

The remarkable story of how my parents and I re-connected – *in just one evening!*

I told the doctor about my parent's transformation at Easter dinner. He asked if I could write it out because many people are struggling like my parents were (Unnecessary!). He said my story would be a good way to help people. That's how you came to receive this letter!

--Rob Chandler



Dear 50+ Friend,

You know how when you're having a conversation with an elder and they kind of nod and smile but not always at the right time? They're trying to pick up on everything you say but the fact is, most of it is going right by them...and they don't want to let on. Sometimes they'll even laugh if they think you've made a joke.

I call these ill-timed nods, smiles, and laughs "elder mannerisms".

I don't mean any disrespect – who can blame them for wanting to keep their dignity during a simple conversation. Problem is, it's not really a conversation because the elder hasn't been able to follow along.

You see, both my parents have been like this for about ten years now. But then last month all their "elder mannerisms" just vanished overnight. It was one of the most remarkable things I've ever experienced.

It was like they were twenty years younger.

It was Easter and my wife and I and two girls were late for dinner at my parents. We sat down immediately and my wife said in a loud and clear voice, "THIS IS VERY GOOD, SARAH."

My Mom smiled and replied quietly, "Thanks, it's one of my mother's recipes."

Then my Dad retorted with "You mean mother-in-law."

"No dear, it's from my mother's cookbook. The one she illustrated and bound herself."

Already this was kind of weird for me. I sat back and looked at my parents. There was something really different going on.

They were acting different, they were talking different, and they even *looked* different – they looked good!

My Mom continued, "Do you want me to show it to you – it's right there on the countertop."

My Dad smiled at her gleefully. "I'm sure it is – but you know very well she got this recipe from my moth-"

"Ridiculous! Your mother never made this! She hardly went near the kitchen! And she certainly never gave

out recipes.”

“She didn’t use recipes,” my Dad replied.

“You can say that again!” Mom said triumphantly.

Perhaps I should explain something here. This is how my Mom and Dad used to trade wits when I was a kid but for the last decade, the conversation goes like this:

Mom to Dad: Need anything dear?

Dad: Mm?

Mom: DO YOU NEED ANYTHING?

Dad would look up from his plate and blurt out, “What’s the problem?”

Mom: I’m just asking if you need anything.

Dad: What do I need?!

Mom would then sigh and close her eyes for a moment to recharge. Then she would turn to us. “Has everybody got what they need?”

Me: WE’RE FINE MOM, IT’S GREAT, REALLY GOOD. HEY DAD, WHAT’D YOU THINK OF THE GAME LAST NIGHT? DAD?!

Dad: Mm?

Me: THE GAME LAST NIGHT –

Dad: There’s one tomorrow.

Me: I know...ah, YOU GONNA' WATCH IT TOMORROW?

Dad: “I don’t need anything, I’M FINE!”

You get the picture. But *this* Easter, things were different – very different!

Was it just a dream?

After dinner, we sat down and my Mom said to me, “We got a statement in the mail this week from that mutual fund you have us in.”

Dad chimed in, “It’s gone down 4% in the last three months – I checked it out online. Should we dump it?”

Okay, I thought – this must be a dream. Or perhaps they’re on some powerful vitamins or something. They

never ask me about the finances.

So I asked, “WHY ALL THIS INTEREST-”

Dad shook his head vigorously, “I’m four feet from you – why are you talking so loud at me? It’s our retirement money – what do you expect?”

“Mom, Dad...what’s going on? Something’s changed – you seem different...and in a lot of ways it’s like you were younger – like 20 years younger.”

And then they told me.

No, they were not on vitamins, drugs, or anything. It was something so simple - we’ve all been laughing about it since.

Later that night, we talked...and talked - about everything and nothing until 3 AM! It was as if they’d been on a 10-year vacation and we were finally catching up.

I felt like a complete fool. For the last ten years, I was conversing with them the way I do with my four-year-old daughter. I thought they were really over the hill. In fact, I’d already been looking into retirement homes for them. But now what I saw was a healthy, happy, vibrant couple - eager to get the most out of life.

Grow old gracefully? I’ve got a better idea...

Here’s an email I got from my Dad recently.

Hi Rob,
You’ll enjoy this one. I was eating in Donavins today for lunch. A waiter (not mine) brought out my food but didn’t know which table it was for. My waiter says to him ‘The old coot in the corner.’ He was about 15 feet away and didn’t think I could hear. A minute later he checks on me “How’re you doing?” he asks. So I say: “Not too bad for an ‘old coot’, thanks for asking.”

I’ve never seen a face go that color!! Orangey red with a touch of blue. Got a free meal out of it!

How Did This Happen?

Well, it happened to my parents as it happens for most people. Slowly. Over time, your senses naturally change. But because it happens slowly, you compensate in other ways. You start turning your head so the good ear can hear better. You concentrate more when someone is talking so you pick up all the words (but

this takes more energy). And you laugh when you *think* the punch line has been delivered.

After awhile you develop a full range of “elder mannerisms”. So now you’re *acting* old, so people naturally treat you different. Most of the time, that means less respect. It’s not right, but it happens all the time. Just like the waiter in my Dad’s email.

But it doesn’t have to be this way.

The technology today allows anyone to hear crystal clear sounds. Everything from the twittering birds in the morning, to the late night whispers of your spouse.

But what’s incredible is that my parents were both wearing their new hearing aids and I couldn’t tell! Even up close, just a few inches away from my Dad’s ear – I could barely see it. If he had never told me – I never would have noticed it. You can thank today’s technology for that.

When they first put them in, the doctor told them to take their time to get used to them. Naturally, their senses had to adjust, and this is exactly what happened. After the first week, they weren’t even aware that they had them on.

But again, this has all had a huge effect on our relationship.

I can actually *talk* to my parents now. A real conversation.

To be honest, I used to feel obligated to visit them – now I actually look forward to it – just to hear them trade wits makes me howl with laughter. And it used to be that my kids would sort of slump (and even whine) when I announced a trip to Grandma and Grandpa. *Now they’re asking for it!*

I’ll tell you another thing. I don’t worry about them like I used to. I only wish they’d been tested earlier. That would have changed things for the better over the last ten years. My Mom had tried to get my Dad tested but the irony was *she* was losing her hearing too and never knew it.

Getting a test like this is free of charge (see below) and there are no pushy salespeople.

They have a doctor on site and, if you wish, you can be tested and then take the results to your own doctor to make your decision. When I heard about all this, I actually went and got checked myself! Why not, it’s free!

It’s a place called Soundpoint Audiology. Apparently, they have locations in many states across the U.S. I was pretty impressed – everything was very modern and professional and they’ve been a leader in the industry for years.

First, they had me fill out a questionnaire. Just a few questions about my medical history and then some lifestyle questions. Then I met with the doctor who gave me an overview of the process.

He mentioned that if I ever wanted to try any of their hearing aids it would be on a risk-free trial basis.

So if I changed my mind – it wouldn’t cost me a cent. (Apparently, that’s true of all their locations).

Then he looked in my ear with one of those magnifying glass things. Then I was led into a sound booth where I heard simple tones and had to tell the technician where they were coming from.

And that was it. All very easy, painless, and FAST!

But the biggest change was not in them – it was in me.

I started treating my parents with the respect they deserve. Something I should have done before but, well, I didn't know. I made a mistake. As an apology, I bought them a two-week tour of Greece. It was our family vacation money (and then some) so this year we'll keep it simple and go camping.

It taught me another thing. When I saw how active and capable my parents really were, I realized that "getting old" is actually a choice – not a fact of life. My parents have shown me this with their courage – it's something they always told me...I just never listened.

All the best for the future,

Rob Chandler

P.S. The doctor at SoundPoint asked me to pass along this message to you:

If you call SoundPoint **within the next seven days** to schedule a Free Test, you'll save \$400 on a set of premium digital hearing instruments, if you have need. But there's never any obligation or hidden costs for the test – it's completely free of any strings.

And for taking the Free Test, you'll be entered to win a Free Dinner For Two on SoundPoint at a fine restaurant in your area. That includes appetizers, wine, dinner, and desert – all courtesy of SoundPoint.

SoundPoint has a very flexible schedule so you can book when it's convenient for you. Remember to call within the next 7 DAYS to schedule your Free Test to receive all the discounts and benefits – *including the chance to win dinner for two on SoundPoint.*