

# Gary Rotstein's What's New in Aging: Feeling happy in retirement?

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Are you an older adult having fun? If you're already 65, you should be doing so. Most of your cohorts evidently are.

This finding comes from a recent Merrill Lynch study, "[Leisure in Retirement: Beyond the Bucket List](#)," that surveyed 3,712 American adults ages 25 and up on their attitudes about work, leisure, fun, anxiety and other facets of life. Baby boomers were the biggest age group interviewed, and people over age 65 were the ones said to be enjoying life most.

Among other questions, people were asked "How much fun are you having at this stage of your life?" They answered using a scale from 1 to 10. Those in the 65-74 age group had the highest average "fun" score: 7.3. Next highest was the over-75 group, cumulatively giving their level of fun a 7.1. (Least happy were those from 35 to 54, at 6.0, which rose to 6.4 for ages 55-64.)

"Notwithstanding the popular media portrayals of fun primarily being the domain of youth, it turns out that the experience of fun rises in mid-life and peaks in retirement," said the report authored for Merrill Lynch by the Age Wave research group.

A lot of this fun has to do with how much leisure time people have in retirement and how little their life is consumed by stress. Only 12 percent of those over age 65 reported that "I often feel anxious." The percentage who were anxious was twice as high for those ages 45-54 and three times as high among the 25-34 age group.

There's been a lot of reporting about how people are less likely to retire at 65 now than was the case in prior years, whether out of economic necessity or because they are more fulfilled by performing work. But one way or another, it seems there's plenty to look forward to in the post-65 years, so no need to dread it if that phase is right around the corner for you. Right?

**Upcoming Events in Aging:**

The Allegheny County Area Agency on Aging is offering free workshops educating caregivers on various topics on Wednesdays. They're held from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the AAA office at 2100 Wharton St. on the South Side, second floor. Participants can choose any number of sessions to attend, but advance registration is required by calling 412-350-4996.

The remaining dates and topics are:

May 25: Home safety and caring for someone with dementia.

June 1: Legal and financial issues and healthy eating.

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