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## A New Wrinkle: What I Learned from Older People Who Never Acted Their Age

**Eric Z. Shapira**
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While many books targeting baby boomers address the challenges of retirement, few focus on the actual aging process. *A New Wrinkle* does—in a positive and inspirational way.

Clinical gerontologist Eric Shapira shares personal stories and anecdotes that bring a credible perspective to his book. Starting with an overview of his family, Shapira discusses how, as a young boy, he was exposed to older relatives who were filled with joy for life. These were people who “never acted their age.”

That experience fostered his need to understand “the child within.” He explains: “The ability to nurture this child would keep me young all of my life and provide me with the sense of wonder one needs to appreciate new things and cherish those things that have come and gone.”

This attitude imbues Shapira’s writing as he leads the reader through careful consideration of the aging process. He addresses tough topics, from memory loss and chronic disease to sex in later years and depression. Shapira offers his professional insight and uses examples and stories to illustrate his points. He includes tips and techniques to help the reader understand the changes that come with aging. While change is an inevitable part of growing old, Shapira believes it “should be embraced with fervor.”

A key aspect of *A New Wrinkle* is its acknowledgment of caregivers. In a number of chapters, Shapira discusses the role baby boomers may find themselves in as caregivers to their aging parents. And he acknowledges, at some point, baby boomers may require assistance from caregivers themselves.

The author does not shy away from an honest discussion of death and dying. He relates death to his life experience, telling of his father, who became depressed and withdrawn when he learned he had terminal lung cancer at age sixty-one. Shapira also provides advice on how to prepare for and deal with death.

Eric Shapira’s positive yet realistic attitude toward aging makes A New Wrinkle an important, uplifting work. In the end, Shapira says, living life to its fullest in old age requires happiness and dignity: “We need to be able to laugh at ourselves and not take life so seriously, even in the face of crisis and tragedy.”

Some readers may find the author somewhat overbearing, simply because he puts so much of himself into this work. In spite of that, *A New Wrinkle* should serve to make the aging process easier to bear for everyone who reads it.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (January 30, 2012)

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