

Numbering Our Days

During much of our life we measure time by its duration: how many years have passed, how many remain before us. We rush through one task in order to hasten on to the next. We use up time, often squandering it like wealthy millionaires.

But as we reach late life, this preoccupation with quantity gives place to an appreciation of quality. The slowing of our lives allows us to meet each person and situation with greater attentiveness. Each moment, each day becomes more precious.

We are finally able to sink into the present moment. In *Number Our Days*, Barbara Myerhoff describes this capacity to live life fully as one of the secrets of aging well.

She quotes a Jewish friend: "I think this paying such attention to life is what we mean by 'a heart of wisdom'...In the psalm it says, 'So teach us to number our days, that we may get us a heart of wisdom.'"

Learning how to number our days means cultivating a capacity for wonder, for solitude and for prayer. Deepening our understanding of these dimensions of the spiritual life can enrich our aging immeasurably.

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