



SENIOR MOMENTS

COMMUNITY

WELLNESS

ENGAGEMENT

A COMMUNITY SENIOR LIVING MAGAZINE PRESENTED BY THE REDMOND SENIOR CENTER

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OPENING REFLECTIONS

FROM THE HEART



Welcome to the September/October Edition of Senior Moments

As the golden hues of autumn begin to paint the world around us and the air cools with the crispness of the changing season, we find ourselves in a time of reflection, renewal, and connection. September and October bring with them not just the beauty of nature's transition, but also an invitation to pause and consider the things that matter most—our health, our homes, and our loved ones. At *Senior Moments*, we are honored to walk alongside you during this season of change, and we welcome you warmly to this very special edition.

This issue is more than just a magazine—it's a heartfelt offering, thoughtfully curated to address the topics of home safety, fall prevention, and cancer awareness. These themes aren't just timely; they're deeply personal. They touch the very core of what it means to age with dignity, to navigate life's challenges with resilience, and to lean on one another for support and guidance.

FOCUSING ON OUR WELL-BEING

Our September-October Wellbeing Series brings a spotlight to two critical areas of health and safety: **Home Safety and Fall Prevention** and **Cancer Awareness**. These are not just subjects for discussion—they are lifelines for many of us in the senior community.

Home is where our hearts live, where our most cherished memories are made. But sometimes, the spaces we've loved for decades can become unexpected sources of risk. Fall prevention is a vital topic, and through this edition, we explore how to make your home a haven by addressing hidden dangers, offering tips to reduce hazards, and sharing practical strategies to maintain independence. Whether it's securing rugs, adding handrails, or improving lighting, small changes can make a monumental difference.

And then there's cancer—perhaps one of the most daunting words any of us can hear. But this issue is here to empower, not intimidate. As we delve into Cancer



Awareness, we share stories of hope, breakthroughs in treatment, and the importance of early detection. We honor the strength of those who have faced this battle and celebrate the advancements that continue to bring light to what was once a shadowy diagnosis. Cancer awareness isn't just about statistics; it's about people, families, and communities coming together to support one another through education and compassion.

A SEASON OF CONNECTION

Autumn, with its falling leaves and shorter days, often feels like a time of retreat and introspection. But here at the Redmond Senior Center, we see it as a time to come together. Our community events, programs, and resources are designed to keep you inspired, active, and connected. Whether it's attending the Harvestpalooza, joining one of our fitness classes, or simply sitting down to enjoy a meal with friends, we hope you'll find warmth and belonging within these walls.

In this issue, you'll also find practical advice, uplifting stories, and even a bit of lighthearted fun. From tips on staying safe at home to the healing power of laughter, every page is filled with something to inspire and engage you. And as we navigate these months together, we encourage you to take advantage of the many resources available to you—whether it's learning about home modifications to prevent falls or exploring how to support loved ones facing cancer.

A TIME TO CELEBRATE LIFE

This season also reminds us how precious life is. As we see the leaves change and feel the days grow shorter, we are reminded to cherish every moment, to reach out to loved ones, and to reflect on the blessings in our lives. It's a time to celebrate the small victories—like sharing a laugh with a friend or learning something new—and to embrace the big ones, like overcoming challenges and finding strength in community.

We hope this edition of *Senior Moments* becomes a source of comfort, guidance, and joy for you. Let it remind you that you are not alone on this journey. Whether you are navigating the challenges of aging, seeking ways to improve your health, or simply looking for a place to feel connected, we are here for you.

LOOKING FORWARD TOGETHER

As you turn these pages, know that each article, tip, and story has been written with you in mind. Our community is at the heart of everything we do, and we are endlessly grateful for the opportunity to share this space with you. Let this edition serve as a gentle nudge to prioritize your well-being, to cultivate connections, and to find peace in the beauty of the season.

Welcome to September and October, dear readers. May these months bring you health, happiness, and a renewed sense of purpose. And may you always remember that every step you take—whether it's securing your home, seeking a health screening, or simply reaching out for a hand to hold—is a step toward living your best life. ●

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COMMUNITY CONNECTION

WHY HARVESTPALOOZA IS THE FALL FESTIVAL YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOU NEEDED (UNTIL NOW)

By James Morris

Alright, let's start with the obvious: fall festivals are *so much more* than cider and pumpkins. Sure, they've got charm—who doesn't love wearing a cozy sweater and pretending to be in a Hallmark movie? But the real magic happens when they give us a reason to leave the house, meet that neighbor whose name you've almost remembered (three times!), and connect with the people who make up the heart of our community.

That's why we do Harvestpalooza.

This isn't just your run-of-the-mill fall festival. Nope. This is *the* event of the season, combining three of the Redmond Senior Center's favorite traditions: the Wellness Fair, Holiday Fair, and Appreciation Day. Think of it as the ultimate mash-up—a one-stop shop for live music, delicious food, handmade crafts, and health resources. Oh, and let's not forget the conversations that somehow start at the door and end hours later over lunch.

So, grab your calendar (or phone, let's be real) and mark this down: **Saturday, September 19, at 10:00 AM.** This is all happening at the Redmond Senior Center, 325 NW Dogwood Ave., Redmond, Oregon. And trust me, this is one outing you don't want to miss.

BECAUSE COMMUNITY DOESN'T JUST HAPPEN

Let's be honest, community isn't some magical thing that just *poofs* into existence. It takes a bit of effort and a whole lot of heart. Someone's gotta open the doors, set up the chairs, and say, "Hey, come on in!"





That's exactly what Harvestpalooza is all about. It's an open invitation for everyone in Redmond to come together, whether you've lived here forever or just rolled into town. It's a chance to reconnect with old friends, meet some new ones, and share a few laughs with people who make you feel like you belong.

THREE EVENTS, ONE FESTIVAL: THE ULTIMATE COMBO DEAL

Here's why Harvestpalooza is such a big deal: it's not just one event—it's three fantastic traditions rolled into one day of awesome.

- **The Wellness Fair:** Got questions about health? We've got answers, resources, and people who genuinely care about helping you live your best life.
- **The Holiday Fair:** Handmade treasures galore! Whether you're hunting for a unique gift or just want to admire some impressive creativity, this is the place to be.
- **Appreciation Day:** Because saying "thank you" never goes out of style. This is our chance to celebrate the folks who make the Senior Center such a special place.

It's like getting your favorite three toppings on one pizza—only this time, the toppings are crafts, health resources, and gratitude. (And okay, maybe some actual pizza, too. You'll have to come and see.)

THE REAL REASON WE GATHER

Let's get real for a second. On the surface, Harvestpalooza might look like any other fall festival. But if you scratch beneath that pumpkin-spiced exterior, you'll find something much deeper.

- **It's a reason to leave the house.** Sometimes, we all need a little push to swap the couch for, well, anything else. Whether it's the promise of live music, tasty food, or seeing familiar faces, Harvestpalooza is your perfect excuse to get out and about.
- **It's a chance to connect.** Life moves fast, and it's easy to feel disconnected. This festival slows things down, giving you the chance to chat, laugh, and make some real connections with your neighbors.
- **It's about belonging.** More than anything, Harvestpalooza is about creating that warm, fuzzy feeling of being part of something bigger—a community that genuinely cares.

MORE THAN JUST A BUILDING

The Redmond Senior Center isn't just a building with an address (though if you need it, it's 325 NW Dogwood Ave.). It's a place where stories get shared, laughs get heard, and people of all ages come together to create something special.

It's where:

- Generations connect and learn from each other.
- Strangers become neighbors.
- Neighbors become friends.

Harvestpalooza is a celebration of everything the Senior Center stands for: connection, inclusion, and community.

FALL HAS BEEN WAITING PATIENTLY—LET'S WELCOME IT IN STYLE

Let's not forget the guest of honor here: *fall*. It's spent all summer waiting quietly in the wings, wearing its best sweater and checking its watch. And now? It's time

to roll out the orange carpet and give the season the welcome it deserves.

Think:

- **Live Music:** Toe-tapping tunes that'll stick with you long after the show.
- **Amazing Food:** Come hungry. Seriously. Our food vendors are ready to wow you.
- **Crafts and Handmade Goods:** Perfect for gift shopping or just admiring the talent in our community.
- **Wellness Resources:** Because nothing says "self-care" like learning how to take better care of yourself.

IT'S THE LITTLE MOMENTS THAT MATTER

What makes Harvestpalooza truly special? It's not just the music or the crafts (though those are pretty great). It's the small moments—the familiar face across the room, the conversation that starts as a quick hello

and somehow lasts hours, the laugh that travels farther than anyone expected.

These are the moments that build community. And when we come together to share them, we're not just attending a festival, we're strengthening the bonds that make Redmond feel like home.

JOIN US AT HARVESTPALOOZA!

So, why do we hold events like Harvestpalooza? Because they remind us why community matters. They bring us together, spark connections, and give us a reason to celebrate not just the season, but each other.

We'd love to see you on **Saturday, September 19, starting at 10:00 AM**, at the Redmond Senior Center. Come for the music, food, and crafts. Stay for the people, the stories, and the moments that'll make you glad you showed up.

Because at the end of the day, Harvestpalooza isn't just about welcoming fall—it's about welcoming *you*. And that's something worth celebrating.

Mark your calendar, grab a friend (or two), and join us. We can't wait to see you there! ●

Harvestpalooza
How to Make the Most of Your Day

Start With What Brings You Live Music • Food • Crafts • Wellness Begin with the activity that excites you most. A favorite experience is often the best conversation starter.	Meet Someone New Turn Neighbors into Friends Introduce yourself to someone you don't know. Harvestpalooza is designed to bring community together, one conversation at a time.	Come Hungry, Stay Curious Explore Local Vendors Sample food, browse handmade goods, and discover local businesses and artisans you may not have met before.
Visit the Wellness Fair Take advantage of wellness vendors and community resources. Learn something new and connect with organizations that support healthy living.	Slow Down and Stay Awhile Some of the most meaningful experiences happen in spontaneous conversations, shared stories, and unscripted laughter.	Make It About Belonging Bring a Friend • Share a Story • Join the Community Harvestpalooza isn't just a festival. It's a chance to strengthen connections and celebrate what Redmond special.

Music • Food • Crafts • Wellness • Community





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FALL PREVENTION AND HOME SAFETY

KEEPING YOU STEADY WHILE YOU SIP PUMPKIN SPICE

By James Morris



Ah, autumn. The season of cozy sweaters, pumpkin-flavored everything, and Instagram-worthy fall foliage. It's that magical time of year when the air gets crisp, the days get shorter, and your home suddenly feels like the ultimate retreat. But let's be real for a second, while you're busy lighting candles and perfecting your blanket fort, have you stopped to think if your home is actually, you know, *safe*?

Because here's the thing: your perfectly curated autumn aesthetic won't mean much if you trip over a rogue rug or fumble your way down poorly lit stairs. No one wants to spend fall in a cast. So, let's talk about how to make your home a haven of safety *and* comfort, without sacrificing an ounce of coziness (or your ability to sip tea while binge-watching your favorite show).

WHY SAFETY IS THE PUMPKIN SPICE OF HOME LIFE

For older adults especially, the home isn't just where the heart is, it's where independence lives. But here's the not-so-fun fact: most falls happen right at home; in the very place we feel safest. (Talk about betrayal, right?) According to the National Council on Aging, falls are the leading cause of injury among seniors. But don't cue the doom and gloom music just yet! The good news is that many of these accidents are totally preventable with a few smart tweaks.

Think of it like this: your home doesn't need an extreme makeover; it just needs a quick safety glow-up. A little mindfulness here, a small adjustment there, and voilà! You've got a space that makes you feel secure without cramping your cozy vibes.

STEP ONE: SEE YOUR HOME THROUGH "FRESH EYES"

Ever notice how when you've lived in a place long enough, you kind of stop *seeing* it? It's like when you walk past that pile of mail on the counter for the 17th time—it blends into the background. But if you take a moment to walk through your home as if you're seeing it for the first time, you might notice some sneaky hazards lurking around. Here's what to look for:

- **Are the pathways clear?** If you've got to do an obstacle course just to get from the couch to the kitchen, it's time for a decluttering session.
- **Can you easily reach what you need?** If you're channeling Cirque du Soleil just to grab your favorite mug, something's gotta change.
- **How's the lighting?** Dim lighting might be great for setting the fall mood, but it's also an invitation for stubbed toes and stumbles.

LIGHTING: LET THERE BE (BETTER) LIGHT!

Speaking of lighting, let's talk about how autumn's shorter days can turn your home into a shadowy labyrinth. Don't let your hallway turn into the setting of a low-budget horror movie—upgrade those bulbs! Bright, energy-efficient LEDs are your best friend, and motion-sensor nightlights are like little safety ninjas guiding you through the dark. Bonus: no more fumbling for the light switch on those groggy bathroom trips at 3 a.m.

RUGS: COZY OR CATASTROPHIC?

We all love a good area rug. They're warm, stylish, and really tie the room together. But let's be honest—they're also plotting against you. If your rug doesn't have a nonslip backing, it's basically a banana peel in disguise. Secure it with double-sided tape or, if you're feeling bold, ditch the smaller rugs altogether. (Your toes will thank you.)





MAKING SAFETY STYLISH

Here's the deal: safety doesn't have to mean sacrificing style. In fact, some adjustments can actually make your home even *more* functional and inviting. For example:

- **The Chair of Convenience:** Place a sturdy chair near the door for putting on shoes. It's practical *and* chic (bonus points if it's upholstered).
- **Reorganize for Reachability:** Stop straining to reach high shelves! Keep your daily go-tos—like mugs, plates, and snacks—at arm's length. Your knees and shoulders will thank you.
- **Blankets Within Arm's Reach:** Instead of draping your throw blanket decoratively across the room, keep it close to where you actually lounge. Style points *and* functionality—win-win!

HIGH-TRAFFIC ZONES: THE VIP TREATMENT

Some areas of your home see more action than others, and these deserve extra love. For example:

- **Bedroom to Bathroom Pathway:** This is where many falls happen, especially at night. Keep the route clear and add some nightlights for good measure.
- **Kitchen:** Use nonslip mats by the sink and stove. And don't store heavy cookware up high unless you're looking for an impromptu arm workout.
- **Entryways:** Wet leaves and slippery doormats aren't your friends. Secure your mats and add a bench or chair for putting on shoes. Instant upgrade!

SEASONAL SAFETY CHORES

Fall isn't just for pumpkin carving—it's the perfect time for a little seasonal maintenance. Take a quick weekend to:

- Test your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors. (Because cozying up by the fireplace is only fun if it's safe.)

CLUTTER: THE SNEAKY VILLAIN

Shoes, bags, cords—oh my! The everyday stuff that piles up in your home can easily turn into trip hazards. But don't worry, you don't need to go full Marie Kondo. Just designate a spot for everything: a shoe rack by the door, a basket for rogue items, and a daily habit of tidying up before bed. Think of it as prepping your home for the next day, like setting out your clothes or brewing coffee in advance (except this time, it's for your safety).

STAIRS: THE ULTIMATE TEST OF BALANCE

If you've got stairs, congratulations—you've unlocked the level of homeownership that requires extra vigilance. First, make sure they're free of clutter. (No, that pile of magazines doesn't belong there.) Next, check the lighting. And if you don't already have handrails on *both* sides, it's time to install some. Think of them as stair seatbelts—they're not optional. For outdoor steps, nonslip treads or textured paint can prevent those "oops, it's wet!" moments.

- Check handrails and grab bars. Tighten them up or install new ones if needed—your future self will thank you.
- Clear leaves and debris from walkways. No one wants to reenact a slapstick comedy on their own front porch.

YOUR HOME, YOUR SANCTUARY

At the end of the day, your home should feel like a giant warm hug—safe, supportive, and just the right amount of snug. By making a few small adjustments, you're not just preventing accidents; you're creating a

space that lets you thrive. So, as the rain taps on the windows and you curl up with a good book, you can rest easy knowing your home has your back (literally).

Remember, safety doesn't have to be boring. It's the little things—like securing that rug or adding a motion light—that make a big difference. So grab your pumpkin spice latte, take a stroll through your home, and make those small changes. Your future self (and your toes) will thank you.

Now, go forth and conquer autumn like the cozy, safety-savvy champion you are! ●



THE LONG SHADOW OF THE CRAB

A JOURNEY THROUGH CANCER'S PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

By James Morris



From ancient mummies to gene-editing superheroes, humanity's been waging a battle against cancer that feels older than time itself.

Let's face it—just hearing the word “cancer” is enough to make most people's stomachs do a backflip. It's scary, no doubt about it. But here's the thing: cancer isn't some modern-day bogeyman that popped up because of processed foods or binge-watching Netflix (though, let's all remember to take a walk every now and then). This sneaky illness has been around for *ages*. Seriously, we're talking prehistoric times.

Scientists have even found evidence of cancer in dinosaur bones that are a whopping 70 to 80 million years old. That's right—T-Rexes might have been the kings of the Cretaceous, but even they weren't immune to this ancient foe. And when it comes to humans, the earliest evidence of cancer dates back to ancient Egypt. Fossilized bones and mummies from around 3000 BCE show tumors, with the Edwin Smith Papyrus describing a “bulging tumor of the breast.” Guess ancient Egyptians had their hands full with more than just pyramid-building.

WHY IS IT CALLED “CANCER”?

Now, here's a fun fact to drop at your next trivia night: the word “cancer” comes from the Greek word for crab (*carcinos*). Why a crab, you ask? Well, Hippocrates, the father of medicine back in 460–370 BCE, thought tumors resembled a crab's legs because of their finger-like projections. (Personally, I think that's a bit of a stretch—maybe Hippocrates was just hungry?) Later, a Roman doc named Celsus stuck with the crab theme and gave us the Latin word *cancer*. And voilà, the name stuck.

Fast forward a few centuries, and the theories about cancer were... let's just say, “creative.” Some thought it was caused by an excess of black bile (a charming ancient Greek idea), while others were convinced it was a punishment from the gods. Spoiler alert: it's neither of those things.

THE DAWN OF MODERN SCIENCE: CANCER GETS PERSONAL

For a long time, understanding cancer was like trying to solve a murder mystery without a magnifying glass. Then, in the 1600s, along came the microscope—a



game-changer if there ever was one. Suddenly, scientists could see cells, and by the 19th century, Rudolf Virchow figured out that cancer cells come from normal cells gone rogue. You could say Virchow was the Sherlock Holmes of cellular science.

But wait, it gets better. In the 1700s, two incredibly observant dudes started piecing together how lifestyle and environment play a role in cancer. Italian doctor Bernardino Ramazzini noticed nuns had high rates of breast cancer but rarely cervical cancer (and concluded it had something to do with celibacy). Meanwhile, British surgeon Percival Pott realized chimney sweeps were getting scrotal cancer from soot exposure. Yes, chimney sweeps—Disney forgot to mention *that* in *Mary Poppins*.

WHEN GENES BECAME THE STAR OF THE SHOW

The real plot twist came in the mid-20th century with the discovery of DNA's structure. Scientists finally cracked the code: mutations in genes were driving cancer. Some of these mutations were inherited (thanks,

family tree), while others were caused by environmental factors like smoking or UV rays.

By the 1970s, researchers had identified oncogenes (genes that promote cancer growth) and tumor suppressor genes (the healthy guys trying to keep everything in check). Think of it as a cellular tug-of-war, but in cancer, the bad guys cheat and win.

And then came the Human Genome Project in 2000, which was like unlocking the cheat codes for human biology. Suddenly, scientists could identify tons of gene mutations linked to cancer, paving the way for personalized medicine. Today, treatments can be tailored to the specific genetic quirks of a patient's tumor. It's like your cancer gets its own personalized playlist of treatments—except instead of songs, it's lifesaving therapies.

THE EVOLUTION OF CANCER TREATMENTS: FROM KNIVES TO NANOTECH

Back in the day, treating cancer was basically just surgery. If you had a tumor, they'd cut it out and hope for the best. Then came radiation therapy, followed by



chemotherapy—both of which saved lives but often came with brutal side effects. (Let's just say chemo isn't exactly a spa day.)

But modern medicine doesn't mess around. Immunotherapy, for example, is like giving your immune system a pep talk and sending it into battle against cancer. Drugs like pembrolizumab—approved in 2014 for advanced melanoma—basically take the brakes off your immune cells, letting them go full Hulk on cancer. Then there's CAR T-cell therapy, where scientists reprogram your own T-cells to hunt down cancer cells like a heat-seeking missile. It's like a sci-fi movie, but real.

And let's not forget targeted therapies like trastuzumab, which zero in on specific cancer-causing genes. In 2017, pembrolizumab even got a "tumor-agnostic" approval, meaning it could treat tumors with certain genetic changes anywhere in the body. Talk about shaking things up!

THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT (AND BUSY)

The fight against cancer is far from over, but we've come a long way since the days of crabs and black bile.

Clinical trials like NCI-MATCH and Pediatric MATCH are testing therapies based on the genetic makeup of tumors rather than where they show up in the body. Researchers are even tackling the infamous KRAS gene, a notorious troublemaker in pancreatic and colorectal cancers, with new drugs like sotorasib.

And it's not just about curing cancer—it's also about improving quality of life for patients. New treatments for cancer cachexia (a wasting syndrome) are giving people more energy to keep fighting.

As Nick Prochak wisely said, "Cancer is a part of our life, but it's not our whole life." Or as Aaliyah Parker put it, "There's almost always something to smile about," even on the toughest days.

So, while the shadow of the crab is still looming, each new discovery chips away at it. From ancient Egyptians scratching their heads over tumors to scientists reprogramming immune cells in cutting-edge labs, humanity's determination is nothing short of inspiring. One day, cancer might just be a thing of the past. And when that day comes, maybe we'll finally let the T-Rex rest in peace. ●



FEATURE ARTICLE

BEYOND THE COMFORT ZONE HOW TO TURN LIFE'S CURVEBALLS INTO HOME RUNS

By James Morris



Life has a knack for throwing us curveballs, doesn't it? One minute, you're cruising along, living your best life, and the next—you're blindsided by a work reorganization, a surprise rent increase, or a friend inviting you to their "raw vegan potluck." (Because who *doesn't* love beet smoothies and zucchini noodles instead of cake?)

Let's face it: change is relentless, unavoidable, and often as welcome as a Monday morning. But here's a little secret: thriving in the face of change is totally possible—and dare I say, it can actually be exciting. Yep, exciting. Hear me out.

WHY CHANGE FEELS LIKE A BAD JOKE (AT FIRST)

First things first: why do we react to change the way we do? Why does the mere mention of “policy updates” or “new procedures” make our brains scream, “Abort mission!”?

The answer is simple: We're wired for comfort. Our brains love predictability the way toddlers love bedtime stories—or the way we love pizza. Change, on the other hand, yanks us out of that warm, cozy place and throws us into something new and unfamiliar. And what does the brain do? It panics. The Resistance Reflex kicks in, convincing us that new = bad and different = dangerous.

But here's the thing: that knee-jerk resistance doesn't have to stick around. With the right mindset and a few tricks up your sleeve, you can retrain your brain to respond to change not with dread, but with curiosity—and maybe even a little enthusiasm.

LET'S TALK ABOUT MINDSET: YOUR SECRET WEAPON

Look, I'm not here to preach some “everything happens for a reason” fluff. Life's changes aren't always wrapped with a neat bow. Sometimes, they're messy, unexpected, and

downright annoying (like when your favorite streaming service hikes its prices *again*).

But here's the truth: how we *think* about change shapes how we *experience* it. If you see change as a giant, unscalable wall, you'll freeze. If you see it as a puzzle to solve or an opportunity to grow, you'll engage with it.

Think of your mindset as the lens you wear every day. If it's foggy with fear and negativity, everything will look harder. But if it's clear, focused, and flexible, the possibilities are endless. Kurt Lewin, the famed social psychologist, had it right when he said, “If you want truly to understand something, try to change it.” Translation? Don't just sit there fearing change—get in there, mix it up, and see what happens.

EMBRACING CHANGE: A PLAYBOOK FOR THRIVING

Okay, so we've established that change is here to stay, and mindset is key. But how do you actually *do*



this thriving-through-change thing when all you want to do is crawl under a blanket and wait for the chaos to pass? Here's your playbook:

1. Get to Know Your Inner Drama Queen (or King)

First things first: figure out how you typically react to change. Are you the type to catastrophize everything? ("The new office software is here, and it's *literally* the end of the world!") Or do you go full avoidant mode, pretending nothing's happening until it's too late? Self-awareness is your starting line. Recognize your patterns so you can start rewriting them.

2. Ask ALL the Questions

When change happens, don't just sit there stewing in confusion. Channel your inner toddler and ask, "Why?"—but in a constructive way. Why is this happening? What's the goal? How can this work for me? The more information you have, the less scary the change becomes. Knowledge really is power.

3. Treat Change Like a Gym Session

You know that soreness you feel after trying a new workout? Change is like that. It's uncomfortable at first, but it's building strength. Embrace the discomfort as a sign that you're growing. Whether it's learning a new skill, navigating a new role, or adapting to a new routine, remind yourself: you're leveling up.

4. Focus on What You Can Control

Spoiler alert: some things will always be out of your hands. (Looking at you, traffic jams and unpredictable weather.) But there's tons you *can* control—like your attitude, your effort, and your willingness to learn. Pour your energy into what's within your power, and let the rest go.

5. Celebrate the Little Things

Adapting to change isn't a one-and-done deal. It's a process. So, celebrate every small win along the way. Did you survive your first day at a new job without crying in the bathroom? Nailed your first Zoom presentation



despite the new software? High five yourself. These little victories keep you motivated.

6. Build Your Squad

Change can feel isolating, but it doesn't have to be. Surround yourself with cheerleaders—friends, family, mentors, or even that colleague who somehow knows *everything* about navigating the new system. Lean on your network when the going gets tough.

THE BIGGER PICTURE: WHY CHANGE IS ACTUALLY GOOD FOR YOU (YES, REALLY)

Here's a wild thought: what if change isn't the enemy, but the hero of your story? What if every curveball life throws is a chance to discover how strong, adaptable, and creative you really are?

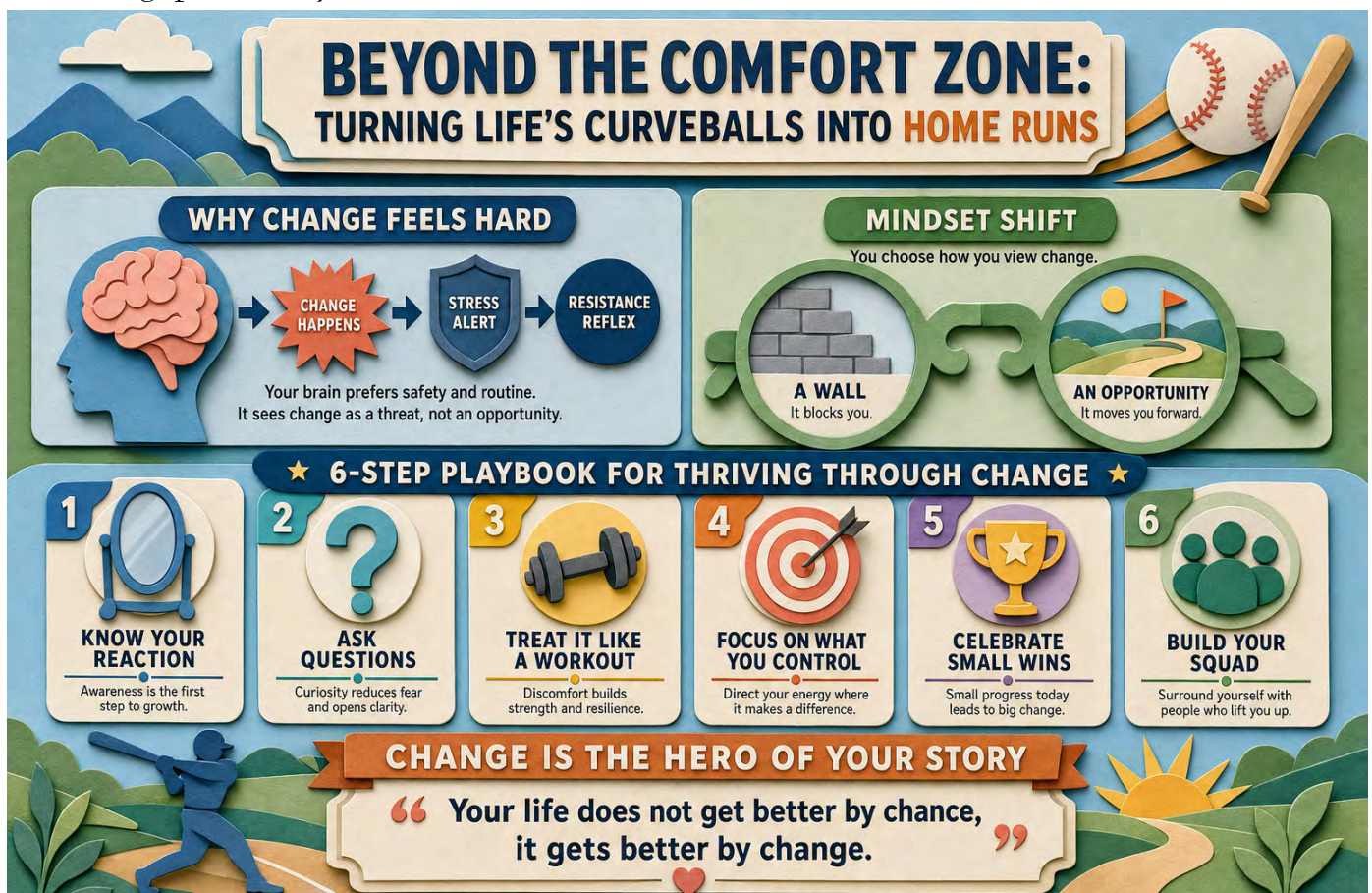
Think about it: when was the last time you truly grew as a person while everything stayed the same? Spoiler alert: probably never. Growth comes from stepping into the unknown, trying new things, and sometimes failing spectacularly.

Or, as Jim Rohn put it, "Your life does not get better by chance, it gets better by change." Translation? Life doesn't magically improve while you're binge-watching Netflix. Improvement comes from embracing the messy, unpredictable process of change.

FINAL THOUGHTS: LIFE'S A DANCE, SO LEARN THE STEPS

Here's the deal: change isn't just inevitable, it's essential. It keeps life interesting. It pushes us out of our comfort zones and into the realm of possibility. Sure, it's scary at first. But with the right mindset, a willingness to adapt, and a sense of humor about the whole thing, you can turn life's curveballs into home runs.

So next time life shifts gears unexpectedly, don't panic. Lean in. Ask questions. Try something new. And remember: you're not just surviving, you're thriving. Because thriving through change isn't just a skill, it's a way of life. And you? You're absolutely crushing it. ●



LEARNING, GROWTH & TECHNOLOGY

YOUR BRAIN ON 'AHA!'

LIFELONG LEARNING IS THE SECRET TO STAYING SHARP (AND FUN) AT ANY AGE

By James Morris



Picture this: the smell of coffee wafting through a cozy room filled with a dozen adults, notebooks in hand, pencils at the ready. But this isn't your typical college lecture hall. Nope, it's a community center class on a random Tuesday morning. Enter Martha, age seventy-two, who's leaning forward like a kid in the front row of a magic show. This week, she's mastering digital photography. Last month, it was sketching landscapes. Next month? Who knows—local history, maybe? Martha's onto something big: she's cracked the code for keeping her mind sharp and her spirit vibrant. Spoiler alert: it's called *lifelong learning*.

Now, I know what you're thinking: "You can't teach an old dog new tricks." Well, guess what? That saying is as outdated as flip phones and dial-up internet. Science says our brains are far more remarkable than we give them credit for. They've got this amazing ability called *neuroplasticity*, which is basically a fancy word for "your brain can still learn cool stuff no matter how many candles are on your birthday cake."

YOUR BRAIN: THE GYM MEMBERSHIP YOU SHOULD ACTUALLY USE

Think of your brain like a muscle. (A very VIP, high-maintenance kind of muscle.) If you don't use it, it gets sluggish—kind of like that treadmill you swore you'd use after New Year's. But when you challenge your brain with new skills or even mildly tricky stuff—like learning to play the ukulele or debating whether pineapple belongs on pizza—it lights up like a Christmas tree.

Every time you learn something new, your brain is building and strengthening neural pathways, kind of like constructing a superhighway of smarts. And here's the best part: all this mental heavy lifting builds up your "cognitive reserves." Think of it as a protective shield for your brain. The thicker your shield, the better you're able to fend off conditions like dementia or brain injuries. Basically, lifelong learning is like a superhero cape for your gray matter. (Cue dramatic music.)

Oh, and it's not just about the stuff you learn—it's the whole experience. The concentration, the problem-solving, the interaction with others—it's all part of the brain-boosting package. So, go ahead and sign up for that pottery class or join that book club. Your future self will thank you.

CURIOSITY ISN'T JUST FOR CATS

Here's the cool thing: lifelong learning doesn't mean you have to go back to school or sit in a boring classroom. (Unless you're into that. No judgment.) It's more about staying curious and open to new experiences. Always wanted to learn guitar? Go for it. Have a random

fascination with Aztec history? Fire up that documentary on Netflix. Maybe you've got an old passion—like gardening or painting—that you haven't touched in years. Dust it off and dive back in.

And let's not forget one of the most underrated skills in today's world: figuring out what's true and what's...not. (Looking at you, internet conspiracy theories.) Critical thinking—asking questions, analyzing viewpoints, and digging deeper—is like CrossFit for your brain. Plus, it's pretty satisfying to call out fake news at the next family dinner.

THE THRILL OF THE "AHA!" MOMENT

There's something magical about learning something new. That moment when the lightbulb goes off and you think, "Ohhh, I get it now!" feels like winning a mini lottery. It's not just good for your brain—it's good for your soul. It reminds you that you're capable, adaptable, and full of untapped potential.

Henry Ford once said, "Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young." And honestly? He nailed it. Lifelong learning isn't about numbers on a calendar—it's about staying curious, excited, and connected to the world around you.

When you're learning something new, you're looking forward. You're anticipating the next step, the next discovery. That forward-thinking mindset is the ultimate antidote to feeling stuck or stagnant. It keeps you energized and engaged with life, no matter your age.

READY TO DIVE IN?

Getting started is easier than you think. Here are a few ideas to get those mental gears turning:

- Try a new hobby or rediscover an old one. Dust off that guitar, grab some watercolors, or attempt that sourdough recipe you bookmarked during the pandemic.



- **Fill in the gaps.** Always wondered how the stock market works? Curious about astronomy? Thanks to the internet (and, let's be real, YouTube), there's a tutorial for just about everything.
- **Be a smart skeptic.** When you read or hear something, ask yourself: "What's the source? Is it legit? Are there other perspectives?" Your brain will thank you for the exercise.

At the end of the day, lifelong learning isn't just about keeping your brain sharp. It's about living fully, connecting with others, and embracing the endless possibilities of a curious mind. As Gandhi said, "Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever."

So go ahead—sign up for that class, crack open that book, or try something totally new. Your brain (and your inner Martha) will thank you. And who knows? You might just discover your next great passion.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Lifelong learning isn't just a trend—it's a way of life. And the best part? It's never too late to start. Whether you're seventy-two like Martha or twenty-two like... well, not Martha, there's always something new to explore. So, grab your notebook, your curiosity, and maybe a cup of coffee, and get ready for your next adventure. Your brain deserves it. ●

ARTS, CULTURE & CREATIVITY

THE SOUNDTRACK OF OUR LIVES

HOW MUSIC UNLOCKS MEMORIES AND BOOSTS OUR MINDS

By James Morris



A familiar melody can transport us back decades, awakening vivid memories and emotions, proving music is more than just sound—it's a powerful key to our past.

There's a special magic that happens when you hear a song from your youth. Maybe it's that upbeat tune from your high school prom or the romantic ballad playing during your first dance with your beloved. Suddenly, you're not just listening; you're reliving. The smell of hairspray, the feel of a hand in yours, the nervous flutter in your stomach—it all comes rushing back with incredible clarity. It's as if the music has built a bridge directly to those moments, bypassing years and bringing the past into brilliant focus.

This isn't just a pleasant coincidence; it's a profound connection our brains have forged with music

over a lifetime. Researchers are finding that music's ability to trigger these “auditory post-it notes,” as one expert called them, goes far deeper than we might imagine, offering fascinating insights into how our minds work and even how we might maintain our cognitive sharpness as we age.

THE BRAIN'S SYMPHONY: WHERE MUSIC AND MEMORY MEET

Our brains are intricate networks, and music seems to light up many of its most important areas. Think of it this way: when you listen to a favorite song, your brain isn't just processing sound. It's engaging regions tied to emotion, memory, and even movement. Dr. Lutz Jäncke, a neuropsychology expert, explains that “hearing music is closely associated with strong emotional feelings, and although music activates the entire limbic system, which is involved in processing of emotions and in controlling memory.” This limbic system is like the brain's emotional powerhouse, and music gets it humming along.

Studies have actually shown that music does more than just help us retrieve old memories; it can also help us create new ones. Imagine learning something new while a particular piece of music plays in the background. That music can become part of the memory itself, a personal soundtrack that helps you recall the information later. It's almost like giving your memories an extra layer of glue.

UNLOCKING THE VAULT: MUSIC AND DEMENTIA

One of the most remarkable applications of music's power over memory is in helping individuals with dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Many of us have seen



the moving videos online or heard stories of people who, despite significant memory loss, can sing along perfectly to a song from their younger days. This isn't random; it's a testament to how deeply musical memories are embedded in our brains.

Assal Habibi, a researcher at the USC Dornsife Center for Music, Brain and Society, notes, "Listening to nostalgic music not only elicits the traditional memory networks of the brain, but it also involves the reward, narrative and self-processing systems of the brain." These are the very systems that help us understand our own life story and feel connected to who we are. When a person with dementia hears a beloved song, it can open a window, however brief, back to their sense of self. It's a powerful, emotional connection that can improve their mood and quality of life.

The documentary "Alive Inside" showcased this beautifully. Social worker Dan Cohen created personalized playlists for nursing home residents with dementia. The results were astounding: people who had been withdrawn and unresponsive would suddenly light up, singing, dancing, and even recalling detailed stories associated with the music. It's not a cure, of course, but it's an invaluable tool for connection and comfort. As Paul Simon once sang, "Music is forever;

music should grow and mature with you, following you right on up until you die." For many with memory challenges, this sentiment holds a special truth.

BEYOND MEMORY: MUSIC FOR FOCUS AND CALM

But music isn't just about looking back; it can also help us in the here and now. Ever put on some instrumental jazz or classical music while you're paying bills or working on a project? Many find it helps them concentrate. The trick often lies in the type of music: think slow tempos, no distracting lyrics, and a steady, ambient feel. This kind of music can minimize distractions and help maintain a consistent pace, making tasks feel more manageable and even more enjoyable.

The "Mozart Effect" you might have heard about, suggesting classical music can boost intelligence, has been a bit debated. But what's clear is that certain types of music can indeed have a positive impact on our cognitive functions, helping us focus and stay calm. Baroque classical pieces by composers like Bach or Handel, for instance, are often recommended for tasks requiring concentration.

YOUR PERSONAL SOUNDTRACK

So, what's the best music for you? Well, that's where your personal taste comes in. While the experts might suggest classical, nature sounds, or ambient electronic music for focus, the most important thing is what resonates with *you*. As the great Ray Charles put it, "I don't get tired of breathing, so I don't get tired of music!" Experiment with different genres and see what helps you concentrate, what brings back those wonderful memories, and what simply makes you feel good.

Whether you're looking to spark a cherished memory, find a calm focus for daily tasks, or simply enjoy the moment, music offers a rich and accessible pathway. It's a reminder that the soundtrack of our lives continues to play, full of power and potential, long after the records stop spinning. ●

FUN & LIGHTHEARTED

SUNSHINE AND SPACE UNPACKING SUMMER 2026'S UNEXPECTED JOYS

By James Morris



Sometimes, the best news isn't just news; it's a cosmic hug from the universe.

Remember June and July 2026? A time when the headlines weren't all doom and gloom? It was a period sprinkled with enough genuine good vibes to make even the most cynical among us crack a smile. From groundbreaking space travel to monumental strides in cancer treatment, and even a few delightful surprises closer to home, these two months served up a refreshing cocktail of human ingenuity, perseverance, and a dash of intergalactic marvel.

Let's be honest, the news cycle can often feel like a particularly aggressive game of whack-a-mole, with each mole a new disaster. So, when genuinely good things happen, it's like finding an extra fry at the bottom of the bag – a small, unexpected delight that makes everything a little better. And June and July of

2026 delivered those extra fries in spades, reminding us that, despite our best efforts to mess things up, humanity can also be pretty darn amazing.

TOUCHING THE STARS, LITERALLY

June saw NASA's Artemis II mission boldly go where no crewed test flight had gone before, sending four astronauts further from Earth than any humans in 55 years. Imagine being out there, 252,760 miles away, witnessing a total solar eclipse as your spacecraft, Orion, passed behind the Moon. Astronaut Christina Koch, the first woman to travel to the vicinity of the Moon, captured the sentiment perfectly when communication was restored, exclaiming, "It's so great to hear from Earth again." It was a moment that transcended national boundaries, a testament to our collective curiosity and courage. Not to be outdone, later in June, Axiom Mission 4 (AX-4) launched to the International Space Station, a truly international collaboration featuring astronauts from the U.S., India, Poland, and Hungary. This mission wasn't just a joyride; it involved around 60 microgravity science experiments, proving that even in the vastness of space, we're still busy trying to figure out how everything works.

And speaking of vastness, July also brought us Christopher Nolan's highly anticipated film *The Odyssey*, starring a constellation of Hollywood heavyweights. While not quite space travel, it was certainly a journey into epic storytelling, and sometimes, a good movie is exactly the good news we need.

HEALING AND HOPE ON EARTH

Back on terra firma, the news was equally uplifting, particularly in the realm of health. The UK government announced a National Cancer Plan, aiming for 75% of cancer patients diagnosed from 2035 to be cancer-free or

living well five years after diagnosis. This isn't just a number; it's projected to save an additional 320,000 lives. It's an ambitious goal, fueled by a £2.3 billion investment in robot-assisted surgery and AI to detect cancers earlier. It's a powerful reminder that "Strength and growth come only through continuous effort and struggle," as Napoleon Hill once said.

In a more immediate victory, Uganda was declared Ebola-free again, a testament to rapid response and dedicated healthcare efforts. Meanwhile, in Sweden, they're getting serious about banning PFAS in everyday products starting in 2028, and a team in Japan developed "eco-fireworks" with water-soluble shells to cut down on debris. Because who doesn't love a good party that doesn't trash the planet? Even something as seemingly mundane as over 100 refill stations for home and laundry cleaners opening across Singapore, offering a 30% discount, is a win for both wallets and the environment.

CELEBRATING HUMANITY'S MILESTONES

Beyond the scientific breakthroughs and policy shifts, June and July 2026 were also a time for celebrating cultural touchstones and remarkable individuals. June 1 marked the 100th anniversary of Marilyn Monroe's birth, a timeless icon whose legacy continues to captivate. A few days later, on June 10,

Pope Leo XIV blessed the Sagrada Família's tower of Jesus, commemorating the 100th anniversary of Antoni Gaudí's death. It was a beautiful intersection of faith, art, and architectural brilliance. And closer to home, the Obama Presidential Center opened to the public in Chicago on June 19, a sprawling complex honoring the 44th U.S. President. These events serve as powerful reminders of the individuals and movements that shape our world, reinforcing Rosa Parks' profound observation: "Memories of our lives, of our works and our deeds will continue in others."

As June and July transitioned into August, the good news kept rolling in. Kazakhstan welcomed the return of tigers in a decade-long rewilding project – the first of its kind. The highest resolution view of the sun yet revealed breaking waves and magnetic mysteries, and SeaWorld completed the largest captive whale transportation operation in the nation's history. It's enough to make you feel all warm and fuzzy inside, like a cat napping in a sunbeam.

So, the next time the news cycle feels particularly heavy, take a moment to reflect on these glimmers of hope. They're a delicious reminder that, sometimes, the best news isn't just news; it's a cosmic hug from the universe, proving that "Living well is the best revenge" against the daily grind. And in 2026, we were certainly living well. ●



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 Sharon Lanier
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I'm Back!



Somewhere in this issue of Senior Moments, a cartoon Randy is lurking in plain sight—hidden among the stories, photos, and surprises. He could be anywhere. Watching. Waiting. Blending in until only the sharpest eyes can uncover his secret location.

Can you spot him before it's too late? Search carefully, find Randy, and email your answer to James@RedmondSeniors.org for your chance to win a prize. The mystery has returned... and this time, Randy is counting on you to find him.

Last issue's answer: Page 28, just above and to the left of the number 7.



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