

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Creative Aging: Rethinking Retirement and Non-Retirement in a Changing World

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Chapter 1

- What events in Moses's story do you identify with the most? Why?
- How and when has your sense of identity shifted throughout your life?
- What do you think of the idea of exploring "the shadow side of ourselves that we have often projected onto others" (p. 18)? What parts of yourself do you need to embrace, or where would you like to grow, in order to experience "psychic wholeness"?
- What part of the pattern of change are you in right now (release, resistance, reclaiming, revelation, risk, relating)? What part would you like to be in? What steps can you take to move forward?

Chapter 2

- Recall five endings that were significant for you. What was being completed with each ending? How did you acknowledge the importance of each one? What symbol or memento do you have of that ending?
- How do you mark major turning points in your life today? What kind of object, such as a milestone, a cairn of rocks or a prayer shawl, could you make to symbolize an important departure you have experienced or are contemplating?
- Is there something in your work that still needs completion and release? What ritual or action might help you move on? Is there someone with whom you might share that release?

Chapter 3

- Where do you feel stuck or resistant?
- How might you make time in your week for the restorative power of doing nothing?
- How might you use your Sabbath time for the internal work of listening for clues about the future?
- Do you listen to your physical body for guidance? Is there some way that you could engage your body and then spend some time writing about whatever comes to mind?

Chapter 4

- How could you pay more attention to your dreams? Find someone to share them with? Give them objective reality with color or clay?
- Do you have a small group of listeners in your life? Who are two or three others who might offer thoughtful questions in the manner of a Quaker clearness committee?
- Are you aware of old interests, such as gardening or paper dolls, that might hold the seed of a new direction?
- If you are a more systematic thinker, what interests or hobbies might you explore?
- What has sustained you through difficult times? Is that something you might develop?

Chapter 5

- It's easy to identify the things that make us angry or disgusted. It's harder to identify what we want to support or stand for. Look at the daily newspaper and circle one or two articles that really tug at your heart. What would you like to change? What do you dream of?
- Have you ever experienced a sense of being in exactly the right place at the right time? Have you experienced synchronicity, when two unrelated events coincide perfectly? What might this be telling you?
- Think back to your family, faith tradition or social context, or to a glaring example of injustice that tugs at your heart. Is there an old sorrow that fuels your passion today? Is there an early experience you might want to heal by writing it as a story?
- Can you think of an example of resonance between yourself and another person's story? Or between a desire for your family (community, school, church) and their responsiveness?

Chapter 6

- How would you describe the tension between your hopeful vision for the future and your current reality?
- How would you describe your deep gladness now?
- What is a deep hunger in the world that touches you?
- Create a list of people who have been guides and mentors. Write a brief description of the top five. Imagine that you are meeting with each one and ask them for guidance at this time in your life. Write down what you hear, even if it makes no sense right now.

Chapter 7

- What part of your life is asking to be born right now? Is there some risk in that for you?

- How would you describe your “resilience quotient”? What has helped you strengthen your resilience?
- What kind of work did you consider useful in the previous decade? How has that changed? What do you consider useful now?
- What would it take for you to let others help you with discernment?

Chapter 8

- Think of a time when a community (not necessarily your workplace) helped you do something that you had always wanted to do. Recall some of the important elements of that help. Do you have such a community now? If not, where might you find one?
- Pick out a group of people (such as Wednesday Weeders) to create a change in your world that you want to see. How are you related to that group? How might you ask them to help with a change?
- When you read the newspaper or listen to the news, is there some situation or group of people that tugs at your heart? Is there some specific action (such as at the drop-in center) that they need?
- Is there some community that you might gather to meet that need?