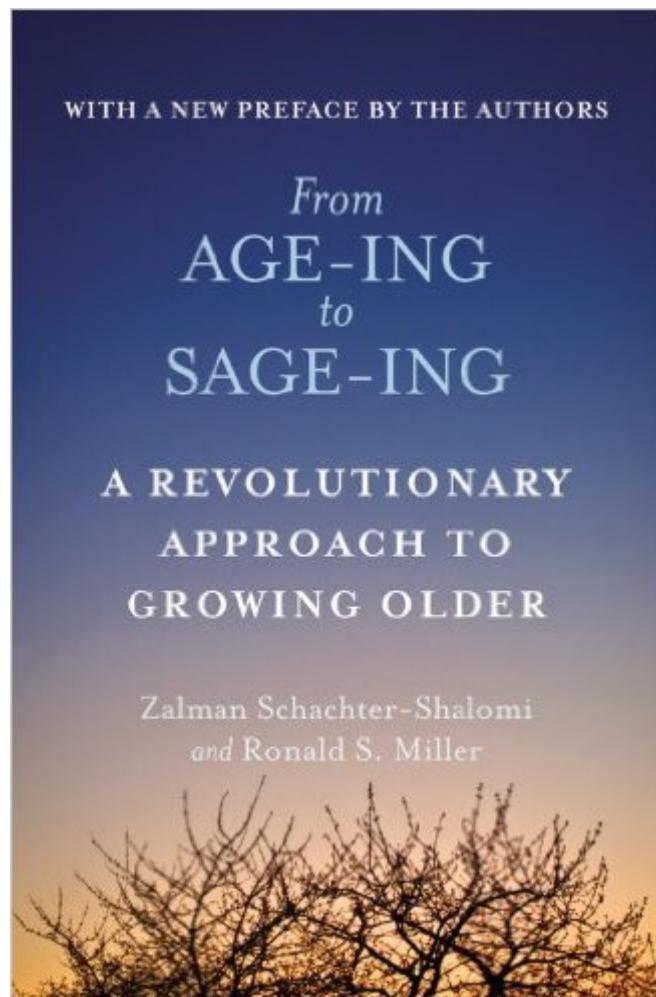


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From Age-Ing To Sage-Ing: A Revolutionary Approach To Growing Older



Synopsis

Over two decades ago, beloved and respected rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi felt an uneasiness. He was growing older, and fears about death and infirmity were haunting him. So he decided to embark on mission to get to the bottom of his fears. Through a series of events that included a vision quest in a secluded cabin and studying with Sufi masters, Buddhist teachers and Native-American shamans, Reb Zalman found a way to turn aging into the most meaningful and joyous time in his life. In this inspiring and informative guide, Reb Zalman shares his wisdom and experience with readers. He shows readers how to create an aging process for themselves that is full of adventure, passion, mystery, and fulfillment, rather than anxiety. Using scientific research--both neurological and psychological-- Reb Zalman offers techniques that will expand horizons beyond the narrow view of "the present" into a grand and enduring eternity. By harnessing the power of the spirit, as well as explaining exactly how to become a sage in their own community, he gives readers a helpful and moving way to use their own experiences to nurture, heal, and perhaps even save a younger generation from the prison of how we typically regard aging. In this updated version of his popular book, Reb Zalman has added a brand new introductory chapter that provides insight into the shifts that have taken place in our culture since the first edition of this book came out in the 1990s. Reb Zalman speaks candidly about the role the 78 million (now aging) Baby Boomers are currently playing in how we think about aging. He provides new inspiring ideas about the importance of an elder's role in shaping society, and explains how elders can embrace the power they have to provide value and wisdom to those around them. Additionally he has added a concluding chapter in which he shares his own experience with aging and the time he calls "The December Years."

Book Information

Paperback: 336 pages

Publisher: Grand Central Publishing; Reprint edition (June 3, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1455530603

ISBN-13: 978-1455530601

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 1 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (86 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #48,988 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #13 inÂ Books > Politics & Social

Customer Reviews

What is the purpose of life lived long past the reproductive years? Using their concepts of "elderhood" and "the art of life completion," Schacter-Shalomi and Miller survey the societal changes that they believe are synchronistic events that give meaning and purpose to the burgeoning population of elders in American society and other developed countries. An increasing number of writers share these men's belief that the aged are needed to guide humanity in its values, to influence the young to make the changes that consider the distant future as well as the present. Rabbi Schacter-Shalomi has spent his adult life studying numerous spiritual disciplines. He believes that the present easy access to ancient spiritual teachings that were once passed secretly from one generation of adepts to the next is for the purpose of allowing large populations to prepare themselves for their contribution to humanity as wise elders. The major theme of this work could be said to be the art of living and dying with meaning. Going beyond the usual observations of the characteristics of our rapidly aging population, Schacter-Shalomi and Miller have offered sound advice on how an individual can find purpose in life beyond reproduction and career. They even offer specific "Exercises for Sages in Training."

Age-ing to Sage-ing is indeed a profound new vision for aging. In a time when our elder population is rapidly growing, it is important that people find meaning in their elder years. Rabbi Schacter-Shalomi has used his own journey as a stepping off point to assist people in making the most of the extra gift of years they have been given in this century. I highly recommend this book because it not only provides theory about becoming a spiritual elder, but also talks about tools for this and gives exercises for this in an appendix. Rabbi Schacter-Shalomi has an incredible grasp of a wide range of religious beliefs and a very wholistic view of spirituality. His message has provided inspiration for myself as well as many people I work with. I also recommend Winter Grace, by Kathleen Fischer.

These days, in our Western culture, for many man and woman over 40, the aging process has become something to fear. Which is utterly crazy, given that most people nowadays are barely half way through their lives at that point. It's like wanting to leave the restaurant somewhere in the middle of the main course and without tasting the dessert at all. I liked this book because it is one of

the few to look deeply into the whole adventure of aging and to broadcast to the world that the later decades of life have a different - and surprisingly wonderful - agenda all of their own. It is time for us older folk to stop cringing about getting older but to open to the process and re-own our place as 'wise elders.' As I was writing my own book - ELDERWOMAN - which is specifically for women, this wise man's book was a marvellous resource for me. It is a full, rich book, worth reading and re-reading. The exercises are useful and practical and the ideas are powerful. Highly recommended.

My attraction to the first named author, Zalman Schachter-Shalomi was due to his reputation as a cabalist, the Jewish practice of mysticism. When I bought and first read this book, in 1995, I was a mere 48 years old, much too young to put its sage advice into practice. This book is for the retired, and even then is not for everyone. When I lent it to my retired friend in California with whom I swap jokes on the internet, her comment was "Although it was a difficult read, bogged down in places, and I didn't like how it was written, it did say a lot of important things and was worth reading" 3-4 stars would you say? In any event, the authors discuss the "theory of spiritual eldering." There are several paths one may take in eldering. First, however, the authors confront the "conscious transit of death." In part three of the book the authors discuss "Spiritual Elderling and Social Transformation." This section includes mentoring and elders as healers of family, community, and Gaia-the living Earth. Finally, an appendix is provided which includes exercises for sages in training. If you are retired or facing retirement and are at a loss for how to lead a productive life in your 'golden years' your time would be well spent in looking this book over.

My own spiritual journey was faltering when I met Reb Zalman and bought this book. It was his humor and wisdom that helped me back onto the path. Now I go towards old age with a sense of purpose and a cheerfulness. I feel that this book was a personal invitation (to all of us) to join the tribal council of elders. I am currently rereading the book and again it is strengthening my resolve to take on the role of elder in my community.

From Age-Ing to Sage-Ing has been a personal inspiration for me. Being recently retired, it has shown me that it's important to take all of the knowledge and wisdom that I have gained and give it back to the younger generation. If all of us healthy elders volunteered some of our wisdom in the workforce, our Social Security crisis would be greatly diminished. This is a wonderfully timely book with an important message.

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