

Color Amid the Wrinkles

Max Lucado is one of my favorite authors. He describes himself as a minister who writes and a writer who preaches. He and his wife, Denalyn, serve the Oak Hills Church in San Antonio, Texas. In a new book, entitled *You Changed My Life*, he shares a journey of understanding his family has been on:

For the last five years, my mother has been in an assisted-living facility not far from my house. The first few months I found it hard to see color amid the wrinkles, walkers, wheelchairs and dentures. Each visit was a depressing reminder of my mom's failing health and fading memory.

Then I tried to practice the message of one of my books, Give Every Day a Chance, even the days of old age. I began to spot blades of grass amid the people:

- *The loyalty of Elaine, also 87, who sits next to Mom at lunch. She cuts my mother's food so she can eat it.*
- *The unquashable enthusiasm of Lois, nearly 80, who in spite of arthritis in both knees volunteers to pour the morning coffee every day.*
- *The historical love of Joe and Barbara, celebrating 70 years, not of life, but marriage. They take turns pushing each other in the wheelchair. Arthritis has enlarged the knuckles of her hand. We were no more than five minutes into the conversation, and he was gently lifting it toward me, expressing his concern.*
- *Then there is Bob, left speechless and half paralyzed by a stroke. The picture on his door displays a younger Bob, smartly attired in military uniform; he used to give orders and command troops. Today his good hand steers the joystick of his wheelchair as he goes from table to table wishing residents a good day by making the only sound he can: "Bmph."*

I used to see age, disease, and faded vigor. Now I see love, courage, and unflappable unselfishness.

The associates in Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home can relate to Lucado's experiences. That's their story every day.

And not only do they witness similar incidents, but it is their love, courage and unflappable unselfishness that drew them into this profession.

– Beecher Hunter