

## Aging Gracefully

So someone forwards me an email with "Then & Now" photos of famous film and television stars. I think whoever created the email wanted to shock readers in how much these stars have changed from being in their prime to being, well, older. But instead of prompting me to think, "Look how old they look!" I thought, "Look how *great* they look!" Many were grey; some had lost their figures; others had bigger noses (the nose and ears don't stop growing); one actually looked better than she did thirty years ago.

Why did I think they looked great? Because not one of them looked like they had plastic surgery to turn back the effects of aging. Not one of them appeared fake. Unlike some stars which look like dolls or clowns due to so many cosmetic surgeries, these people looked incredibly normal and, therefore, incredibly beautiful.

The image-obsessed don't understand that aging doesn't have to be a bad thing. Sure, you may be 65 but feel 18—fantastic! But you don't have to look like it. In fact, if you try to, you're going to end up looking ridiculous and prove wisdom doesn't always come with age. I'm not saying you have to wear mom jeans and granny polyester pants once you hit a certain age, but I am suggesting shopping at clothing stores which cater to teens isn't the best idea after you reach a certain age, nor is getting so much botox shot into your face that you can't move your facial muscles.

Because in the end, looks don't count for much. A smile, a happy heart, and a positive attitude do, though. I know of a very young looking 52-year-old who refuses to colour the gray out of her hair because she's so proud to be a grandmother and wants people to know that's what she is. Now that's happy and positive.

Are people remembered and respected for devastatingly good looks, or because they were strong and confident, morally upright, doers of good deeds, champions of the less fortunate, cheerful in spite of circumstances? Handsome is as handsome does and I say ageing gracefully instead of fighting time tooth and nail is as handsome as you can get.