Aging Gracefully

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Out of nowhere my daughter told me a few months ago that the fine lines under my chin are more visible now-a-days. For a moment I didn't know how to respond. I was a little baffled and perhaps made a little apprehensive by such an honest comment. Quickly I flashed a big smile and told her, "I've noticed those lines too. I simply cannot stop the natural aging process!" Then we had a hilarious discussion as to how all the wrinkles can go away just by waving a magic wand. "How?" I asked. "Well, of course for starters you will need plastic surgery," she said. "What! Me having plastic surgery? So that I can look a few years younger? No way!" My daughter felt a little embarrassed for putting me on the spot. She then advised that a short and hip hair cut, and a pair of high end designer eyeglasses will do the trick for now. For the last couple of years for Mother's Day my daughter has given me anti-aging skin care products. I think being an only child, at some level fear has set in that her mother is aging. If I use anti-aging products that vouch for retaining the youthful look, they may add to my longevity.

For now, there is not a single grey hair on my head that's visible. Why would I need plastic surgery? The only way I will consider myself a senior is when I get my official senior discount card and that's quite a few years away. With my turning the big fifty, the AARP magazine (the syndicated official magazine for people over age fifty) has started arriving in my mailbox. I tell myself that it must be for my husband. I collect it from the box, and once inside the house, I put it on the nightstand on his side of the bed. Call it denial, but I am not ready to ride the senior wagon yet. The AARP magazine is filled with all the health tips, such as how to make hearty chicken and noodle casserole in minutes, so that the seniors have a lot of time to participate in other activities. They advertise additional health care coverage that is not normally covered by Medicare or Medicaid. The magazine features all the senior "doers, dreamers and pioneers," making a difference in their lives or the lives of others. They interview famous people, from legendary Quincy Jones to actress Glenn Close, who are dedicating time and effort in helping impoverished children around the world and breaking the stigma of mental illness. These are all noble causes, right? But somehow I turn away from this magazine. It makes me a little depressed, especially when I see all the 'before-and-after' surgery photos. I feel similarly when I watch the announcement of Digital TV's transition deadline being extended into the summer. After all, in this day and age, who has analog/non-digital TV except a handful of seniors? After flipping through a few pages and seeing the ads for affordable ideas in long term care insurance for terminally ill patients, I had enough of that magazine. I threw it away, put on my walking shoes and baseball cap, and took a brisk walk towards the coffee shop. What happened there was an eye opener. When I paid for my coffee it seemed that the Pakistani cashier charged me a little less than usual. I

