

Be Wonder-Full

By Joan Maiden

"I'm set in my ways."

"You can't teach an old dog new tricks."



I'm sure you've made these statements or heard them. Is it true that after a certain age you can't become fit physically and mentally? Absolutely not! Research is showing how

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We all have a comfort zone—where we're, well, comfortable—and we usually really like our comfort zone. The problem is that the old adage "use it or lose it" is true. If you're not moving forward, you're moving backwards. If you don't challenge your muscles, you lose them and the same goes for your brain—you lose what you don't use.

So what is the answer?

- **Decide to improve.** You won't do what you don't really feel compelled to do. A good start is to read articles on the benefits of physical and mental exercise and talk to people who are more active and engaged than you are and find out what they do and how it has helped them.
- **Get out of your comfort zone.** Try something new. What is one thing you always thought you would like to try but never did? Now would be a good time to explore. You may find you really enjoy an activity you never even thought about before. (I discovered I love boxing.)
- **Be consistent.** Trying new activities can be difficult at first. Don't give up. Watch a baby learning to walk. It takes a lot of effort and concentration to master a new activity.



- **Have fun!** Your comfort zone can be limiting. Always doing the same things with the same people and talking about the same things can make your world very narrow. Never lose the wonder—appreciate the beauty of the world, the love of family and friends and opportunities to explore—whether it's learn-

ing Italian, taking a dance class, learning to paint or hiking the Appalachian Trail.

- **Be wonder—full!** Remain full of wonder and you'll never grow old!

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