

# Aging As An Idea

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In our childhood, youth, and lengthy adolescence, we invite aging. We can't wait to grow up. We want to become bigger, more capable, more independent. Aging becomes a primary goal – a powerful, positive idea.

In early adulthood, we celebrate the maturity Aging brings us: marriage, family, career, and friends. We ride atop the privilege of Aging to become productive, even creative. We prove our Aging worthiness.

In middle adulthood, multiple successes obscure sprinkles of gray. We can still climb mountains, resolve major challenges. We enjoy this plateau that Aging affords. But in the distance, the outline of a faint question mark is rising.

In later adulthood, our parents' deterioration and loss exposes our Aging fantasy. We realize the major diseases – cancer, heart disease, dementia – increase exponentially with age. And, we must admit the initial signs of our own decline. Our positive Aging idea of youth gets turned inside-out. And continued Aging becomes an outcome to be resisted.

In advanced adulthood, the desirable multi-lane Aging expressway of our youth transforms into a one-way, dead-end alley. We subject ourselves to all sorts of temporary repairs for maladies that multiply before us. And we find ourselves in constant retreat of progressive Aging as the enemy.

And, in this case, the Enemy always wins.

## Conclusion

Our Aging aspirations were fulfilled. We grew up and became credible, full fledged adults. But we discover that the energetic ride to the adult hilltop was designed to hide the ignominious reverse slide downhill to the graveyard.

In the end, life is a con job – enticing us to totally commit to fostering the next generation only to have our ticket to continued engagement canceled. And the Aging game boosters ensconced in culture instruct us to appreciate this scam.

No wonder we strive so vigorously to convince ourselves that we can expect a forever, painless, and glorious life after death – an end that could be our reward for being such willing participants in the inescapable con game of life.