

DECREASE

Aging, Autumn, Decay, Decline and Twilight

1. ESSENCE

- 955 Age carries all things away, even the mind.
Vergil (B.C. 70-19)
- 956 Old age is an incurable disease.
Seneca (B.C. 3-65 A.D.)
- 957 All human things are subject to decay.
Dryden (1631-1700)
- 958 Old age is an island surrounded by death.
Juan Montalvo (1832-1889)

2. OPPOSITES

- 959 Old things are always in good repute,
present things in disfavor.
Tacitus (55-117 A.D.)
- 960 As we grow old we become both more foolish and more wise.
La Rochefoucauld (1613-1680)
- 961 We hope to grow old, yet we fear old age; that is,
we are willing to live, and afraid to die.
La Bruyere (1645-1696)
- 962 Every man desires to live long; but no man would be old.
Swift (1667-1745)
- 963 As we advance in life the circle of our pains enlarges,
while that of our pleasures contracts.
Anne Swetchine (1782-1857)
- 964 Heaven gives our days of failing strength
Indemnifying fleetness
And those of youth a seeming length
Proportioned to their sweetness.
Thomas Hood (1798-1845)
- 965 Forty is the old age of youth; fifty the youth of old age.
Victor Hugo (1802-1885)

966 Youth is fair, a graceful stag,
Leaping, playing in a park
Age is gray, a toothless hag,
Stumbling in the dark.

Isaac L. Peretz (1852-1915)

967 The young feel tired at the end of an action;
The old at the beginning.

T. S. Eliot (1888-1965)

3. INSIGHT

968 Old people have fewer diseases than the young,
but their diseases never leave them.

Hippocrates (B.C. 460-370)

969 No one is so old as to think he cannot live one more year.

Cicero (B.C. 106-43)

970 Old age is by nature rather talkative.

Cicero (B.C. 106-43)

971 Nature hath appointed twilight as a bridge to pass us out of
day into night.

Thomas Fuller (1608-1661)

972 Few persons know how to be old.

La Rochefoucauld (1613-1680)

973 Man can have only a certain number of teeth, hair and ideas;
there comes a time when he necessarily loses his teeth,
hair and ideas.

Voltaire (1694-1778)

974 Age makes us not childish, as some say;
it finds us still true children.

Goethe (1749-1832)

975 Winter, which strips the leaves from around us,
makes us see the distant regions they formerly concealed;
so does old age rob us of our enjoyments,
only to enlarge the prospect of eternity before us.

Richter (1763-1825)

976 Autumn wins you best by this, its mute
Appeal to sympathy for its decay.

Robert Browning (1812-1889)

977 I've never known a person to live to be one hundred and be
remarkable for anything else.

Josh Billings (1815-1885)

- 978 To know how to grow old is the master work of wisdom,
and one of the most difficult chapters
in the great art of living.

Henri Frederic Amiel (1821-1881)

4. POSITIVE

- 979 A graceful and honorable old age is the childhood of
immortality.

Pindar (B.C. 518?-438)

- 980 Old age has a great sense of calm and freedom. When the
passions have relaxed their hold and have escaped, not
from one master, but from many.

Plato (B.C. 427?-347?)

- 981 It is not by muscle, speed, or physical dexterity that great
things are achieved, but by reflection, force of character,
and judgment; in these qualities old age is usually not
only not poorer, but is even richer.

Cicero (B.C. 106-43)

- 982 Old age, especially an honoured old age, has so great
authority, that this is of more value than all the pleasures
of youth.

Cicero (B.C. 106-43)

- 983 As for old age, embrace and love it. It abounds with
pleasure if you know how to use it. The gradually declining
years are among the sweetest in a man's life, and I maintain
that, even when they have reached the extreme limit, they
have their pleasure still.

Seneca (B.C. 3-65 A.D.)

- 984 Even in decline, a virtuous man
Increases the beauty of his behavior.
A burning stick, though turned to the ground,
Has its flame drawn upwards.

Saskya Pandita (1182-1251)

- 985 Old wood best to burn, old wine to drink,
old friends to trust, and old authors to read.

Bacon (1561-1626)

- 986 No Spring nor Summer Beauty hath such grace
As I have seen in one Autumnal face.

John Donne (1572-1632)

- 987 The evening of a well-spent life brings its lamps with it.

Joubert (1754-1824)

- 988 Men, like peaches and pears, grow sweet a little while
before they begin to decay.
Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809-1894)
- 989 Age, like distance lends a double charm.
Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809-1894)
- 990 Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made.
Robert Browning (1812-1889)
- 991 For age is opportunity no less
Than youth itself, though in another dress,
And as the evening twilight fades away
The sky is filled with stars, invisible by day.
Longfellow (1807-1882)
- 992 Age is not all decay; it is the ripening, the swelling,
of the fresh life within, that withers and bursts the husk.
George MacDonald (1824-1905)
- 993 Who soweth good seed shall surely reap;
The year grows rich as it groweth old,
And life's latest sands are its sands of gold!
Julia Ripley Dorr (1825-1913)
- 994 How beautifully leaves grow old.
How full of light and colour are their last days.
John Burroughs (1837-1921)

5. NEGATIVE

- 995 The man reaches his declining years and recalls the
transitoriness of life. Instead of enjoying the
ordinary pleasures while they last, he groans in
melancholy.
I Ching (B.C. 1150?)
- 996 What else is an old man but voice and shadow?
Euripides (B.C. 480-406)
- 997 Old age is, so to speak, the sanctuary of ills:
they all take refuge in it.
Antiphanes (B.C. 388-311)
- 998 Nothing is more dishonorable than an old man, heavy with
years, who has no other evidence of his having lived long
except his age.
Seneca (B.C. 3-65 A.D.)

- 999 Whoever saw old age that did not applaud the past and
condemn the present?
Montaigne (1533-1592)
- 1000 Men of age object too much, consult too long,
adventure too little, repent too soon,
and seldom drive business home to the full period,
but content themselves with a mediocrity of success.
Bacon (1561-1626)
- 1001 And so from hour to hour we ripe and ripe,
And then from hour to hour we rot and rot;
And thereby hangs a tale.
Shakespeare (1564-1616)
- 1002 Old age is a tyrant, which forbids the pleasure of youth
on pain of death.
La Rochefoucauld (1613-1680)
- 1003 No skill or art is needed to grow old;
the trick is to endure it.
Goethe (1749-1832)
- 1004 Thus pleasures fade away;
Youth, talents, beauty, thus decay,
And leave us dark, forlorn, and gray.
Walter Scott (1771-1832)
- 1005 What is the worst of woes that wait on age?
What stamps the wrinkle deeper on the brow?
To view each loved one blotted from life's page,
And be alone on earth as I am now.
Byron (1788-1824)
- 1006 Nature abhors the old, and old age seems the only disease;
all others run into this one.
Emerson (1803-1882)
- 1007 Few envy the consideration enjoyed by the eldest inhabitant.
Emerson (1803-1882)
- 1008 What makes old age hard to bear is not the failing of one's
faculties, mental and physical, but the burden of one's
memories.
Somerset Maugham (1874-1965)

6. ADVICE

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- 1009 Those who search beyond the natural limits will retain good hearing and clear vision, their bodies will remain light and strong, and although they grow old in years they will remain able-bodied and flourishing; and those who are able-bodied can govern to great advantage.
Huang Ti (B.C. 2700?-2600?)
- 1010 Great effort is required to arrest decay and restore vigor. One must exercise proper deliberation, plan carefully before making a move, and be alert in guarding against relapse following a renaissance.
I Ching (B.C. 1150?)
- 1011 It is always in season for old men to learn.
Aeschylus (B.C. 525-456)
- 1012 You must become an old man in good time if you wish to be an old man long.
Cicero (B.C. 106-43)
- 1013 Discern of the coming on of years, and think not to do the same things still; for age will not be defied.
Bacon (1561-1626)
- 1014 No wise man ever wished to be younger.
Swift (1667-1745)
- 1015 To be happy, we must be true to nature and carry our age along with us.
Hazlitt (1778-1830)
- 1016 If wrinkles must be written upon your brows, let them not be written upon the heart. The spirit should not grow old.
James Garfield (1831-1881)
- 1017 All objects of this world are perishable. This body is subject to decay and death. Remembrance of this will wean your mind from the sensual pleasures and turn it inwards in awakening a sense of reality in the Unseen and the Invisible.
Sivananda (born 1887)

7. POTPOURRI

- 1018 A green old age, unconscious of decay
That proves the hero born in better days.
Homer (c. B.C. 700)

- 1019 The mind of age is like a lamp
Whose oil is running thin;
One moment it is shining bright,
Then darkness closes in.
Kalidasa (fl. c. 450 A.D.)
- 1020 Have you not a moist eye, a dry hand, a yellow cheek,
a white beard, a decreasing leg, an increasing belly?
Is not your voice broken, your wind short, your chin double,
your wit single, and every part about you blasted with
antiquity? And will you yet call yourself young?
Shakespeare (1564-1616)
- 1021 He that loves a rosy cheek,
Or a coral lip admires,
Or from star-like eyes doth seek
Fuel to maintain his fires;
As old Time makes these decay,
So his flames must waste away.
Thomas Carew (1595?-1639)
- 1022 The sun, when he from noon declines,
and with abated heat less fiercely shines;
seems to grow milder as he goes away.
Dryden (1631-1700)
- 1023 An age that melts with unperceiv'd decay,
And glides in modest innocence away.
Johnson (1709-1784)
- 1024 Thus fares it still in our decay,
And yet the wiser mind
Mourns less for what age takes away
Than what it leaves behind.
Wordsworth (1770-1850)
- 1025 All that's bright must fade,
The brightest still the fleetest;
All that's sweet was made
But to be lost when sweetest.
Thomas Moore (1779-1852)
- 1026 Every season hath its pleasures;
Spring may boast her flowery prime,
Yet the vineyard's ruby treasures
Brighten Autumn's sob'rer time.
Thomas Moore (1779-1852)

- 1027 Years steal fire from the mind, as vigor from the limb;
And life's enchanted cup but sparkles near the brim.
Byron (1788-1824)
- 1028 The first forty years of life give us the text;
the next thirty supply the commentary on it.
Schopenhauer (1788-1860)
- 1029 The melancholy days have come, the saddest of the year,
Of wailing winds, and naked woods, and meadows brown
and sear.
William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878)
- 1030 Fires that shook me once, but now to silent ashes
fall'n away,
Cold upon the dead volcano sleeps the gleam of
dying day.
Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892)
- 1031 How far the gulf-stream of our youth may flow
Into the arctic regions of our lives,
Where little else than life itself survives.
Longfellow (1807-1882)
- 1032 My experience is that as soon as people are old enough to
know better, they don't know anything at all.
Oscar Wilde (1854-1900)
- 1033 Twilight, a timid fawn, went glimmering by,
And Night, the dark-blue hunter, followed fast.
George W. Russell (1867-1935)
- 1034 Senescence begins
And middle age ends,
The day your descendents,
Outnumber your friends.
Ogden Nash (1902-1971)