

Aging Brings Sense of Calm

New research found aging brings more positive than negative emotions, and also more passive than active emotions.



Aging brings a sense of peace and calm, a new study finds. The good life starts around age 60.

Researchers often study depression in older people, and happiness studies are common. But the new research found aging brings more positive than negative emotions, and also more passive than active emotions. Anger and anxiety are examples of active, negative emotions, reported LiveScience.com.

"The passive/positive combination reveals that contentment, calm and ease are some of the most common emotions people feel as they age," explained Catherine Ross of the Population Research Center at The University of Texas. "Emotions that are both active and negative, such as anxiety and anger, are especially unlikely among the elderly."

Ross and John Mirowsky, professors of sociology, say the overall feeling with age is one of greater contentment. Another recent study found seniors are the happiest Americans, while Baby Boomers are miserable by comparison.

The new study, published in the May 19 issue of *Social Science and Medicine*, was funded in part by the National Institute

on Aging. It examined 1,450 responses to the 1996 US General Social Survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center, which included English-speaking people aged 18 and older. Studies like this frequently look at old data that is comprehensive, analyzing it in new ways.

Participants responded to statements such as: On how many days in the past seven days have you ... felt that you couldn't shake the blues, felt sad, felt lonely, felt anxious and tense, felt worried, felt so restless that you couldn't sit long in a chair, felt angry at someone, felt mad at someone, felt outraged at something somebody had done, felt calm, felt at ease, felt contented, felt happy, felt overjoyed by something, felt excited about or interested in something, felt proud, felt embarrassed, felt ashamed.

Compared to men, women had more negative emotions and more passive emotions. Also, participants with higher income and education levels had significantly more positive emotions than those with lower income and education levels, the researchers found.

More Fake Health Goods Entering EU

The number of fake personal healthcare goods entering Europe is on the rise and poses a danger to consumers, according to an EU customs report on counterfeiting and piracy.

The report found that seizures of counterfeit cosmetics and personal care products like razor blades and moisturizing creams increased by 264 percent in 2007 over a year to total more than six million items, AFP reported.

Meanwhile in Geneva, the US proposed to the World Health Organization (WHO) the creation of an international system of certification to protect consumers from counterfeit products.

Health Secretary Michael Leavitt suggested a collaborative system of international standards and local controls.

The Brussels report said the number of fake toys picked up grew 98 percent, and medicines by 51 percent. Dodgy computer equipment finds rose 62 percent.

"Counterfeiting continues to pose a dangerous threat to our health, safety and our economy," EU Taxation and Customs Commissioner Laszlo Kovacs warned.

Surprisingly, given this substantial rise, the total number of such goods seized in the 27 nation European Union actually went down owing to a drop in the number of counterfeit CDs, DVDs and cigarettes intercepted.

However the European Commission report noted: "Although the overall amount of articles seized by customs has decreased compared to last year, there has been an increase in sectors that are potentially dangerous to consumers."

It listed Georgia, followed by Turkey and then China--which is responsible for almost 60 percent of all counterfeit goods seized in the

EU--as being the main sources of fake personal care products.

Switzerland, India and the United Arab Emirates were top for medicines.

The number of counterfeit goods in traditional sectors--like jewelry and clothing-- also rose significantly.

Seizures of jewelry and watches last year close to doubled with a rise of 89 percent, while almost 30 percent more clothing accessories and shoes were picked up, the commission's Taxation and Customs Union department report said.

The biggest sectors for counterfeiters remained cigarettes.



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News in Brief

Biodiversity Confab Opens

The Earth's natural resources must be shared more equally between rich and poor nations, Germany's environment minister said Monday at the start of a UN biodiversity conference.

Some 6,000 representatives from 191 countries are attending the 11-day conference on the UN's convention on biodiversity, which was first adopted at the Rio Earth summit in 1992, Deutsche Welle reported.

"The industrialized countries must recognize the need to share natural resources with those with those who have safeguarded them," Sigmar Gabriel declared.

"It is a question of principle, a question of justice," he said. "The developing countries are right to speak of 'bi-piracy', when the industrialized world use their resources without authorization and without paying a penny," he said.

Participants at the conference are hoping to establish a roadmap towards negotiating, by 2010, an "Access and Benefit Sharing" regulatory framework governing access to genetic resources and sharing the benefits from their use.

Gabriel said he expected "significant progress" on the issue. "We need a clear mandate for structuring the negotiations by 2010," he said.

The UN convention on biodiversity (CBD) was established at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, whilst the Bonn conference is the ninth meeting of its signatories.

Auctioned Ferrari Fetches \$11m

A Ferrari 250 GT California Spyder once owned by US actor James Coburn fetched nearly \$11 million at auction, making it the most valuable vintage car ever sold under the hammer, organizers said.

The rare black convertible was one of 33 cars and scores of Ferrari memorabilia sold at auction on Sunday in the luxury sports carmaker's hometown of Maranello in northern Italy, Reuters reported.

The 7 million euro (\$10.98 million) price paid by British radio and television host Chris Evans eclipsed previous records for cars sold under auction, organizers RM Auctions said.

"It's a very rare Ferrari, one of just 56 built," said spokesman Terrence Lobzun. "It's a very desirable car, probably one of the most desirable Ferraris ever built as far as style and design are concerned."



Turkey Widens Smoking Ban

A law extending a smoking ban in Turkey to most enclosed areas--including taxis, ferries and shopping malls--came into effect on Monday in the nicotine-addicted nation.

As of midnight, outdoor smoking was also banned in locations such as stadiums and playgrounds. A ban on lighting up in restaurants and coffeehouses will be implemented next year, AP reported.

Smoking was already barred on buses and airplanes and in larger offices. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's Islamic-rooted government expanded the ban to most enclosed places as part of an attempt to reduce smoking rates in the country and the effects of second-hand smoke.

Around 40 percent of Turks over the age of 15 are smokers, consuming around 17 million packs a day, according to Yesilay, an organization devoted to fighting alcohol, drug and tobacco abuse. The government says around 160,000 people die annually in Turkey from smoking-related ailments.

The law, passed by Parliament in March, calls for a fine of 50 Turkish lira (US\$40) for people who light up in smoke-free areas.

Most Americans Phone

While Driving

Nearly three-quarters of Americans drive while distracted by activities such as talking on the phone, largely because they feel pressured to stay in touch, a poll showed.

More than 80 percent of mobile phone owners said they talk on the phone while driving, the survey, conducted last month by the Nationwide insurance company, said.

Forty percent of American mobile phone owners between the ages of 16 and 30 admitted to composing and sending text messages while driving, AFP reported.

An equal percentage have been hit or almost hit by another driver who was using a mobile phone, the survey said.

According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, there are 115 road fatalities each day in the United States and distracted driving causes 80 percent of road accidents.

Nearly half of those polled said mobile phones and other technology were the most dangerous distraction at the wheel.

Younger drivers--in the United States, people start driving at 16--were the least likely to use their phones while at the wheel.