



**motion picture  
pioneers  
assistance  
fund**

# SOCIAL SERVICES CORNER

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## ANXIOUS ABOUT AGING

**Question: My wife has been a worrier all her life. I thought as we got older she'd let some of it go, but she's as worried as ever. Can this harm her health?**

**Answer:** Indeed it can. Worry is our normal response to every day stresses like driving or an unexpected bill in the mail. Excessive worry is a sign of a mood problem that may cause anxiety or depression. Both of these conditions are under-diagnosed in older adults, and both are treatable with a combination of medication and non-drug approaches.

As we age our anxieties may change, but they don't necessarily go away. Medical conditions can cause anxiety and complicate worries. Respiratory problems and Parkinson's disease, for example, can impact anxiety physiologically. Physical disabilities or memory loss can trigger or worsen anxiety emotionally. Grief and loss can do the same. When someone is anxious, their medical conditions may worsen because the body and brain are stressed and not able to function properly. The heart races, breathing gets rapid, and thinking and judgment may

become clouded with worry.

Living with worry or anxiety is all about how well one copes with it. If your wife's worry is interfering with her social life, if she is fearful of going out, or she cannot enjoy fun activities, then it is a problem. If you notice she is taking anti-anxiety or sleep medicine more often, drinking more than usual, or is frequently irritable, she is having trouble coping.

If you know the sorts of things that cause her to worry, help limit her exposure to those things. Second, talk to her about her coping strategies or help her find some that work for her. She may try deep breathing, taking a walk, or simply talking through her concerns. Encourage her to talk to her doctor about her worries and the effect they are having on your life together. Treating anxiety is fairly straightforward, but only if she is forthcoming about it. It's never too late to learn healthy coping methods.

Sources: "Anxiety & Older Adults" brochure available at <http://www.gmhfonline.org/gmhf/consumer/factsheets/anxietyoldradult.html>. "Fudging The Facts For Peace Of Mind" at <http://newoldage.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/12/24/fudging-the-facts-for-peace-of-mind/>

## JOKE OF THE MONTH

**Red: I'd give a thousand dollars to anyone who would do my worrying for me. Ted: You're on, Where's the thousand? Red: That's your first worry."**

— *The Best of the Good Clean Jokes*, Bob Phillips

Laughter is known to boost the immune system, lower blood pressure, burn calories and release pleasure-inducing chemicals in the brain.

Go Green!

Receive Social Services Corner by email.

Call (888) 994-3863, ext. 2370, or email [info@wrmail.org](mailto:info@wrmail.org).

**Do you or does someone you know need our assistance? Call toll-free (888) 994-3863 or visit [www.wrpioneers.org](http://www.wrpioneers.org) to find out more about our assistance programs.**



The Motion Picture Pioneers Assistance Fund is a program of the Will Rogers Motion Picture Pioneers Foundation.



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## ARE YOU REALLY AS OLD AS YOU FEEL?



Is age just a number? Researchers may have found that the answer is “Yes!” We all have ideas about what it means to get old. These ideas are deeply rooted in our belief systems, whether they come from personal experience, professional training or something we saw in a movie. How we age individually is to some extent programmed by these ideas.

If you are programmed to see aging as a time of loss, disability, or having no purpose, then you have a negative view of aging. If you have a negative view of aging, then you will see your own aging process as a negative experience. This could lead to depression, that leads to less activity, that could actually shorten your life! Research has shown that older adults who have negative beliefs about aging are less likely to recover fully from age-related illnesses and injuries.

Older adults who have positive views about aging, such as a time for leisure pursuits and appreciating hard-earned wisdom, have a better experience and are more likely to overcome hurdles that may occur with aging. Older adults who have positive ideas about growing old are more motivated to engage in social activities that may boost their thinking and mood. This leads to better outcomes through health compliance, such as diet, exercise and taking medicine regularly.

You may have heard someone say, “She’s 90, but a young 90.” Or perhaps you’ve known someone who is “old before his time.” How old do you feel? If you find your ideas tend to be negative, you can change them. By being aware of your beliefs, you can think them through. Better yet, talk about them with a friend to figure out how your ideas are influencing your aging process. You might find your ideas have evolved as you’ve gotten older. You might find you feel younger than ever!

Sources: “Association Between Positive Age Stereotypes and Recovery from Disability in Older Persons,” *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 11/21/12. “Older People Become What They Think, Study Shows,” <http://newoldage.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/12/19/older-people-are-what-they-think-study-shows/>.

**A free booklet, “Understanding Depression,” is available on our website at [www.wrpioneers.org](http://www.wrpioneers.org) or by calling (888) 994-3863. The booklet includes treatment options and ways to help yourself and family members.**

## NEW ADDITIONS TO THE MPPAF’S NATIONAL RESOURCE DIRECTORY

**[www.AnnualCreditReport.com](http://www.AnnualCreditReport.com), (877) 322-8288**

This website, the only site authorized by Equifax, Experian and TransUnion, provides free annual online credit reports upon authentication of identity. Credit reports may take up to 2-3 weeks to receive by regular mail.

**[www.Edmunds.com](http://www.Edmunds.com)**

This website was launched in 1995 by Edmunds Inc., a privately held company founded in 1966 to publish automotive pricing guides. Consumers visiting the site will find free new and used car information that is still compiled by the Edmunds’ team of experts.



### QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Great artists say the most beautiful thing in the world is a baby. Well the next is an old lady, for every wrinkle is a picture. ”

—Will Rogers

**To view our entire National Resource Directory, please visit [www.wrpioneers.org](http://www.wrpioneers.org).**