

## **A Story to Remember**

I remember clearly an encounter with a patient who was about to turn 100 years old.

Pain had developed in her right knee a few days before, and wasn't getting much better.

I asked what she thought was causing it.

**Patient**     *I'm not getting any younger. What do you expect at my age?*

**Dr. Stall**    *How is your left knee?*

**Patient**     *Fine, why do you ask?*

**Dr. Stall**    *Just wondering why that knee doesn't hurt too. Isn't it the same age as your right knee?*

She smiled and understood what I meant. I suggested a mild pain reliever, warm soaks to the painful knee, and rest. By the next week, she was back to baseline.

Think about it. Often. I do. It keeps me on the right track when I try to help my older patients.

Don't sell older people short. There is always something that can be done to help an older person lead a happier, more functional life, even in extreme old age.