

## **Aging Gracefully in the 21st Century**

“Personal Philosophies of Today’s Seniors”

By: Dallen Cox

It’s time to put them all together, the pieces of the puzzle that make my living philosophy, what it is today. The puzzle’s border started in the arms of my mother and father as they shared their love during my infancy. Physical growth influenced my living principles and added shape to my growing personality without conscience recognition of inward growth on my part.

Influence of family, friends and church brought knowledge of right and wrong and added defining details to the emerging outline of my moral character. Learning to walk brought the inevitable trips, falls, bumps, scrapes and the feeling of defeat followed by the feeling of euphoria that ensued when walking was mastered. Later, as life’s greater challenges were conquered a lot of space in the puzzle was covered equating to the impact on my developing personality.

Service to my country in the U.S. Navy taught me the meaning of freedom and the sacrifice needed to sustain this freedom. With recognition of freedom came the desire for more knowledge and an education that would prepare me to compete in the workplace in a forthright manner. A college degree was only the beginning as 40 years in the workplace tempered my personality to recognize the value of hard work, and sacrifice of fellow workers.

The last remaining pieces of the puzzle of my life came together when I met a lovely woman and we started our life together. The love we have shared for nearly 43 years has made the greatest impact on becoming a loving and understanding person. Only the love of our two children was needed to make the picture complete. The love for my son as I watched him grow into a husband and father and the love only a father can know for a daughter put the last piece in place.

Yes, the picture of my life depicted in the completed puzzle accurately defines how life has prepared me to age gracefully in the 21st Century. Love is timeless and I carry this feeling with me always. My love of God, leading a moral life and treating every person with kindness is paramount in my philosophy of life. I still savor the feeling of freedom and thirst for knowledge in which I pursue with the same enthusiasm and vigor as in the days of yore.