

Retirement Matters

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Volume 89

Retirement Matters

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The reality of situations?



Working in retirement facilities, one soon learns that things are not always what they seem - as the following anecdotes show.

Stolen Mattress

A lady in a retirement facility named *Emma Barter*, complained that someone had stolen her mattress, while she was actually sleeping on it! This was alleged to have occurred on three different occasions. The Matron then told her that they had just found the mattress in question and had put it back on her bed. The resident looked at it, and she confirmed that this was indeed the correct mattress i.e. the one they had stolen. The Matron then, in front of the resident, marked the mattress and base with a permanent marker. The resident never again complained that her mattress had been stolen.

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The telephone ploy

On one occasion the same lady, *Mrs. Brown*, was by mistake called to the office phone. (The receptionist had mistakenly thought that a caller had wished to speak to her). After she had returned to her room she complained to the Matron that it had been a ploy to lure her away from her room, by them telling her that there was a call for her and that she had better hurry. She went on to claim that while she was away, they had stolen 12 of her tea bags out of three different boxes in which she kept them. She further alleged that the plot was hatched by a carer named *Pretty*.

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A key issue

Mrs. Smith said that *Dorothy* (another resident suffering from advanced stage Alzheimer's), had asked her for her keys. *Mrs. Smith* said that she eventually gave them to her. *Dorothy* had then, according to her given them to a carer named *Pretty*, who went into her room and stole R340. *Pretty* had then given the keys back to *Dorothy*, who returned them to *Mrs. Smith*. (All in the depths of her imagination!)

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The reality of situations (continued from 1st page)

False accusations

In one Home we experienced a spate of allegations of theft. One morning a young student-carer had been accused of stealing money from a resident. The resident Mrs. *Jones* had publicly accused her and consequently everyone knew about the allegation. The carer was distraught and in tears. An hour later Mrs. *Jones* apologized to the Matron - saying that she had made a mistake... that she had found the missing money. Matron insisted that Mrs. *Jones* apologize publicly to the student-carer in the dining room - which she duly did. Concerned about the hurt caused to staff who were being falsely blamed of theft, I being the manager, *read the riot act* to both sets of residents (Emma Barter and Victoria Memorial Homes).

A short while later Mrs. *Jones* complained that she had had R450 stolen from her room. I expressed some doubt; inferring that she was possibly confused. She indignantly informed me that she would never falsely accuse any person... that she was in no manner what so ever confused, or suffering from dementia. This was said with all the aplomb and indignity that an English lady of her breeding could muster. She even offered to take an oath on the Bible - truly impressive, totally credible! But I gently explained to her that she and I were not acquainted; that we did not know each other; consequently I did not know to what extent she might be confused in regard to her complaint; that I would need to discuss the matter with Matron? When I did ask Matron about her, I was informed of at least three previous instances of her true confusion. But I was truly astonished at how credible she had sounded; especially seeing as I had worked with people suffering from dementia for over 20 years!

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These experiences taught me three important lessons:

1. The importance of confabulation --- get into their world! Use experimental and fantasy psychology to alleviate situations i.e. such as the *marking of the bed*.
2. How incredibly credible dementia sufferers can sound.
3. And how a few isolated complaints of theft can trigger a spate of *copy cat* complaints both real or imagined - echoes of mass hysteria, exacerbated by boredom. However the danger is that we must be careful not to assume that every complaint is imagined... we must not succumb to the Aesop Fables Syndrome. Each complaint has to be fully investigated and, if found to be imaginary, the resident needs to be informed in a manner which allows them to save face, to come to peace with their imagined concerns. (*Get into their world*, as little will be served but trying to bring them back to reality).

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Henry Spencer

Better the lie that soothes—than the truth that hurts

it is kinder to join them in their world. By then the degree to which they have become immersed in their imaginary world precludes their accepting truths without the accompanying pain of realizing how far they have strayed off course (if they are by then even capable of once more embracing reality?).

When the Alzheimer victim or family member that you are caring for, alludes to an incident or person incorrectly – don't try to bring them back to reality! And very often the reality checks are motivated by the needs of family or Carers, rather than those of the patient themselves. Trying to reason with someone who has Alzheimer's often just ends up frustrating both parties!
- Henry Spencer

The Spencer Retirement Accommodation Assessment Form (SRAAF)

When seeking retirement accommodation, many people rely on *fast-talking* estate agents, or other sources (often with limited knowledge, or their own agendas). This is one of the most important decisions, one may ever be called upon to make – a one-way street from which, once entered, few return unscathed. But having lived in a retirement village for over twelve years, I have learnt to trust my own judgment; and to this end have designed my own assessment form, as follows:

The Spencer Retirement Accommodation Assessment Form					
Activity Observation	Negative	Pt's	Positive	Pt's	Comments
Type of card games being played	Bridge	0	Poker	+1	With real money - add 2 bonus points; strip poker deserves an additional 5 points.
Composition of car bumpers	Chrome Steel	-2	Polycarbonate	+1	Chrome is OK on classic cars but in retirement villages is often an indicator that the driver is of a similar vintage.
Car sounds	Clutch slipping/ excessive revving	0	Smooth engine noise	+1	OK so long as it is only heard once, and is not near your intended cottage or vehicle (Oh! And if a resident is observed attempting to drive her car down the steps to the Frail Care Centre, deduct a further 5 points. No! On second thoughts scrap this assessment form and leave the village immediately).
Car dents	Dents found on car boot	-2	No dents	+1	If the remnants of fabric similar to that worn by traffic officers is found to be adhering to the scratched paint – allocate 3 bonus points
Are any motorcycles parked outside cottages?	No	0	Yes	+1	If it is a Royal Enfield or Harley Davidson deduct a further 2 points ... however if it is a Yamaha add 2 points
Quality of food	Soup, Crumpets or scones	-1	Roast beef, roast potatoes, Yorkshire pud & and dumpling	+1	Whilst the modern generation would probably be unable to cook roast beef, this is perhaps the one advantage of at least having an older cook in the village?
Number of People sitting in dining room at meal times	< 5	0	>5	+2	If half the residents are observed to be asleep - deduct a further 4 points (5 if they are snoring)
Sporting facilities	Croquet	0	Bowls	+1	Archery or model yacht sailing would earn an additional 3 bonus points
Heated Swimming pool	None or covered	0	Yes - In use by more than 2 people	+2	People in an unheated pool would earn a further 2 bonus points
Pets	None	0	Allowed	+2	Dogs more than 50 cms high qualifies for an additional 3 bonus points
Tennis courts	No	0	Yes	+1	In use - allow 2 extra bonus points
Gym	No	0	Yes	+1	If there are weights as well as treadmills allow 3 extra points
Did you observe any male residents	No	0	Yes	+1	If they were wearing an earring, bandana , or had tattoos - add 2 more ts

The Spencer Self-Assessment Form (continued)

Current number of activities advertised on Notice Board	< 3	0	> 3	+1	If the dates on notices show them to be > 2 years old, or if rules prescribe long dresses for tennis, and full length swimming costumes - deduct 4 points. (The same applies if the only notices displayed relate to funeral parlors).
Are homemade Xmas cards listed as an activity?	Yes	0	No	+1	They probably also make knitted covers for hot water bottles!
Are wheelchairs/ walkers parked outside the village centre?	Yes	0	No	+1	More than 5 go home and start searching for another village!
Fashion/dress style E.g. hat pins or women touting cigarette holders?	Yes	0	No	+2	Men wearing two-tone brogues or striped Milton blazers – deduct a further 2 points
Find out what music DVDs are shown to residents	Andre Rieu	0	Bruce Springsteen	+1	The showing of an Andre Rieu movie is often synonymous with trying to encourage reclusive residents to come to dinner
Is Bingo being played?	Yes	0	No	+1	In retirement villages the bingo readings invariably reminds one of the last rites being read.
Visits to frail care (Detection of urine odour?)	Fragrance present	- 2	None present	+2	Remember that an excessive smell of Milton is often merely a cover-up intended to disguise the smell of urine.
Number of residents observed in village gardens?	< 5	0	> 5	+1	If more than 2 people are found to be dead or unconscious amongst the flowers - deduct a further 2 points
Total	Min -5		Max + 26		Additional Bonus points to be earned = + 22

The number of points scored may indicate the following:

- More than +35 ... purchase immediately!
- 20 to +34... it would seem to be a reasonable proposition and, with your unstinting assistance, it may be possible to rebuild the *enthusiasm reserve*. (But I would sell the golf clubs, as you are unlikely to have much time for anything else).
- 10 to +19 ... Look elsewhere first.
- Less than + 10 ... You should perhaps have left you car's engine switched on and running. And if during the course of your visit you are approached by a Trustee and your dog *Bonzo* growls - scrap the entire process; simply climb into your car and drive away. You can't fool a dog!

Henry Spencer



You can't fool a dog

5 Ageist Expressions to Leave Behind in the New Year Embrace a new narrative on aging for a healthier 2024.

Updated January 1, 2024 | Reviewed by Jessica Schrader

As a clinical psychologist specializing in gerontology, I often reflect on the subtle nuances of language and their profound impact on our perceptions of aging.

A recent family gathering provided a vivid example of this: Two older family members, reuniting after a decade, exchanged greetings that unwittingly reinforced negative age stereotypes. One commented, *"You look great for your age,"* to which the other replied, *"You don't look so bad yourself."* This interaction, though seemingly innocuous, highlights a broader societal issue: the casual normalization of ageism.

With the new year upon us, it's a prime opportunity to re-evaluate and retire some common yet damaging phrases about aging. Not only will this benefit those around us, but it will also nurture our future selves.

"You Look Great for Your Age." This seemingly complimentary remark is a veiled reinforcement of ageism, implying that aging is undesirable and that value is tied to youthfulness. Instead, offer unambiguous praise like, *"You look great,"* which appreciates the person without age-related conditions.

"She's Too Old to Do That." Such statements severely underestimate older adults and perpetuate outdated ideas of what aging "should" look like. Let's encourage and celebrate the diverse interests and capabilities of older adults, recognizing their right to engage in fulfilling activities at any age.

"Senior Moment." Describing memory lapses as "senior moments" not only trivializes the issue but also fosters negative stereotypes about cognitive aging. It's crucial to understand that while memory disorders are more common in older adulthood, they are not normal. Mindful language involves not attributing minor forgetfulness to age and recognizing that everyone, irrespective of age, can have moments of distraction.

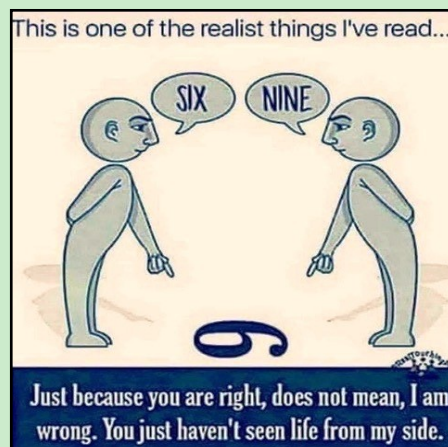
"Act Your Age." This phrase often aims to regulate behaviour seen as inappropriate for one's age, reinforcing rigid and outdated norms. In my work on sexual health and aging, I encourage health providers to confront their biases about aging and sexuality. It's important to support individuals in embracing their authentic selves at every age.

"Old Dogs Can't Learn New Tricks." This cliché wrongly suggests that older individuals are inherently averse to learning or new experiences. Research shows that resistance to change is less about age and more about individual openness. Let's shift the narrative to celebrate the ongoing potential for growth and learning in older adults

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Regina Koepp PsyD, ABPP
Psychology Today
(Article shortened)

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Senior driving - adapt or die!

I have found that as I have grown older some of my physical abilities have deteriorated to the extent that they now pose risks to my ability to drive safely.

One such impediment is my ability to twist my neck in order to see if there is any traffic approaching from the rear., before pulling out, or changing lanes.

I find that I have become stiff-necked... and I don't mean that in a derogatory sense! And before you say 'well look in your side and rear view mirrors'... I can assure you that they don't always provide the whole picture!

SO WHAT TO DO?



Purchase the side mirror extension as depicted in the photo (on my bakkie).

They are truly amazing as they provide a clear and comprehensive view of approaching vehicles. And are both cheap and are easy to fit on to your existing mirror ... and as is shown in the pic, they are simply attached with two straps.

Henry Spencer



**New seatbelt design:
45% less car accidents!!**



South Africa does not have money to hire new doctors



South Africa, which struggles with a shortage of medical personnel at state-owned hospitals, **hasn't hired more than 800 qualified doctors in public health posts because of a shortage of funds, a medical union said.**

"Annually, the department cites budget constraints as a barrier to hiring qualified medical doctors, yet no substantial measures are evident to solve the funding dilemma," the South African Medical Association Trade Union, known as Samatu, said in a statement Thursday. "This contributes immensely to the web of factors **that prompt the continuous emigration of qualified doctors.**"

Doctors wanting to work in the country must register with the Health Professions Council of South Africa, whether they qualified within the nation's borders or at universities outside, said Jeanette Hunter, the acting director-general of the Department of Health.

"Provinces are continually putting out adverts for doctors," she said, highlighting eight vacancies advertised in the Free State two weeks ago. "We want to employ all qualified and registered doctors." The department doesn't have enough doctors, and unemployed professionals should come forward with their registration numbers so that it can arrange jobs for them, Hunter said.

Global Shortages

Shortages of doctors and nurses are **not unique to South Africa. They're worse in many other African countries,** according to a World Health Organization study. **In the UK, chronic staff shortages in the NHS have left some hospitals near breaking point.**

Nonetheless, this adds to a litany of problems confronting Africa's most industrialized economy, which contends with frequent power cuts and where years of mismanagement and corruption at state companies and within the government have cost South African taxpayers billions of rand.

In South Africa, the country's poorest people have access to free treatment at 3,741 public clinics and hospitals, but these facilities are often plagued by broken equipment and shortages of medicine and beds. The **ratio of practitioners to population is 0.3 per 1,000, compared with 1.75 per 1,000 at private facilities.**

The government plans to introduce better universal access to health care through a state-run fund that will buy services and medicines from both public and private providers. In 2023, Parliament approved enabling legislation for the program, which will be phased in over several years, but doubts remain about whether it will solve the country's healthcare woes.

On Friday, the South African Medical Association, which is separate from Samatu, also highlighted the lack of public-sector posts for newly qualified doctors. "There's a huge shortage around the country," said Akhtar Hussain, the chairman of the employed doctors advocacy forum at the South African Medical Association. **"They end up going to the private sector" or ultimately, they leave the country,** he said on SAFM Radio.

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South Africa does not have enough Drs. (continued)

Internship programmes

South African doctors graduating from the country's universities are required to do two years of internship and one year of community service overseen by the Health Department. This policy aims to improve equitable access to primary health-care services by ensuring enough medical personnel in under-serviced areas. At the end of 2023, the Department of Health had 2,451 posts available for internships and had only 2,358 applicants, Hunter said.

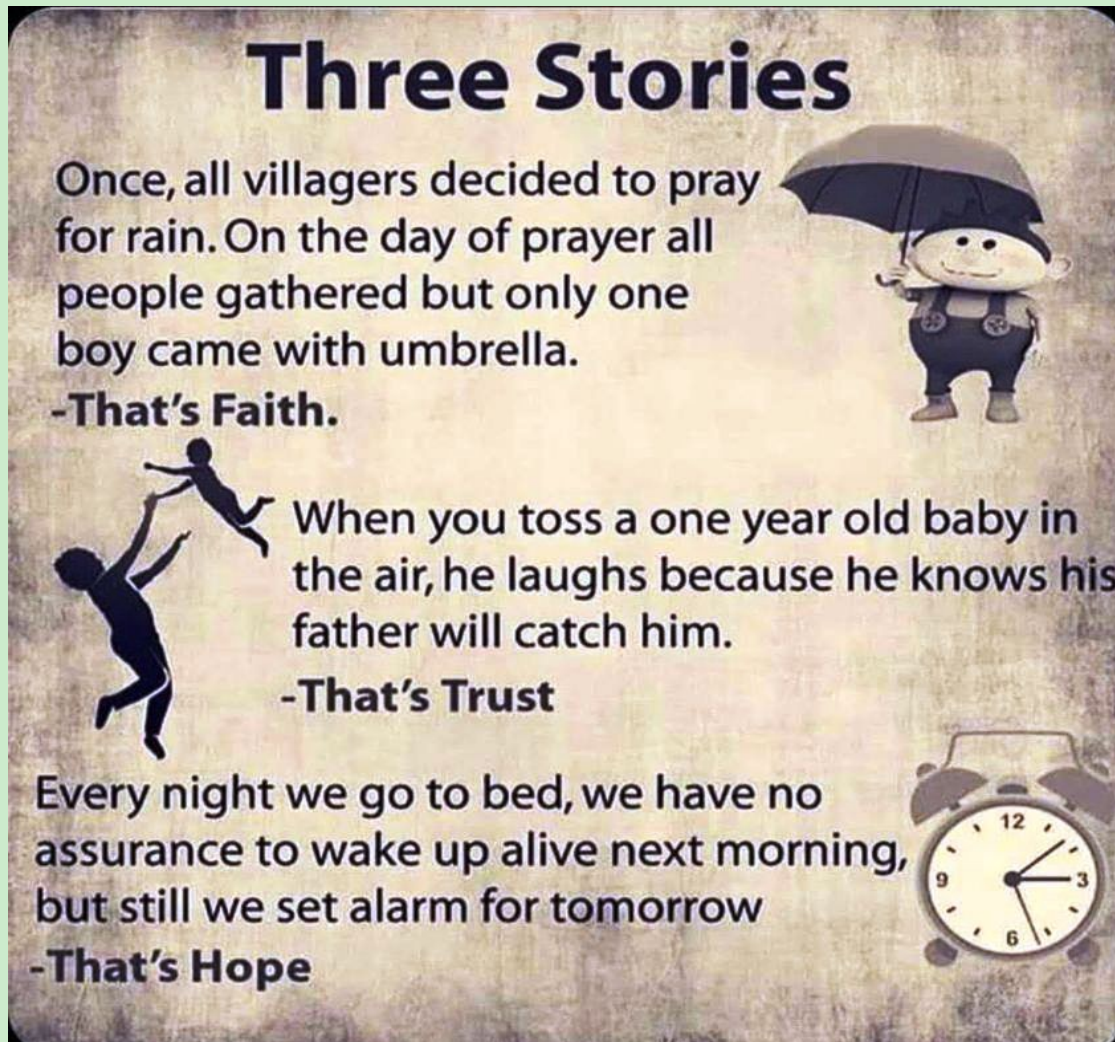
Still, there isn't a clear strategy for keeping doctors in public service after completing the training, Samatu said. Poor working conditions are the most common reason given by doctors for leaving the public sector.

"The spectre of unemployment of post-community-service doctors not only squanders their accumulated experience but also symbolizes a broader neglect of healthcare priorities," Samatu said. "Swift integration of these professionals into positions where their skills can be utilized is not just expedient, it is an ethical imperative."

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Daily Investor

Bloomberg • 6 January 2024



Head and Shoulders above the rest - *The Amber Glades story*



Last Wednesday I attended a *Midlands Matrons Forum* meeting kindly hosted by *Amber Glades* in Howick - and the experience was a *real* eye opener!

The developer, Tim Gibson grew up on an avocado and banana farm at Tzaneen. And their farm was an epitome of a family farm, with his parents and both sets of grand-parents residing on the property.

He relates how, as they reached the end of their lives all his grandparents were nursed by his mom in their family home - where most of them died peacefully. And that when they passed away at night, the children would be woken up to have a look, and to say a final goodbye! It was a totally family orientated relationship.

Five years previously Tim had invited me to the proposed site of his new development, in order to discuss his plans for the future. I was at the time pessimistic regarding the likelihood of it succeeding - but last week I realised that I had been wrong! It happened this way!

Prior to the meeting's commencement, we were sitting talking. The venue, on the first floor, was opposite a very well equipped gym and swimming pool. Tim quietly pointed to an elderly man training in the gym and said ... "*That man is my Father.*" He later went on to explain that his mom and dad had been the first residents to move into Amber Glades... and that they both continued to live there!

Now how unique is that! I have travelled and worked internationally for over two decades and have yet to learn of any retirement facility, where the developer's parents were the first to move into the village - and who happily continue to live there!

For me it is an indication of a number of important things. It shows that:

- The development is not solely about generating a profit – it is about providing meaningful and secure lives for seniors.
- At its heart is the importance of family and people.
- No one knows the developer better than his parents, and if they trust their son... then so too should others looking for retirement accommodation.

In his words..."we realised the real need for assisted living in our area... Understanding the Eden philosophy made me realise that it was really just good old fashioned family values that I had experienced on our farm. Amber Glades was the realisation of a dream to provide senior living in the most special way we could."

And in my opinion Amber Glades does just that!
Well done Tim!

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Henry Spencer

NHI corruption possibilities are endless!



The possibilities for corruption in the government's proposed National Health Insurance (NHI) scheme are endless as it will effectively put around R600 billion in funding under the control of a single institution – the National Department of Health.

This is feedback from Wits School of Governance Professor Alex van den Heever, who told Newzroom Afrika that the NHI follows the design of many failed state-run institutions.

Van den Heever's comments come on the back of President Cyril Ramaphosa saying that despite the threat of legal challenges, the NHI Bill will be signed into law soon. Ramaphosa joked during his State of the Nation Address (SONA) that he was looking around for a pen to sign the Bill. (Parliament's National Council of Provinces approved the Bill in December. It referred it to the president, who can either assent to it or ask lawmakers to amend it if deemed legally or technically flawed) "If he finds his pen, we will have a series of court cases that will probably end up decimating the Bill," Van den Heever said.

He explained that the Bill seeks to collapse the provincial healthcare system and centralise it in a national institution that does not exist yet, while collapsing private healthcare funding. *"You are disturbing the entire current health system and attempting to create a third health system which you claim will be better. There is no rationale for that kind of move."*

"So there is no real reason for this. The concern is that the real reason for this is to consolidate power in one organisation that will result, in its ultimate form, in R600 billion being under the control of the health minister. That is just wrong."

"It is the design that has collapsed pretty much everything that we have in the state at the moment."

Van den Heever explained that the main concern many people have about the NHI is the potential for rampant corruption. *"The possibilities for corruption are endless. People are largely concerned because they feel this is the purpose behind it. That this is not intended to improve healthcare."*

"It is about vested interests who have an interest in essentially capturing parts of the state."

He added that it would be naive to think otherwise. "The state remains captured. It is not state that has moved away from systemic corruption. It is deeply embedded in the way everything operates at the moment."



Wits professor Alex van den Heever

Health Minister Joe Phaahla has tried to downplay concerns over the NHI, shrugging off concerns from the private healthcare sector and those who believe the scheme will ultimately fall to government ineptitude. He noted that fears that the government will be unable to manage nearly all healthcare in South Africa effectively are *"overblown"*.

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Must read books - There is life after 65!

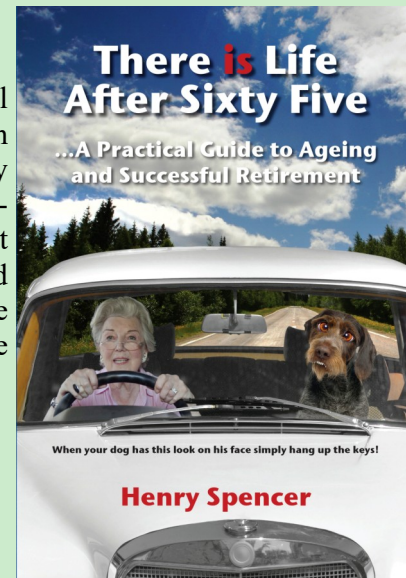
...A Practical Guide to Ageing and Successful Retirement

This book is an examination of the many choices which you will come across as you approach retirement. It reflects particularly on the development of retirement villages, and what are euphemistically termed lifestyle villages. It also explains in simple terms the problems that you may encounter, as well as adaptations that will assist you in optimising a period of life which, if managed correctly, could be one of the more meaningful. Its focus group are those who are approaching retirement age, but it could also be of benefit to those who have already retired.

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"Getting old is a fascinating thing.

The older you get, the older you want to get." —Keith Richards

I can recall once at age 14 saying to God "I just want to get to 35!" No older than that! - Izzy

NHI corruption possibilities are endless (continued from previous page)

"Those who fear that the NHI will become a state-owned enterprise, some say it will be an Eskom, let me tell you this – you can ask the Auditor-General, in this last audit, all public health entities either got clean audits or got unqualified audits, without exception." he said. "So, we can assure you that the NHI will be safe in our hands." (This is a lie!)

Contrary to the minister's comments, though, the Auditor-General's (AG) report on national and provincial government performance assessment for the 2022/23 financial year – tabled in November 2023 – shows that Phaahla is being economical with the truth.

The AG's report noted that a quarter of auditees in the year under review provided unreliable, incorrect or no evidence for the achievements they reported. This included the National Department of Health, which had four disclaimed opinions and one outstanding audit out of 10. This is hardly "clean or unqualified audits, without exception", as the minister posited.

In her report, the AG specifically called out the Health Department, noting that "health facilities are not coping with the demand for health services, and the safety and security of citizens and businesses are under threat". "We reported material findings on the performance reports of most departments in the education, health and human settlements sectors, with most of the worst audit outcomes – adverse and disclaimed opinions or conclusions – being in education and health."

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DAILY INVESTOR

[Shaun Jacobs](#) • 15 February 2024

You're never too old!

A 106-year-old from the Philippines is Vogue's oldest ever cover model

Vogue Philippines has revealed Apo Whang-Od as the cover star of its April issue, a move that makes the 106-year-old tattoo artist from the Philippines the oldest person ever to appear on the front of Vogue.



Whang-Od — also known as Maria Oggay — has been perfecting the art of hand-tapping tattoos since she was a teen, learning under her father's instruction. Residing in the mountain village of Buscalan, about 15 hours north of Manila, in Kalinga province, she is considered the country's oldest *mambabatok* — or traditional Kalinga tattooist.

Once, the hand-tapped tattoos that Whang-Od creates using just a bamboo stick, a thorn from a pomelo tree, water and coal, were earned by indigenous *Butbut* warriors. Now, international visitors seeking her signature geometric designs make up much of her clientele. *"Heralded as the last mambabatok of her generation, she has imprinted the symbols of the Kalinga tribe—signifying strength, bravery, and beauty—on the skin of thousands of people who have made the pilgrimage to Buscalan,"* Vogue Philippines said in a post on social media.

The art can only be passed down to blood relatives, and Whang Od has been training her grandnieces Elyang Wigan and Grace Palicas for several years. *"(My friends who gave tattoos) have all passed away,"* Whang Od told CNN Travel in 2017. *"I'm the only one left alive that's still giving tattoos. But I'm not afraid that the tradition will end because (I'm training) the next tattoo masters."* *"The tradition will continue as long as people keep coming to get tattoos,"* she added.

Dior's landmark Mumbai show signals India's growing luxury status. *"As long as I can see well, I will keep giving tattoos. I'll stop once my vision gets blurry."* Vogue Philippines editor-in-chief Bea Valdes said staff at the publication decided unanimously that Whang-Od should go on the cover. *"We felt she represented our ideals of what is beautiful about our Filipino culture. And we believe that the concept of beauty needs to evolve, and include diverse and inclusive faces and forms. What we hope to speak about is the beauty of humanity,"* Valdes added. Prior to Whang-Od's appearance in Vogue Philippines, the record for oldest Vogue cover model was held by actress Judi Dench, who appeared on the front of British Vogue in 2020, at the age of 85.

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Courtesy of Next Avenue

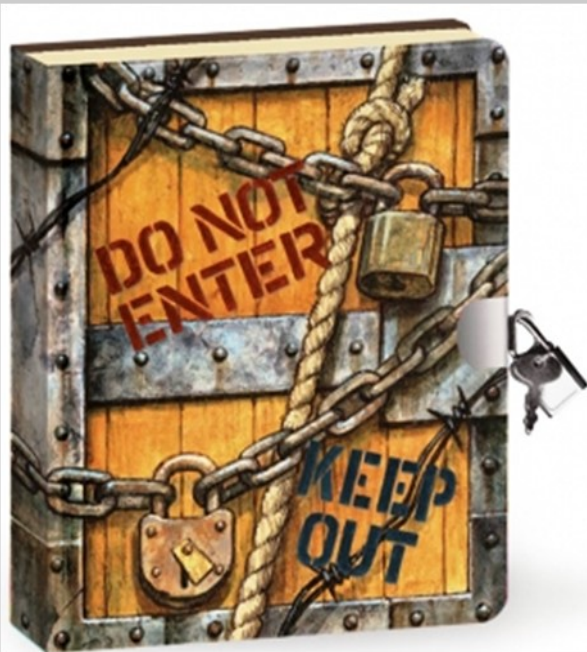
Written by Amy Woodyatt, CNN

Image credit: Artu Nepomuceno/Vogue Philippines

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The Fiasco of maintaining a inaccessible abuse register!



According to the Older Persons Act (Act 13 of 2006), the Minister must in the prescribed manner keep a register of persons convicted of the abuse of an older person or of any crime or offence contemplated in section 30(4).

*Regulation 24 provides that **only** the following persons shall have access to the register:*

the Minister; officials in the Department designated by the Minister; a Member of the Executive Council of a province responsible for social development; and officials in the provincial department of social development designated by the Member of the Executive Council responsible for social development in that province.

The register is not open to members of the public and remains confidential at this stage. It is also a criminal offence to have any unauthorised disclosure or publication of contents in the register.

... So, if no one can access the register - what purpose does it serve? ... How does maintaining an 'inaccessible register,' prevent 'abusers' from being re-employed?

Are there actually registers ... or is this just another State myth, designed to hide the fact that they are incapable of; or unwilling to, maintain accurate abuse registers (and the same would apply to sexual abuse offenders as well!)

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Two attitudes to life - your choice?



The inaccessible abuse register (continued from previous page)

Whilst working in the UK in 2003, I experienced the following: I was seeking employment, and soon discovered that similar to the South African Police Clearance Certificate, all applicants had to obtain such a document. (It may have been due to my being a 'foreigner' on an Ancestral Visa). Similarly even when successful in a job application, one then had to obtain the approval of an organisation known as CSCI, prior to actually commencing work.

On one occasion I had in error issued the wrong medication to a dementia patient. She was in no manner harmed, but my wrong-doing resulted in a disciplinary hearing and warning. After a successful application for the position of Care Home Manager, for a facility for adults with profound learning disabilities, I was then directed by my new employer to make an appointment for an interview with CSCI ... which I duly did. (I could not commence my new job until this had been done!) On entering their interview room, after taking my seat... The first thing that I did was to inform them of the medication error that I had made. Their response was amazing! They said ... *"We are glad that you have told us that, as the incident is recorded here on your file."*

Had I not informed them, I doubt that I would have been allowed to assume the role of Home Manager, at the *Windbound*.

What is the point of having abuse registers which are hidden away, and are inaccessible to care facility employers! Redesign the 'abuse register' system in order that it can serve the purpose for which it is intended... to protect the frail and vulnerable!

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Henry Spencer

When choosing a retirement village, or care centre ...

Assess the CEO or Manager first - not the facility!

Bricks and mortar don't change i.e. those erected in one city are the same as those in another; and they have similar ambitions where ever they are located.

But a human being, who in your senior years is given the mace of power; who is able to dictate what you do, and how to do it; how you'll live your future life...

now that is a different kettle of fish entirely!

A good CEO can make things (even misbehaving bricks and mortar) - work!

So when meeting visiting the facility to assess it... insist on meeting the CEO face-to-face.

And then trust your gut instinct. (If the CEO is too busy to meet with you - then you definitely need to be cautious!)

If you feel that you can trust the CEO, then go ahead and assess the village further, however, if the CEO exudes an aura of mistrust - then walk away immediately! Don't waste your time on any further investigations.

It may even help to take your pet dog '*Bonzo*,' with you, as you can't fool a dog!

If on meeting the CEO; or Matron... Bonzo puts his tail between his legs and rushes off to hide under the car ,

Then follow suit and drive away!

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AND ALWAYS REMEMBER - PEOPLE ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN THINGS!

Under the *affluence of incohol*



Thegingermen.com
We go to dinner - we drink a little
Just a sip - just a tippie
We visit *bars* - we drink a *lot*
We promise - not another jot
Moving *downhill* - we start to slide
Neighbours *chossip* - wives do *gide*
Our bottle finds a place to hide
.....
It soon becomes a pleasant taste
Even dregs we *do not waste*
A deep morass - we start to sink
Oops! I've spilled my bloody drink
Oh *hit!* Oh *shell* - bloody *hammit*
I really need to break this *dabit*
'Tis such a *devastating habit*
We fall on *trops* - *stip* over feet
Leverse on *rawns* - that once were neat

Stopped by police - can we walk *la..la..laight?*
f course we can't - it's far too *strate*
Am I *sunk* - don't be *drilly*

What a sought - 'tis far too *thilly*
And as I *lommit* in the *vane*
I *pate this self-inflicted* *hain?*

.....
Henry Spencer

This poem plays on the difficulty that those under the influence of alcohol seem to have in pronouncing words; how they mix up word endings etc. It explores the manner in which inebriated people still seem to think that they are making sense - perhaps even poets? WARNING: YOU HAVE TO BE SOBER AND MUST CONCENTRATE TO READ THIS POEM!

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