



6 Steps To An Ageless Life

A PREVIEW

*ageless: adj. not typical of or confined
by a particular period of time*

KEN SMITH

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About the Author

Ken Smith has been at the leading edge of branding and strategic marketing in America for 40+ years.

Graduated magna cum laude from Muhlenberg College in Allentown, PA

President, Smith & Co. – branding strategists and marketing consultants – primarily for small-to-mid size businesses nationwide and international – more than 300 clients – offices on Madison Avenue in New York City, Philadelphia, Denver and Atlantic City, NJ

Partner, Golf Profit Builders, LLC – one of America’s premier consultancies for golf course marketing and operations

Partner & CEO, Smith O’Keefe & Associates – branding, advertising, public relations agency

Founder & CEO, Legacy Life International, LLC – multiple Internet businesses in support of “a meaningful life and legacy”

Leadership roles in numerous non-profit organizations – numerous awards, including United Way Volunteer of the Year in region.

DEDICATED TO AN AGELESS LIFE

Ken is a cancer survivor. Ken and Marianne Smith have been married 56 years. Together they have launched a new website and blog (<https://everageless.com>) advocating for and supporting an ageless life – not confined or defined by any particular point in time or age – a state of mind that embraces aspiration – proactively taking charge of life – always looking forward toward building a life of meaning and purpose.

Ken Smith
6 Steps To An Ageless Life
A Preview

CHAPTER ONE



Introduction

**Before outlining the 6 Steps, let's look at life's
continually changing perspective**

Anne Prescott is 56 years old and happily married. Anne has led an active, productive life. She raised three children, dotes over her four beautiful grandchildren, enjoys working, is active in several organizations and loves to work out.

Anne personifies the modern woman. Her friends continually say to her, often with an envious laugh, "Anne, you're so lucky... what's it feel like to have it all?"

Yet in the private places of Anne's hectic life, something is amiss. Anne is feeling... older. 60 is approaching. It doesn't seem that long ago that Anne considered 60 to be ancient, a faraway place where old people think and do things so differently from Anne's values and perceptions of what is a "good life."

"I told myself I would never let age define me," thought Anne as she found herself more frequently feeling a bit melancholy, even a little anxious, about the future. Nothing she could put her finger on, but just enough to feel uneasy.

That uneasiness accelerated when, over a few months, some significant events brought her age into sharper focus:

- A snooty little teen queen at the movie theater uttered the foulest words in the language as Anne and her husband asked for two tickets and heard for the first time... "Is that two seniors?"
- Anne's doctor told her the aching in her joints was arthritis, and gave her a prescription for that drug she saw advertised on TV featuring crotchety-looking old people
- Anne's husband lost the promotion he was expecting to a young hotshot and is increasingly bemoaning all the new technology at work he has to learn. He's worried about losing his job at a time he and Anne were starting to get excited about retirement planning.
- Anne's mother's health is deteriorating, and concerns about her ability to live alone are creeping into family discussions almost nightly.

You get the point

And it's not about being 56 or 65... or even 45. As most of us approach or experience the "other side" of 50, our body, our mind and the world around us conspire to remind us of our mortality and what we have not accomplished. TV, radio, magazines, the newspaper you read – they all seem to be featuring stories about Boomers, their challenges and influence. Is it any wonder age becomes an increasing focus in our life?

I believe this focus on age to be counter-productive – to the health and well-being, not only of yourself, but also of your family, your friends, co-workers, your community and society as a whole. This is big stuff. This is not about a trendy, feel-good introspection. This shifting focus has serious economic, social and political consequences.

The focus on age in America today is pervasive – from the 18-49 demographic that is misdirecting focus in the media and making media investments dangerously inefficient - to offensive "senior" programs that turn off the people they're supposed to attract (ask the AARP how they had to reinvent their marketing) - to hiring and promotion practices in American business that could be construed as "profiling."

When prime time TV is dominated by commercials for retirement planning and drugs to treat aging diseases and erectile dysfunction, it's hard not to have age clouding your radar screen.

So what do you do about it?

That's what this new book and web portal, EverAgeless.com, are about. Both advocate for a different perspective – a focus on living an ageless life and achieving a state of mind we'll call "Agelessness." They will advocate for a proactive, *action*-focused movement toward this state of mind. Passivity, lethargy and resignation are faceless enemies that challenge us as we age. Fear erodes confidence. Disappointments sap the spirit. Energy wanes.

And always... always... the mortality freight train keeps picking up speed... creating this century's intense, debilitating pressures to find fulfillment FAST – while there is time. This is raw, gut-level, hard-wired emotional thinking that has defined aging since prehistoric man first recognized that younger, stronger hunters were beating him to the prey and anxiety about the future began invading his thinking.

In today's media-rich world, pervasive images reminding us of that steamrolling train are everywhere – in countless magazines' portrayal of the modern man and woman... in movies, TV, on cell phones and the Internet, overwhelming us with data and images of a different brand of youthfulness than we remember... watching, sometimes stupefied, as technology advances at blurring speed... coping with oppressive email and text volume, and downloads of endless information to a brain that seems to be firing more and more in slow motion...

No wonder we feel the pressure of TIME.

One of humanity's core traits is the need to find fulfillment – to find meaning and purpose in life beyond existence. It's the reason communism and dictatorships can never endure. It's the reason the future of government, education, the economy, indeed the future of the world lies in empowering and energizing the individual's quest for fulfillment in his or her life.

At the risk of sounding too preachy, these 6 Steps are as valid for a school, a team, a business or a government as they are for you as an individual – because the principles are the same. They represent a path to fulfillment, meaning and purpose that *energizes* life – for yourself, your family and friends, co-workers, your company, your community, your government, your world.

Alas, this lofty sermon can be fodder for a lively discussion at another time (and, perhaps, another book). But for now, the focus of this book and web portal will be entirely on *you* – on your personal quest for Agelessness and an ageless life.

As the book and web portal progress, more excerpts will be forthcoming. We will continually broaden and deepen our advocacy for the 6 Steps. Hopefully, these short excerpts presented here will stimulate your curiosity to discover more about this fulfilling quest.

We also welcome your feedback and contributions to our research. In addition to our request for “Life Story” anecdotes on our EverAgeless.com website, we will soon introduce the **EverAgeless**

Feedback Forum to provide an even more interactive dialogue as we progress.

“

“I hope you find this Preview of my new book stimulating, thought-provoking and inspiring. Enjoy!”

Ken Smith

Here is a short teaser outlining the 6 Steps To An Ageless Life

1. Look inward

In my consulting practice advising companies and organizations on how to develop and energize brands, we first discuss how brand is all about *differentiating*. What is so unique about our client’s business or organization that will influence someone to select *their* product, service or point of view -- in the face of competitive claims by others?

What does this have to do with looking inward? The traditional way businesses develop a brand is to look *outside* the

business to the perceptions of others – customers, prospective customers, etc., and build a brand that fulfills their needs and desires. Trouble is, competitors are doing the same research, getting similar answers, resulting in so many look-alike brands. What’s the real difference between Home Depot and Lowes? Between restaurant chains? Between different brands of soap, toothpaste and beauty products?

Our firm, instead, begins every brand development engagement by ***looking inward*** - facilitating a process of looking for uniqueness *inside* the company or organization – unearthing the client’s reason for being.

As individuals, we, too, are often fooled and confused by the perceptions of others – how others think we look, dress and speak - how others perceive our intelligence, wit, passion, caring, curiosity, talent, faith... and, of course, our age.

That’s why looking inward is Step 1 on your journey to an ageless life. Every journey begins at a starting point, a launch point. Your journey begins by **understanding yourself, your core values and truths that make you “you.”** Only then can you build sustainable positive growth in your life.

The book and web portal will offer guidelines for looking inward, how to make your own personal assessment and build a personal dossier – what you like, want, where you want to go, who you want to be, what fulfillment you seek, what challenges and obstacles must be addressed.

Secrets shared...

I'll share secrets gleaned from 40+ years of listening, facilitating self-discovery, gently pulling away curtains, facades and even stone walls to reveal core truths. These truths must be illuminated, however deeply hidden they may be, before moving forward.

You'll learn practical ways to make meditation a part of your life. With the pressures and pace of everyday life, quiet meditation is one of the most powerful tools for looking inward with clarity. You'll read Life Stories of peers sharing their own self-discovery and how meaningful this first step is in achieving the real objective – to live an ageless life.

Every quest must have a beginning, a starting point. Step 1 is the starting point on your quest. **You must first understand *yourself*** - free from the perceptions and expectations of others that color your self-discovery, free from distraction, free from limits and exterior worldly pressures.

The path to an ageless life begins here... within *you*.

2. Age defiantly

This is a topic that arouses strong emotions. At one extreme are the grotesque effects of too many plastic surgeries, a caricature of youthfulness and a dangerous addiction.

At the opposite extreme is the obese, 60-year-old mother of two grown children, depressed with an unfulfilled life and resigned to a spiritless future. Publicly she may profess a confident, contented commitment to "age gracefully," comfortable in her own skin and disdaining "all that weight loss and anti-aging nonsense on TV." Privately, she aches with self-loathing and contempt for her lack of courage and will to do something about her weight, her appearance, her life of quiet desperation.

Like politics and religion, passionate, strongly held views can energize a healthy zest for life, or polarize into an "us or them" discrimination of the "other." Our faith, beliefs, convictions or perceptions are right and others are wrong - relegating the "others" to be labeled as less worthy in some way.

Who's right? Should we all fight defiantly against the consequences of aging? If so, what do we call those who quietly or defiantly say, "No?" Can we tell who these disdainers are -- by their appearance, their personality? What constitutes superiority and inferiority? Who decides?

Pretty heady stuff. Is there any right answer? Is it possible to age defiantly and gracefully at the same time? As stated earlier, this book and web portal will be an advocacy. So any wish-washy fence straddling won't cut it.

As the title of this 2nd Step, and the overriding theme of these 6 Steps imply, this author advocates for action. This book and web portal will put forth a point of view that an active defiance of aging is both healthy and rewarding -- that the passion to look and feel youthful need not lead to extreme behavior.

Action is the centerpiece of this advocacy. The thoughtful introspection of Step 1 is as much action as making the appointment to see the obesity specialist. Positive, moving-forward action at all levels of this journey is the strategy that will enable you to reach the goal of an ageless life.

Action is not just about motion. Action is also a learning experience. It's John Dewey's famous axiom about education -- that you "learn by doing." The brain in action is constantly refining its perceptions, its strategies.

How many times have you procrastinated about something, endlessly thought out what you would do, felt anxious and uneasy? Then when you finally found the courage to get started, the act of doing something energized you. New information and experiences clarified your thinking. "Why didn't I get started earlier?"

In the book and web portal, I'll address this confounding question of how to age defiantly without doing more harm than good. And, at the same time, find serenity and joy in that which cannot or should not be changed.

Is celebrating a birthday at 60 meaningless, passé, harmful, joyful? How can you create a personal environment around you where age is immaterial? How do you relate to friends and family around you who do not understand what you're doing, and question your "cultish obsession" with Agelessness?

Action has consequences. How can you keep passion from evolving into obsession? What resources are available to assist you on this journey of action?

3. Filter stress

stress: *n* tension or pressure exerted on something or someone

Notice I did not say eliminate stress. The tension and pressure exerted on us, in some cases, can save us from harmful actions, stimulate a thoughtful assessment of a situation, sharpen our senses, spur us to rise to the occasion, grow stronger, grow smarter, inspire courage.

Despite all admonitions, we cannot eliminate stress, nor should we. However, you can develop and refine ways to proactively filter stress – to run stressful information, situations and anticipation through a well-designed and well-constructed filter that assesses any stressful information, situation or anticipation with one primary test – will it help or hinder you as you move forward on your journey to an ageless life?

I'll show you the construction plans for this powerful and essential filter. I'll suggest how to reorganize the personal environment around you to make room for positive input and feelings that can mitigate stress - and keep you from losing your way on your personal path to an ageless life.

Stress can be multi-faceted and multi-layered – involving work, home, family, finances and much more. Often stress environments are self-imposed. I'll help you assess those environments, run them through the filter and suggest how they can become environments that support and enhance your journey.

4. Forever aspire

Aspire to what? It isn't the "what," but rather the act of aspiring that is important. Ageless and aspiring are linked in an almost spiritual embrace. If I were to pick one of these 6 Steps that most embodies the spirit of this journey, it is Step 4.

Whatever your age, your education, your job, your health, your stress level, your financial position, wherever you are in your life...

aspire. To aspire is to breathe. To live. It is hardwired into our brain. If we were forever free to aspire, we would do so with consistent joy and anticipation.

So what stops us from following our true nature as humans? Life. From the moment we become aware of the world, the world imposes limits, borders, fear, structure, rules. Other people impose their perceptions and opinions that color our perspective and challenge our aspirations. “You’ll never be beautiful.” Or “a public speaker.” Or “president.” “Sports aren’t lady-like.” “Why would you want to get a college degree at 60?”

What’s holding you back? Why aren’t you constantly aspiring to something? Aspirations pull us forward. They can be as small as learning how to text... lose a few pounds... be more adventuresome. Or they can be bigger aspirations to improve your relationship with your daughter... change careers... or deepen your faith.

Fighting your way through the maze of imposed limits, etc. can make finding the starting point of your path to an ageless life quite difficult. I’ll help you take an objective look at all these limits, borders, fears, etc.

An ageless life is a forever-aspiring life – to the day your last breath is taken. No excuses. Let nothing overpower your true nature. I’ll help you address the difficult challenge of setting goals. People agonize so much over goals and never get to the action part.

We do not have to be entirely realistic as long as the incremental steps toward the goal are realistic and meaningful. Often the achieving of small steps toward an unrealistic goal reveals that the

goal may be more realistic and achievable than we thought when the journey started.

Action continuously changes the dynamics and, more often than you expect, possibilities spring up seemingly out of nowhere. I'll help you build an environment and achieve a state of mind where aspiration is like breathing – free of limits, borders and fears.

Keep moving forward...toward something ... forever aspiring... forever ageless.

5. Take charge

By now, it should be pretty clear that purposeful *action* is the consistent theme of this advocacy. All of us are challenged in one way or another in our quest to move forward on this journey.

So many barriers, distractions and circumstances conspire to slow our progress or stall our journey. Some we can influence, some we cannot. Life-defining changes in our life, intersecting with the natural evolution of Life Stages, can dramatically change our perspective. And every time we slow down or stop our journey, remember it requires an even greater level of energy to start moving again or pick up the speed.

That's why everyone needs to build a systematic, internalized, every-day commitment to keep moving forward. And the only way to achieve this level of control in your life is to **take charge**.

I'll show you how to make “proactive” a way of life. How to commit. How to take control. And how to renew your commitment every day.

In no way do I advocate action without thoughtful consideration of risk or consequence. On the contrary, I will show you how to build a Risk/Reward Evaluator that can help you quickly and effectively assess actions to ensure they are aligned with your quest.

But at the core of this quest is a commitment to *action* – to keep moving, aspiring, always learning from experience, always prudent, but always proactive.

An ageless life isn't confined by the limits, borders or fears of age. An ageless life is life in motion. That doesn't mean frenzy or even substantial change. It means moving forward in mind, body and spirit – at whatever pace and degree is right for you - toward a point where age, or any other defining limit, is immaterial.

I'll help you take charge of your life with a level of commitment you may not have thought possible before. Agelessness, in the face of all of life's conspiracies to keep you from this goal, requires a will strengthened by constant exercise. Consider me your personal trainer providing the exercises, proper technique and motivation to strengthen your authority over your life, every day.

6. Embrace fun!

This is all such serious stuff. Giving you a headache is *not* one of my goals. Neither is suggesting that living an ageless life is free from joy, laughter, silliness, fancy or reverie. An ageless life is a full life – full of substance, meaning and full of fun!

This is a cart-and-a-horse thing. It isn't that having fun will get you closer to an ageless life. Rather an ageless life frees you to have more fun! I would argue that when you feel yourself having a lot more fun in your life, you're already there.

A life more free of the barriers, borders and fears that numb the fun receptors in our brain is a life in which fun is free to flourish. Hopefulness replaces anxiety. Energy replaces lethargy. Contentment replaces resignation. And it becomes a geometric progression. The more joyful life feels today, the better it is likely to feel tomorrow.

The pessimist will tell you not to enjoy life too much now, because something will happen tomorrow to dampen that joy. I would argue that, for the person living an ageless life, tomorrow is for planning, not for worrying. The timeliness of an ageless life reduces those feelings of unease about the future.

Of course, we all know that tomorrow may bring pain or sorrow. The goal is to make tomorrow less material to your enjoyment of today.

I'll provide some suggestions and tools that will help you learn how to more freely embrace fun in your life. You'll be amazed and

thrilled how that attitude radiates to those around you – at home, at work, wherever you are. And how that radiation is returned to you, energizing your life even more.

In Summary

Everyone involved in this new book and the EverAgeless.com web portal is anxious to bring these initiatives to fruition and share our message with you. We are committed to making EverAgeless.com your most valued resource in your quest for an ageless life.

We will keep you apprised of progress. We also value both your input and suggestions on how we can make these initiatives more relevant and useful to you.

This journey to an ageless life is a journey of discovery and fulfillment. We welcome the opportunity to be of assistance.

Thank you.

And be sure to join the EverAgeless community now at <https://everageless.com/contact> .

Want to be notified when this book is ready to publish? Go to <https://everageless.com/contact>. In the form at the bottom of the page, type in “Put me on the Book list” and submit.