

Being or feeling ?forever young?

by Mark Pavilons

Who is this man looking back at me in the mirror with bags under his eyes, Einstein-like hair and facial scruff?

It can't be me, can it? We all know the answer.

Maybe it's some grand marketing scheme, where substances are placed in the glass that exaggerate images or reflect them back with defects, to make us go out and buy rejuvenating cream, hair color or supplements.

Okay, it's age. But it's not just the passage of time and the creases it causes on the body. It's about the inner self.

That's what's weird about my latest mirror experiences. Inside, I'm nowhere what my driver's licence says. At times, I feel like a high school senior, and others like a frat boy. But this guy, staring back at me? That's not me.

Would a ponytail help? Maybe an earring or a tattoo? Leather pants? Don't laugh, I actually had a pair in my 20s.

My summer attire ? colourful Hawaiian shirts ? speak volumes about my out-going and carefree nature. But in reality, I'm more like the Kool-Aid Man, given my rotund mid-section.

According to Alphaville:

?It's so hard to get old without a cause

?I don't want to perish like a fading horse

?Youth's like diamonds in the sun

?And diamonds are forever.?

I'm not talking about immortality and being ?forever young.??But I do admire seniors who look and act decades younger than their true age. In my opinion, to be youthful, and perhaps live upwards of 200 years, combined with wisdom, is the best scenario. With those who qualities, we would be unstoppable.

So, let's start a GoFundMe campaign to immortalize Boomers, tap their minds and extend their lives, for the betterment of all humankind. Who's with me?

?Wisdom is the reward for surviving our own stupidity,? according to Brian Rathbone, Regent.

It's been said the wisest are the most annoyed by the passage of time. I don't know about you, but lately, my patience is wearing thin with the increasing number of idiots in this world. From tailgaters and speeders to just plain rudeness, my fellow humans are showing signs of wear and tear.

Some say men and women age differently, but many agree that life is written on your face. My laugh lines (that's I like to call them) and miles of bad road on my kisser were all well-earned.

Every line, dent, scar and wrinkle has a story to tell.

I'm so lucky in that my wife and her mom are quite youthful looking. On occasion, some people have asked my wife whether she's my daughter. Not sure whether to be insulted or impressed by that question. Regardless, some strong genes on that side.

In photos of my dad, the description that comes to mind is 'stone face,' a rather serious, careworn look. We've uncovered some family photos, circa the turn of the century, where men were complete with expressionless faces and those exquisite handlebar moustaches. The portraits look more like a group shot at a funeral, than a happy family occasion.

During my first chemo session, my wife snapped a pic of me and I looked just like my late uncle did in his 70s. Sure, I realize DNA sneaks up on you, but boy.

Being a bit of a foodie, I've learned that age is important when it comes to wine and cheese. I love cheese. Also, not everyone gets to age gracefully, or at all. Many don't make it into their 70s or 80s anymore.

Dr. Seuss once said that adults are obsolete children. But have you seen Dr. Seuss characters? What strange world of elongated and exaggerated features did these hail from? On second thought, seeing one of these peer back at me from the mirror may frighten me at first, but I'd get a good, hearty chuckle at it.

When you think about it, humans are the only creatures on earth who are concerned about youth, longevity, looking good and achieving some sort of status.

For our lower-level mammal friends, their skills and intelligence are directed towards food, shelter, safety and the pod or family. Yes, there's a hierarchy, but it's one set by nature and the alpha takes on the responsibility of leader.

They don't have an ego (or so we believe), so they merely do their job as nature intended. They lead, protect, provide and often bark out orders or directives. I don't think they spend a lot of time preening or looking at their image in the calm pond waters and remark how good looking they are.

And they likely don't do any soul-searching or take stock of their lives.

I doubt whether animals have the same concept of time as we do, and they sure don't understand the nature of the universe or the unique aspects of time and space. Well, I'd keep an eye on dolphins and octopuses because I'm positive they aren't telling us everything.

Luis Barragan once said that a garden must 'combine the poetic and the mysterious with a feeling of serenity and joy.'

We are our own gardeners and I believe we all have a bit of mystery and poetry in our lives.

We've all experienced joy. Serenity, well that's a tough one.

Maybe we're all mistaking youth for inner qualities that outlast all others. Age means nothing, but if we're filled with peace, calm, compassion, honesty, motivation and contentment, then I think we've partly mastered this thing called life.

Our mirrors won't reflect back what we could be or should be. But that strange, light-bending optic device may show us the way. It may indicate it's time for a change, a change of diet, attitude, approach or demeanor.

I may not give my mirror self the thumbs-up or finger gun salute, but I may not hate him so. He may be on to something.

If only there's a device to look through us, into us, and find that joyful, rambunctious child. I'd love it if we could get those x-ray glasses at the back of comic books and see into a person's soul and witness their goodness.

Then we'd have no use for mirrors at all!