


THERAPY PAGE

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Bob Rice L.Ac.

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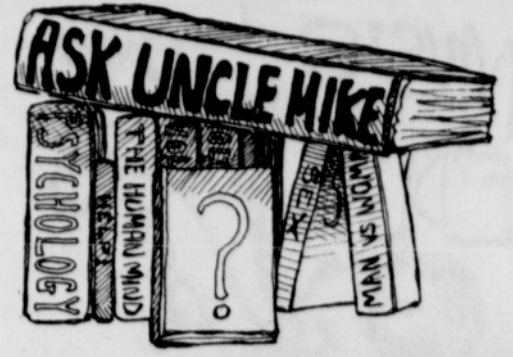
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Dear Uncle Mike,

Last month you said if you were a black lab, you'd be 350 in human years. I take that to mean you're fifty. I just turned fifty myself and I confess it's hit me in ways I hadn't foreseen. My health is good and all that (we won't talk about prostrate, okay?) but I'm starting to think in terms of the old three score and ten and how that leaves me (maybe) twenty years. Twenty years ago seems like yesterday. Young women I'd flirt with if I weren't married are calling me 'sir'. Looking at myself in the bathroom mirror isn't as fun as it used to be. I realize that dreams I still nurture are probably not going to be. Nothing about my life has changed. I have a wonderful wife, a job that's more fulfilling than most, and grown children I love. Suddenly, it doesn't seem to be enough. Is this midlife crisis? Is there a cure?

Feeling Old in Astoria



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Dear Feeling Old,

Interesting word, crisis. What it means is a level of energy preceding, often immediately, a change in the prevailing order. Water in a teapot is in crisis the moment before it boils. Only those phobic about steam are bothered. Midlife crisis, an unfortunate term coined by those horrified by transition, should be celebrated with all the fervor of a puberty rite. Only a nitwit would look for a cure.

So young women are calling you sir. What exactly do you have against respect? You are, like it or not, a village elder. The deal we all make with space/time is to trade youth for experience. All in all, it's one of life's great bargains.

Yes, Uncle Mike is 350 in dog years. Although he enjoyed a charmed and amusing youth, his portion of the human comedy didn't even start getting good until he hit forty. Chess, to say nothing of life and love, is more fun when you know the rules.

No, Uncle Mike is not thrilled with his stomach tone. This only means the scant seconds he once spent in front of the mirror admiring his never especially exciting physique can be turned to more productive use trimming his ear hair. Try as he might, Uncle Mike can't muster any pain and sadness from this. He is, in fact, happy as a clam to have lived half a century and would cheerfully open a vein before going back even to yesterday.

As for dreams, Uncle Mike considers himself the laughable result of his. No, they haven't all worked out as planned. It's as if he set out for Oz, wound up in a cabin in the rainforest and giggles a lot at his luck. In a spherical universe, the further we travel the closer we get to home. The only dream Uncle Mike still thinks worth dreaming is to be at peace with his world. At any age, the only game in town is understanding -- knowing our place in the cosmic minuuet and dancing the best we can. Uncle Mike is reconciled to the fact he'll never be John Travolta. He's shooting for Robert Duvall now.

Sudden feelings of mortality? Where, Uncle Mike wonders, have you been? Yes, Boobla, in terms meaningful only to the American Medical Society, you're going to croak. It could happen, heaven forbid, before you finish reading this. Read the papers, bucko. Men our age drop over like pole-axed steers every day of the week and Uncle Mike would wager not one of them saw it coming. At the risk of sounding unsympathetic, so what? As Wendell Berry pointed out in 'Memory of Old Jack', "It is no tragedy when, at the end of a life, a man dies." Throw from your mind that pewling homily, 'This is the first day of the rest of your life'. It makes more sense to believe it's your last day on the planet and behave accordingly. If this doesn't keep a man from stewing over the number of candles on his birthday cake, nothing short of death will.

Uncle Mike does, however, welcome the opportunity not to speak of prostates.

Dear Uncle Mike,

I've got this problem, or rather my boyfriend does. This woman at his office is hustling him. She works under him, no pun intended, and her behavior is obvious to everyone. Jerry (not his real name) has consistently turned down invitations to lunch and drinks after work. He says he's made his lack of feelings plain but that the woman just won't take a hint. She's an excellent worker and Jerry doesn't want to let her go, but the situation is getting on both our nerves. Any suggestions?

P.O'd in Portland

Dear P.O.'d

Uncle Mike always has suggestions. That's why he's Uncle Mike. First off, congratulations on believing your boyfriend when he described the flirtation as a one-way street. A lesser woman might call him a lying dog and demand he either fire her or find a new place to put his toothbrush.

If your boyfriend, Not Jerry, has not introduced the law into his conversations with this woman, he might consider it. If her amatory behaviour interferes with his work, it constitutes sexual harassment. There's a good chance she has reduced his reality to a success object. In today's parlance, that makes Not Jerry a victim.

Another tack might be to give the cheap hussy a call and ask does she have photographs showing her with all her front teeth. Explain that you regard her behaviour as a personal assault and that any further batting of the eyes could lead to a nasty introduction to your Rottweiler.

Letters to Uncle Mike can be sent to: Box 1222, Cannon Beach Or. 97110

The fault no child ever loses is the one he was most punished for. Cesare Beccaria

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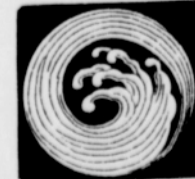
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- IF YOU ARE NEW TO THE STEAM BATH, YOU MIGHT WANT TO FOLLOW THESE STEPS TO ATTAIN MAXIMUM ENJOYMENT.
- ALLOW YOURSELF PLENTY OF TIME. UNDRESS IN THE AREA PROVIDED. TAKE OFF WATCHES AND LOOSE JEWELRY.
- ENTER STEAM ROOM. YOU MAY WANT TO STRETCH OUT IN A RECLINING POSITION TO COMPLETELY RELAX.
- PULL STEAM CORD UNTIL DESIRED TEMPERATURE IS ACQUIRED. IF BREATHING IS DIFFICULT, BREATHE THROUGH A COLD WET WASH CLOTH AFTER 10-15 MINUTES TAKE A REST IN THE DRESSING ROOM.
- REENTER THE STEAM ROOM FOR ANOTHER 10 MINUTES REPEATING THE PROCESS. USE ENOUGH STEAM FOR YOUR OWN LIKING.
- AFTER REPEATING THE CYCLE 2 OR 3 TIMES END WITH A SOAP AND WATER SHOWER AND RINSE WITH COOL WATER TO CLOSE PORES. DON'T GO OUT INTO COLD OR WET WEATHER UNTIL YOU ARE DRY AND HAVE FINISHED PERSPIRING OR YOU MAY GET CHILLED.

WE HOPE YOU HAVE A WONDERFUL AFTER STEAM FEELING! CIGARETTES AND ALCOHOL ARE NOT COMPATIBLE WITH A STEAM BATH. WARNING! ELDERLY PERSONS OR THOSE SUFFERING FROM HEART DISEASE, HIGH OR LOW BLOOD PRESSURE OR OTHER PHYSICAL DISORDERS SHOULD CONSULT A PHYSICIAN BEFORE USING A STEAM BATH. IF YOU ARE NOT AN EXPERIENCED STEAM BATHER, DO NOT OVER DO YOUR STAY IN THE STEAM ROOM. DO NOT USE THE STEAM ROOM AS AN ENDORSEMENT TEST.

BUSINESS HOURS THURSDAY & SUNDAY 4:30-10:30 FRIDAY & SATURDAY 3:30-10:30