

The Way It Is: The Bird's Eye View From Ninety



Since my sky diving adventure, friends and kin have praised me for being courageous. I don't see it that way. Yes, I am of a "certain age" as they say, but every resident at Wesley Palms knows about being "courageous" in so many ways. We all have reached a stage in life where we experience things that require a great deal of strength — struggle daily through pain of body and pain of losses. It takes effort. It takes courage. If you are a senior, you know what I mean. We all are here at a lovely retirement community for some reason or other. Yes, we miss our old life, and our new one requires much of us, which includes situations we never dreamed we'd have, and it isn't always easy. To those much younger who ask about the right life-style to survive to old age, I admit I don't exercise as I should; I love junk food, and don't care if the early bird gets the worm. I give in to pain sometimes and upset family and bore others by giving "blow by blow" accounts of it all!

There is no true answer to the question; everyone has their own way of dealing with the Golden Years even when they are a bit tarnished. Sometimes I find it annoyingly necessary to reach for my cane on what I refer to as "my bad day," but it is needed for balance. I hope for wisdom of my years, and the courage to face whatever life now presents. Whether good or bad, this is the "now" and better if we can call it just another adventure in living. Funny, but high places always scared me. Perhaps, subconsciously, I took a sky jump to prove something to myself and it did give me a good feeling to conquer that fear. I rejuvenated myself. I'm pleased that I just dumped wise advice and gave in to the urge to see beauty from a bird's eye view. It is similar to the urge that recently had me buying paints to learn about putting happy, bright colors on a canvas. I wish I could ride a horse again—my mother and sister did in their eighties—but I couldn't get a leg up no matter how much I feel that urge. There are things I realize I can't do, and fears I haven't conquered like jumping into the deep end of a swimming pool.

The most important thing is to keep trying to squeeze every bit of joy out of life. So ... any one ready to start a Wesley Palms Sky Diving Club?

By Jeanne Warnke, resident at Wesley Palms Retirement Community