

## **Life Envisioning - The Reunion of Past, Present & Future**

As we approach the final pages of Aging Consciously, we want to give you the opportunity to have a conversation with three essential aspects of yourself - your youthful self, your present self and your future self. So in the next process we are going to bring these various aspects together and give you the opportunity to integrate them.

Here again, you can read this guided process all the way through and then turn on some music, close your eyes and retrace the steps as best as you can. You can also do the process as you read along or invite someone else to read it to you as you lean back in your chair and close your eyes. Whatever method you select, please

*Settle comfortably into your chair – easy now*

*let the chair support your body*

*and your body support you*

*and give you peace*

*as you begin to notice the natural rhythm of your breath.*

*Quietly now, focus on the steady flow of air*

*coming into your body, and going out of your body,*

*and with each breath rest in the present moment.*

*As thoughts come up, just let them drift from view*

*and instead follow your own breath -- in and out*

*in and out and now let us begin this wonderful journey....*

*Come with me now,  
follow my voice to a place that will be very familiar to you...  
walking now, through a quiet forest on a still day...  
All around you are tall, old trees –  
the kind a young child would take delight in;  
all the gentle giants offering their shade and pine needles to play in –  
the kind an older person would go to to remember  
the great mysteries and simple truths of Life...*

*Walking, walking along a path that  
hasn't been trodden much of late...  
through this wise forest...  
deeper now, into the woods.  
You notice the subtleties of the creatures here...  
a squirrel heralding your arrival;  
the cry of a hawk in the distance...  
and you keep walking –  
the path is easy and smooth –  
there is no hurry. No one hurries in this forest.*

*Step follows step,*

*breath follows breath  
and you notice up ahead,  
just a little ways up, there's a fork  
a turn in the path...really, there are two paths...  
the one to the right more traveled,  
the one to the left hardly noticeable...*

*You choose the one on the left...  
you keep walking...  
effortlessly, as though you have always known this path...  
not much further ahead  
you see a bit of sunlight filtering onto the trail...  
there's some kind of opening there...  
so you go on, to find out about it.*

*Yes, there, standing in the space  
where the light splashes the trail,  
the warmth is good...and you are content...  
but you see a bigger opening still,  
just there, a few more steps ahead...  
and you go a little off the path to peer  
at what is just the other side of that big tree...*

*A clearing...yes, a lovely, small clearing...  
and in the center of that open space,  
to your surprise and delight...there is a house...  
a lovely, simple house with rockers on the front porch...  
it's a friendly place...you can tell.  
Somebody takes good care of this place...  
it has good bones. The windows and doors are open...  
but you cant' tell who's home it is...  
and you're curious, so you decide to at least walk up  
to the porch and find out if anybody's home...*

*Such a familiar place...  
there at the front door, you listen...  
no sounds of people or pets...  
just the easy buzzing of bees along the honeysuckle vine...  
and this feeling that you 'know' this place...*

*After a few moments of scanning the details of the place...  
the simple farmhouse table in the dining room...  
with a pair of half-burnt candles in the center;  
the well-worn, overstuffed chair in the living room;*

*the occasional drip of water from the kitchen faucet...  
you decide to go in...and as you cross the threshold,  
in a funny kind of way, you feel like you're home.*

*In front of you is a simple hallway  
with a bookshelf and a chair just next to a closed door...  
there on that bookshelf you are amazed to find  
a whole array of photographs – such familiar photographs...  
your photos...your family, your friends...  
oh, there you are...very small; and there –  
that one to your left – there, yes, that's you...  
you a handful of years from now...*

*You realize— this is a very special place...  
and something compels you to open the door...  
these photos, so accurate, so real, so confirming...  
this is your life...*

*Through this open door, you walk now...  
to find out more about this house that holds so much for you...*

*There before you is a magnificent, beautiful thing...*

*so startling, really, it's the only thing in the room...  
leaning easily against the strong wall –  
there, in the far left corner of the room – an elegant, mirror...  
probably 8 feet tall and 6 feet wide...  
framed with a gold leaf frame...  
and looking back at you from the mirror,  
there is this face you know so well...  
how simple and stark, and clear...  
here in this welcoming space...here you are.*

*You see yourself here as if for the first time.  
Those eyes...windows to your soul  
that have witnessed exquisite joy and intolerable sorrows...  
the same eyes that have wept at the beauty of creation  
and burned with the frustrations of unanswered questions...  
Those shoulders that have carried dreams –  
and burdens, felt the wind in summer and been soaked in the rain...  
Your hands...that have touched children's faces  
and grasped for love when it felt like it might be leaving...  
Those feet, that have walked so many, many miles.  
Been on holy ground, been tired...been steady...  
So beautiful you are...standing here...You.*

*It's been so quiet here...and peaceful...  
and you're startled to hear somewhere nearby,  
yes, nearer even now...the sounds of a child's laughter –  
the sound of a child, yes...coming into the house...  
ever so quietly now almost like a game of hide and seek...  
tip toes, you start to turn away from the mirror...  
but before you can, this little person slips through the doorway  
and playfully calls your name...and lovingly...  
so happy to see you...this young child comes to you  
and hugs you around your legs...  
giggling...relaxed, as though they had known  
all along that you would come here to meet them...  
and as children do, they look now to the mirror and say to you,  
'Look! Here we are!' And you, realizing with amazement,  
how true – yes! 'Here we are' – for this little child  
is one you know so well...so very well...this little one is you.*

*Marveling at this magic house,  
you reach down to lift the child into your arms  
and as you do, you notice a slight opening of the door...  
a shaft of light from the hallway...*

*and there are the slow, deliberate steps --  
the steps of an elder...an elder who has come to this place  
after waiting a long, long time for your arrival...  
one with clear vision and a longing to visit with you.  
For this is the most important visit you may have ever had...*

*The child is in your arms, still...  
and this Old One laughs a contented laugh...  
and the child too...they so love one another,  
know each other so well...  
and now this wise ancient soul  
takes a place just next to you...an arm around you...  
and with the reverence reserved for great rituals,  
you look into this Old One's eyes...  
you rest in the bliss of a homecoming to this great soul...  
and you look back into the mirror now,  
and witness the whole picture...  
you are all here – you are complete...  
all that you've ever longed to remember  
from the time you were so very small is here  
in your embrace...and the ache you have had  
from your first breath for the wise one*

*who knows what to do even in the dark...  
this ache is satisfied...because you are safely supported,  
completely loved --deeply known.  
And you, you as you are in this moment...  
there you are in the mirror too.  
In all your human-ness,  
all your longing, your wishes and wants...  
here you are – all of you*

*And as you stand before yourself,  
you witness an amazing thing...  
a miracle you will know for always...  
as the little one nestles into your arms,  
their warmth radiates into you...  
and your face lightens...  
and any aches you'd carried in from your walk  
in the forest fade away...  
and as your older sage self rests  
in the silence of deepest love,  
standing there, just next to you –  
ever so slightly leaning into your shoulder,  
you relax in the deepest core of your being...*

*You take a breath...all three of you in the mirror –  
You...and a breeze flutters in through the curtains...  
look out the open window  
and follow that breath from the sky –  
and the moving leaves on that tree branch...  
and as easily as it came, the breeze fades away...  
so your gaze returns to the mirror – to you...  
and now, this face looking back at you makes a smile...  
and it turns into a grin and a chuckle, now...  
because you get it ...  
you understand fully...  
that little one, and the old wise one...  
they are still here,  
but they are not as they were before...*

*Your own feet feel happier...  
your heart feels wiser...  
there is a wonder in the way you know the world...  
an innocence you thought you'd lost long ago...  
a peace you have never known quite this way.*

*You are all accounted for...and you are home.*

*It is time now to rest...*

*to find a good place to sit for a while...*

*to hold these great mysteries in your heart...*

*So you spend a few more moments there  
remembering the lines of your face in this mirror,  
and when you are ready,  
you turn and exit this inner sanctum...  
slowly walking down the hall,  
past the photos on the bookshelf,  
down the hall...and there, you notice it .  
That chair – the one that looks just right for you.*

*And you sit. You rest a while...*

*you stay with yourself...*

*And you breathe quietly...*

*still aware of the sounds around you...*

*Easy now...coming back into the experience of this space...*

*Following our words back into this room.*

