

LYNNE'S TOP 10 REASONS TO FEEL HAPPY ABOUT GETTING OLDER

10. **GREATER IMMUNITY TO COLDS.**
9. **LESS PAIN IN THE DENTIST'S CHAIR.** Older people have less sensitivity relating to dental procedures.
8. **GREATER SENSE OF WELL-BEING** The older brain defaults to the positive.
7. **GREATER CONTROL OF EMOTIONS** Even though older people tend to feel emotions more strongly, they are more adept at tempering them as necessary.
6. **PATTERN RECOGNITION** The brain sifts through millions of life experiences, seeking knowledge through identification of patterns. The data base increases with age.
5. **MYELIN LEVELS DON'T PEAK UNTIL APPROXIMATELY AGE SIXTY** Myelin leads to better neural transmission.
4. **COGNITION PEAKS BETWEEN AGES FORTY THROUGH SEVENTY**, per the forty-year-long Seattle Longitudinal Study.
3. **NEW BRAIN CELLS ARE GENERATED THROUGHOUT THE HUMAN LIFE SPAN.** Encourage this process by exercising, learning new things, and socializing.
2. **YOU CAN BUILD COGNITIVE RESERVE** to counter effects of dementia. Again, exercise, learn, and socialize to encourage this process.
1. **BILATERALIZATION** As we age, connections are made and strengthened between the two sides of the brain. This enhances creativity, problem-solving and decision-making.

*Lynne Spreen can be reached at www.AnyShinyThing.com. She is the author of *Dakota Blues*, a novel, and *Middle-Aged Crazy*, a collection of short stories. Both are about finding joy, independence and happiness in midlife. Available at Amazon.com.*