

Marist Poll: Faith Improves Quality of Life for the Aging

In the U.S. today, more than 70 million Americans—nearly one-third of the adult population—provide care for their elderly parents or relatives. A new study reveals that for aging people whom view faith as an important part of their life have more positive lives than those who don't.

The Marist Poll survey conducted for Home Instead on the subject of aging in America, found that those for whom faith is a dominant part of life view their lives far more positively than those for whom it is not. This data is part of a GOLD Indicator (Gauging Overall Life Dimensions), the first of an annual survey to assess how Americans view their lives based on ten indicators of satisfaction.

The study, titled "Generation to Generation: Gauging the Golden Years," found that Americans who practice faith rated their quality of life better across all 10 life dimensions studied: family, neighborhood safety, housing situation, spiritual life, health, friends, work or how days are spent, free time, finances, and community involvement.

"Most Americans, regardless of age, see their religious faith as at least important or more important to them as they get older," the study notes. Fifty-eight percent of those polled said said faith is as important to them as they have gotten older, while 34 percent said it is more important, and only 8 percent responded that it is less important.

Caregiving can be rewarding, but it's also a responsibility that comes with high stress and family strain, according to author Lori Hogan, whose new book, *Strength for the Moment*, celebrates, encourages and offers support to caregivers as they give of themselves to provide compassionate care for their loved ones.

“Faith is such an important factor in how we care for our aging parents and loved ones,” says Hogan. “Faith provides hope and encouragement for the caregiver’s soul.”