

Turning 80 and FitBit

Description

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Turning 80 gives me a new take on aging. Eighty is Old Age. Make no mistake. Eighty is old. Arriving here has been a contest against genetics and the hurdles life tossed in my path. I decided to get some assistance with the contest: a FitBit. The idea was to measure steps and sleep. The hospice nurse in my family suggested sleep quality is a key to better aging. Lots of people measure their steps trying for 10,000 a day. I have blogged about the value of this [step-counting for your health](#).

Wearing a FitBit through one night made each of three trips to the bathroom a crisis of failure. Normally I slip right back into bed and sleep again. The FitBit made this nightly parade a gauntlet with a row of judges pondering their score cards, lifting a 5, one after the other. After forty-eight hours, I decided not to keep score.

As for making sure I walk at least 8000 steps daily, I discovered in the two days I wore the FitBit that my ordinary day with no specific exercise period produces 2000 steps or a mile. And just one walk in my neighborhood to the bank, the grocery store, the UPS or post office or bus stop and home again is another two miles plus, plus. I'm happy with three plus miles a day. I don't need a FitBit to remind me. I'm like the family dog. I need to walk everyday.

The FitBit goes back to the store. The contest against Old Age is over. Did I win? By what

measures shall we judge the conclusion of this race?

Physical ability? OK there. But greatly changed. Smaller goals. Getting up and going to bed. Walking. Taking care of my personal needs like bathing, shopping, cooking, feeding the chickens and the cat and myself. I don't move as fast. Slipping on the ice has moved from possible to probable. Bending over to brush teeth or tie my shoes is accompanied by creaks and occasionally sharp catching of the breath. Six miles is my max and fewer than 2000ft. elevation gain. About four hours is plenty on the trail. I will cross country ski, but not drive to the summit if road conditions could require chains. I'm perfectly able to put on chains, but think better of such an effort.

Considering the falling probability, I decided to try an ADT Health monitor. When the bulky pendant arrived in the mail (with a dresser top base that glows in the night), I knew I would never wear the thing or tolerate another LED eye surveillance in my bedroom. The thing is Ugly. I have no heavy boobs for it to hang between. Un-hideable. The two men who rent space in my house took one look at the gizmo and at me and said, "Premature." When ADT called to activate the system, I was in Mexico swimming in the ocean and walking the beach and couldn't be reached. Even though I'd signed a three year contract, ADT took it back. Not ready yet. Maybe in five more years.

Eye sight? Still driving at night. I doubled my carotenoids and the little halos of light around each beam of the oncoming motorists disappeared. Click to see what



carotenoids, those fat soluble anti-oxidants that help with eye health.

Hearing? Not so good. Costco hearing aides work marvels, but I have had mine adjusted three times in three years. And the quality of musical sound is tinny which is a great disappointment to me. To sing in the choir, I have to adjust them so my own voice mixes well with the other singers and then crank the volume up for the readings and the sermon. (I suppose there are those hearing aid wearers in the pews who turn theirs down during the sermon.) I understand there is an effort to calibrate the algorithms for music to help the partially deaf's enjoyment of same. All the work in the past has been with speech. May I live long enough to experience this more inclusive approach to amplifying sound.

Forgetfulness? Not too bad. Names elude me as much as ever. In fact I may be a bit better

at names because I am paying more attention, or more of me is paying attention to you. MindWorks has made a difference. When I head for the basement to get something, I usually remember where I put it. That's a change for the better. [MindWorks](#) is a



new-ish supplement.

Incontinence? Sometimes but not enough to wear protection.

Flatulence? Frequently, which causes much hilarity in my family: "barking spiders" "Squeaky floors," "Jet propelled." Accepting one's Creatureliness is surely a sign of accepting aging.

Skin, hair and nails? Now here is a measure of aging that I watch



and

made a big effort to delay by taking anti-aging tonic called Vivix

and

plenty of supplements that support healthy skin, hair and nails. About a year ago as if a switch were thrown, my finger nails started splitting and tearing. I have resorted to organic false nails done at great expense once a month at Nail Time in West Seattle. At least they have come up with something that is not acrylic and therefore not cancer causing. At the same time, I lost nearly all my pubic hair and, as my granddaughter observed while giving me a head rub on Christmas day, "Grandma, your hair is not as thick as it used to be." I'd always had a thick bush and was distressed to see it gather at the shower drain. Oh, well. Who besides me will notice? As far as skin goes, my cat punctures it regularly with his nails and teeth. The slightest brush against the chicken coop fence or tossing my back pack over my shoulder produces a sub-cutaneous bleed, little reddish brown patches on my hands and lower arms. Less emotionally thin-skinned and far more physically thin-skinned is not a tragedy. Which brings me to

Quality of personal relations? Is this a qualifying bench mark in the aging process? It is by

my bench marks. I have pursued authentic honest relations with boundaries all my adult life. “Can I be in relation with you without hurting you or losing myself?” I still make mistakes, am rude, insensitive and critical at times, but I recognize these deviations from the course more quickly. I can meet you from my heart more often.

Eighty just means I am old. My condition is whatever it is on a given morning. I’ve thrown out the markers and given up the contest, content to observe and embrace however it is, rejoicing in the new day.

Love, Betsy

Be well, Do well and Keep Moving.

www.HiHoHealth.com for shopping

www.OpenBorderswithLove.com to read about my new book



Category

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