

**Distress-Free Aging:  
A Boomer's Guide to  
Creating a Fulfilled and Purposeful Life**  
Introduction

There are 78 million baby boomers in America today and the first of these just turned 60 on January 1, 2006. It's not surprising then that this generation of people is now faced with unique challenges as they confront their inevitable retirement, lifestyle changes and other reminders of growing old. However, this group has already proven themselves to be different than previous generations by being more active, healthier and living more productive lifestyles. The chance to pursue life-long interests and other activities, once constrained by the commitments of work and family, is a welcome blessing now. Many boomers have changed careers, seeking work in areas they love, rather than in areas that pay well. The general premise is, if you want to do something, go for it. In fact, a study done by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development in June 2006, showed that older Americans report their current level of happiness is greater than when they were younger.

So why is there a problem? The answer lies in one's level of personal adjustment. Some of us are experiencing the horror of aging with a vengeance. The physical, emotional and psychological challenges of growing old can be devastating. Physical ailments resulting in chronic pain, cognitive impairments that affect memory, emotional challenges like loneliness and depression, significantly impact our mental health and ability to function effectively.

We have been studied and reviewed, critiqued and marketed more than any other population in society. Advertisers are fixated on boomers and capitalize on their subsequent challenges and ultimate victories. We

have been recognized for having huge potential and success, but yet we are tormented by a deep sense of disappointment and struggle. We are experiencing the loss of our youth, our loved ones, maybe our hopes and many of our dreams. With 2/3 of our lives gone and only 1/3 left (hopefully), we are awakening to the reality that we are not prepared emotionally, psychologically or financially for what lies ahead.

What can we do? Should we whine and complain, cry and give up? Or should we make a **mindful** choice to try on a new strategy to see how well it fits? As we travel through midlife, we need to promote a healthier mental health. We need to reach out for help so that we learn to appreciate the gifts set before us. We need to live out the rest of our lives with a strong sense of well being and control and add meaning to our lives. In other words, we need to take charge and reshape our vision of the future. The intricate holistic approach to a boomer's mental health encompasses social, psychological, physical and spiritual factors, all working towards an effective strategy for maintaining vitality and creativity in one's later years.

I speak from experience. I am a licensed Mental Health Counselor and have worked with a variety of different populations over the years, from adolescent substance abusers to geriatric individuals in 50 year abusive relationships. When I turned 53, I had been working at an agency, running their domestic abuse program for six years. The clients were wonderful and the group work was fulfilling, but the politics of agency life had taken its toll. I hated the 9-5 drudgery, the repetition of paperwork and the monotony of the day. I wanted something more and had to do some soul searching to find out what that was.

I left the job, planning to open my own private practice and be my own boss. Things were going well in

theory, but it was difficult getting started. I would ask myself, "Is this all there is?" I was depressed and bitter that I wasn't exploring whatever dreams I may have had in the past. I was in a deep funk. One day I realized that the only way to help myself was to get up, brush myself off and start examining unfamiliar territories to find out new things that felt right. I am now an author. I'm doing teleseminars/workshops, seeing private clients and running empowerment groups for seniors and loving every day because my time is my own. It is fulfilling, exciting and rewarding work and I feel like I am embracing life now with a new zest, because I was given a second chance.

If you are at a point in your life where you feel disillusioned, disappointed or are in distress, this book has the answers. It will give you the tools you need to fulfill your dreams. It will take you on a journey of exploration to bring you back to the enthusiasm of your youth. It offers 10 proven strategies that will lift you out of the baby boomer blues and into a momentum of courage and change. It's about mindful choices that allow for personal growth and creativity to rejuvenate your spirit, your body and your mind.

To purchase "Distress Free Aging: A Boomer's Guide to Creating a Fulfilled and Purposeful Life", <http://www.bummedoutboomer.com/distressfreeaging/index.html>

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