



NOT OVER THE HILL

Ready to Roll!

You could probably never picture yourself at age 30, never mind 50. But here it is, looming on the horizon. (Hopefully that glow in the distance is the rising sun and not the multitude of candles on your cake!)

All kidding aside, take heart. We all know being 50 today isn't what it used to be. In the past, hitting 50 signaled mental and physical decline. But, with today's advances in medical care and improved health education, "fifty somethings" can now look forward to living longer and feeling better than ever before.

Recent research is beginning to show that the dreaded "mid-life crisis" may be more myth than reality for many people. In fact, a few wrinkles, graying hair, and a slower pace aren't enough to deter many people from enjoying their new-found maturity. For the first time in their lives, many people find themselves in an ideal position to achieve a better balance in their lives. Careers are well underway. Children are grown or well past the time-consuming infant and toddler stages. And, aging parents are still able to manage on their own.

If you've been focusing on work - either by necessity or choice - to the exclusion of all else, now may be the perfect opportunity to begin developing the other facets of your personality. "Workaholics" sometimes later regret having missed out on important parts of their lives, which can never be recovered. As the joke goes, you rarely hear someone on their death bed saying, "I wish I'd spent more time at work." Perhaps you'd like to take the time now to spend more time with your spouse, children, or grandchildren; pursue a long-held interest; or get involved in community service.

Can life really be better after 50? The answer may depend on how well prepared you are financially so you don't have to work so hard. If you're not yet financially able to cut back on your work schedule, it may not be too late to start planning a strategy that will allow for some lifestyle changes at 55 or 60.

Your horizons are limited only by your imagination and your financial means. Reassessing your life can be difficult, but it can also lead to a more fulfilled future. Rather than being a depressing event, hitting 50 may be the ideal milestone to enlarge and enrich your world while you still possess the good health and energy to enjoy it.