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THE CENTER FOR THIRD AGE NEWSLETTER - MARCH 2005

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH - EPICETUS

"What concerns me is not the way things are, but rather the way people think things are."

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1. FATHER WILLIAM'S MUSINGS FOR MARCH

OUR MINDS MAKE AGING HARD - AND WE CAN CHANGE OUR MINDS!*

Personal transformation is hard. Each transformation demands we grow a new identity appropriate to our changed station in life. Remember crossing the divides between childhood and adolescence, high school and being grown up, single and married, individual and parent, worker and supervisor? Recall those journeys fully and you'll remember the anxiety as well as the excitement. "Can I really do this?" "Am I doing okay?" "Why does this look so easy for everyone else?"

But those transformations were a snap compared to moving into our Third Age. Why? Because we wanted to be a teen-ager, we wanted to be grown up, we wanted to get married, and we wanted that promotion. Who wants to get old?

This is why transformation into Third Age is so much more difficult: We don't want to do it! Who in their right mind would want to take on cultural images of aging like Decline, Disease, Dependency, Depression, Degeneration and Death? No wonder so many of us cling to our Second Age when the alternative is portrayed as so dismal.

But this isn't the way aging is; it's the way we think it is because the world continually tells us so. What can we do about it? Check out this month's feature article by Bill Sadler (author of "The Third Age") and the other tips below...

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH – UNKNOWN AUTHOR

"The problem with doing nothing is that you don't know when you're finished."

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- 1. FATHER WILLIAM'S MUSINGS FOR APRIL**

NEEDING TO "finish" CAN BE a second age addiction

In the incredible film "What the Bleep Do We Know?" (www.WhatTheBleep.com), scientists show how we get addicted to emotional states in the same way we get addicted to drugs. One such addictive state is needing to "know when we're finished." After we spend 3+ decades getting high on checking off the "To Do List," it should come as no surprise that "kicking the habit" will bring withdrawal symptoms with it.

Now don't get me wrong – "finishing" is as important as anything else, *but it's not more important than everything else*. Like any addiction, an obsession with "finishing" takes over our lives and makes all else secondary. We see smelling the roses, playing with children, watching a sunset or just simply "doing nothing" as "wasting time." This compulsion may have been useful when "amounting to something" was life's point, but in Third Age it becomes a real liability. Now it's time to discover who we are and how we want to use ourselves – and we don't do this hooked on "To Do Lists." As Bill Sadler's research shows, the ability to reflect is a foundational element in creating a Third Age Identity (The Eagles' Glenn Frye offered the same advice in his song "Learn to Be Still").

This month's newsletter offers possibilities for both activity and stillness. Sections 2, 3 & 5 let you see what some other Third Agers are doing on the activity front, and Sections 4 & 6 offer some rehab help for the "finishing addicted." Have a great April Fool's Day!

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH – PEGGY LEE

"Is That All There Is?"

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1. FATHER WILLIAM'S MUSINGS FOR MAY

"Is That All There Is?"

I know, I know - going AWOL for more than three weeks is no way to run a blog, and I apologize. (It's especially painful to have lost over half my readership, and I do hope you'll both come back).

But this has definitely not been a vacation! It's been a withdrawal into self that began in depression and transformed into lasting peace. It's an entirely new way of experiencing life for me and seems to be what many have found after going through a "dark night of the soul" ("the little death" that allows the personal ego to accept its true role as servant, not master). As Einstein put it:

"The intuitive mind is a sacred gift
and the rational mind is a faithful servant.
We have created a culture which honors the servant
and has forgotten the gift."

I'm now certain this "re-framing" of the relationship between personal ego and Larger Self (however you like to define it) lies at the heart of true maturity.

There's another saying from Richard Bach's "Jonathan Livingston Seagull" I've kept on my desk for thirty years hoping it would some day become true for me:

It is good to be a seeker.
But sooner or later, you have to be a finder,
and then it is well to give what you have found,
a gift into the world
for whoever will accept it.

I at last have become a finder and know my giving is to support others in their process of Third Age Transformation. The best way I know to do this is to tell my own story as simply and honestly as I can. Here's the most recent chapter...

In *The Third Age*, Bill Sadler points out how deeply we associate aging with the "D WORDS": Decline, Degeneration, Disease, Dependency, Disability and Decrepitude). Peggy Lee's wail of depression and despair ("Is That All There Is?") has echoed in me for decades. But no more. Something deep in my psyche has shifted, and what a joy it is!

I'm finally coming to my terms with the meta-paradox of having BOTH peace AND passion. As long as I can remember, I have flip-flopped between these two poles. I would pursue ecstasy until I literally blew my life apart and burned myself out, and then, in my exhaustion, I would pull back into myself hoping to find peace and healing. After a period of R&R, my life would begin to seem gray and dull, and I would bust it wide open again as my hyper-creative phase kicked in again. I learned a lot from the extremes, but they were never sustainable. I'd pretty much resigned myself to EITHER giving up the passion OR living on a roller coaster. Neither was acceptable.

For twenty years now a primary friend and teacher has been Atum O'Kane, and along the way he gave me this saying:

There's no place to go,
There's no thing to do,
Be here now,
It's all here for you...

These were not new concepts; they've been in my world since the sixties. But that's all they were – concepts. Although I'd been focusing on them for forty years, my process was "three steps forward, two steps back," and I was never able to turn them into a continuing reality for me.

In my Second Age frame, I saw "No place to go, No thing to do..." as terribly depressing and, like Peggy Lee, would despair into "Is this all there is?" It seemed life was over. There's no place worth going. There's nothing worth doing. Everything worth doing has been done and cannot be returned to. There is no "MORE" to seek for, and seeking "MORE" was what my life had always been about.

But recently I reached a "tipping point," and a Third Age frame took over. Suddenly I heard the question "Is that all there is?" in a totally new way. Now it's a portal to the freedom of BOTH peace AND passion, and I answer:

"Yes, this is absolutely all there is, and isn't it fabulous! Finally I can be at peace because everything I've been seeking is right here, right now, and I can be passionate in my embracing of it all! That's what Third Age fulfillment is all about - being passionately at peace and being peacefully passion-filled!"

Then my Doubting Thomas says, "Let's see if you think like this tomorrow..."

Well, it's been more than a week now and the insight, awareness or "new reality" has not been lost (a week of consistency is a long time for my active psyche). I enjoy whatever I'm doing immensely, whether it's chauffeuring family, reconciling credit card statements or carrying in firewood. Those concepts that have been with me for thirty years (like "Be Here Now" and "Before Enlightenment, chop wood, carry water; after Enlightenment, chop wood, carry water") are no longer unrealistic "great ideas"; they are the day-to-day life I'm living. I'd often thought I'd never experience this, and I want to share as much as I can with all who are interested.

So here's a promise. For the next month I'll regularly and honestly report on how this new life of mine is holding up. All you skeptics who know me so well can check my condition on Father William's blog:

<http://blogs.salon.com/0004489/>

P.S. If you're curious about why #3 is about golf, it's because my friend Lance sent me a nice note about the last newsletter that also said, "The only thing missing is something about golf." So, for Lance and all the rest of you links-lovers, here's to curing "The Yips"...

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH – EPICTETUS

"What concerns me is not the way things are, but rather the way people think things are."

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1. FATHER WILLIAM'S MUSINGS FOR JUNE

DOING SOMETHING ABOUT "THE WAY WE THINK THINGS ARE"

The more I live out this Third Age of mine, the more I'm sure Bill Sadler's research is right on the mark, especially his delineation of the three major tasks we face. In his book "[The Third Age](#)", he says to "graduate" from Second Age, we have to:

- 1: Change Negative Images of Aging;
- 2: Redefine Success from Achievement to Fulfillment;
- 3: Build a Third Age Identity on Paradox.

All three require profound "reframings" at deep unconscious levels. What's a "reframing"? George Lakoff, Professor of Cognitive Science and Linguistics at Berkeley, writes in his book "[Don't Think Of An Elephant!](#)":

"Frames are mental structures that shape the way we see the world. As a result, they shape the goals we see, the plans we make, the way we act, and what counts as a good or bad outcome of our actions.

"You can't see or hear Frames. They're part of what cognitive scientists call the 'cognitive unconscious' - structures in our brains that we cannot consciously access, but know by their consequences: the way we reason and what counts as common sense.

"Reframing is changing the way [we see] the world. It is changing what counts as common sense..."

Reframing is difficult and slow work. It can occur in a flash, as in instances when a near-death experience radically shifts the way one sees the world. But for most of us who are middle-class comfortable and determined to remain so, such transformative flashes will be rare. If we wish to take charge of our Frames, we will have to do the hard work of self-awareness, discernment and replacement.

SELF-AWARENESS: What are the Frames I see through now?

DISCERNMENT: Which Frames do I want to keep, which do I want to release and which do I want to create?

REPLACEMENT: How will I immerse myself in my chosen new Frames long enough for them to "take"?

In preparation for the Creative Problem Solving Institute later this month, I'll be weaving together Third Age "reframing" possibilities from Lakoff's work, Rosemund and Ben Zander's "[The Art of Possibility](#)", Malcolm Gladwell's "[Blink](#)", the film "[What the Bleep Do We Know?](#)" and others. If you're interested, follow along on Father William's blog:

<http://blogs.salon.com/0004489/>

FOR THOSE HOLDING ME TO LAST MONTH'S PROMISE...

May's Musings focused on how old FW is working out the paradox of BOTH PEACE AND PASSION. As promised, my blog reported how stable my new "serenity" was proving to be (Father William's Mental Health Report: Average Daily Score 8.3 of 10). I can't remember having a more solid month despite moving home (again) and traveling 35 hours back from NZ to Vermont's coldest, grayest May in memory. So, after a full five weeks, I can still recommend the reinterpretation of "[Is That All There Is?](#)" as a most useful reframing. With apologies to the "Serenity Prayer," here's a short version:

Grant me the PASSION to change what can be changed,
The PEACE to accept what can't,
And the WISDOM to tell the difference.

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH - PROFESSOR IRWIN COREY.

If we don't change direction soon, we'll end up where we're going."

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1. FATHER WILLIAM'S MUSINGS FOR JULY

NOTES FROM CPSI 2005

I know this newsletter is a week late, and I apologize. In way of explanation (not excuse), old Father William has been on the road since June 23 and has just gotten back to VT and his beloved broadband to send this. Besides, it's summer and you don't want to read much any way.

A main reason for the trip was to participate in CPSI (THE CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING INSTITUTE). CPSI is a community of over 500 creative, fun-loving people who've been coming together for a week learning for 51 years. (Some have actually been there every year!) Among the hundreds of offerings were: "Speed Painting" – "Team Building in the Workplace" - "Public Speaking for the Chronically Divergent" – "Living Life in the Purple Zone" – "Advanced Facilitation Skills" and "Build It and They Will Come." Nightly events included a Blues Music Bash with Big Walter and the Groove Merchants, Arts Night at Minneapolis' Walker Gallery and Dancing at the Pub until the wee hours. I got to spend most of my week with a group of challenging Third Agers who turned my head around a few times. There's just no way to convey in words the totality of the experience, so I won't even try.

What I will do is introduce you to a couple of the many amazing people I met. These two GREAT ELDERS are Mary Catherine Bateson and Dr. Dale Anderson, and they have some profound suggestions for creative greater meaning and joy in this Third Age of ours...

Love, Father William

P.S. If you've noticed July's Musings are brief as well as late, you're absolutely right. The paradox of these last two weeks is that they've been BOTH INCREDIBLY RENEWING AND DEEPLY EXHAUSTING, and, now that I'm home, I wouldn't have had it any other way!

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH – HENRY MILLER

"The world is not to be put in order; the world is order, incarnate. It is for us to harmonize with this order."

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1. FATHER WILLIAM'S MUSINGS FOR AUGUST

I've had a new realization about the structure of Third Age. It now seems to me there are at least two stages to this age and that they're sequential.

The first is coming out from under the stupifying "consensus trance" imprinted by our media/marketing culture ("stupidity" results from being in a "stupor"). In The Center's terms, this work requires doing a reasonable (not perfect) job of:

1. CHANGING NEGATIVE IMAGES OF AGING: This means helping my ego come into right relationship with the larger Self and not worry so much about its personal security, status, etc.;
2. REDEFINING SUCCESS FROM ACHIEVEMENT TO FULFILLMENT: This means knowing it all (achievement, fulfillment, whatever) comes through me, that I'm a channel, not the source and that my role is to align and cooperate, not to control and direct;
3. BUILDING A THIRD AGE IDENTITY ON PARADOX: This means remembering reality is all one and my job is to participate in the beauty available to me right here, right now.

I believe this process is very similar to what Jung meant by "individuation" and Einstein by placing "the rational mind" (the ego) in service of "the intuitive mind" (the Self). It's all about gaining the maturity and confidence to take our direction from inside rather than from the world. Once we commit to this shift*, we become able to fully access and use our enormous supply of accumulated experience and wisdom. In other words, we've graduated to another level of possibility.

While this first stage work will never be finished, I've come far enough to actually believe Third Age will be "THE BEST" part of my life yet. (I was absolutely unable to believe this four years ago!) Naturally I'm now interested in what the next stage of Third Age might offer. I believe it will open up the capability for true leadership, a leadership uncorrupted by the Deficiency-Motivated Needs of Survival, Security, Belonging and Status Abraham Maslow so brilliantly clarified.

Wouldn't that be something? To lead purely from our deepest values and guided by all our wisdom and experience! What would that kind of Third Age Leadership look like? And what might it bring to a world starving for mature confidence, strength and love?

This is what we hope The Center for Third Age Leadership will help us all learn, do and be. Next month I'll take a stab at what some aspects of such leadership might be and how we can develop them in our glorious Third Age selves...

For daily musings, go to: <http://blogs.salon.com/0004489/>

*See "Direction Shift: From Outer to Inner" at <http://www.fatherwilliam.org/stories.htm>

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THE CENTER FOR THIRD AGE NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER 2005

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1. FATHER WILLIAM'S MUSINGS FOR SEPTEMBER

My thinking about the nature of Third Age leadership keeps evolving. Here's where I've come to recently...

It seems the kind of leadership we respond to in First Age is like that of Peter Pan; it calls us to playful adventure and going beyond the boundaries set for us by well-meaning parents and teachers. Going beyond these boundaries is important to our psychological growth and movement toward independence. The difficulty comes when we haven't grown up enough to handle these ventures into the outer world and cannot find our way back (teenage pregnancy, drug abuse, gang membership, etc.) While these adventures may be fun and help us grow, following their calls is risky business and may trap us in worse situations than we left.

In Second Age I think we look for leadership that will give us security, belonging and status in the achievement-oriented world of adults. We're attracted to leaders who seem powerful, and we fervently hope some of that power will become ours. Jack Welch at GE was a prime example of this kind of leadership in our time. I trained GE managers for 20 years beginning in 1977 and loved the spirit of the company back then. I worked with third-generation employees; their grandparents had worked for GE, their parents had worked for GE and they were always going to work for GE; it was their second family and home. In 1981 Jack took over, started preaching globalization, cut almost 200,000 employees and sold any business that didn't promise being #1 or #2 in its industry. Almost overnight (2-3 years), GE went from being a community to a jungle where pure achievement, not his-

tory or loyalty, was what mattered. The phrase, "Don't tell me what you did for me yesterday - what have you done for me today?" was said often and with righteousness. The most depressing thing about it all was how immediately and eagerly the younger generation of managers embraced the culture change and how inhumane was their lack of compassion for those laid-off and sold. Obviously this was a culture change I didn't like, but GE was the most successful company in the world under Welch's leadership, so the human costs simply didn't get counted.

First Age adventure leadership and Second Age achievement leadership are both important to individual and societal development, and it seems they both often entail some pretty awful and perhaps unnecessary human costs. The questions I'm trying to raise here are:

How can mature Third Age leadership interact with and moderate less mature forms of leadership for the good of all? And how might we help Third Agers understand, prepare themselves and participate in this work?

These have long been important questions in any society, but Katrina's revelations (see next article) make them urgent for America now. Next month we'll focus on some beginning answers...

For other musings, go to: www.FatherWilliam.org

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH – MAX DEPREE

The first task of a leader is to help define reality. The last is to say 'thank you.' In between, the leader is a servant.

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1. FATHER WILLIAM'S MUSINGS FOR OCTOBER

Fifteen of us founded The Center because our world is starving for mature leadership. Isn't it amazing how much clearer that's become in the last two months? This issue of our newsletter is about the kind of leadership elders can, and, if our society is to continue, must provide.

One of my favorite books of all time is Max DePree's "Leadership Is An Art." Max is chairman emeritus of Herman Miller, Inc., a member of Fortune magazine's National Business Hall of Fame, and a recipient of the Business Enterprise Trust's Lifetime Achievement Award. He's also written "Leadership Jazz" and "Leading Without Power."

Sometimes celebrities like Max are so far away that what they do seems beyond us. This is not true of Max. Who of us in Third Age cannot "help define reality, say 'thank you' and be a servant"?

Dorie Shallcross is the kind of the leader Max is talking about, and she's one of us – down-home, local and wise. Read how she goes about her leadership in the following piece, and see if it doesn't help you know how to go about yours...

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7. THIS MONTH'S LINKS

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH – THE SAGE OF ASHEVILLE

Three kinds of people have difficulty in becoming psychotherapists: those who are highly cognitive, those who are highly extraverted, and men.

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1. FATHER WILLIAM'S MUSINGS FOR NOVEMBER

Being a man (like [The Sage of Asheville](#)), I can both share and enjoy his joke about our gender. At 67 I see some fairly clear gender differences (at least once a week my wife says to me, "I don't want you to fix it, Bill - I just want you to listen!") I can also recognize there are innumerable exceptions to these patterns at all ages.

But I want to move away from the EITHER/OR of biological realities (we are EITHER male OR female) to the BOTH/AND of psychological balance (we are BOTH Feminine AND Masculine). In fact, Third Age is a time for rebalancing our Masculine and Feminine to support the person we want to become now. Consider this story from Bill Sadler's "The Third Age":

"Barbara, a very successful woman in a male world inhibited her Feminine in order to succeed in that world. In her Third Age, she realized she needed to open to and develop her Feminine in order to claim her wholeness. Barbara was very autonomous as a young adult and went through several transformations before she uncovered a fuller femininity after turning fifty...

'I'm changing and continually discovering things in my self that amaze me. One major thing I've discovered as a woman is a kind of balance of feminine and masculine elements within myself in a way I never knew possible. My journey has been to go to the edge, and as I do I find amazing dimensions to myself.'

"After years of medical practice, she had begun to feel burned-out, angry, bitter, and even resentful. Her career had been outwardly successful but increasingly dissatisfying:

'I felt terribly trapped in medical practice and couldn't see any way out. Clients were demanding more and more, and then they would turn on you. I would put in horrendous hours and feel I was

really caring for them, and they would file malpractice and say I was deliberately trying to hurt them. It felt so unjust, and it seemed like people were trying to own me.

'I entered medicine in part because I wanted to be totally independent. In medical school I was nearly a stereotype of a male: aggressive and very competitive. In those days you had to be like that to succeed as a doctor and as a single woman in a nearly all male society.'

"While battling with mixed feelings, she discovered that she had a malignant melanoma. She believed that her body was sending her an important message. Feeling betrayed, stuck, and filled with doubts about the course of her life, she sensed that the cancer was a self-destructive way of reacting to her situation. Surgery eliminated the cancer. Reassessing her life and changing her medical practice and lifestyle addressed possible contributing factors... She also uncovered and released a hidden part of her personality to achieve greater balance:

'A major development in my midlife has been to become aware of my feminine side. Recovering a balance — between control and caring, being intellectual and emotional — is one way of viewing how I got out of the trap. I became a much more feeling person. I've realized that feelings have a very important part in medicine. You start with knowledge, but in your interaction with patients you need compassion. An emotional level of interaction is perhaps most important in treatment. By discovering my feminine side and expressing it in medicine and with friends, I've been experiencing inner movement, an awareness of being feminine and vulnerable.'

"Barbara revealed that by becoming a doctor, she had deliberately undergone an identity transformation, repressing feminine qualities and adding masculine ones:

'I used to be tougher than tough. I would never show emotions; I thought that would be a sign of weakness. Now I allow my emotions to show. The biggest risks for me are letting people see who I am. I wanted to be well thought-of and would act to please people. I still want to be well-thought-of, but I'm more concerned to express how I feel as openly as honestly as possible....'

"In her fifties Barbara began reshaping her identity as a competent woman, creatively balancing qualities that she had once thought incompatible. Through her adaptation to a very stressful situation, perhaps the most difficult in her life, she became more inwardly complex. In defining a new self, she has changed her definition of success, reaffirmed the girl within, and above all enlarged and revised her feminine self-image. She has become more of a woman than she ever had been."

The point of Barbara's story is that "The Feminine" is not just for women, and "The Masculine" is not just for men. For most people, it's initially difficult to keep the psychological qualities (Feminine and Masculine) separate from biological gender (female and male). I considered creating new words for

the qualities that were less confusing, but only briefly. Feminine and Masculine are the words Carl Jung chose to describe these psychic constellations, and what's good enough for Carl is good enough for me. (To help keep this separation clear, Feminine and Masculine are capitalized throughout.)

Separating Feminine and Masculine from gender is hard to do, especially if your conditioning imprinted you to believe Feminine means "weak and needy" and Masculine means "dumb and boorish." To become whole, we have to develop both our Feminine and Masculine resources. While it may seem obvious qualities like "responds" (Feminine) and "initiates" (Masculine) are equally available to both women and men, our cultural conditioning can make this hard to remember.

I'm finding the need for this rebalancing my Feminine and Masculine showing up in a fundamental way. For me, Third Age is a time of seeking a new identity appropriate to this time in life. What it's taken me a few years to recognize is that my process of seeking itself needs significant rebalancing.

During Second Age, my seeking, like Barbara's, was extremely Masculine and chose metaphors for itself like pioneer, explorer, knight on a quest, etc. I have run up against the limits of Masculine seeking. Deciding where I need to go and "making it happen" are no longer so appropriate. Exercising control is no longer the relevant technology. It's now time to "let it happen." This is the more Feminine form of seeking. For me, it has involved withdrawing from the Second Age world, letting go of fear (and the control fear necessitates) and opening to whatever is – and I'm finding it a slow and difficult process. As Eliot wrote in *The Four Quartets*:

In order to arrive at what you do not know
 You must go by a way which is the way of ignorance.
In order to possess what you do not possess
 You must go by the way of dispossession.
In order to arrive at what you are not
 You must go through the way in which you are not.
And what you do not know is the only thing you know
And what you own is what you do not own
And where you are is where you are not.

But now that I finally know I don't know my way into true Elderhood, I'm slowly accepting I must "go through the way in which I am not." For me, that seems to have a much larger Feminine component than my Second Age life prepared me for.

This issue of the CTAL Newsletter has a couple of pieces that help expand the meaning of the Feminine. The "Presence" review that follows offers a logical map for putting the Feminine "let it happen"

at the center of the Masculine “make it happen” achievement process. The “Women Beyond 50” article opens possibilities for sexuality my mother never had a shot at...

For more on Feminine/Masculine and other stuff, go to: www.FatherWilliam.org

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THE CENTER FOR THIRD AGE NEWSLETTER - DECEMBER 2005

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH – MARY PARKER FOLLETT

“Unity, not uniformity, must be our aim. We attain unity only through variety. Differences must be integrated, not annihilated not absorbed.”

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1. FATHER WILLIAM’S MUSINGS FOR DECEMBER

Happy Holidays! This is the season of good will, peace and, hopefully, greater unity among all, difficult as that may be in some of our small family units, much less between nations and ideologies. For me, good will, peace and unity are functions of Spirit, and that incredibly complex and often divisive subject will be the focus of these December musings (which, of course, are personal and not necessarily shared by my colleagues).

Back to Spirit. Yes, the capitalization is intentional because I'm talking about something larger than human. I know this will be troublesome for some, but it's also the season of charity, so I hope you'll grant me a little. Spirit is a tricky business. For the last forty years I've been successful as a teacher and consultant by carefully naming my spiritual work in secular terms. My attitude was, "I'll call it whatever you need to call it, but, whatever that is - Teambuilding, Conflict Resolution, Leadership Development, Creativity Training or Visioning - the work will still be about being truer to ourselves and to our connection with Spirit." I no longer want to camouflage the essence with acceptable names.

It's also silly not to talk about Spirit when we're in the Third Age. By this time we know we really are going to die and that this occasion may not be so far off. At 67 I have a number of close friends who have gone on. Likewise, I could leave this plane at any time. I want to think about what the possibilities are.

So far, I don't have any definite answers, but I do see some interesting options. I'm certainly not the first to see these, and it's reassuring that others I admire have seen them before me. The rest of this newsletter is about the consideration of some of those possibilities...

2. YES, VIRGINIA, THERE IS A SANTA CLAUS! is a wonderful piece written over a hundred years ago about how we might find Spirit in our daily lives, especially during this holiday season.

3. JEWISH WITH FEELING: A GUIDE TO MEANINGFUL PRACTICE is "without question the best, most readable introduction to Reb Zalman's philosophy of Judaism; it is also, in this reviewer's experience, the best 'beginner's guide to Jewish spirituality' available today."

4. THE PRESENT NEED OF THE WORLD is also almost a century old and as relevant today as then. Especially powerful for me is the notion of how organized religions have mistaken their individual notes for the much greater Music (Spirit) of which they are only one form of expression.

5. THE HALL OF LIGHT takes us even further out. For those of you who love great fantasy like "The Lord of the Rings" and "Harry Potter," I've found another. Katherine Kerr's "Deverry Epic" begins with this amazing description of the journey of reincarnation – of being drawn again from the world of Spirit down into the world of flesh.

6. THE JOURNEY & THE WILD DIVINE is an amazing piece of software that will let you, in Reb Zalman's words, "Try this. If you feel it as a living reality, we're getting somewhere."

I would really like feedback about this newsletter because what's capturing my heart and attention may not be relevant, or even appropriate, to many of you. If so, I and The Center for Third Age

Leadership need to know that. Please send any thoughts or suggestions you have to:
FatherWilliam@ThirdAgeCenter.com

Thanks for being part of us and have a wonderful holiday season in whatever ways you celebrate...

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