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Life Choices... a newsletter from Latimer Financial Services



Retirement and Tax Planning Education Funding Portfolio Review
Long Term Care Life Insurance Critical Illness and Disability Insurance

July 2011

Carpe Diem!

Recently, I have been thinking a lot about age.

Now...please keep in mind that everything you are about to read – if you do – will be the product of my personal observation and thinking. This is what I would describe as unrecorded, unscientific, and probably unnecessary research. Thinking about age or aging has never been something that occupied my time very much.

Mainly, I think I was trying to think of a suitable, summer subject for this newsletter. It is not intended to cause you to dash to the telephone or your BlackBerry or your email to take any action in particular. All it might cause you to do is...perhaps...think about what you think about age.

The nature of our work requires us to know – very specifically and accurately, a client's date of birth.

We know how old you are.

When do you plan to start looking your age?

And periodically, I look at the date of birth, do a quick mental calculation and turn to my client in amazement by saying: "When do you plan to start looking your age!"

Many believe that I mean that as an off hand compliment.

All should know that when I say it, I am not trying to flatter. People who look old know they look old – after all, they have mirrors and a host of people outside their very doors that are placed there conveniently so that they might compare themselves with others of similar ages. Good grief! I think I'm old! Or, my goodness, they look old – I hope it'll be a long time before I look that old!

I ask people: when do you plan to start looking you age – mainly because they are very young looking...for their age.

The scientists among you will tell me that genetics has a lot to do with how you look. And you would undoubtedly be correct – perhaps. I don't tend to believe everything scientists tell me. Look at the arguments they are having amongst themselves on whether the earth is cooling or warming. They do not know everything!

The philosophers among you will tell me that your face is a reflection of who you truly are and what you think about.

Not being a scientist, I think that might be a more accurate argument than the genetics card.



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An 89 year old client...

...came to our office last week and when she was leaving, literally ran across the office chasing our assistant's brand new puppy that was visiting at the time. For a couple of seconds I was fearful of her falling and breaking some important bone. But I forgot whom I was worrying about. This lady is ageless and has more agility and more energy than I do!

And a 65 year old client...

...retired last year and immediately began complaining that he was running out of time. Not that he was going to die anytime soon, necessarily, but he could not find the time to do what he wanted to do because he realized that he had developed symptoms and aches and pains and his retirement was turning into a succession of visits to doctors and specialists of one kind or another. These problems had begun very shortly after his retirement date – almost as if there was a conspiracy to keep him off the golf course.

A 79 year old client...

...had a serious heart attack. As a result he sold his business and retired. He has recently finished building a house, by himself – and is in the process of building an oversize garage and shed on his property – by himself. In his spare time, he delivers tractor-trailers to Toronto and Vancouver for a friend. Retired, you say? 79 you say?

And a 50-year-old professional woman...

...told me that when she was in university in her late teens and early 20's she began to worry about what she would do to fill her time when she retired! Forty years before the fact!

There are people who determine how they are feeling by checking the calendar. As soon as they hit 60 or at the latest, 65, they begin to complain about loss of memory, hearing, vision, taste buds. For some, nothing is gradual. Last night they went to bed able to remember their Aunt Millie's shoe size and today they cannot.

What I really think age is good for...

We tend to concern ourselves about age and aging to the point that we really should question: why is age important? Age: what is it good for? How am I different because this year I am 40 and next year I'll be 41 and last year I was 39? Is there no way to beat the aging process other than looking for Vasco da Gama's Fountain of Youth? [For you Florida enthusiasts – I can tell you – it is not there...it is up here... (imagine you can see me touching my right temple).]

I know an 80-year-old man who has been retired for 21 years. He's planning a round the world trip with his wife. He talks as if his life has been and will be an exciting journey with no end and has interests that do not allow time to dwell on the passage of time.

I think that your date of birth is critical only five times in your life:

1. The school board will be able to tell you the specific date when you should start going to school.
2. The motor vehicle bureau will know the exact date when you can receive your driver's license.
3. The authorities will know exactly when you can legally imbibe alcoholic spirits.
4. Your last employer will have a sense of the date on which they should think about a replacement.
5. The Canada Pension Plan and Old Age Security people will know when to start sending your cheques.

What other date is not under your control? Those are the four really important dates. So your actual date of birth is more a convenience to the "higher authorities" in our lives than it is to you.

You don't get old at a specific time. You don't lose your hearing, or your vision, or your taste buds, or your sense of balance at a specific time. It can happen anytime.

I don't know how to close this: Never worry about things that have not happened and you have no control over anyway?

Carpe Diem...!

Please call us if you have any questions or would just like more information (204) 942-6895. We look forward to helping you make it a great year!