

## SENIOR CENTERS

# **Senior Enrichment Poetry**

Poems by Norman Molesko Resident Newsletter Poet

In honor of National Senior Center Month September 2023

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## Introduction

I am one of these "OLDIES" who relish the joys of being my age and able to create.

During my retirement, I am having the fortunate opportunities to poetically assess the past and the present, from the better (not worse) side of humanity.

My soul generates sparks of innovation, as I outreach to empathetic souls.

My thoughts and intuitions envision good feelings, leading to good days.

Norman Molesko

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#### LIVING IN A WORLD OF GOODNESS

I wake up in the morning. I realize that I'm alive. I'm aware.

And what about the world around me? I generally see the world as good. Not everyone can see the world as good, the homeless, the very ill, the hurting and others.

Goodness is a way of thinking, a way of feeling. Looking back at my life, at your lives, many of us grew up with the idea of goodness. Our parents said to us, you are a good boy, you are a good girl.

The word good is a basic part of our language. It is heard in common, everyday expressions. Good morning. Good afternoon. Good night. Good feelings. Good times. Good friends. Good ideas. Good luck.

Good and goodness have always been around. These are feelings, openly showing themselves, at times. These are feelings, underlying who we are, as a people. For me, I am living in a world of goodness.

#### **MY POSITIVE LIGHT**

Some feel and some say to get older is a take-away phase of a person's life. One can live without. One can do without. I downright smite this negative oversight.

I am fortunate to be guided by a positive light. From out of the past, I reflect, I reminisce. Rich nostalgia describes my previous times, coming from the vault of life inside my mind.

Let us transition into the present moment. What I know, how I feel, how I think, how I act, how I respond, what I view, happens to be right and natural for me to do.

Let us next shift into a future time. Here I strive to be a fertile seed, out of which creativity can sprout. About this striving I sense no doubt.

I often hear expressions of negativity, from many directions, at many places. I shrug off those who harbor such stress. My positive light keeps shining about.

#### **GRANDPARENTING PARENTING**

Some grandparents parent their grandchildren. No simple job. They can become burnt out. Child rearing at an older age is not an easy endeavor. There is caring, obligation, sacrifice and love.

They can be using up the money, they put aside for retirement. Then they may not be doing other things, they had always wanted to do.

The payoff comes if and when the grandchildren are happy and growing up fine. At least the children are now safe and in good hands, though the grandparents may need lots of prayers.



#### LONELINESS

Some of you may find this is a difficult time in which to survive. You could have feelings of loneliness and feelings of helplessness, due to lack of health, inadequate relationships and/or possessions.

You could have health problems you have not or were not able to solve, not taking the proper and timely steps to stay heathy and fit.

You could have relationship problems about interacting with others. It could have begun because you never had helping parents, the parents who you never got, to teach you how to adapt. Your parents could have denied your self-worth and self-respect.

You could have possession problems, gratifying yourself by acquiring possessions, as a substitute for the love of another.

If you are truly lonely, please reach out to overcome loneliness. Consult a professional person who deals with loneliness, if necessary.

#### **KINDNESS IS AROUND**

Every time I feel kindness in my heart, every time I say "Best Wishes" to someone, I am floating within a harmony of well-being.

I see folks greet other folks warmly and smile happily to others nearby. I see folks actively listening to others, doing good deeds, making others feel good.

I breathe in kindness from the air and well-being from a world permeating care. The heart-warming qualities that abound makes me know that kindness is around. Why don't you do a kind deed for someone, and see how it feels, right after doing the deed?

#### TIPS TO OVERCOME LONELINESS AND ISOLATION

Set the tone for the day when you awaken. Mediate, pray and/or say, "Today will be a good day". Go to a window and watch the sunrise.

Stretch in bed and focus on good thoughts. Shower or sponge bathe, water is healing. You feel better when you look better. Consider conscious breathing, meditation or just relaxing.

Make a plan of things you want to accomplish for the day. Go to technology. Put on your television, radio or computer. Have a conversation by email or telephone. Interact with a pet. Maintain social connections by texting, Facebook, Skype and Zoom.

Look through magazines or play music. Go grocery shopping. Eat well. Go out for breakfast. Do something you haven't done before. View the world with wonder and beauty.

Don't forget to watch our gorgeous sunsets.

#### FEELING POSITIVE RATHER THAN NEGATIVE

Feeling positive is the better way to be. This can lessen your stress and your anxiety. This can encourage you to function at your best.

So when you have feelings of negativity, don't let these feelings get you down. Feelings of negativity can be turned around.

Sing with delight, "Good Feelings Is My Joy." These brief lyrics can interrupt negative feelings, freeing your mind for positive feelings.

Sing with delight, "Good Feelings Is My Joy." This is my insight to bring about positive feelings.



#### **OLDER BRAINS ARE MORE CAPABLE**

I am not a weak and decrepit old man, a frail old man going downward, dwindling away. Most the time I am a live wire, a vibrant upbeat old man. However, there happens to be a common stereotype that old people in our society are generally frail and decrepit and their minds are dwindling away. For many old people, this is definitely not so. The brains continue to develop physically and mentally and become better integrated into the body and the mind. The left half and right half hemispheres now function together. Older brains are more resilient, adequate and capable.

#### I'VE GOT TODAY

I've just awoke. I'm going to grab the day, make it mine. Each hour will be mine. I will own this day. I sense it. I feel it. I will have a pursuit of purpose. Today will be a day to be curious, to be active. Today will be a day of study, of growth. I sense it. I feel it. Each moment, each minute, will be mine. I will follow my rhythms, my passions. This will prompt me to learn, to know more. I sense it. I feel it.

#### SOLITUDE

You may feel that you are not lonely, when you are laid-back and leisure around. You may or may not be busy with something.

Leisure time is not an activity to pooh-pooh. For you, the time is free and unfettered and your own. One thing can lead to another when you leisure around.

What may be really important to you, you are independent as well as being yourself. Behaving leisurely and not becoming lonely is solitude.

#### **CELEBRATING OLDER PEOPLE**

We older people have always been around. We older people have withstood ups and downs. We older people have worked to build this nation. We older people have given to our nation.

We older people are leaving behind a precious heritage, legacy and nostalgia to our children, grandchildren and future generations.

These are the gifts that we have given from our labors, our hopes, our dreams, our creativity, our accomplishments. Our nation realizes the worth of older people. Our nation celebrates older people every May. May is called Older American Month.



#### FEELING OF LONELINESS FADE AWAY

The awe of nature and its beauty fascinate me. Green spaces invoke calmness and peacefulness. Sometimes I stroll around for half-an-hour. I may notice many a colorful flower.

I walk in the sun and in the shade. I say "Hello" to another walker passing-by. Cheery songs from birds abound. I may keep hearing them all around.

I am happy sensing experiences of wonder from our natural world and its beauty. This brings out awe-inspiring emotions in me. Feelings of loneliness fade away.

#### THE EMOTIONS OF ANOTHER

Emotions allow us to understand one another. The ability to read the emotions of another is critical. You are looking at me. What do you see?

You should be able to read the emotions of another. It can be the positive emotions of a happiness or relief. It can be one of surprise, fear, disgust, anger or sadness.

Observe the gestures of the hands, mouth, nose or eyes. Listen to a pleasant or unpleasant voice or whisper. Attend to cries or laughter, grimaces or smiles, moving eyes, wiggling nose, wrinkling brow or nodding head.

What is critical is to be able to understand one another.

#### A SOMEBODY WITH A SENSE OF SELF

I am a somebody with a sense of self. I don't show my sense of self to everybody. In many situations I just don't fit in.

I should not feel I am a nobody. I actually know I am a somebody. I am a somebody with a sense of self.

I simply recall what I have done. No need to compare myself to anyone. I am a somebody with a sense of self.

I can stand up tall and don't feel small.I can face the world with confidence.I am a somebody with a sense of self.

#### **AVOID THE PERILS OF LONELINESS**

Millions of Seniors live alone and many experience loneliness. Loneliness can lead to serious ailments, depression and death. Avoid the perils of loneliness.

Seniors can become involved in all sorts of activities, interesting, engaging activities, that will keep them absorbed. Their minds become focused on these absorbing activities. As Seniors are absorbed in what they do, loneliness disappears.

So go find interesting, engaging activities that will be absorbing.



#### **IN THIS WINNING STREAK**

We are in the winning streak. We continue to wake up each morning. "We're here. We're alive. We're alert."

Life is not passing us by, as we can stand here and sigh. "We're here. We're alive. We're alert."

People, younger and the old, keep on dying. For us who are alive, we're in the winning streak. It pleasures us, as we continue to live.

We're pleased. We're blessed. We stay connected. We are with others, who are in the winning streak. We're here. We're alive. We're alert.

We need life to enjoy, to create and to share.

#### WE OWN WHAT WE DO

It seems to me negativity runs unchecked. Negativity is encouraged by many cultures, many families and our education in the schools.

We are living in a society that fosters criticisms. This means our continuation with negativity. But negativity is not good for our health.

Positivity is very good for our health. Science has demonstrated this fact. We need to sound a clarion call to minimize negativity.

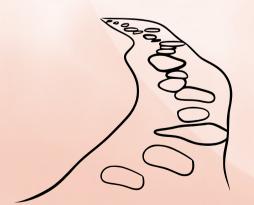
We can rewire our minds and change for positivity. There are so many ways we can do this. Let us persevere until we accomplish this change.

Our mind will awake with a healthier life. We own what we do.

#### WALKING DOWN MEMORY LANE

Sitting at home alone. What should you do? How about starting to write about your life story? You could gather your thoughts and first do an outline. You could pass the finished book down to your children. You could pass the finished book down to your grand kids. Passing down your life story should please you. You would be walking down memory lane.

Or you could go through your photo albums, even the boxes containing photos of yourself. This could revive some warm-hearted memories. You could email several photos with comments to those folks who you have lost touch with, those folks who could miss not being in your life. You would be walking down memory lane again.



#### **A SENIOR OUTLOOK**

I say to myself, today I have awakened. Today is a special day for me.

I am grateful for my old age. I am alive right now. I honor each and every day.

I value old age as a gift so dearly.To be alive is so precious to me.I appreciate old age sincerely.

I can still touch. I can see feel. I can still think. I can still do. I contribute to my community.

This is my Senior outlook.

#### TAKING A NAP

Younger folks may make joke and laugh at an Oldie taking a nap as a pastime. I am an Oldie. I want to rest my mind. This can happen with many Oldies, after eating a midday or evening meal.

Or I just take a short nap to perk me up. It pleasures me to take a nap.

My mind drifts off like this. My eyes closed, sitting in quietness, relaxed in timelessness, immersed in space without boundaries. I sense warmth, comfort and contentment. How wonderful it is being here.

#### **MY ROLLATOR AND ME**

Some people walk only with their feet. I walk with my rollator and use both feet. Moving around for me is no longer a big feat. I have a humdinger of a rollator with a seat. My rollator has squeeze handles for hand control. It has 4 wheels for me to push and roll.

I am controlling my rollator. Stopping, pausing. I am applying the brake. I am relaxing, looking around. My rollator gives me support. for my weak feet and knees.

My rollator provides me with security. I can stop, listen to a bird or a band in the park. My rollator allows me to function by myself, be active, keep my mind fertile, not be a turtle. It is a constant companion to me wherever I go. My rollator is my buddy, my enabler, my friend.

#### A YOU AND ME MAKE A WE

I had friends, many good friends, but somehow something was missing. Many times I felt alone, just alone. And then we met, you and me. From this sprouted a sense of chemistry. I am basking in the warmth of your love. You give me your hand and place it over my heart. I flutter, quiver and shake with you. You know, you give me so much joy. You and me have become a we, expressing our togetherness, our connection. You are my good feelings. You are my joy. You and me make a we.



#### SHARING GOOD FEELINGS

Many people are living in their own shell, when by oneself or alone in a lonely crowd. Each of these shells is a shell of isolation.

Another person can penetrate the shell. For example, Give a smile to another person. Then say, "How Are You Doing?"

This smile and this simple question can be picked up by this other person, and makes you and this other person feel good.

The shell of isolation is penetrated and opened up. You can now have a pleasant conversation, unlocking both souls with an exchange of goodness.

#### ALONE AND LONELY

My seeing is not okay. I don't recall what I saw at times. Maybe I don't hear just right. My hearing is poor.

And what's worse, I 'm not sure what's in store for me. I am uncertain and unsure what the future will hold for me.

You should realize that I am alone and feel lonesome at times. I worry why my heart rate and pulse readings fluctuate so.

I make decisions in my mind that are faulty and I can regret. I don't always get my facts right and ignore why I screw up so.

These words above exemplify a person being a "nervous wreck", feeling lonely, at times, and impacted by the condition of loneliness.

If you find yourself in this condition, reach out and share with your doctor how you are mentally and physically feeling, to combat the serious, unhealthy effects of loneliness.

#### **OUR BEAUTIFUL SURROUNDING BLUE SKY**

Tell me why is the blue sky so beautiful? I become aroused by the awareness of the sky. Some folks ignore or disregard the sky above.

I was sitting on a bench near a ladies' clothing store. Several ladies passed by, looking straight ahead. I asked some ladies, as I pointed my thumb upward, just one question, "What color is the sky above?"

The first lady looked up and said, blue, baby blue. The next lady said, sky blue. Other ladies remarked, pale blue, medium blue, light blue and natural blue. A lady noted, a 20 per cent chance of rain tomorrow.

I raised my head and looked up at the sky above. I was thrilled by this sky, what an exquisite blue sky.

#### **ACTIVE WISDOM**

I write about aging reality, my reality and the realities of those I meet and know. For me it is human to share, whether walking or in a wheelchair.

Various seniors and oldies feel similar in many ways, jaw boning at a market place, complaining in a doctor's office, letting hair down over the phone.

They relate twinges and pains, illnesses and other things to blame. They listen to each other's headaches, read obituaries and go to funerals. They are living through plenty at this time.

Yet my mind is often on a brighter plane. I keep in charge of myself whenever I can. I feel rewarded and good, when I help others.

#### OY! YOU HOYT!

One person flippantly comments, as a comic, "So you hoyt. So you are having discomfort? Tell some funny jokes and you will feel better."

Another says with psychological overtones, "The discomfort will go away. It's only mental. Just pay attention to this advice. Change your attitude! Relax! Take it easy!"

And a third person relates, as a magician,"Just forget you are having discomfort.You know you are imagining it.Ab-bra-ca-da-bra! Your discomfort is no more."

An elderly man, more philosophical, advises, "So, what's new? You are getting older, not a kid anymore. What to do? So it hurts. I hurt too. Get used to it."

A really helpful, supportive person says, "Oy! You hoyt? Consider your doctor's recommendations. Connect with your experience and your feelings. Then choose the best possible option available to you."

#### LET ME LIVE MY LIFE AS I NEED TO

Let me live my life with my feelings, thoughts and activities. Let me express myself, though you may not agree with me. I will listen to you, if what you say makes sense to me. Let me appreciate my own unique gratifications. Let me enjoy the beauty and goodness in each day. If I become socially disconnected, I could become depressed and could live an unhealthy, shorter life. Please let me live my life. This implies keeping my spirits up.

#### **MY PILLS**

Pills, pills, pills for this elderly guy.Doctors prescribe many.I am told usually to take all, until they are used up. To do so is wise.Some stabilize, mobilize, tranquillize, even sterilize.

Twelve pills for me to take when awake. They have such funny names. My "half-an-hour before a meal" pill. "With food" pill. "After I eat" pill. "A not-to-eat before one hour" pill. "Two each nightly before going to bed" pill and "a weekly pill."

All these pills get me confused, crazy at times. I need to organize my pill-taking methodically. Frustrations do arise which I try to disguise. I say "my pills are an old man's prize."

#### THE POWER OF THE CANE

To walk is hard without a cane, for some who are in pain or lame. When I walk I can use my cane, on the opposite side of my weakness or pain.

My good leg moves forward. The cane holding hand guides the cane. My bad leg steps ahead, recycling momentum again.

If I begin to trip at all, the cane can save me from a fall. It aids when picking up a ball. I even feel secure in a mall.

The cane improves my endurance. I am more stable and balanced. In crowds I navigate faster. It helps me be my own master.

I can open automatic doors and elevator doors. The ladies can decorate their canes galore with color-coordinated décors.

#### **ON A POSITIVE UPSWING**

I grow. I expand with creative aging. I find new energy and new meaning. I am on a positive upswing.

I feel vibrant with a sense of wow. I glisten in the here and now. I stay active. I stay connected.

My heart and soul are engaging. I am on a positive upswing.

So don't think to yourself "there is no hope". Don't just sit alone by yourself and mope. Use your potentials. Use your skills.

This is your world. This is my world. You decide how to live in your world. You too can be on a positive upswing.

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#### **MY HEARING IS NOT PERFECT**

What did you say?
Face me!
Please say it again!
Clearly. Slower. Louder.
I want to understand you.
I know you said something to me.
It may not be what I heard.
May not be what I think you said.
My hearing is not perfect.
Not all sounds are clear to me.
Not all sounds can be heard by me.
Some sounds are difficult to hear.
Please repeat what you said?
Clearly. Slower. Louder.
I need to understand what you said..

#### EACH PERSON IS VALUABLE TO ME

I ask myself the question, what is the value of each person? Here is my answer to all.

I respect each person. I learn from each. Each one is valuable to me.

When one behaves in a way different from me, that person does me a favor.

That behavior shows me what I want to be, what I don't want to be.

I respect each person. I learn from each. Each person is valuable to me.

#### WITHIN THE MIND

I don't really know what I actually know. Facts comes to me when aware or unaware. They get lost within the mind, as if to disappear.

When trying to remember some facts can reappear. They can surface slowly or as a pop-up suddenly appear. Other facts are found eventually after being absentee. Some facts don't come back at all. They are permanently lost. This is called the lost and found department of the mind.

## CHALLENGES AND APPRECIATION

I can't make the world exactly like I want it to be, optimum for me.

Yet in the autumn of my life, I have the right to possess my own symptoms.

I live in a world of introspection, aware of my private sensations and feelings.

My sensitivities, aches and pains belong to me as part of my kingdom. I suffer in silence.

I accept these symptoms as challenges, and appreciate I still survive and am alive.



# TREASURES

Sensing relief from discomfort is a simple pleasure. For me, each simple pleasure is a treasure.

Feeling chilled on a wintry day, trembling, cold down to the bones, then sipping hot soup is so warming. Ahh!

Having a splitting headache, with agonizing pain in the brain, then the migraine is not there. Ahh!

A cramping in the upper leg, causing anguish and screaming, then the pain stops. Ahh!

Being blasted by raucous music, assaulting to the ears, then the noise abruptly stops. Ahh!

I can go on and on, but what I mean to say is when a feeling of discomfort leaves me any day, Ahh!, this sense of relief is indeed a pleasure, though noticed only for a moment or two.

I hold such moments as precious, appreciating each as being a treasure. Certainly you must have collected such treasures during your life.

# HOW LONG AN ELDER STAYS

To some people young or younger, an Elder's life could seem for them to be rather long.

Many robust Elders express the desire to reach their one hundredth birthday, by living richly in mind and spirit for more than 36 thousand days.

While youth questions the length of time, the Elder's heredity, outlook and luck can affect how long the Elder stays.

#### THERE'S VROOM IN ME

I've turned on the ignition, put my car into drive, took my foot off the brake, stepped on the gas.

My car barely started with a putt, putt, putt, picked up some oomph, zoomed ahead with a vroom.

Several days later I had begun to garden under the summer sun. I became weak and exhausted. I lost my vroom.

Deep within my chest, my breathing was labored, as when my car went putt, putt, putt.

I sat down to rest awhile, drank a pint of water, and waited around patiently for my vroom to resume.

### GESTURES

When you talk to another person, just by sharing a "Hello", your two worlds meet, your two worlds connect. This mutuality I respect. A nod, a wink, a smile, a hand wave, a laugh, a word, are commonplace gestures, representing positive encounters. Each gesture can be the stimulus, the hair-trigger, used to reveal another person's soul. Each gesture can let out the sunshine found within the other person's soul.



### **BE KIND TO YOUR MIND**

I realize sometimes, I can plant a seed in someone's mind, but I cannot twist that person's arm, to have them think like I do. Now here are some positive words.

Don't clutter your mind. Don't moan. Don't groan. Don't revive old ghosts from the past. Don't worry about any future unknown. Accept what you have, what you own. Appreciate today in a positive tone. Be patient with what you find. Usher in a new way. Be kind to your mind. Relax and unwind.

## **MY COMFORT ZONE**

My activities are being guided by what I call my comfort zone, by good feelings that are ingrained.

These feelings become immersed in my mind, where I detect a sense of composure, a place of tranquility and safety.

My comfort zone is my oasis, the location of my inner sanctuary, where I am at peace and serenity.

No chance of becoming overwhelmed. No chance of becoming stressed.

# THE ELDERLY COUPLE

Behold. He's doing the old man's walk.
She's doing the old woman's walk.
That's what their neighbors are thinking.
They are old. They shuffle along nowadays,
their backs are slouched, their legs unsteady.
The use of canes could help in balancing somewhat.
The use of rollators could balance them even better,
preventing them from falling forward and broken bones.
Outside their home, they are glad not being homebound.
They feel they are still active and still part of the world.



### WATER IS BENEFICIAL

I have started to love water. Drink two quarts a day. Take some before I eat. It keeps me hydrated. It dissolves my meds. A natural liquid, so neat.

I love water. Use it to shower. Cool the body. Clean the feet. Rinse the teeth. It becomes a treat.

I love water. It helps when tense. Clears the head when dense. Its benefits are immense. Respecting what it does makes good sense.

# **GETTING ALONG WITH ANOTHER**

In my mind, in my head, there should be a spontaneous plan, an active goal, a labor of care, to get along with another soul.

I need to realize and accept that some plants need water day after day. Some folks need to receive in some way an expression, an exchange of tenderness, of kindness, each and every day.

In doing for myself, I do for others. In doing for others, I do for myself.

I need to remember this and no longer forget, to offer to another niceties when it is apropos.

### **GO AWAY DEMONS OF STRESS**

I aspire to walk down the path of being good to myself. I should learn to discern how best to prevent onsets of stress. Also other ailments I don't yearn.

I should not allow little demons of stress, to dance around as they wish in my head. These demons of worry and concern should be forced to leave my mind. Breathing-in, breathing-out, ten times, could be the way for a stress-free day.



# **OLDER SENIORS NEED NOT BE LONELY**

Many older Seniors feel and perceive themselves as being alone and not belonging. They can become lonely and socially isolated. However, to remedy such feelings, these Seniors could start reaching out and start relating to each another, like chit-chatting and sharing their lives. They could talk about what is familiar and also new, nostalgic and non-nostalgic, with each other. These Seniors could be tuning in to other caring folks. They could feel socially connected and content to belong. Goodbye to being lonely and not belonging. They now belong.

### THE ELDERLY AGING

Aging can be experienced as a take-away for many elderly. For these elderly, things change in time as the years past, becoming less and less.

Many younger don't relate to elderly decline, especially when not in contact with the one in decline. Those younger cannot be bothered.

Their heads are in different places. They worry about jobs, money, kids and more. From where many younger are, elderly aging is far-away.

The reality for the elderly is in the here and the now. Outward features, deepening wrinkles, flabby skin, double chin, lowered shoulders, walking slowly and carefully, are easily noticed.

The elderly must not hide from nor avoid the younger. The elderly have much to give to and share with the younger. The younger should take advantage of the elderly wisdom.

# A BLESSED MIRACLE

There is so much in the world for us to appreciate. The gifts of experience and memory belong to us.

Sentience is a blessed miracle we have, a mental process, within the physical and chemical parts of our bodies.

Sentience allows us the capacity to feel and sense, when our minds are consciously aware and alert.



Norman Molesko is the Resident Poet for the ONEgeneration eNewsletter.

As an "Oldie", Norman uses his poetry to communicate about Senior issues, concerns, awareness, and experiences.

Norman's current distinctions include being recognized as "Ambassador for Seniors" by the City of Los Angeles and as "Ambassador Of Joy And Goodwill" by the California Writers Club, West Valley Branch.

Norman has authored the following publications:

"Retiring And Senior Living, Experiencing The Second Half Of Life" Amazon.com

> "Heart Attack! Then What?" Amazon.com

"Seniors And Elders Embrace Life" Amazon.com

"Literary Works Of Norman Molesko" Google Search

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