

What is Retirement?

by Jann Burner

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Keeping a Journal

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As we grow and age in this life, we seem to have generalized goals for specific periods of time. The first 18 to 25 years can be set aside for education and training. From 25 to 35 could be called the period where one gets married and raises some kids. From 35 to 55 or 65 is where one focuses upon one's work or career. And then you come to the age of "*retirement*". But what actually is, "*retirement*"? Of course, ideally, it means that finally you can stop working and simply "*enjoy*" your life with your spouse. Your kids are grown and on their own and you no longer have to go to "*work*" each day.

But what "*is*" retirement? All of the previous sections in a life are full of detailed descriptions. But "*retirement*" is somehow left rather vague. One would think that retirement would be the long-awaited *GOAL* of life. But instead we are left with the vague image of a rather portly man playing golf and drinking, "*at the club*" and the female enjoying raising her grandkids. But what if you aren't a golfer (or a drinker) and your grandkids don't really need you to raise them. Hmmm.

There actually is a specific purpose to be accomplished within the period called "*retirement*". But it isn't generally discussed in the media because it has to do with "*Spirit*". The period we call retirement is actually the period where one should review their entire life experience. What have you actually learned from your 65 + years of life within this 3-d hologram called life on earth. What

has “*Mary*” or “*Jim*” actually learned in this life? How have you been able to grow your soul.

And this brings me to the main topic: *keeping a Journal*. It doesn't really take very much time and you don't have to be a talented writer. You just have to keep some form of notes about your life experience as it is happening. And here's an interesting thing I've discovered (having kept a journal for over 50 years). Among all my notes detailing specific patterns of stress and lists of complaints I have noticed that from time to time a detailed “*paragraph*” or two will sort of pop onto the page that really has nothing to do with what came before or after. Suddenly a deep “*insight*” will just sort of...*appear*. And then, just as suddenly it will stop and the notations will return to my patterns of general complaint and detailed frustrations with one thing and another. And then, a week later, maybe a couple of months later, the sudden appearance of another “*deep*” insight will appear again. It might simply be a paragraph or two or it may be an entire page. And, in rereading my journals I find that this seems to happen on a semi regular basis, although at the time of the writing I am relatively unaware of the “*insights*”.

And here's the rather amazing part. I have gone through my journals with a yellow marker and noted where and when these isolated “*insights*” appear. And I have found that they are all connected! It seems like a vase that has been shattered long ago with the pieces scattered across time. Or, in another way of looking at it, it is like “*I*” am keeping two journals. One is my current day to day personal list of frustration and complaint and the other is from a higher perspective. But the “*higher*” perspective is still “*me*”. It is just my viewpoint from a higher frequency of Mind. Some might call this a gift. Some others might call it celestial schizophrenia. But it is not uncommon. We all are having multiple conversations with “*ourselves*” all the time. But we are often too distracted by life's continual drama to pay attention.

Now, to many people, a *journal* is simply a “*male*” euphemism for a “*diary*”. And as we know, many young girls keep diaries while in middle school or high school. But likewise, most early nautical explorers kept diaries except that they were called the ship's log and it detailed their adventure and served as an historical document. I would suggest that you think of yourself like an early explorer off on a dangerous mission that has never been attempted before: the personal exploration of *your life*! Think of your journal as your ship's log.

I would also suggest that should journaling “*catch on*”, some day in the future these journals will be studied in Universities around the world as *historical documents*. “*What was life really like in the 21st Century.*”

But who has the time to actually press pen to paper in this world of constant distraction and immediate gratification? Well...no need. If you own a computer or a smart phone you can simply install a *voice to text* program or *App* and you will suddenly have a personal secretary to take down every relevant thought and your secretary will work 24-7 for *Free!*

Now that is what I call “*Retirement*”.

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Here is a list of five specific suggestions for readers who haven't kept a journal but now find themselves in the “*retirement phase*” of their life:

1. List *every address* you have ever lived at. Describe each location in detail as best you can recall.
2. List all the “*forks*” in the road of your life. These don't have to be particularly

good or bad, they are merely position points where a choice was made that changed all that came after.

3. List all the "Close calls" you've had with Death. Everyone has those "*events*,"

which happen in their life that could have quite easily resulted in their demise but didn't. Call it "*fate*" or simply good luck. Describe each of these in detail.

4. Describe your life in 5 year increments. Start at the age of 5. What do you recall (if anything) between your birth and the age of 5. Then move on and recall what you can between the ages of 5 and 10. Don't go into 11 or 12. Keep it firmly in *5 year* increments. And do this until you are within 5 years of your current age.

5. Create a "Reverse Bucket List". A "*normal*" bucket list, would be a list of things you want to do in the future. In the case of a *reverse* bucket list, go over your life and select things that you have already done or accomplished. Things that you enjoyed or are proud of and list them "*as if*" you haven't actually done them yet but list them as things you want or hope to do or accomplish at some time in your life.

