

relating



5 REASONS TO EMBRACE YOUR MILESTONE BIRTHDAY

By Sharlene Breakey

1

You'll come into your own.

I loved turning 30 because I began to feel way less neurotic, especially about what men thought of me. When Jessica Williams and I started our podcast, I'd get messages from guys criticizing me for things like the pitch of my voice. Five years ago, that might have caused me to consider changing something about myself, but now I just think, "This is who I am, and I like it."

PHOEBE ROBINSON IS A COMEDIAN, WRITER, AND COHOST OF THE PODCAST *2 DOPE QUEENS*. HER SECOND BOOK, *EVERYTHING'S TRASH, BUT IT'S OKAY*, WILL BE PUBLISHED ON OCTOBER 16. SHE LIVES IN NEW YORK CITY.

2
—**It adds fuel to your fire.**

Age was never something I thought about. Ever. But as a pro athlete turning 40, I've been forced to, since people now ask me all the time when I'll stop playing. Initially it made me mad, but now I let it push me. I'm like, "Doubt me? I'll show you." Far from slowing me down, getting older and having kids has taught me and inspired me so much that it's probably added a decade to my career. Someday I'll hang up my bikini, but not yet.

KERRI WALSH JENNINGS IS A THREE-TIME OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST AND A ONETIME OLYMPIC BRONZE MEDALIST IN BEACH VOLLEYBALL WHO IS TRAINING FOR THE 2020 OLYMPICS. SHE RECENTLY LAUNCHED P1440, AN EVENT SERIES INTENDED TO REVITALIZE THE SPORT OF VOLLEYBALL. SHE LIVES IN MANHATTAN BEACH, CALIFORNIA.

3
—**You'll find your peeps.**

Now that I'm in my late 40s and (let's face it) nearing 50, I've finally found my tribe. That's because I've gotten much better at reading people. As a result, I'm much less likely to let a narcissist camp out in my basement. I had an aspirational 40th birthday party, inviting the people I thought should be my friends. It was overcatered and underpopulated, and the people who came stayed 45 minutes, wondered why they were there, then left. It was borderline humiliating but provoked a moment of reckoning that spurred me to change how I looked at friendship. I'm much better now at spotting like-minded souls. And I only befriend people who are both funny and kind.

PAMELA DRUCKERMAN IS THE AUTHOR OF *THERE ARE NO GROWN-UPS: A MIDLIFE COMING-OF-AGE STORY*. SHE LIVES IN PARIS.

4
—**Mindfulness comes naturally.**

My mom set an important example for how meaningful and joyful life after 60 could be. After divorcing my father, she got her own little apartment and spent 24 years being single—and she loved every second of it. She was so grateful to establish rituals, to drink tea and go to museums. Close to 70 myself, I am now the one finding great joy in small things. You learn that those simple moments—walking in the park, painting, going out to dinner with someone you love—are the best parts of life. And that life really is an accumulation of those moments.

MAIRA KALMAN, AN ILLUSTRATOR AND WRITER, IS THE AUTHOR OF *CAKE*. HER MEMOIR ABOUT HER MOTHER, *SARA BERMAN'S CLOSET*, WAS WRITTEN WITH HER SON, ALEX KALMAN, AND IS DUE OUT ON OCTOBER 30. SHE LIVES IN NEW YORK CITY.

5
—**Neuroscience is on your side.**

What most people think is true about aging—that it's a sad and empty decline—is wrong. Some research shows that as we age, our brains change in ways that may actually make us more positive. The emotional peak of life can occur in our 60s and 70s. And as our brains change, so do our values, making us want to give back. What's more, because we're living longer, we can get the gift of an additional 10 to 15 years to be productive and enjoy this happiness. In fact, our culture suggests that all the innovation comes from young people, but really, more start-ups are begun by people over 55. It's an extremely generative chapter of life.

JONATHAN RAUCH IS THE AUTHOR OF *THE HAPPINESS CURVE: WHY LIFE GETS BETTER AFTER 50*. HE LIVES IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

