



Reinventing yourself in your senior years

by Carol Leish

In early December, actress Lee Gale Gruen gave an inspirational talk at the Ventura SCAN Health Center. Lee focused on Baby Boomers (people born between 1946-1964) and seniors (people mid 60's and up), to inspire them to realize that there is life after retirement. Lee, 72, reinvented herself as an actress and author after being a probation officer for 37 years in Los Angeles.

Lee stated that people retire for many reasons including being tired of working, ageism, health reasons, getting laid off, or wanting to do something else with their lives. She said the various reasons for being frightened about retirement, include: Are you still relevant?, what to do with your time, fear of the unknown, being bored, depression/anxiety; or, and not having enough money to get by.

She emphasized, "Seniors are important to society as caretakers, role models, and tribal elders." She mentioned that seniors give back socially by becoming volunteers, at various places; are involved economically by investing and spending money, and active politically active.

"It's important to find joy, satisfaction, and excitement," according to Lee Gale. "The secret is to find a passion and follow it. Try something new to do. Find something that matches your abilities." She said that you can determine your own journey.

Lee's emphasis on finding a passion connected with me, because, at 52 I've been writing more articles over the past few years and really enjoy doing it. According to Lee Gale, there are a variety of things that seniors can do to stay busy such as exercising, singing, dancing, painting, writing a memoir, taking classes specifically designed for seniors, traveling, being involved in service clubs, book clubs or playing card games.

Volunteering to help others is also a very important things for seniors to do, according to Lee Gale. Lee also said that volunteering is a great way to stay involved. Consider giving time to the community as a teacher or a coach, helping out at a hospital or library, volunteering at a school or at an animal shelter are examples of various places for seniors to consider getting involved.

Lee said that it's easy to find various activities to become involved with. You can go to seniors centers, Google items on the Internet, go visit the library, or go to the website, meetup.com.

Continue to realize that reinventing yourself according to what you're passionate about doing is essential in order to maintain happiness and satisfaction in life.

You can read Lee's book "Adventures with Dad...A Father & Daughter's Journey through a Senior Acting Class" to learn more about Lee and to find your own inspiration.