

THE PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

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CONTRIBUTORS' BULLETIN

April, 1983

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT RETIREMENT

Dear Friends,



In sober fact, old age begins at birth. Therefore, preparations for retirement should begin in infancy. At first the program must be carried by the parents. They must bend the twig of the child's character and establish values which will extend to the end of mortal existence--and beyond. The well adjusted person can face all the changes of life with strength of character and an appropriate optimism. Among the earliest lessons that most help is religious orientation. The child must recognize the importance of faith in the Divine Power which governs all things. In these early years, children should be taught to assist in the maintenance of the home. They are not pampered guests but working members of the household. If the temperament is well established before the boy or girl enters the public school system, there is less likelihood of contamination through initial contacts with the corrupting influences of modern society.

By the time young people enter high school, the problem of career comes into focus. In some cases aptitudes and abilities become obvious as schooling proceeds. All too often, however, students become overinvolved in the excitements of daily existence. Emotional pressures increase and there is little time or interest in the responsibilities of self-maintenance. Graduation from high school is a major crisis in the careers of the young. For some time the economic potentials of trades or professions have become the prime consideration. Many have told me that they had no actual interest in law or medicine, but most lawyers and doctors are rich. This type of thinking has desperately damaged human beings who were well suited for less glamorous occupations. Where money is all-important, morality and ethics are compromised, health is damaged, and the individual becomes a victim of his own success.

From this point on, the individual may be drifting helplessly on a sea of trouble. A young person who has never learned to discipline his or her own character is very apt to have a broken home, unpleasant children, and an early coronary. The roots of disaster were planted in childhood, but by the time a man or woman reaches the fortieth or fiftieth year, the tree has grown up and the fruit is bitter.

To gain some sense of personal security and play the game that has become almost unbearable, there may be increasing dependency upon alcohol or tranquilizing drugs. When these become dangerous addictions, the sufferer seeks psychotherapeutic help. Probing often results in the discovery that beneath the surface of a pompous personality is a weak little creature unable to cope with the problems of this world and terrified by the thought of death. It never occurred to this moral and ethical weakling that he has missed numerous opportunities to strengthen his character and enlighten his mind. He became a sports fan and wasted both time and money watching professional athletics. Between seasons, he favored fantasy fiction on television and, as the programs worsened, bought a larger screen and took on some of the channels that featured degeneracy, violence, and hard rock music. If he read a book, it would probably be X-rated fiction, detective stories, or contemporary exposes of ancient and modern corruption. Many are basically equipped for a higher level of attainments, but are now satisfied to become wealthy clubmen and own condominiums by the sea.

What we have just mentioned is what the Bible called "riotous living"; and in these later days, it is accepted as expensive but indispensable to happiness. The forty-ninth year was known to the ancients as climactic. The physical body, the needs of which have been entirely ignored, begins to show signs of wear and tear, and the mind turns to thoughts of nutritional supplements. There are also numerous advertisements dealing with rejuvenation, but health will not be improved unless character is ennobled and there is no trace element available for this. The next climactic is the sixty-third year. This is two years in advance of the standard retirement age, but more and more people are taking early retirement and sacrificing some financial benefits. A few spots of illness have arisen and it is beginning to become imperative to take things easy. Even with more moderate living the climactic years may present difficulties. The eyes are not too good, the hearing is impaired, and there is always the possibility of a pacemaker. In these years also, older people decide that they cannot continue to maintain elaborate and expensive establishments and give thought to retirement communities and mobile home parks. It is interesting that many who devoted the best years of their earning careers to building extravagant homes a few years later are glad to let them go.

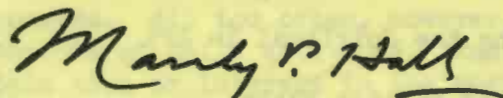
As the retired chairman of the board, you wish his successor well, eat the traditional fried chicken dinner, and a long and painful career is ended. Now it is possible to look forward to blessed leisure. At last you can do the things that have been on your mind for a long time. You have always wanted to travel, especially in that fascinating land of Nepal. Here are the wonderful customs, the great snow-peaked mountains and placid lakes and plush resorts. So you talk to your travel agent and he tells you: "I'm sorry, but due to the high altitude we cannot accept members on this tour who are over sixty-five years of age." Red China is scarcely safer and Japan is not satisfactory if you cannot handle long walks and flights of two or three hundred steps. So you go to Paris and have trouble with the water. You have waited too long for the great vacation. You should have been taking good care of your body when you took your first job. If, however, you are not too wealthy, you could be pretty healthy up into your seventies. You could have gone to Nepal on your own. Hobbies now come into focus. Franklin D. Roosevelt loved the sea and, after he was paralyzed, he made a collection of miniature ships and probably assembled some of them himself. Mr. Gump of San Francisco

supplied him with several handsome miniatures. A good game of bridge may be relaxing. It is not very therapeutic, but is ideal for distributing gossip. An elderly couple may have difficulty in finding something that they both equally enjoy. When the old king of Sweden was too old for tennis, he took up crocheting which was also appealing to Queen Mary of England.

Here, one pitfall presents itself. There may be a tendency to become nostalgic. When the mind is not healthily occupied, it develops unfortunate habits. Those who live in the past are dead already. As the sphere of activities is restricted, qualms of conscience may burden the spirit and it is much too late to relive the past, at least in the present embodiment. The heart may take consolation in religion. In our first childhoods we should develop the faith that will sustain us here and hereafter. There is a tendency to exploit this real and sincere need and last minute revivals of a long latent faith can be disastrous. Having no discrimination, never having studied religion, and having failed to understand the true consolation of a wisely matured belief, we discover the lack of the sustaining power of strong but kindly believing.

The point we particularly wish to make is that the thoughtful person should enrich and organize his ideals, dreams, and aspirations NOW. There is no other time, or better time, than the present. Take a few minutes a day, otherwise wasted, in thoughtful consideration of our place in a universe of wisdom and beauty. It is not necessary to assume creedal complications. Probably the best textbook is to think quietly about the people you know, the troubles they face, and the degree of insight with which they attempt to solve them. Search out a few reasonably contented members of the older age group. How did they conserve their happiness? How did they build their lives together? How have they reacted to the emergencies arising in the lives of their children? You may find, as I have found, an eighty year old grandmother who retired from confusion when she was sixteen years old and has enjoyed a remarkable and extensive retirement.

Most sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Manly P. Hall". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

MANLY P. HALL

RECOMMENDED READING:

Aude	Chaldean Oracles of Julianus	(C)	\$10.00
Byrom	Dhammapada (Sacred Book)	(P)	5.95
Case	Great Seal of the United States	(P)	2.25
Chang	Book of Internal Exercises	(P)	6.95
Colgrove	How to Survive the Loss of a Love	(P)	2.95
Donnelly	Great Cryptogram (2 Vols.)	(C)	42.50
Fischer, Editor	Essential Gandhi	(P)	4.95
Gandhi	All Men Are Brothers	(P)	3.50
		(C)	7.50
Gyatso	Buddhism of Tibet and the Key to the Middle Way	(P)	4.00
Helene	Blessed Virgin Mary	(P)	6.95
Helene	Dead Sea Scrolls	(P)	2.25
Hoeller	Gnostic Jung and the Seven Sermons to the Dead	(P)	7.50
Jampolsky	Children as Teachers of Peace	(P)	7.95
Jampolsky	Love Is Letting Go of Fear	(P)	5.95
		(C)	9.95
Kandinsky	Concerning the Spiritual in Art	(P)	2.25
Keynes	Drawings of William Blake	(P)	5.00
McCaffree	Bible and I Ching Relationships	(C)	16.00
Seton	Gospel of the Redman	(P)	3.50
Wilson	Descartes	(P)	9.95

All of the above books are available at the Arts of the World Gift Shop at PRS or order by mail by adding 6% of the total cost of the order (\$.75 minimum) for shipping and handling for 4th class book rate. Orders may be shipped by UPS, the fastest way, by adding 10% of the total cost of the order (\$1.50 minimum). California residents, please add appropriate sales tax. All prices subject to change without notice. Checks or money orders should be made payable to:

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