

for **Sex**
GROWN UPS



Dr. Dorree Reveals
the Truths, Lies,
and Must-Tries for
Great Sex After 50

Dorree Lynn, Ph.D., with Cindy Spitzer

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Praise for *Sex for Grownups*

“As a woman hovering on the precipice of 50 and a cosmetic dermatologist to many aging women, I personally and professionally welcome Dr. Lynn’s contribution. Along with her individualized and insightful therapeutic approaches, Dr. Lynn’s assessment that every female is ‘an agent of change’ serves as a useful tag line to guide us through the journey.”

—**Tina Alster, M.D., director of
the Washington Institute of Dermatologic Laser Surgery**

“If you are young at heart, and you want to feel the fire Dr. Lynn’s book is for you! It will take you from the Alpha to the Omega and you will enjoy the journey! It belongs on every boomer nightstand.”

—**JC Hayward, vice president, WUSA-TV9**

“Life after 50 can be a wonderful and surprising cascade of self-discovery. That goes for your sex life, especially, and by examining what’s going on in your head as well as your body parts. Dr. Dorree Lynn’s new book reveals the path to satisfying lifelong intimacy.”

—**Daniel J. Kadlec, coauthor of
*With Purpose and The Power Years***

“Sex, intimacy, and aging have long been ignored by health professionals and the public. Dr. Dorree Lynn’s inviting book for men, women, and couples over 50 brings empowerment for enjoying the pleasures of eroticism and love-making throughout life.”

—**Barry McCarthy, Ph.D., professor of psychology at
American University and coauthor of
Men’s Sexual Health and 10 other books on sex**

“Dr. Dorree offers wise counsel and practical advice for how to turn the inevitable alterations of aging to our erotic advantage. Finally, a book that tells it like is—sex can get better as we get older. And Dr. Dorree tells us how!”

—**Sheri Winston, CNM, RN, BSN, LMT,
wholistic sexuality teacher, founder of the Center for the
Intimate Arts, and author of *Women’s Anatomy of Arousal***

“Hang on everyone! Help is on the way. Dr. Dorree Lynn promises to rescue all of us and not a moment too soon.”

—**Kitty Kelley, bestselling author of
*The Family: The Real Story of The Bush Dynasty***

for **Sex**
GROWN UPS



Dr. Dorree Reveals the
Truth, Lies, and Must-Tries for
Great Sex After 50

Dorree Lynn, Ph.D., with Cindy Spitzer



Health Communications, Inc.
Deerfield Beach, Florida

www.hcibooks.com

Lynn, Dorree.

Sex for grownups : Dr. Dorree reveals the truth, lies, and must-tries for great sex after 50 / Dorree Lynn, with Cindy Spitzer.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN-13: 978-0-7573-1464-3

ISBN-10: 0-7573-1464-3

1. Sex instruction for older people. 2. Older people—Sexual behavior. I. Spitzer, Cindy. II. Title.

HQ55.L96 2010

613.9'60846—dc22

2009053953

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Publisher: Health Communications, Inc.

3201 S.W. 15th Street

Deerfield Beach, FL 33442-8190

Cover design by Larissa Hise Hensch

Interior design by Lawna Patterson Oldfield

Interior formatting by Dawn Von Strolley Grove

Anna sings:

“When you become a teacher, by your students
you’ll be taught . . .”

I first heard Gertrude Lawrence sing these words when I was young.
It took me all these years to finally understand what they meant.

To my clients,
who have entrusted me with their souls
and have taught me so very much

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Sometimes stars align and one humbly and with appreciation says, “Thank you.” That is the case with this book’s team. They have been beyond wonderful. Talented writer and gem of a human being, Cindy Spitzer took my beginnings and endings and made the middle—actually the entire book—much better than I could have alone. Cathy Phillips, executive assistant par excellence, kept my life functioning, while researching and endlessly proofing the manuscript. Allison Janse, our HCI editor, was continually supportive and creative. My agent, Linda Konner, made a great match getting me an HCI. And what is so wondrously special about this collaboration is that we are individuals of different ages and life stages.

My sincere appreciation goes to my friends, Dr. Fern Loos Beu, Joyce Bonnet, and Dr. Marjorie Liepold; to my colleagues at AARP, producers Nina Halper and David Pepper, who coined me the media “sexpert”; to my readers and supporters Sheridan Brown, John Crawford, James (Jim) Gross, Gwen Pearls, Lesley and Rick Wolfson, and Jerry Martin, my computer guru; to adult toys expert Tamara Payton Bell; to my focus group participants who spilled their concerns and questions (perhaps all the wine helped); to my extended family “clan”; and of course, to my funny, generous, loving husband, Isaac Levy, who willingly lived with my computer love affair when I’m sure he would have preferred me in bed.

Thank you, Dr. Dorree, for trusting me with this fun, true, and important book. We sprang into each other's lives at just the right moment, like the ice cream truck suddenly rolling down your street on a hot summer day. I admire your guts, smarts, humor, and wisdom. It has been a pleasure and privilege collaborating with you.

I also thank my wonderful husband, Philip Terbush, precious children, Chelsea, Anya, and Zachary, and dear friend Cindi Callanan, for our shared love and support. I am also filled with gratitude for two extraordinary teachers who helped set me on the path toward the life I now love: Christine Gronkowski, who at SUNY Purchase in 1985 showed me what I could not see in myself; and my fabulous writing mentor at UMCP, two-time Pulitzer Prize-winner Jon Franklin, whom I haven't seen in more than two decades but still learn from daily.

FOREWORD

By Devra Lee Davis, Ph.D., M.P.H.

For most of her life, Dr. Dorree Lynn has been breaking paradigms. As a teacher, psychologist, and public speaker, she has paved the way to staying sane in a multi-tasking jam-packed world. In a world awash with prescription drugs and fix-it books for everything from our minds to our libidos, she brings a refreshing grown-up approach to one of the most important parts of life—our ability to reach out and touch someone and feel alive, exuberant, and connected. She exposes the myths of eternal youth and instant orgasm with élan and great wit that is both frank and captivating. Dr. Dorree shows us that the simple medical model that primarily promotes drugs to treat changing sexual performance must often be rejected. There are truly many different ways to skin a cat and many different paths to feeling intimate, passionate, and connected as we age.

For those of us who have reached the age of some distinction, advertising images provide a constant reminder that we aren't as young, as thin, or as smart as we used to be. But saying we aren't kids anymore does not mean that we are less of a person or less able to enjoy delicious moments of intentional joy.

The brain remains the sexiest part of the body. If we are lucky as we age, we still remember the feelings of youth and all the drama and intensity that surrounded some of the simplest and most important parts of our relationships. But if we listen to Dr. Dorree, we will learn not to confuse those memories of what once was for what passion and love are all about as we enter and maneuver through the second half of our lives.

Thomas Moore once noted that we have a habit of talking about sex as something that is merely mechanical. Yet, nothing we do has more soul. As we age, we can find new ways to allow sex to transform us, enthrall us, center us, and calm us. To accomplish this well, we have to reject the cultural view that sees the body as detached from our feelings, our sense of values, and our emotions. Staying in love or falling in love again in midlife, or falling in love over and over again with a still lovely spouse as an elder, requires a sense of humor and a keen appreciation that hope is one of the most powerful stimulants in the world.

Dr. Dorree teaches us that our habits and expectations—no matter how well established they are—can get us into trouble and need to change as we do. As Moore explains in *The Soul of Sex*, “Sex takes us into a world of intense passion, sensual touch, exciting fantasies, many levels of meaning, and subtle emotions. It makes the imagination come alive with fantasy, reverie and memory.” Accepting the constructive role of sex and play throughout our lives, as Dr. Dorree urges, helps free us of guilt and feelings of inadequacy. If we succeed in doing this, we will pay more attention to beauty, sensuality, and pleasure, and enhance our enjoyment of the full experience and our own spirituality, as well as increase the quantity and quality of fun in our lives.

This book offers much more than the usual techniques found in how-to-do-it sex cookbooks. With added years our physiology changes and for most, so does our physical desire (both more or less). While the physical expressions of intimacy can change, the need for physical, spiritual, and emotional intimacy is the one constant. Lifelong partners need to work at finding new ways to satisfy themselves that fit the changes in their bodies, minds, and souls.

Here you can find information in an easy, digestible way that manages to be both amusing and profoundly important. Many typical sex books break things down into their smallest component and miss the really big picture. As a result, the ordinary book on this topic takes the juice out of sex and is frankly boring. With a breezy style that is unafraid, Dr. Dorree presents the physical part of sex as

central component of life that cannot simply be treated or managed with drugs alone.

~~What works for one person may not work for another. There is no one size fits all to our private parts or our private feelings about this most essential part of life. Despite its universality, sex remains a uniquely personal experience that is tailor-made for each individual and each couple. Dr. Dorree wants people to understand the need to take responsibility to learn and grow as they explore change in their own sexuality, their feelings and bodies that come with the privilege of growing older.~~

Sex for grownups provides a welcome approach to an age-old problem: how to remain vitally alive and sexy as we age. Dr. Dorree reminds us that we can start with accepting who we are and understanding that the best things in life change as we change. Expectations of that twenty-something year-old we once were are remembered and put behind. With grace, some technical help, abundant good humor, and a willing attitude, this book shows you how those golden years can be full of fun and good feelings that last a lifetime.

Devra Lee Davis is the author of *The Secret History of the War on Cancer* (Basic Books, 2009), a National Book Award finalist *When Smoke Ran Like Water* (Basic Books, 2003), and *Sell Phones What's Really on the Line* (Dutton in 2010). She is the founder of Environmental Health Trust and Visiting Professor of Preventive Medicine at Mt. Sinai Medical Center.

INTRODUCTION:

Yes, We Still Do It!

Welcome to the wonderful, sometimes confusing, and always exciting world of sex for those of us who (gratefully) are long past being kids. When it comes to the often discussed but rarely personal understood topic of sex after 50, mature adults tend to fall into two camps. Either you inwardly smile knowing that grownup sex, like fine wine, just gets better and better with age, or you shrug your shoulders and say, “Sex after fifty? Does it really exist?” The truth is sex after 50 really can exist, and though it may be different from what you remember when you were younger, it can actually be even *better* than before.

If you find that hard to believe, you are not alone. As a practicing psychologist, Dr. Dorree speaks with women and men every day who find sex has become a bore, a chore, or a source of performance anxiety. Often in secret, people over 50 quietly worry about a myriad of sexual issues that are more common than most of us think.

For example, if you’re a woman, do you find your mind wandering away from the bedroom? Do the thought of graying hair, a widening waistline, or sagging boobs make you want to undress in the closet? Do you fret about your turkey neck or secretly look in the mirror and pull your skin tight, pondering what creams or a surgeon’s knife might fix?

If you’re a man, do you worry about getting it up and keeping it up in bed? Or maybe you’re self-conscious because your penis seems smaller and less cooperative than before. Do you wonder if all other guys think the way you do?

While it’s easy to think there is something wrong with us now that we don’t look like Barbie and Ken or perform like athletes in bed, in truth we are as normal as can be. It is perfectly natural for our bodies to change as we age. And of course, sex changes too—which, with some new information and willingness to experiment, can turn out to be an unexpected gift. Just when we think we are losing something special from our youth, we have the opportunity to experience something that can be even more marvelous, now and in the future. In fact, we can remain sexually fulfilled beings as long as we are alive. Sex makes the world go round. It is our essential life force, within us through every age and every life stage. In fact, lifelong sex is what sets us apart from all other species.

However, in today’s sex-flooded, youth-focused world, it’s easy to find superficial sex information served up on “reality” TV (which is not at all real) or in popular magazines, but where can you go for real wisdom and practical solutions that go beyond Viagra and cosmetic surgery? As Americans, we like to think of ourselves as so sophisticated and so in-the-know about sex, but many of us really don’t know where to turn for truly useful insights about what’s happening to our bodies and how we can still have deeply satisfying sex at every age and stage, no matter how we change.

You are not now, nor will you ever be, too old for sex, too ill for sex, too unattractive for sex, or too alone for sex. Despite Madison Avenue, the media, and the medical world telling us that only young is sexy, the truth is that each of us can be sexy for all of our lives—far more sexy than most people imagine. While it’s true that sex does change as our sex-drive hormones begin to fade after 50, our core sexuality lasts a lifetime. Sex never dies!

Sex is just too primal, pleasurable, and good for us to give up without a battle. At any age, sex can keep you healthier and may help you forget about your worldly woes for a while. After 50 (and even after 90), we don’t need to toss out our condoms and hang up our vibrators as we grow older and wiser. Sex and sensuality are integral and permanent to life, and there is no reason, if we are physically able, not to enjoy both for the rest of our days.

However, it takes some new knowledge and effort, and maybe even some new ways of thinking about yourself and your partner, and that is where this book comes in. *Sex for Grownups* goes bold where other books only peek—into the intimate lives of real adults having sex (or wanting to) in the 50s, 60s, 70s, and beyond. Whether you are a 50-year-old woman just beginning menopause or an 80-year-old man who hasn't been intimate with another person in more than ten years; whether you can't last as long as you used to or you have an illness; or you are just plain bored in the bedroom, this book is your gateway to a sexy new future. Within its pages you will find many things you may never have heard of or read before that could very well change your life. The idea is to transform your thinking and shift your attitudes. While the book is full of practical tips, information, and new things to try in and out of bed, it is by no means a technical how-to book on the pure mechanics of sex. It's a book about *morphing your mind*. What you decide to do with your body is up to you.

We hope the book helps you talk to your loved ones, partner, friends, and those who want a chance to open up more about what we all know is so true. Sex after 50 can be great, but getting there requires a bit of an attitude shift and the journey is not without some bumps. We're sure you'll find that most of what we are about to share with you about sex in the second half of life is really quite reasonable, sometimes comforting, and even funny at times.

Feel free to just dive into the chapters and sections that interest you most. Women will probably gravitate to Chapter 2 ("Sex Is More Than Procreation") and Chapter 4 ("Keeping Your Juices Flowing"). Men may want to take a look at Chapter 3 ("Performance Power Customized") and Chapter 9 ("The Great Joyride"). If your relationship is on the rocks or could just use a tune-up, Chapter 6 tells it like it really is in a long-term relationship and how to fill in those lost intimacy, fall-in-love-again gaps. Looking for a partner? Check out the many tips in Chapter 7 ("Plenty of Fish in the Sea"). Those with illnesses and physical challenges (eventually we all have something or our partners do) can turn to Chapter 8 ("Illnesses, Schm illnesses!") for new ideas about how to make love if you are no longer an acrobat. And we hope that everyone reads Chapter 1 ("You're Still Rockin'") and Chapter 5 ("Between the Sheets"), which finally set the record straight about real sex as we age and offer countless suggestions for turning so-so sex into really good sex, and making really good sex even better.

Throughout the book, the personal stories and questions are all true. Even better, the answers are too! Psychologist Dr. Dorree Lynn has helped thousands of people over the last four decades with her healing wisdom about relationships and sex. So if you are feeling down about your lack of spark (and we all sometimes do), don't deny your sexual desires until they flicker and fade. Sex is your birthright and you deserve to be happy at every age! This book will show you how.

YOU'RE STILL ROCKIN' AND WE DON'T MEAN IN A CHAIR Change Your Attitude, Change Your Life

Once upon time in America, there were many people approaching 50 and even more after 50, who were rapidly becoming the major age group in the land. Despite this fact, these pioneers were still trying to hang on to the youngsters they remembered themselves to be. They wanted to look younger, act younger, feel younger, and especially have sex like they did when they were younger. After all, everyone on TV and everywhere else said staying young forever was a good thing and certainly quite possible. And who doesn't like being told you can have exactly what you think you want, for as long as you want it? Who among us would dare to whisper that the Myth Emperor has no clothes; that youth fades, gravity happens, hormone levels fall, and time marches on? We are all happier with easier pleasantries and a few good myths to cling to (including, by the way, the authors of this book). How else can we live happily ever after?

Fairy tales always end with the prince and princess somehow finding each other, but you'll notice they never show what happens next. We gladly put up with the miseries of Cinderella scrubbing the floor earlier in the story because we know she will get the hunk in the end. And we're just as happy not to see what happens later, when Cinderella is back on her knees, scrubbing up baby puke and feeling abandoned by her prince. The messiness of real love, real sex, and real life are not the stuff of fairy tales. That's why Sleeping Beauty is awakened by a kiss at the *end* of the story, not at the beginning. After that kiss, all the juicy foreplay, the sticky sex, the relationship issues, financial strains, communication breakdowns, and all the other downs and ups of real life are magically missing from our fairy tales. Given how complex life actually is and how differently women and men view both the process and the goal, it's a wonder that anyone manages to have a good relationship at all.

In the real world, real men and women can still manage to feel sexy and even live happily ever after—but only *after* they challenge the myths, ignore the lies, and start exploring some new grown-up must-tries that can make sex after 50 truly magical.

Why must we reconsider our beloved myths? Because the very myths that are so appealing early in life (the idea that we never have to grow older and sex will never change) can end up hurting us later in life when we try to cling to these myths instead of embracing our new reality. Quite naturally, none of us wants to think about getting older or possibly losing our youthful sexuality until we are forced to. Those in their 40s might still intend never to grow old, read every magazine sex article they can find, and only fleetingly wonder why they feel a bit more tired than before. In our 50s, we may begin to have concerns about new facial lines, menopause, or softer penises. In our 60s, perhaps our energies are less reliable and intercourse becomes more challenging. Each step of the way, we may feel increasingly bad about our changing bodies and maybe even feel like failures in bed when we cannot live up to our own expectations of youth. And then one day, who knows when, maybe in our 70s, 80s, or beyond, we realize that layer by layer our myths of youth are all gone and that there is no point in trying to be anything but our true selves at every age and stage. How much more amazing life could be if we realize this sooner so we can enjoy each precious moment more, rather than perhaps spending so much time chasing a lie for the sake of a dream, believing a myth that once felt so good, until it started to hurt so bad.

The truth is we do age. We grow, we change—and sex changes, too. Sex after 50 can be deliciously satisfying, but since life is not a fairy tale, we don't get to have it that way without making some effort. There is no right or wrong way to enjoy sex after 50, and we all stumble and bumble along the best we can as we travel this new road. With some new ideas along the way (maybe like some of the ones in this book) and some effort, life *can* be happily ever after—sort of. While not perfect, that's far better than any make-believe fairy tale.

Dr. Dorree Says:

When the fairy tale fades, men and women continue to have different story lines.

What a Difference a Lay Makes

Bill felt depressed. At 57, his hair was falling out and his energy was down. Worst of all, he just couldn't seem to get and keep an erection like he used to. For as long as Bill could remember, he could always count on his penis to perform. Now he worried he might be over the hill. Then one day his wise wife made love to him, and shazzam!—a new Super Bill emerged (for a while, at least).

A Connection a Day Keeps Sex in Play

Bill's wife Gail, 55, feels awful. She still loves her husband, but lately married life has become more bother than fun, especially in bed. With hot flashes, cold sweats, and droopy body parts, she'd rather just keep to herself. Who's got the desire or energy for sex? She would much rather cuddle and talk in bed (preferably with her sleep gear on and the lights off), and skip intercourse altogether, although she's willing to occasionally please her husband.

For Gail, the intimacy is mightier than the orgasm. Both feel that something precious is slipping away as their bodies change and sexual desire wanes—and neither knows what to do about it.

Who's That Stranger in Your Mirror?

Do you think people your age look much older than you? Have you noticed men balding on top and women's faces widening in the middle? Are your women friends trying to wash away their gray and cram themselves into the hippest (and more hip-accommodating) Not Your Daughter's Jeans?

It's hard to believe, but you've changed, too. Maybe you're feeling a little heavier and a little slower than before. Maybe your kids have grown, work has changed, relationships are different, and sex just isn't as much fun, exciting, or intimate as it used to be. Or maybe you've never married or are suddenly single and wondering what to do.

As you approach 50 and after, body fat increases, skin gets drier, energy flags, body parts sag, and your sex-drive hormones drive off into the sunset without you. Few of us are ever really prepared for this age. We all know it's bound to happen "someday," but not today, and certainly not to us. It all creeps up so slowly, hardly noticeable at first. Then one day, the reflection in the mirror doesn't match the person you still feel you are inside. Your body has changed, your life has changed—*you* have changed.

Now it's time for your thinking to catch up.

- 14.7 percent of Americans will be over 65 by the end of 2010, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- 25 percent are already over age 50.
- 40.9 percent will be over age 45 by 2010.

That means about four out of ten Americans are in the second half of life. What kind of sex are these folks having? Does sex change, stay the same, or just fade away? What can we expect of our sexuality as we age?

The simple answer is there are no simple answers. People over 50 enjoy sex in countless different ways: with partners and alone, frisky and relaxed, often and infrequently, routine and exotic, with emotional intimacy and without it, married and unmarried, in sickness and in health. Some people over 50 do give up sex entirely, but most do not. While sex in the second half of life does change over the years, it never dies.

Can Sex Really Last a Lifetime? The Answer Is Hiding at Your Local Nursing Home

If anyone wonders whether we stay sexy and sexual for our entire lives, consider something few people know: Behind closed doors at nursing homes across the country, older adults are continuing to enjoy sex in their 70s, 80s, and beyond. That's right. Grandma Sadie and old Uncle Lou are sneaking around like teenagers, kissing, cuddling, and even more, every chance they can get, whenever the cranky young nurse turns her back. And why not? Hot, juicy love makes the world go round, and sex is an important part of the equation. For most of us, sex-drive hormones do fade with age, but our core sexuality can last forever and our sensuality can expand. Whether it's heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, transsexual, or a banquet for one, sex is part of our deepest selves and a vital path to our primal connection with others.

Not only that, sex is good for us! In fact, studies show that people over 50 who have a regular sex partner tend to be happier, healthier, and may even live longer than those who miss out. For example, in a 2004 AARP Sexuality Study, respondents who said they had a regular sex partner generally reported having a more positive outlook on life, feeling less stressed, are less likely to be depressed, and are more likely to report their health is excellent or very good. And all the other health benefits aside, good sex is just plain fun. That alone is more than enough reason to try to keep it alive.

The challenge for those of us over 50, as we live longer than any group before, is to find ways to navigate the many physical and emotional changes of aging so that we can continue (or begin!) to enjoy sex and sensuality to the fullest.

And for those active nursing home residents, who sometimes pick up sexually transmitted diseases because they don't have easy access to condoms, let's show a little more respect. If we let teenagers sleep together in colleges, why can't older adults have a little freedom and privacy? Give them free condoms and "Do Not Disturb" signs.

QUESTION: *I had just gotten out of the shower and was trying to get my contacts out. I wiped away the steam from the full-length mirror and what I saw shocked me. Exactly when did my rear end fall?*

—JUANA, 4

Your bottom didn't fall; it gradually relaxed. Gravity happens! You can lift your butt somewhat with exercises that target that area or go for a whole Brazilian cosmetic surgery tighten and reshape, but that's not what's really bugging you, is it? Each of us eventually has that defining moment when we realize we are no longer young. It was happening all along, of course, but suddenly we notice.

How old is old? At 49, you are pretty old compared to a 20-year-old, but still quite young in the eyes of a 65-year-old, and practically a baby to someone who was your age when you were born. Age is relative, not only to younger and older people, but also relative to how you feel about yourself, your expectations, and your culture. You can be over the hill at 35 or still young at heart at 75. Besides your chronological age, you also have a biological age (your health status compared to others) and even perhaps a psychological age (how you feel, think, and behave, relative to others).

In some real ways, age is merely a state of mind. But there is no escaping the fact that our bodies do physically age, as well. For women, menopause (typically around 51) provides a clear signal of the "change of life" as estrogen suddenly drops, but knowing what is happening usually doesn't stop from throwing you into an emotional and physical tailspin. For guys, the impact of gradually declining testosterone can sneak up slowly, until one day your erections seem softer and less reliable than before—rarely the most welcome wake-up call. All these changes can feel like a terrible loss, and there is no quick way around the grieving process that most of us go through when we realize that the sexuality of our youth is truly behind us.

Dr. Dorree Says:

A tip about age. I don't go by the numbers. I calculate my age by looking behind me at those who may be younger and saying "been there, done that," and looking ahead and saying "I'm not there yet. Calculating my age by life stage makes tons more sense than by years.

On the very bright side, we get two huge benefits as we grow older. First, with children out of the house (unless they have boomeranged back to you), careers established, work cut back, or possibly retirement, we have more time to enjoy ourselves and our partners if we have one, and more time to go find one if we don't. Secondly, as our sex hormones naturally decline, we also have a tremendous opportunity to experience deeper, closer, more sensual sex (see Chapter 2). Having more time to focus on ourselves and a greater opportunity for sensuality are each a big bonus. Together, it's like winning the lottery twice.

Who Says Younger Is Sexier?

Just about everyone, that's who! Gazillions of messages a day try to convince us that young—and *only* young—is sexy. Sure, the media throws us a politically correct nod, showing attractive seniors supposedly shining our way through our golden years, even if a bit battered and bent. But those token gestures can hardly compete with all the TV, movies, radio, popular music, magazines, and even wrappers on gum and panty hose—all full of images of young, sexy people whom we are supposed to try to be.

Why? What is so wonderful about not growing up? What is wrong with being just who we are every age? Our culture tells us we must hang on to youth like a life raft, and with enough make-up, Botox, and sass, we really can turn back the clock. But 50 is *not* the new 30, 50 is the new 50; 60 is *not* the new 40, 60 is the new 60! After all we've been through and figured out over the years, 50 or 60 really can be a whole lot happier and sexier than 18, or at least we can understand ourselves better. It's a part of life's developmental tasks. Unlike when we were young and trying to fit into a world we just met, after 50 we can finally, proudly, and fully be our true selves. Do we really need to look and feel twenty years younger? *Didn't we already do that?*

Dr. Dorree Says:

As grownups, no one else can tell us what is right and wrong. We have to take responsibility for our own decisions, and to understand that whatever we do, the choice is our own.

Yes, it would be nice to have the energy and strength we had back then. But do you really want to go back and do it all over again? The teenage acne, that nerve-wracking junior prom, starting up your young adult life, perhaps raising small children, finding a first job, or building a career—isn't it nice to be finished with some of that stuff?

Most teenagers and young adults (including maybe ourselves at an earlier time) think they invented sex. They find it inconceivable to imagine that their parents, or anyone significantly older, are "doing it." Of course, in time, it dawns on most people that this can't possibly be true; of course sex is not only for the young. But the idea can linger and confuse us, especially when it is so relentlessly reinforced nearly everywhere we turn. It's true that young people at the height of their fertility can look very sexy, but grownup, intimate, authentic sex can beat the pants off awkward, training-wheel sex most every time. Even our age looks sexy, depending on the eyes of the viewer.

It's all about attitude. It's appropriate to grieve for our necessary losses, feel sad for what is no longer, bemoan our thinning hair, and whine about our waistline, wrinkles, and warts. But you can also grab ever-changing life by the tail and enjoy the ride—even if (admittedly) you do end up a bit nauseous on some of the twists and turns. *Now* can finally be your time to see life as the adventure it always been. Of course we've changed! That's what happens when you keep living.

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