



The Virtues of Aging

Jimmy Carter

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'As we've grown older, the results have been surprisingly good,' writes former President Jimmy Carter in this wise, deeply personal meditation on the new experiences that come to us with age. Now in his 70s, President Carter has never enjoyed more prestige or influence on the world stage, nor has he ever felt more profound happiness with himself, with his accomplishments, and with his beloved wife, Rosalynn. In "The Virtues of Aging," Jimmy Carter shares the knowledge and the pleasures that age have brought him. Blending memoir, anecdote, political savvy, and practical advice, this book truly illuminates the rich promises of growing older. The approach to old age was not an easy one for President Carter. At 56, having lost a Presidential election, he found himself involuntarily retired from a job he loved and facing a large debt on his farm and warehouse business. President Carter writes movingly here of how he and Rosalynn overcame their despair and disappointment as together they met the challenges ahead. As the book unfolds, President Carter delves into issues he and millions of others confront in planning for retirement, undertaking new diet and exercise regimens, coping with age prejudice, and sorting out key political questions. On a more intimate level, Carter paints a glowing portrait of his happy marriage, a relationship that deepened when they became grandparents. Here too are fascinating sketches of world leaders, Nobel laureates, and great thinkers President Carter has been privileged to know -- and the valuable lessons on aging he learned from them. "The Virtues of Aging" celebrates both the blessings that come to us as we grow older and the blessings older people can bestow upon others. An important and moving book, written with gentleness, humor, and love, "The Virtues of Aging" is a treasure for readers of all ages.

The Virtues of Aging Details

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Laura says

I pretty much like everything that I've read by Jimmy Carter. I guess I like most anything that encourages me to think positively and do good. Plus I like his voice. This particular book didn't tell me anything I didn't know but I guess that's often the case with something that is basic and rings true, no big "ah-has" just "well, of course".

Lewis says

One you get past the platitudes and preachiness (this is Jimmy Carter), you're reminded again that, while he may have been one of our worst modern presidents, he is also one of the best human beings to have ever held the office. His mature acceptance of the vicissitudes of aging, and his ability to grow at every stage of life is pretty inspiring. I wouldn't vote for him again, but I would like to have him as a neighbor.

Jennifer says

I really enjoyed what he had to say...it was a quick easy read

Donna says

This book was so positive and left me feeling good about myself and what we can all do in our senior years, life is not over if we pursue interests and help others. It was an easy read and I think I may read it every year to remind me of what's really important

Nancy says

Interesting read after just finding our Carter has brain cancer. A lot of logic in what he writes but he's also been lucky to have many privileges in his life also. An easy read and you will learn a little about growing older that should prove useful.

Aja says

Not a bad read, but I had a few issues. 1. You can tell it was written by a politician (count of the use of the word "citizen" alone would tell you this) 2. Kind of out dated. Felt more like an essay than anything else.

Jennifer Nanek says

This was a nice little book written to make one feel better about getting older. President Carter explains about some of the benefits of being older and how one can improve ourselves over time. He encourages education, volunteerism, getting things in order, staying healthy and so forth. I enjoyed this, was a quick and easy read.

Vicki says

This came highly recommended, so I was hoping for a little more than what I got. It was an easy read, some helpful advice I'd like to refer to later. There are parts of it I'd like to read again in future years, as the "Aging" thing becomes more real.

Fred says

I have this audio book, read by the author. I listened to most of it last year in the Spring. I have great respect for this man and would love to volunteer to work in his center in Atlanta. I help out on Habitat for Humanity. He has a good mind.

Anita says

Picked this up on a whim, and very glad I did: it's charmingly written and full of some pretty basic advice that I can often use reminders of. Plan for retirement, keep your body as healthy as possible, create new friendships and maintain the old ones, volunteer, revisit the topics that interested you when you were young.... and on & on. This is written by a 70-something for fellow seniors, but I'm feeling old enough lately to feel like I can use a lot of this advice. And it makes me nostalgic for a time when we had presidents (& ex-presidents) who exuded a sense of compassion and honor. (Of course, Jimmy Carter has always been a unique president in that way.)

Jonathan Mandell says

One of Jimmy Carter's 19 post-presidential books (so far), this short tome offers folksy, common sense advice for people who, like him, are "involuntarily forced into retirement" -- in his case, from the White House.

In one chapter, he talks about the activities he maintains -- fishing, mountain climbing, bird-watching, skiing, tennis, hunting -- and adds "I haven't yet given up at ny of the active sports of my earlier years, although I have had to cut back on some of them. Now I run three miles a day with Rosalynn instead of the seven miles I ran while president, and we limit our tennis to two sets of about twenty games." Somehow in there lurks one explanation for why so many see his presidency as a failed one.

Gail says

Not very meaty but a very easy, quick read. I did find some parts overwhelming, as in, Jeez, I'm such a slacker compared to President Carter and his cohorts! But, I did find inspiration in the second half of the book and recommend that for people who enjoy thinking about the meaning of their lives and managing the fact of our mortality.

Robert says

Since I'm 76, I decided I'd better read something about aging. The title of this book was intriguing - since being "virtuous" (for once in my life) sounded nice. But, while mildly interesting, it hasn't improved me - and becoming virtuous is no closer that before I read the book. I seem to be doing what I'm supposed to be doing at this age - which was disappointing, since I thought I was maybe exceptional. It was sort of interesting to be reading this now since it was written in 1998 and Jimmy Carter is now 90. I'm fond of the man. Anyone who can fight off an angry swimming rabbit is someone to be fond of. His contributions AFTER his presidency have exceeded those while in office. FASCINATING. There is one thing, however, which I do not intend to emulate. For his "old age," he and Rosalynn decided to settle back in their hometown of Plains, George. You're not going to catch me going back to Des Moines!

Maggiemuggins says

Carter attributes the aphorisms at most chapter heads to a "wonderful mountain philosopher, whose books and weekly columns have delighted southerners for many years." It's a pity he didn't let this Jimmy Townsend write the entire book for him as it is a slim volume, in more than one sense, at 135 pages and with not a single paragraph worth reading, even less worth remembering. I've always considered Carter a decent sort of chap; but that, unfortunately, doesn't mean he might be an insightful or interesting writer which, in this case, he isn't.

Karen says

Jimmy Carter describes how he and Rosalynn build a rich and full life after his "forced retirement" at 56 (when he failed to win re-election). As a young adult, he imagined a life with much fewer possibilities for himself as a 60 something, 70 something and 80 something. However, he built a life full of purpose, service, learning, devotion, and meaningful relationships with friends, family members, activists and volunteers. He also describes the rich and full lives of many people 80 plus, dispelling the myth that people past 65 have nothing to contribute. From the details of his book, it's clear that many mature people are making meaningful contributions in several venues. Inspiring and informative.
