Think it’s too late to “re-invent” yourself? Think again. According to Carolyn Worthington, editor-in-chief of Healthy Aging® Magazine, it’s never too late to find a new career, a new sport, passion or hobby. Healthy Aging® Month is an annual health observance designed to focus national attention on the positive aspects of growing older. Now in its second decade, Healthy Aging® Month provides inspiration and practical ideas for adults, ages 45-plus, to improve their physical, mental, social and financial well-being.

The numbers of people over 45 is growing every year. The attention used to be just on the baby boomers. The generation x-ers are elbowing their way in and have many of the same interests as the previous generation – stay active and vibrant as long as possible. There are over 76 million baby boomers today over 50 and the first of the 82.1 million generation x-ers are about to reach that milestone.

“Use September as the motivation to take stock of where you’ve been, what you really would like to do if money was no object,” says Worthington. “And try it! Who says you have to do something related to what you studied in school? Who says, you can’t start your own home business later in life, test you’re your physical prowess, or do something wildly different from anything you’ve done before? Only that person you see in the mirror!”

See our 10 tips to get you started on page 2!
1. Do not act your age or at least what you think your age should act like. What was your best year so far? 28? 40? Picture yourself at that age and be it. Some people may say this is denial, but we say it’s positive thinking and goes a long way toward feeling better about yourself. *(Don’t keep looking in the mirror, just FEEL IT!)*

2. Be positive in your conversations and your actions every day. When you catch yourself complaining, check yourself right there and change the conversation to something positive. *(Stop watching the police reports on the local news.)*

3. Have negative friends who complain all of the time and talk about how awful everything is? Drop them. As cruel as that may sound, distance yourself from people who do not have a positive outlook on life. Surround yourself with energetic, happy, positive people of all ages and you will be happier too. *(Smile often. It’s contagious and wards off naysayers.)*

4. Walk like a vibrant, healthy person. You can probably do it. Check your gait. Do you walk slowly because you have just become lazy or, perhaps, have a fear of falling? *(Make a conscious effort to take big strides, walk with your heel first, and wear comfortable shoes.)*

5. Stand up straight! You can knock off years with this trick your mother kept trying to tell you. Look at yourself in the mirror. Are you holding your stomach in, have your shoulders back, chin up? See how your neck looks better! Fix your stance and practice it every day, all day until it is natural. You will look great and feel better. *(Your waistline will also look trimmer if you follow this advice.)*

6. How’s your smile? Research shows people who smile more often are happier. Your teeth are just as important to your good health as the rest of your body. Not only is it the first thing people notice, but good oral health is a gateway to your overall well-being. *(Go to the dentist regularly and look into teeth whitening.)*

7. Lonely? Stop brooding and complaining about having no friends or family. Do something about it now. Pick up the phone, landline, or cell and make a call to do one or more of the following: Volunteer your time. Take a class. Invite someone to meet for lunch, brunch, dinner, or coffee. *(Volunteer at a local school to stay in touch and to keep current on trends; take a computer class or a cell tutorial session to keep up with technology; choose a new person every week for your dining out.)*

8. Start walking not only for your health but to see the neighbors. Have a dog? You’ll be amazed how the dog can be a conversation starter. *(If you don’t have time for a dog, go to your local animal shelter and volunteer. You will be thrilled by the puppy love!)*

9. Make this month the time to set up your annual physical and other health screenings. Go to the appointments and then, hopefully, you can stop worrying about ailments for a while. *(For a list of recommended annual health screenings, a great resource is MyHealthFinder. You can visit Medicare.gov to check coverage.)*

10. Find your inner artist. Who says taking music lessons is for children? You may have an artist lurking inside you just waiting to be tapped. Have you always wanted to play an instrument? Ever wondered if you could paint? What about working in wood? *(Sign up now for fall classes and find your inner artist!)*

FOR MORE TIPS AND IDEAS

See Healthy Aging® Magazine at www.healthyaging.net
DID YOU KNOW?

Poor dental health impacts overall health and increases the risk for diabetes and heart disease.

Dry mouth (reduced saliva production), often caused by prescription and over-the-counter medications, is a problem for 30 percent of older adults. It contributes to significant tooth decay and gum disease.

FAST FACTS

75%
About the percentage of people ages 60+ who have only some of their natural teeth.

1 in 5
The number of adults aged 65 and over with untreated tooth decay.

<3%
The number of Americans who live a “Healthy Lifestyle,” according to a study published in Mayo Clinic Proceedings.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit: www.seniorsoralhealth.org
http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/dental.htm

Many retirees downsize their homes, but this decision requires careful consideration of a variety of factors.

Is Downsizing Right for You?

From Age Dispatch

As men and women retire or approach retirement age, many choose to downsize their homes. Such a decision can save older adults some money while freeing them from the hassle of maintaining large homes they no longer need.

Downsizing to a smaller home or apartment is a big step, one that homeowners should give serious thought before making a final decision. The following are a few helpful tips to help homeowners determine if downsizing to a smaller home is the right move.

1. Get a grip on the real estate market. Downsizing is not only about money, but it is important that homeowners consider the market before putting their homes up for sale. Downsizing can help homeowners save money on utilities, taxes, and mortgage payments, but those savings may be lost if you sell your house during a down market. If you don’t think the current market will get you the price you are hoping for, wait until the market improves before you sell.

2. Take inventory of what’s in your house. Empty nesters often find that their homes are still filled with their children’s possessions, even long after those children are adults and have left home. If the storage in your home is filled with items that belong to your children and not you, then downsizing might be right for you. Tell your children you are thinking of downsizing and ask the over to pick through their items that are still in your home. Once they have done so and taken what they want, you can host a yard sale, and then donate or discard what you cannot sell. Once all of the items are gone, you may find that moving into a smaller place is the best decision.

3. Next, examine your own items. Your children’s items are likely not the only ones taking up space in your home. Take inventory of your own possessions, making note of items you can live without and those you want to keep. If the list of items you can live without is long, then you probably will not have a problem...
moving into a smaller home. If you are not quite ready to say goodbye to many of your possessions, then you might want to stay put for a little while longer.

4 Consider your retirement lifestyle. If you have already retired or are just about to, and you are planning to spend lots of time traveling, then downsizing to a smaller home may free up money you can spend on trips. If you really do see yourself as a silver-haired jetsetter, then you likely will not miss your current home. If travel is not high on your retirement to-do list but you have a hobby -such as crafting, restoring classic cars, or woodworking - that you hope to turn into a second profession, then staying put and converting your extra space into a workspace is the best choice.

5 Your decision to buy a smaller home versus renting an apartment will depend a lot on nonfinancial, emotional issues as well. Do you love the idea of owning your own place and fixing it up the way you want? Or will it be a big relief after years of ownership not to worry about the lawn or broken down appliance? Renting can make your monthly expenses predictable. If you rent, your budget will not be blindsided by a roof repair, and relocating to another area is easier when you rent.

Still, many downsizing retirees opt to buy a smaller home all cash, using the proceeds from the sale of their larger home. This allows them to continue to grow their home equity without the monthly mortgage – freeing up the cash for other budget items like travel or activities. Some retirees chose to move to an independent-living community filled with other seniors. These arrangements can include an apartment, meals, weekly housekeeping, maintenance, gym membership or exercise classes, activities such as movies, and even free salon services – all for a predictable monthly rental fee.

For more information:

http://www.kiplinger.com/article/retirement/
http://virtual.strathroyagedispatch.com/

Choosing Happiness at Any Age

Strive for Happiness

On some level, we all want to be happy. Otherwise, life would seem bleak. When we feel happy, we are productive, motivated, creative, and on fire.

For many, aging can create a lot of unhappiness, as things that once felt in our control now feel out of control, like our health, our bodies, and even our relationships with others. That is why it’s even more important to engage in daily activities that cultivate happiness and to build that emotional muscle, so that you can experience overall well-being.

Choose Happiness

We are dynamic individuals with many layers that feel different emotions in any given day. Experts will tell us that you can choose happiness, but most people struggle with this concept. Happiness is not something you capture. True happiness, contentment, and joy need to be nurtured, cultivated, and practiced.

Following are some tips on ways you can feel happier in your life:

Leave Your Seat and Move Those Feet

Exercise is one of the best ways to feel happy. Neurotransmitters and endorphins that support you in feeling good are released during exercise. Your brain chemis-
try actually changes when you exercise.

Studies have shown that physically active people can recover from depression more quickly than non-exercisers, and it can lead to better mental health as we age.

Not an exerciser? That’s OK — just get up and move, even if you walk for 10-20 minutes a day. Then work yourself up from there.

**Connect With Others**

Human connection is one of the most important factors in overall happiness and feeling good. In our busy world today, it’s easy to skate through life with our heads buried in TV, electronics, or other distractions.

When we have interpersonal relationships with others, we feel a sense of belonging. It is in our nature to want to be close with others and to connect, so reach out to someone today whether it’s an old friend, or a new one waiting to be made.

**Be of Service**

Being of service can bring true, authentic happiness. Serving others leads to a very strong sense of connectedness and inner happiness. Working with a charitable organization can bring joy and a humble connection with the greater good. Giving back is good for you.

What can you do to be of service today? Visit [greatnonprofits.org](http://greatnonprofits.org) to find a charity in your area.

**Find a Happy Hobby**

Having a hobby that you enjoy is also an important part of cultivating happiness.

Find something you enjoy doing, and do it as often as you can. This will begin to spark those inner feel-good feelings and your creative spirit.

**Put on a Smile**

Look, feeling happy every moment is just not possible. We are complex beings with a whole network of emotions. It’s OK to experience sadness once in a while — or fear. These are important emotions too, grateful for and the experiences you’ve had that have warmed your heart. See? It’s almost impossible to feel anything but happy when living with an attitude of gratitude.

**Spend Time in Nature**

Spending time outside is known to energize us and give us a feeling a vitality. Connecting to nature is almost as important as connecting with humans.

Take some time and go outside. Look around. Listen to the wind blowing through the trees. Smell a flower. Get lost in the woods. Whatever you choose, get outside as much as you can and see how it starts to change your happiness barometer.
Healthy Living... Know What Type of Care You Need

There are four basic types of outpatient care: emergency, urgent, routine, and specialty. Knowing what type of care you need for your symptoms ensures you get the best care available. This can also save you time and money. If you have a medical emergency – something you think is a threat to life, limb, sight, or safety - immediately call 911 or go to the closest emergency room. The following table defines the four types of care, gives examples, and provides guidance on getting the appropriate type of care.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Care</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>What To Do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency</td>
<td>Treatment for a serious medical condition that the average person considers a threat to life, limb, sight, or safety</td>
<td>No pulse, severe bleeding, spinal cord or back injury, chest pain, severe eye injury, broken bone, inability to breathe</td>
<td>Call 911 or go to the closest emergency room. Notify your primary care provider (PCP) within 24 hours or on the next business day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Urgent</td>
<td>Treatment for an illness or injury that won’t result in further disability or death if not treated immediately, but does require professional attention within 24 hours</td>
<td>Rash, migraine headache, urinary tract infection, sprain, earache, rising fever</td>
<td>Call your PCP first for same day appointment availability or appropriate guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Routine</td>
<td>General health care services, including office visits and preventive care</td>
<td>Symptoms of chronic or acute illnesses and diseases, follow-up care for an ongoing medical condition</td>
<td>Call your PCP to schedule a routine appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty</td>
<td>Medical care from specialists for treatment your PCP cannot provide</td>
<td>Cardiology, dermatology, gastroenterology, or orthopedics</td>
<td>Get a referral from your PCP who will coordinate your care to ensure your needs are met</td>
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ACO Contact Information

For questions or additional information on ACO’s:
Visit: www.medicare.gov/acos.html
Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)
Or TTY 1-877-486-2048

To contact us:
CHRISTUS Louisiana ACO
80 Versailles Blvd, Suite C
Alexandria, Louisiana 71303

Beneficiary Help Line (844) 361- HELP (4357)

Compliance Hot Line (844) 881-INFO (4636)

Website: http://www.christus_health.org/aco-public-report-information-louisiana