



OBAMA — Hopefully, *The Restorer*. All hail. (That includes you, O great ungrammatical, unwashed, and omnipresent Teapartyers.)

Barack Obama is the statesman-president who can save America and the world from fascistic corporate rule and lead us out of war, as the revolutionist Robert Kennedy would have done forty years earlier had he not been assassinated.

See **“TEAPARTYERS”**

OLD — As the lamentive Yiddish saying goes, too soon old; too late smart (or, in the vernacular, “*shmart*”).

See **AGED SAGES; Old Men**

The **OLD CRUSADER’S CREDO** —

If I engage in the Crusade, follow me.
If I hesitate in the Crusade, push me.
If I should err in the Crusade, correct me.
If I should falter in the Crusade, uplift me.
If I’m unaware in the Crusade, inform me.
If I should betray the Crusade, kill me.
If I should hunger in the Crusade, feed me.
If I need aid in the Crusade, assist me.
If I should die in the Crusade, remember me!

—Author unknown (adapted from
The Window 2 My Soul, the memoirs
of my young crusading comrade
Yusef Shakur—www.yusefshakur.com)

OLD FOOL — The saddest kind.

As the saying goes, "There's no fool like an *old* fool." (Except an *older* one.)

OLD GOAT — See **CODGER**; **COOT**

The **OLD MAN'S ALL-TIME HEROES** — Old Satchel Paige (may have been fifty when he finally got his chance to pitch in the major leagues), Old Archie Moore (won the light-heavyweight title at forty), Old George Foreman (regained the heavyweight title at nearly forty-six), historian Will Durant (still wrote and lectured into his 90s), octogenarian architect Frank Lloyd Wright, Will Robinson (assistant general manager of the Detroit Pistons when he was in his 90s), Detroit Red Wing Gordie Howe (played during five decades in the NHL), George Burns (made a booking for his 100th birthday at ninety-six), ninety-six-year-old Detroit activist Grace Lee Boggs, painter Grandma Moses (absolutely), and Clara Peller ("Where's the *beef* ?!")

Also Methuselah (*particularly* Methuselah!).

See **GRACE LEE BOGGS**; **Old Women**

The **OLD MAN'S BEST TEACHERS** — His *mistakes*.

The **Old Man's FIRST AXIOM** — "What will ultimately kill you is not what you're eating, but what's eating *you*."

This is true at *any* age but particularly among oldsters, whose aging nervous systems are more physically vulnerable to emotional stress.

The **Old Man's SECOND AXIOM** — "Don't drink and drive."

Have you ever tried to turn a car while holding a martini? (Actually, some half-blind old geezers shouldn't be driving at all.)

The **Old Man's THIRD AXIOM** — "Avoid *surgery*" (unless you're a surgeon).

My recently departed and revered friend Mel L. Barclay, M.D., once told the story of the venerable sawbones the nurses dubbed "*Dr. Whoopsy*"

(not to his face). When Dr. Whoopsy cut and sawed a tad too deep, "Whoopsy!" was his customary comment, whereupon his *whoopsied* victim frequently took flight to a better world. 'Twas well past time for Dr. Whoopsy to retire.

Indeed, surgical errors are increasing. The Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations has patient-safety tips on its website at www.jcaho.org.

The **Old Man's FOURTH AXIOM** — "Avoid *shrinks*."

Psychiatrists *have* successfully "shrunk" some patients' noggins. My old buddy Mackie went to one for five years, and five years ago Big Mack wouldn't even answer his phone. Now he answers it whether it rings or not.

Also, his ears are stuck together, with what's left of his brain poking up out of the top of his head.

The **Old Man's "FRIENDS"** — Old "Al Hymer" hangs around the Old Man more and more often. "Will Power" helps the Old Man get out of bed. "John" is where the Old Man spends a lot of quality time sitting reading the newspaper. When "Charlie Horse" is around, he takes a lot of the Old Man's time and attention, and the Old Man spends some time with "Ben Gay" then, too. When "Charlie" leaves, "Arthur Ritis" shows up and stays the rest of the day.

(This item comes courtesy of my fellow *Michigan Chronicle* columnist, the erudite Hugh Burrell.)

The **Old Man's GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT** — *Survival*.

The **Old Man's GREATEST FEAR** — To become *irrelevant*.

The **Old Man's GREATEST MASTERPIECE** — His *next* one.

The **Old Man's LIQUID VIAGRA** — For pouring himself a *stiff* one.

The **Old Man's MOST PRECIOUS POSSESSION** — *His health.*

He who has *health*, has *hope*—and he who has hope, has *everything*.
(Arabian proverb.)

See **HOPE**

The **Old Man's SECRETS AND ADVICE FOR CONNUBIAL BLISS** — First, stay *healthy*. Play Scrabble together. Write poetry to each other. Don't get fat (unless your spouse prefers that you have a lot of meat on your bones—and then don't get morbidly *obese*).

Also, don't drink to excess (alcohol has ruined millions of marriages). Arrive at an agreement regarding how the money is to be managed, and by whom. Take your meals *together* at home and dine out together frequently if you can afford it. Share with or read to each other things that you find interesting. Take turns choosing what movies and television shows you're going to see, and then watch television together, attend movies and plays and concerts together, and frequently visit libraries and bookstores together. Shop for food, clothing, cars, and furniture together. Take walks and bicycle rides in the woods together. Volunteer for worthy causes together. If you are church-going folk, attend church together.

Further, socialize with each others' friends and family, and try not to *criticize* each others' friends and family. Also, try not to be *moody*. Cultivate an interest in your spouse's interests—and find hobbies or activities for mutual involvement. Attend most of each others' functions (even if they bore you). Conversely, allow each other a little time and space to be alone to “do your own thing.”

Never hold grudges toward each other—and never, *ever* play The “Blame Game.”

Moreover, never criticize each other to third parties—always keep a united front to the world. Praise each other *to* each other—as well as to the *world*. Never use the silent treatment as punishment—always talk things out. Also, don't raise your voices to each other or *interrupt* each other—and *listen* to each other with your *hearts*. (Make love a lot via a *variety* of techniques, too.)

Finally and above all, *never* go to bed *angry*—or *alone* (or with *anyone else*).

See The **“BLAME GAME”**

The **Old Man's SECRETS AND ADVICE FOR LOSING WEIGHT HEALTHFULLY** —

Exercise regularly. Eat spicy foods if you can tolerate them (it makes you eat slower). Eat smaller portions. Eat rice and beans (low in fat, high in fiber, and they stabilize blood-sugar levels). Avoid seeds, rice, and corn on the cob if you have diverticulitis.

Fast occasionally. Eat *out* less: cook and eat healthier food at home. Eat fresh fruit and vegetables and fish and nuts. Use plain vinegar for salad dressing. Always eat breakfast. Poach or boil your eggs, and avoid pork sausage and red meat. Eat turkey bacon—and beef ribs in moderation. Eat one bar of dark chocolate per week.

Exercise regularly following meals, and consider taking up Nordic walking (an activity that involves using walking poles for a full-body workout). Eat a daily bowl of muesli (oats, fruit, and nuts—it digests slowly and makes you feel fuller longer). Raise your own garden vegetables.

Make lunch your largest meal (rather than dinner, which is the last meal before bedtime). In fact, if you can, eat just one full meal per day, and instead of having the other two meals, snack on whole grain crackers, sugarless cereals, raw carrots, radishes, asparagus, potatoes (including the skin), apples (including the skin), pieces of orange, and non-hothouse tomatoes or cherry tomatoes.

Get fifteen minutes of sun every day if you're in a climate where you can, and if you *can't* (or even if you *can*), take 1,000 IU of vitamin D and 1,000 mg of calcium on a daily basis. Also, drink a glass of low-fat milk and take an aspirin every day. Drink lots of water, and go very easy on drinks containing alcohol, except for one glass of red wine with an aspirin before bedtime.

Following the counsel contained in these secrets will facilitate living well and long.

See **Old Men's EASY TECHNIQUE FOR LOSING WEIGHT WITHOUT EVER GETTING OUT OF BED** and **SECRETS OF THE CENTENARIANS**

The **Old Man's SECRETS AND ADVICE FOR STAYING OUT OF DEBT** —

Maintain a budget and stick to it. *Save*. Travel very *little*. Don't take expensive trips, and reside as close to your work as you can.

Also, take advantage of today's attractive real estate bargains, and establish equity in a home. If you already *have* a home and your mortgage is "under water," re-negotiate it. If you're a senior citizen who owns a home and has considerable equity in it, get a "reverse mortgage" for a lifelong source of income.

Hire a trusted expert to manage your investments. Buy "off brands" rather than "name brands." Don't use a debit card; if someone steals the number and empties your bank account, you have no recourse. Use a credit card, but have only one—and *always pay it off in full every month*. That keeps you out of debt and also builds up your credit rating.

Buy previously-owned late-model cars for *cash*. Shop in thrift stores. Don't make loans to relatives or friends.

Never own a big boat. (Take it from Your Auld Author—the maintenance and docking costs are *astronomical*, and so is the cost of gas.) Instead, rent one for an occasional afternoon of cruising, book an occasional passage on a cruise ship, or go for rides on your friends' boats and help them pay for the fuel (and/or get yourself a little pedal boat and pedal it on a little lake).

old men (not capitalized) — Ordinary, mediocre, uninspiring *hombres* who guzzle lots of beer, watch lots of football from their easy chairs, and envy productive Old Men's success. (Not that there's anything wrong with an Aged Sage drinking beer or watching football now and then—even if he's a *Lions* fan.)

See **Old Men**

Old Men (with a capital "O" and "M") — Aged Sages: The Old and Wise.

Sadly, Old Men real and true *per this* timelessly *authoritative source's definition* of them are relatively *rare*. Thus, we oldsters are a precious resource, but we are often ignored by the young and not-yet-wise or *never-to-become-wise*. We are Super-Sagacious cosmic beings made of thinking, breathing *star stuff* who yet remain *miraculously alive* late in life for a far-too-infinitesimal flicker of cosmic time.

Old Men know and can teach young men and women much of what's written here, and much more. Conversely, many *unwise and chronologically old* men—in contrast to those Men who are wise through experience as well as being chronologically *Old with a capital "O"*—don't, can't, and probably never will.

Also per this definition, we wise, witty, well-seasoned Old Men are what *young men* ultimately can become if they live *long* enough—and live *receptively* enough.

See **Old Women**

Old Men's CHILDHOODS AND YESTERYEARS OF YOUTH — Dimly glimmering, dream-driven moonscapes.

These yesteryears are veritable lost worlds peopled reflectively by hordes of loved ones long dead. Yet, Old Men's memories can breathe into those lost loved ones the miraculous breath of life once again and bring them into the resurgent sunlight of our minds' eyes and our recollective reveries.

Beloved cousins Carl and Dick, can we truly play "war" in the woods just one time again, or dive for turtles at Sand Lake? Carl is gone—but at this writing Dick and I still can, *in our minds' eyes*.

Beloved Cliff and Ralph and "Bullet" Billy, can we relive those victorious big-time relay races again? Cliff and "Bullet" Billy are gone, but Ralph and I can, *in our mind's eyes*.

When Old Men and Old Women consciously relive their many triumphs and joys in their mind's eyes, it wondrously warms their Old Bones.

See **MEMORIES**

Old Men's EASY TECHNIQUE FOR LOSING WEIGHT WITHOUT EVER GETTING OUT OF BED — Healthful, enjoyable, and natural, O.M.E.T.F.L.W. Without Ever G.O.O.B. is an *extremely pleasurable technique* that stretches the muscles, accelerates the heart rate, and uses up calories.

If you're a reasonably comely female who would like to learn more about this technique, send me your letter of inquiry and resumé (and picture),

and maybe we'll go on tour demonstrating it—if you pass the blood test. (Just *kidding*, Gina. *Ouch!*—Hey, I *said* I was *kidding*, didn't I?)

Old Men's SPIRITS — The principal animating essence that pervades and tempers Old Men's thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Old Men know that our *spirits* never grow old. Wrinkles may be written upon our brows, but never upon our *hearts* (or our *behinds*).

OLD POET — An Aged Sage with a lyrical bent who harbors a fierce heart.

The *old poet's* therapeutic poeticizing can help to heal intense emotional and psychological wounds both in himself/herself and *in those who read and digest his/her verse*. Old poets who have suffered viscerally can initiate deep healing and change.

OLD VIOLINS — “The older the violin, the sweeter the music.”

This is true of the *violinist* as well! (Note: Your Auld Author has been a violinist for sixty-six years, and sweet sounds still sing from his trusty old fiddle—especially at Christmastime.)

See The **VIOLIN**

old women (not capitalized) — Aged *non-Sages*.

See **Old Women**

Old Women (with a capital “O” and “W”) — Aged Sages—the wise and sacred counterpart of and complement to Old Men.

A rare W.O.W. prototype of the author's acquaintance is ninety-six-year-old Grace Lee Boggs (www.boggscenter.org), the Asian-American widow of Jimmy Boggs, a lauded African-American civil rights activist. Grace Lee Boggs still lives at this writing in her decaying eastside Detroit neighborhood despite her national celebrity status among civil libertarians. For three-quarters of a century, Grace Lee Boggs has been

an implacable foe of the materialistic culture, the inequitable distribution of wealth and opportunity, and the emphasis on celebrity in every part of our society.

See **MINISTER MARY EDWARDS; WISE OLD WOMEN (W.O.W.)**

OLDER — You've never been *older* than *you* are today. (Think about it.)

OLDEST — So far this is the *oldest* you've ever been—but hopefully, not the oldest you'll ever be!

(Personally, in the spring of 2008, Your Auld Author *reveled* in his septuagenarian status as the oldest educator working full-time in the beleaguered and desperately needful Detroit Public Schools.)

OLDSTER — A “senior citizen.”

Note to Republicans: This word is not to be confused with “roadster” or “holster.”

See **ELDER** (*noun*)

OPINION — Something that almost *never changes* about *anything* among the *foolish* and the *close-minded* (right, Repubs?).

OPPORTUNITY — An entity ordinarily to be *seized* the instant it materializes. (*Carpé diem!*)

Nonetheless, many Old Men have agonizingly learned at some point in time that when opportunity knocks, it isn't always *safe* to open the door.

Down a darker avenue, *opportunity* is also the major engine that drives destructively adulterous behavior in married males—and *stealing another man's wife* is a despicable theft. (See **ADULTERY**)

See **CYNIC, CYNICISM; SECURITY**

OPTIMISM, OPTIMIST — Optimism *exemplified* and *personified* was Old George Burns at ninety-six booking the gig for his 100th birthday, or any opponent of Sugar Ray Robinson between 1940 and 1950 who imagined that he might be able to pull off an unlikely upset.

When an optimist's alarm clock jars him awake at six o'clock on a gusty week-day winter morning, he awakens, throws open the window, and shouts, "Good morning, God!"—in contrast with the pessimist, who opens his eyes at six a.m. and moans, "Good God, morning!"

Like Voltaire's *Candide*, the *optimist* maintains that we dwell in the *best of all possible days*, and the pessimist is certain that the *worst of all possible days* is nonetheless about to *dawn*.

See **PESSIMIST**

ORGASM — Old Men and Old Women know that ultra-orgasmic places can be reached and touched in the *mind* as well as the body. For many old (and young) poets or poets-at-heart, writing or discovering the *perfect poem* approaches an orgasmic level of intensity; many old jocks recall that a *sweet victory* can actually *surpass* it.

So, too, for social activists, can the successful subversion of an *unjust system*.

See **COME** (*verb*); **GRAND-DADDY**

OUTER SPACE AND THE NEAREST PLANETS — Inevitably, the next victims of *urban sprawl*.

OWL — A poor, put-upon feathered creature that old Cowboy Earl caught out on the prairie one night and had his way with when the sheep were skittish.

Cowboy Earl's sidekick Cowboy Clem remarked to him the next morning, "Earl, iffen y'all don't tell nobody 'bout me and that purty little heifer, ah won't tell nobody 'bout you and the owl."

See **SHEEP** (*noun, singular and plural*)

OXYMORON — A contradiction in terms. Example: “*Productive committee.*”

To quote A. *Nonni Mouse*, that wry and oft-cited old rodent: “To get something done, a committee should consist of three members, two of whom are *absent.*”

Further examples of oxymorons: “Sweet sorrow” (from Shakespeare’s *MacBeth*—right, Republicans?), *jumbo shrimp*, *honest lawyer*. . . .

(Yes, I know—you megalomorononic Repubs thought oxymoron meant “a dumb ox,” right?)

“Sweet sorrow” wasn’t really from *MacBeth*, either—it was from *Hamlet*, right?

(Actually, “sweet sorrow” really was from *Romeo and Juliet*. I’m telling you suspicious GOP fellers the *truth* this time—honest!)

See **ANONYMOUS**

The **OZONE LAYER** — A very thin, frighteningly *fragile* layer of oxygen in the outer stratosphere at an elevation of about twenty miles.

There’s a huge and growing *hole* in the *ozone layer* generated by the carbon-emitting gases from the giant industries of greedy corporate moguls and from the cars and trucks that we all ride in to work every day, and from the aircraft that some of us fly in *almost* every day back and forth across the country and throughout our ever acceleratively *warming* globe.

See **AL GORE**