

With some pressure from my kids and other members of the younger generation I have switched from a PC to my first Apple computer. As the helper at the Apple Store said, "So you're coming over to the light side -- or the dark side, however you look at it." As you, my Brothers know from a previous Meditation, it was Brother Joe Marandola who first peaked my interest about Apple computers. But it was my children who gently, albeit in an almost patronizing way, thought I should at least **try** a new computer.

It's funny about this cross generational thing; I have always equated youth with enthusiasm but not necessarily Wisdom. Now I'm realizing that generations other than mine can possess significant wisdom. I suppose that's part of humility.

We should all try something new once in awhile. Learning a new type of computer is like trying to learn a new language -- you know what you want to say but you can't quite say it yet; at least not with any speed or forethought. I imagine it's something like being in an accident and learning how to walk or talk again. On one level I feel OK about myself; on another level I feel like a child; and not in the good sense. Of course I suppose that's the way it should be throughout life: feel OK about yourself but still have a sense of humility. If trying to learn new skills, whether it be a new job, or how to play music, or how to speak a new language, leads to that sense -- that's a positive side effect.

My daughter sent to my new computer an email outlining life lessons learned from someone at the other end of the generational spectrum, a 90 year old woman in Cleveland, Ohio. The lessons include something like the following:

**1) Burn the new candles, take the new car out in the rain, drink the champagne. Don't save them for a special occasion. Today is special.**

I am guilty of not following that one. I am proudly a compulsive type who likes to keep everything perfect and sometimes unused; that is until it's begins to dawn on me that some of my things might outlast me. Maybe I should burn the new candles.

**2) Don't compare your life to others. You have no idea what their journey is about.**

I was constantly surprised as a psychiatrist that when I sat down with someone in my office I would learn about an entire world that the person was experiencing about which I would have never have guessed. And it wasn't all bad things, just a different world. I learned to never judge a book by its cover and try not be envious at the surface appearance of others.

**3) Over-prepare, then go with the flow.**

We all need a *broad behavioral repertoire*. Be compulsive when it's appropriate; be loose when that's appropriate. Quiet sometimes, boisterous other times. Aim; but then see where life takes you.

**4) Be eccentric now. Don't wait for old age to wear purple.**

I suppose that comes under the heading 'we tend to care a little too much what other people think of us.' Which, in a way, is very self-centered -- how do we know people are thinking about us?

As for our behavior, if it's not illegal or immoral -- then really it's OK.

**5) Life isn't tied with a bow, but it's still a gift.**

There is a biblical quote somewhere about us not just accepting the good in life but also the not so good. The bad, after all, is really a subjective judgment. God has put all on this earth for a reason.

It's important to hear others' opinion and direction. Sometimes getting used to a new way of thinking and the views of the young and old are difficult to assimilate, especially as we get older.

It was George Burns who said "It's hard for me to get used to these changing times.

I can remember when the air was clean and sex was dirty."