



Breaking the retirement myth EMBRACING A SECOND INNINGS

Iris Apfel was one of my favourite celebrities. Apfel was an American textile expert and interior designer by profession. I became a fan when she became popular as a fashion guru for her eccentric style and devil-may-care attitude for signing a modelling contract at age 97. Her outlook on ageing and work was inspiring — “I think retiring at any age is a fate worse than death. Just because a number comes up doesn’t mean you have to stop” — she once stated in a magazine interview.

Her big, round, black-rimmed glasses, bright red lipstick, and bold choice of colours and accessories implied originality and she dared to carry it all so elegantly. Her tagline, “More is more and less is a bore,” attracted millions of followers on Instagram and TikTok.

She never retired and died at the age of 102, enjoying her work fully until her last day. Her assertive perspective on what should be the ideal working years, got me thinking. This freedom of choice can be liberating but what she could do in her society is not achievable in ours. We tend to look at retired people with pity and as a burden.

Honestly, I hate to think that way.

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