

# "Everything Old is New Again ... Or Do I Need New Glasses?"

by Dr Bill Webster

I just returned from holidays. I had a great fortnight in Scotland where I made a substantial contribution to the Scottish Home for Lost Golf Balls. Then I led a group tour of 36 people to Alaska for one week on a cruise ship. A tough job, but someone has to do it. We had a great time seeing glaciers, exploring gold mines, and the highlight, watching whales (real ones, as well as those crowding the huge buffet onboard ship!! For video, check out [www.I-paid-for-it-and-darn-it-I'm-going-to-eat-it.com](http://www.I-paid-for-it-and-darn-it-I'm-going-to-eat-it.com). )

So now it's back to work. Someone asked me today if I feel rejuvenated. Refreshed perhaps, but *rejuvenated*? I don't think so! I'm just *starting* to relax. I've never felt so old, probably because I've never BEEN this old. They say two things happen when you get older. First, you start to forget things. The second thing ... now wait a minute ... what's the other thing? ... oh well. I just forget what the second thing is. Of all the things I ever lost, I miss my mind the most.

Remember the old song which goes, "Everything old is new again." That may work with fashion and tradition, but it's not really applicable to people, is it. I don't have to go further than the mirror to question that reality. Rejuvenation? Hah! Look at me! I'm 20 pounds overweight. I used to have a barrel chest, but it's all behind me now! I used to have curly hair, now all it does is wave ... GOODBYE! I have aches and pains in places where I'd forgotten I had places. I go out with my wife, and people ask me if this is my DAUGHTER. The first time I met Zig Ziglar, the well known motivational speaker, he took one look at my wife, another look at me, shook my hand, and told me I had to be the best salesman he ever met! And if I needed further proof, all I need to do is go skiing with my sons. Admittedly, they are good, but they can be down the hill and back up the ski lift in time to catch me falling off the chair on my first ascent. And that's the name of THAT tune.

Aging! It is something we baby boomers are having to come to terms with as the flower power generation starts to wilt. Why is youth wasted on the young? As the Mennonites say, "Too soon old, too late smart." I think what makes me feel worse is that I still FEEL young. I still think of myself as youthful. I still feel like I have a lot of goals to achieve, lots of things I'd like to attempt, and places to go. I may not be young, but make no mistake about it, I'm not finished yet.

So let's put this aging thing in perspective. I have realized, regardless of our age or situation in life, that happiness is something you decide on ahead of time. Whether I like my life or not does not depend on how everything is arranged. It is how I arrange my *mind*. Speaking personally, I have already decided to love it. It is a decision I make every morning when I wake up. Because I do have a choice. I can spend the day recounting the difficulties I have with certain things in my life; I can lament the things that don't work or the stuff that I hate about my life; or I can get out of bed and be ready to face whatever challenges are presented to me that day. It is a case of mind over matter.

Each day is a gift, and as long as my eyes open, I want to focus on the new day as well as all of the happy memories I have stored away. We can be thankful for what was, but today is what we have. Age is like a bank account. You withdraw from what you have already put in. I believe that our background and circumstances may have influenced who we are, but we are responsible for who we become.

So there are a few things that this truth implies:

I believe that true friendship continues to grow, even over the longest distance.

I believe that we are responsible for what we do, no matter how we feel.

I believe that either you control your attitude or it controls you.

I believe that money is an abysmal way of keeping score.

I believe that you can keep going, long after you think you can't.

I believe that heroes are the people who do what has to be done when it needs to be done, regardless of the consequences.

In December of 1914 a fire broke out in the laboratory of Thomas Edison and totally destroyed it. The damage exceeded two million dollars which was a huge fortune in those days. However the buildings were only insured for \$200,000 because they were constructed of concrete which was thought at the time to be fireproof. Much of Thomas Edison's work went up in flames that night. Edison's son, Charles, later told of finding his father watching the scene with his white hair blowing in the wind. "My heart ached for him" said Charles Edison. "He was 67 years old, no longer a young man and everything was going up in flames."

But the very next morning, Edison stood with his family at the ruins and said “There is great value in disaster. All our mistakes are burned up. Thank God we can start anew”

Three weeks after that disastrous fire, Thomas Edison produced his first phonograph.

Perhaps we are not as young as we were, and never will be, but we can get new glasses. Not for reading, but for our ATTITUDES. We can see things from the perspective of an Edison. For if Thomas Edison could renew his efforts at 67, maybe there’s hope for you and me. Actually, that’s guaranteed, if we remember that IT’S ALWAYS TOO SOON TO QUIT. So, what mountain should I tackle today?

Let me say how much I am looking forward to being at Independent’s day in September, and I am hoping to meet many of you there, to make or renew your acquaintance.