter wisely acknowledges that aging with grace is a multifold endeavor, and that its main component may well be a curious zest for life.

KAREN RIGBY (September 12, 2014)

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