

May 2021

It has occurred to me lately that I have not done the best that I could have with my life. I've had these thoughts before but lately they seem to be more intense.

Even though I had a 50 plus year marriage, four awesome children, who turned out to be four wonderful, productive adults, owned my own business, worked as a professional for 20 years, was sober for 38 years and lived to the age of (who knows?); it doesn't seem to be enough. There might have been a lot missing. I have thought in the past years that it might have been God, then I thought it was drugs, then relationships, then excitement, then work to finally my Higher Power and love today.

I've been tempted lately to drink alcohol so it can alter my mind....Why?

Well, to the outsider it appears that I'm okay. No one sees this 75-year-old, widowed, retired, grandmother beset by loneliness and death. I know one can be lonely at any age but this is me and I'm guessing plenty of other older people.

My days are filled with the monotony of the elderly....breakfast, medications, coffee, newspaper, lunches and shopping. I love my friends but they're getting old! (lol). I clean my own mess and routinely go to funerals. I call the Senior Center to check on new classes or a special food for lunch. I have my hair and nails "done" even though my hair is thinning and nails are cracking. I go to doctor's appointments, MANY doctors appointments....you know the doctors who are about 40 and look at you like a crumbling building. Dentist? Forget it. Just hand in your dentures to be cleaned.

So I am bored, some would say. Once I danced, do you believe it? Sometimes on a table, of ten on the floor...always drinking. Today I can barely walk straight. I used to have someone to kiss. Today I catch my grandchildren wiping away what might be drool after I kiss them.

I used to believe I could be anything I wanted to me...I was so wrong!

Well I decided wisely not to drink. I'm sure it would have been a disaster!! One old, drunk lady, how very unattractive. So I've been looking around for a natural high, one that won't kill me. I found quite a few. Emerald trees against the blue

sky are delightful. My grandchildren's blue eyes are stunning. A parfait at Rachel's Split Rail is a super delight! Kids running and yelling at the playground..I love it. My cats, who are always ready for a hug, who purr when they just look at me. A good movie on TCM is brings up lovely memories. Smells..they bring me to my senses and sometimes bring loving memories. A good meal with all the "yummies" I'm not supposed to eat is occasionally fun. Doing something for someone else always works, a smile to a stranger, hello to a friend. Many other sweet behaviors we all pretty much are aware of....

Life and love is all in our perception. And adjusting our perception takes a lot of work but we can do it. Look at our lives, all we've been through and survived. We are the beautiful, strong elderly and we know how to find the best in everything.

Dorie Okeefe

229 Bacon Pond Road

Woodbury, ct 06798

203-232-1968