

No reason why learning should stop at age of 60

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Don't retire behind your age. Learning is a lifelong experience. Just because you are 60 plus chronologically, doesn't mean you are reaching a no-more-learning period in your life. "Intellectual stimulation and new ideas give a new zest for life," says Hanna Fromm, who with her husband established the Fromm Institute for Lifelong Learning at the University of San Francisco.

Meeting for seniors to be held Nov. 3

The rights of the consumer and the pros and cons of the province's drug payment plan will be aired on Nov. 3 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Senior Citizens Centre on Riverside Drive.

Al Murray of the provincial ministry of consumer and commercial relations will speak on the rights of the consumer and how to get in touch with the right people to lodge a complaint or get information.

Rev. Lance Wood of Dundas United Church will talk about the Ontario drug plan and its limitations.

In the afternoon there will be discussions about the coalition for seniors and a meeting of the Ontario Advisory Council for Seniors.

The University of Western Ontario is also interested in seniors and is offering credit and non-credit courses free to anyone 60 and over. "I believe learning opportunities should be readily available to everyone," said Ann Harley, director, professional and personal development. "Only by understanding changing relationships, by assessing their impacts on society, can we monitor patterns and trends and offer alternatives."

"Going back to university is certainly no snap," added Sandy Reid. "But most older students do much better than they think." Sandy is a mature-student advisor for the faculty of part-time and continuing education at Western.

The first step in non-credit courses is to register; in credit courses one must first apply for admission. The next step is to talk to Sandy. This year 100 students 60 and over are taking credit courses and many others are in non-credit. Sandy advises her students to go into courses that are familiar to their backgrounds, especially if this is their first venture back into education in 20 or so years. In these courses the older student will have the practical experience, now he or she must learn the theory, and Sandy recommends only one course per term.

tainly spark our discussion periods. With their knowledge and enthusiasm they can often make a dull course interesting."

And just what are seniors interested in this year at university? Art, creative writing, music appreciation and another subject called The Splendid Misery. This is about the American presidency from Washington to Carter, and with the election coming in November, quite appropriate. Previews And Post-Mortems is an experience for theatre-goers, as it assesses current productions.

However, it is in their own sphere that seniors show the most interest. Courses such as Death And Dying and Doctor-Patient Relationships are filled almost to capacity. One drawback for these lectures for seniors is they are always held at night, although the Aging In Canadian Society course is being held at the University Hospital Auditorium A.

Even seniors who are plagued with health problems need stimulation for their minds. "When I get involved with my studies, my other problems, for a time at least, seem to fall away."

Marnie is another 63-year-old who has gone back to university. She was

she is bursting with assurance. "For me, it was a personal growth experience," she said. "I have an interest outside my home and family, an interest that gives me something to think about and talk about that isn't useless or mundane."

Joseph enrolled in a course in geology, (he had always been a rock hound) and before long he was acting as assistant to the professor. Joseph had renewed an old interest and with his experience made it seem new to the younger students.

Besides these courses at the university, the faculty is sponsoring the noon-time lecture series at the public library with a different topic every Tuesday.

The whole concept of education has long been to prepare young people for a career. Now a new concept is being added, to prepare seniors for their retirement years. There are going to be a lot of problems coming up for the elderly. These problems need assessment, and alternatives need to be offered. What better than seniors speaking out for seniors? Don't let age be a barrier to knowledge.

Write to: Irene Crawford, The Senior Side Of Living, The London Free

SENIOR SIDE OF LIVING

by Irene Crawford
Written for
The Free Press



There are students who prefer something entirely different. "We don't want basket weaving, we want something that challenges us, makes us think!" Another student said she found familiar things boring, she wanted to jump into something new. She did — political science.

For the older students who want to take courses and are apprehensive about writing examinations, we enrol them on an audit basis. "They take the courses without taking the examinations," Sandy said.

How do seniors feel being with students less than half their age? "It doesn't bother me a bit," said Doris. "In fact, I've become a surrogate parent for a couple of younger students who are away from home for the first time."

How do students feel about having seniors in their classes? "They cer-