

To age well, basically, means to avoid putting your parents into an old folk's home where they ain't treated with much dignity. I am using classified information from the Squamish Armed Forces, but I don't really care since I will eventually end up incarcerated inside a Dark Barracks, raped by Hog Riders.

The first key to having a good, long life (longevity) is to have a Gem Box. Everyone needs to have one of these and guard it well.

With a Gem Box, you can farm a crapload of Gems, which will allow you to gain huge amounts of whatever resource you want, so you can ward off illnesses and live an ostentatious life. That being said, there are some required elements needed to live a good life which cannot be attained at all/fully with wealth alone. Let me explain this through the explanation of the story below.

This is basically the story told to me by Mr Min Lai Haw, a 147-year-old officer for the Mountains. At one point, nobody really liked ageing since they were executed the day after turning 40 years old. Miraculously, he escaped. He hated their style of life, since there is only so much ground that one can cover in their lifetime and an intrepid explorer would strive to live longer in order to gain more knowledge and experience in every possible way. There is already a lack of time in our busy lives, as any urbanized folk would realize when they juggle their work, leisure and everything else within their 168 hours a week. (A rage spell can alleviate this, but only to some extent, since there is a cap on the time that is boosted from this.) Worse, when they end up wasting time on some distractions/delay, or they idle, this eats up to their 168 hours in the week, as time preserves its eternal flow. He then migrated from Meslilloet Mountain (where he used to live) to Squamish. Over there, he got to enjoy his life as he took on the Air Force department. However, he was shocked by what he was seeing happen to the majority of his fellow similar-aged brethren!

This discovery came to light when he happened to have to go through a rescue mission somewhere near Banff. It turned out that a flood had literally totaled the place, and his aim was to fly his aircraft there in order to save the people there. What a shocking experience! When he first landed the plane, he saw chaos: Young, fit men were forcing their way through the crowds to be the first to be rescued. The old people, unable to fight back, simply had no choice but to sit there and hope for the best. This was bad and inconsiderate, since the elderly are generally more susceptible to water-borne diseases such as cholera and typhoid. This is not how ageing well should go like; instead, what the healthy population should do at the very least is to allow the elderly priority in being rescued.

It is not unusual for some communities to have the grandparents sent to the Old Folks Home. The treatment they get there is often not stellar. Although there are staff to attend to them, for entertainment they would often be relegated to the free TV channels, or playing games with the other old folk or the occasional school that travels there as a Community Involvement Project item. Even if they were unable to respond physically, they can still feel it emotionally. One of them puts it as having them line up in one row for the shower, spray water and soap on them, rinse them off and then unceremoniously throw a towel on them and ask them to wipe themselves.

To age well is to try to educate your children by showing your parents the due respect in taking care of them. You treat your parents as (hopefully) your kids will treat you next time when you are the ageing population. Bringing food to them is one thing but actually having fun and spending time with them doing things they like to do is one such good way. Also don't engage in illicit activities like gambling, drinking, smoking or stuff with significant negative externalities, since your parents will tend to be the ones who have to needlessly (and defenselessly) suffer from your own actions, preventing them from ageing well.

Outside of your family, give up the train seats to the elderly, be patient with them, and most certainly don't con with their feelings with the scams just to get away with their wealth (and happiness)...

As I wish to elaborate on this, I feel that while living longer is usually a boon, there are situations where this is not desired. If the elderly is generally neglected, or dumped, or has physical problems/diseases that greatly restrict their movement (e.g. paralysis or blindness), this can hurt their emotional well-being and it would be like living in nirvana: being alive, but not living. This is the opposite of ageing well and such a person would rather die sooner and end their misery.

With today's technology, we have gained the ability to have better healthcare and generally lead longer lives. In the developed world, many people can expect to live past the age of 80. (Again, the officer here is an aberration.) Having a lot of things to keep them occupied and entertained will allow them to age well.

Bear in mind, however, that in one billion years' time, the Earth's climate will become hostile to all non-microbial life, which is to say that overdoing the technology will eventually come back to bite us. Hence living longer will generally lead to good life, but it sure ain't the only factor; the circumstances to the extra years mean a lot as well.

I chose it because it can leak Squamish's military information in terms of this officer's personal life. (Don't worry, I am not gonna let out information that can jeopardize Nanaimo, Whistler or Phuket. Those are my hometowns.) Or, perhaps more importantly, because it is a real life experience from someone else's perspective, both as a young man and as a 147-year-old.

Means a lot to me as I want to live long and well and I'm better off dead than under constant trepidation from ill treatment. Likewise for my family especially my parents (I'm already 24 years old). For the society, perhaps trying to compare different beliefs in terms of perspective...

That person's personal experience is significant as it shows how ruthless nature (and the society) can be to those who can't fight back.

Should respect their cultures, but personally what I feel is that it is an obligation/commitment to look after your own parents WELL... and to show due respect to other elderly people

Must explain how ageing well can take place through elimination of the preventing factors

Relates to the question of the week through a different story which no one really wants to live through... so as to make one think twice about their own actions before they crap it out on others. It would not be unusual to live to the age of 147 years (Mr Min Lai Haw, for instance); it's just that this age pyramid does not go that high.

In any case, taking the current world situation into account:

Low birth rates, higher mortality rates (from more old people), general longevity

Ballooning of the elderly population, shrinkage of the working population (exact range doesn't really matter)

Decline in population (Italy)

In more developed countries, dependency on foreign workers to do work

Leads to the country's economy being affected from greater outflows

Could also undermine certain sectors e.g. national defence

Higher tax paid by everyone to support them (government's expenditure increases)

Retirement age goes up

More illnesses and vulnerability to extreme weather, global weirding only exacerbating matters

Hopefully be then, we would have advanced our technology to the point where we don't need so much human labour (we can't get rid of it completely, as the technology could overrun us to the point

of the X-men scenario). Advanced technology could also cause us to have better longevity; however, this may not be a good thing, unless the technology can come in the form of Revives (to bring back the dead) and Wonka-Vite (cuts your age by 20 years/pill).

In 250-500 words, please talk about your submission.

Why did you choose this item?

What does it mean to you? Your family? Your community? Your society?

How does it relate to the question of the week?

Plenty to be said. Llama Swarms. Ride Llamas.

I chose this because it may seem ridiculous in today's context, but when this actually happens in the future, it would send mass shivers down the governments' spines. Also makes one realise that they will not be able to just depend on their offspring for support. It means a lot to my family, because I am an only daughter and I have about 1,000 aunties and uncles, all about 50 years older than me. Which is to say that when I turn 45, I would expect several hundred of them to still be alive, and since many of them do not have kids, it would indeed place a huge burden on me to look after all of them. The scary thing is that I'm 24, and while they are sufficiently capable of looking after themselves currently, unless I get blessed by the fairies, the situation can change significantly in a matter of 20 years. It may seem like an eternity but there again it is in a blink of an eye before this moment comes.

peer 1 → I love your submission. Very interesting and I love your postscript too!

peer 2 → The submission is very creative and I commend the participant for this. She makes it personal in that she described her family age groups and the responsibilities she fears she will have to bear when they are too old to take care of themselves. This brings reality nicely into the picture. I found her portfolio submission difficult to understand as she did not orient the graph and there was no explanation of it. The reference to "Llama Swarms" was totally unclear. I realize English is not the participant's first language and I commend her for her grasp of it. However, I would like to suggest she not use the term "crapload" in an academic or school paper.

peer 3 → I have never met someone with over 1000 aunties! You are exaggerating right! I hope so! LOL. Anyway the reality is what you describe personally is really scary. Everyone needs to get involved and all governments should be considering strategically what options are available to them to find solutions to deal with this challenge that we soon will be facing.

peer 4 → Umm, okay. Since you didn't meet the word minimum for the commentary, maybe next time don't try so hard to be funny, or whatever it was you were trying in vain to be, and just put the "postscript" in the commentary to meet the requirement. Or just keep flaking, whatever, you'll get the points because we old people understand children and their need to try to be different, even if they are different just like everyone else.

peer 5 → Insightful thoughts regarding the global impacts that the aging population may cause! But I am not sure how one on earth can have 1,000 aunties and uncles? Is this a regular phenomena in your country? Or you just imagine that all older people around you are sort of being relatives? Anyway, you are right in terms of the burden that family caregivers like you may face in the near future with the growing number of older adults. Well done!