



good times

Baby boomers have discovered that with age comes wisdom — and perhaps a better shot at happiness too

BY DR. ART HISTER



(balding) head wondering.

Well, it's not bad news for us, of course, my fellow boomers, but it is bad news for those come-behind-us Gen-Xers who won't really have a shot at happiness, this survey seems to say, until they finally inherit everything we baby boomers leave them. Assuming, of course, that we don't figure out a way to take it all with us. And we will, we will.

Anyway, the big question is this: why this happiness age gap? Because if you

Also, by your mid-50s, the kids have likely left home and if you're lucky (or if you changed the locks), they haven't returned — yet.

Surveys also show that if you have a partner, your relationship is best in your 50s, since you've both likely accepted that hey, that's all he's going to be and that's (sort of) okay.

All of which means that unlike a 20- or 30-something who still believes in Santa to fulfill their dreams and who spends lots of time worrying

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believe the advertising, youth trumps everything.

The survey wasn't set up to answer that question, but even a little bit of thought provides some obvious answers.

First, of course, is that you become much more comfortable with who you are as you age. After we've hit our peak midlife years, most of us have accepted that we won't become the world's best violinist or a third-line centre on the Canucks, or even a mid-level bureaucrat at the Ministry for Silly Walks. And that's okay because we'd rather be barbecuing than barging up the career ladder.

about why those dreams have not come true, by midlife, you've pretty much stopped worrying about the things you know you cannot change: Greenpeacers will forever be standing outside your favourite store haranguing you to sign petitions that never change anything, newspapers will never have anything worth reading and, of course, the Canucks will never win the Cup.

Those of us over 50 can be happy with that. Besides, we're too busy sleeping to really care. ■

A recent telephone survey of nearly 350,000 Americans was the proverbial good news/bad news report, all depending on your point of view, and even more, on your age.

So, if you ask me, as a person who was at Woodstock and who saw **Janis Joplin** in concert

— live, folks, and not on YouTube — the good news is that if you believe this survey, real happiness only hits you in your 50s. The even better news is that it builds from there, so if one's health stays intact, the happiest people are those between roughly 50 and 75 (or even a bit older).

So where's the bad news? Every baby boomer must now be scratching his

Dr. Art Hister is a medical writer and health analyst for Global TV and Corus Radio.