

CNN Medical consultant Dr. Sanjay Gupta writes, "...People who live better — and longer — are the ones who hold on to hope. They keep their chins up and often throw themselves into the service of others. "1

The older are wiser about COVID, even though they are hardest hit. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 93 percent of COVID-19 deaths nationwide have occurred among those ages 55 or older.² Despite this imminent threat to our older citizens, it is reported "As a group, older adults, appear to be withstanding the mental health strains of the COVID-19 pandemic better than all other age groups."³ In other words, our seniors may appear to be more resilient in bouncing back from this COVID crisis.

Our senior citizens' motto could be, "What age dictates, we mitigate!" says senior learning consultant, Dr. Ruth Woo, of the Jacksonville's Senior Services Department.⁴ Additional good news is "about one-half to two-thirds of people show Post Traumatic Growth (PTG).⁵ PTG is a type of positive change which people experience as a result of struggling with major life challenges or a traumatic event. You have the "resiliency gene" baked into your DNA.

This article will explore:

1. Six benefits of entering your golden years.
2. Tips on how to adjust to being among "The Rest of Us" (54 years+), including memory loss.
3. How to communicate meaningfully with non-boomers (or how not to over-share "baby boomer fables.")
4. Six Benefits of Entering Your Golden Years.

There are several advantages accompany aging. Older adults:

- * Are less irritated by things
- * Become more reflective
- * Grow wiser
- * Spend less time worrying and fighting
- * Improve mental performance especially in job-related and verbal skills
- * Report positive life satisfaction

2. Tips on How to Adjust to Being Among "The Rest of Us"

Use It or Lose It — Your Memory.

As the oldest baby boomers just turned 74+,^{6,7} many worry about their memory. But mental abilities can actually increase as we age if we use our skills. Problems with memory and computation result more from lack of practice than change in our physical thinking equipment. About 89 percent of elderly DO NOT experience Alzheimer's disease. (About 11.3 percent of those over 65 do have Alzheimers.)⁸ "An idle mind is the devil's playground," and that devil is Alzheimer. But brain disease can be slowed down by using your brain in particular ways, says Dr. Sanjay Gupta in his 2021 book "Keep Sharp," in which he offers 13 "Brain Muscle Building" exercises to help you use your brain rather than lose it.⁹

The best way to remember what you read or do is to concentrate on what you are doing or reading. Learning to concentrate on your breathing, will improve your overall concentrating ability and therefore your memory.

Also, silently repeating to yourself, what you have just done (i.e., "I turned off the stove, brought in the dog,") will help you remember later that you did turn off the stove or brought in the dog.

A normal memory problem occurs when you can't remember where you put your keys. A serious memory problem happens when you can't recall what your keys are used for. In either case, you should go see your doctor.

Simple memory (and Whole Brain) boosters include:

- * "The palest ink is better than the best memory," so put it in writing. Write notes to yourself. You can use sticky notes (those small yellow notes that allow you to cover an entire desktop or refrigerator with reminders). Leave messages to yourself on your phone. Like "location, location, location," remember, "repetition, repetition, repetition."
- * Play with your brain, that is, keep your brain in tune by playing games. "Bridge" the gap. One of the brightest people this author knows plays bridge youthfully and expertly, yet technically qualifies for AARP membership. There are many resources for games to play. Games, World of Puzzles magazine is great.¹⁰ AARP offers a whole host of games and brain challenges, available online and on your iPhone. Put down that TV remote and find something that fits your interests.
- * Create routines. Remember the old saying, "A place (and time) for everything and everything in its place." It may be boring but learn to routinely put your keys (and wallet, etc.) in one place. That will be one less thing you have to remember.
- * Tell jokes to tested audiences, like your best friends. This requires timing and remembering the punch line. If you

