

# THE GREAT IDEAS ONLINE

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Subsistence work is the work we must do in order just *to live*. Leisure work is the work we must do in order *to live well*. —Mortimer Adler



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## THE PARTS OF LIFE

Mortimer J. Adler

Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Million Dollar Round Table of the National Association of Life Underwriters at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel, Montreal, Canada, July 16, 1962

## Foreword

The quest for knowledge is a never ending journey. In truth, it has been said that the more we know...the more we know that the less we know. We seek the understanding of life, its purpose and meaning, and find that as we share the examination of new ideas and experiences, our own life, as well as those we touch, becomes richer.

For the second year in succession, the Million Dollar Round Table invited as guest lecturer, Dr. Mortimer J. Adler, distinguished philosopher, educator, author and consultant, to aid its members in their continuing search for self development and understanding.

Dr. Adler's treatment of "The Parts of Life" is a fitting sequel to his superb presentation last year, "The Art of Communicating".

We wish to share it with those who journey with us and sincerely believe you will find it worthy of your attention.

Lester A. Rosen, C. L. U. Chairman,  
1962 Million Dollar Round Table

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**M**r. Coakley, Members of the Million Dollar Round Table: I am deeply sensible of the honor you have bestowed upon me by inviting me to address you a second time and in a successive year. Thank you for elevating me to the coveted post of a repeating qualifier. In the jargon of this organization, the only thing left for me to aspire to, although I know it is beyond the reach of all earthly ambition, is to become a life speaker.

As Mr. Coakley indicated, I want to talk to you this morning about the parts of life—the way we spend the years of our life and the days of our years. At first glance, what I am going to say this morning might not seem as important, or certainly not as immediately practical, to you as what I said to you last year about the art of communicating. Nevertheless, if you will bear with me I think you will see before the morning is over, that this theme does have a great practical significance—not only for the conduct of your own lives, but for the discharge of your professional obligations toward

those in whose lives, as well as whose deaths, you are interested. I am assuming that life insurance is concerned with the living as well as with the dead. It is the aspect of life which one can insure that is the center of my consideration this morning.

Let me begin by calling your attention to the simple fact that we are living in an extraordinary, revolutionary period. We are living in the middle of revolution—a second industrial revolution much greater than the first, under the impact of the most remarkable technological advances; a revolution not only industrial, but also democratic, which is making our society approach a classless society. Both of these changes are more recent than the last fifty years.

As Mr. McMillon pointed out quite rightly this morning, the age in which we live and our society have certain novel and striking characteristics. These directly affect the condition of our lives. Let me call your attention to four of them.

We live in a society—an environment—in which, for the first time in history, change is so rapid that, as Margaret Mead has aptly pointed out, no one of us dies in the world in which he was born. That world is completely changed. Our grandfathers and great-grandfathers died in a world which in all significant respects had remained almost identical with the world in which they were born. Their whole life was spent in an environment that was relatively constant and permanent in its features. Our world changes with a rapidity that is absolutely breathtaking.

We live in a society which, for the first time in history, is affluent. Until our country reached that degree of affluence, no society was a society in which one could say that poverty and destitution could be removed or eliminated. We can reasonably hope for that now.

We live in a society in which most men have more free time than any group of men ever had in the past. And, finally, we live in society in which the advances of medical science and art have increased the length of life. Increased longevity is a fundamental fact and a fundamental fact of interest to you.

These four things—rapidity of change in our environment, the affluence of our society, the amount of free time at our disposal, and the length of our lives—have a bearing on the conduct of our lives. But while these four things are remarkably novel in the affairs of men, human nature itself remains constant, the order of human goods remains the same, the scale of values is what it always was. My old friend Aristotle with whom you became so intimately acquainted last year, divided all human goods into three main catego-

ries: (1) external goods, such as wealth and all the comforts and conveniences of life; (2) the goods of the body, such as health, strength, beauty, the pleasures of the senses; and (3) the goods of the soul or of the spirit—the moral and intellectual virtues. The order in which I have mentioned these three types of goods is the order in which they are to be sought for the sake of happiness or the good life.

As you will see, what I am going to say to you this morning about the parts of the human life will translate into contemporary and practical terms the moral significance of that order of goods. Only a few of our ancestors faced the moral problems which now confront all of us. Only a few of our ancestors had enough wealth or free time or a life long enough to make these problems serious for them. Today all of us must think how best to use our wealth, since we all have sufficient wealth; or how best to use our free time, since we all have more free time than we know what to do with. And we all face the even more important problem of how best to prepare for old age and retirement.

I want to say at once that these two problems—(1) how can we best use our wealth and our free time during the years when we are working to earn a living and (2) how can we best prepare for old age and retirement—are closely connected. I hope that I can make you see the basic and clear truth that the solution to the second of these problems cannot be achieved without a right solution to the first problem. The solution of the first problem is indispensable to the solution of the second. I think it should be obvious at once that these two problems have practical relevance for the members of the Million Dollar Round Table.

I do not know all the intricacies of your profession, but I do have some vague notions about annuity insurance, estate planning, and retirement plans, which obviously bear on the main theme I want to talk about this morning. Apart from your professional obligations to your clients, you have, I can see from the program of this meeting, some concern with these matters in your own personal lives. I noted two interesting points in the seminar which Mr. Albritton is going to moderate on Thursday, entitled “Work Smarter—Not Harder.” One of them is Point 9, which concerns your own continuing education—what you are doing to develop your own growth; the other is Point 11, which is concerned with your personal objectives when you retire. Both of these matters, which will be discussed on Thursday morning, are of immediate interest to me this morning.

I have also studied the 1961 membership survey and noted that

66% of this group work more than 30 hours a week and less than 59. It is to that 66% that I am addressing my remarks. There are about 256 members of this group who claim to work more than 60 hours a week. I will see them later. I have some things to say to them in private which I do not want to say in public. Then there are 75% of this group who take between two to six weeks vacation. There are 148 members of this group who take nine weeks vacation or more. I want to see them later also. I want to find out how they do it.

The two problems I stated for you a few moments ago lead me to divide this talk into two main parts. I wish to talk to you first about how we spend the time of our lives right now—at our stage of life. I want to talk to you secondly, and as a consequence of that, about how we prepare for what I prefer to call our maturity rather than our old age; for, in fact, the age at which we now retire from earning a living can hardly be described as senility. It is an age at which men now achieve their full growth or maturity; and the problem we face is what to do with our maturity when we have retired from earning a living.

## I

If you were to ask the average American—and, I think, the members of this group would prove to be no exception—how he spends the time of his life, what he does with the 24 hours daily given to him, day in and day out, week in and week out, month in and month out, he would give you an answer that constitutes what I call a three part view of life. He would say that he spends approximately eight hours in sleep. He would say that roughly one third of his time is involved in recuperating from his labors and from all the activities of his waking life. Then he would say that another eight hours a day is spent in labor, work, or toil, or whatever has to be done to earn a living. The remaining eight hours of the twenty-four, he would say, is my *free* time.

If, then, you were to ask what he does with his free time he would say, “That’s my leisure time.” And if you asked him what he meant by leisure, he would tell you about the things he does for recreation, amusement, play, or diversion.

That three part answer, dividing the time of one’s life into sleep, toil, and play is, I think, quite wrong. It is wrong for several reasons, but mainly for the reason that it confuses what should be two distinct uses of free time. The average American, with this three part view of life, fails to distinguish what is truly leisure from what is truly play. That failure, as we will see, makes retirement from

work an endless vacation and ultimately a boring nightmare of vacancy, idleness, time-killing, or sleep.

In addition to confusing play and leisure, this three part answer is wrong because it omits the fifth part of life. It omits rest. The right answer to the question about the parts of life, should enumerate five parts, not three or four. They are (1) *sleep*, (2) *work, labor* or *toil*, (3) *play*, (4) *leisure*, and (5) *rest*. Of these five parts, two present no difficulty. They can quickly be made clear and distinct. Let me do that right away.

You know what is meant by sleep, but I would like to include under sleep more than you ordinarily conceive sleep to consist in. Sleep really represents, in the division of one's occupations, all biologically necessary activities—all the things you have to do to keep the body alive and in health and vigor; all the activities of feeding the body, of exercising it, and cleansing it. All these necessary activities may occupy a little more than eight hours a day when you total them up. Let the word "sleep" stand for all these things, indispensable to the maintenance of bodily life, health, and vigor.

What is the meaning of rest, as distinct from sleep, play, leisure, and work? Certainly, rest is not sleep, although many of us think that we go to sleep in order to rest. I would like you also to see that it is not work, play, or leisure. The easiest way for you to grasp this is to consider what is meant in the Old Testament, when, at the end of the story of creation, it is said that on the seventh day God *rested*. It is perfectly obvious, is it not, that on the seventh day God did not go to sleep. On the seventh day, God did not go to work, for it was from the work of creation that God rested on the seventh day. Nor on the seventh day did God start to play or to indulge in leisure.

Furthermore, in the Old Testament—in the Ten Commandments in fact—we are enjoined to set apart the seventh day, the Sabbath, as a day of rest, not as a day of play. Our puritan ancestors were right in their interpretation of this commandment. The Sabbath was not intended to be a day of play, although we now generally take it that way.

Finally, there is one more point that should help us to understand the meaning of rest. In both the Jewish and Christian religions, we are supposed to look forward to achieving heavenly rest when our earthly life is over. These three phrases which are common in our daily speech—a day of rest, on the seventh day God rested, and heavenly rest—should convey to you the deep meaning of this ex-

traordinary word “rest,” when it is properly used and not as a synonym for lying down and taking one’s shoes off. It really means contemplation. On the seventh day, God rested. He rested from the work of creation. He rested by engaging in the highest of all activities—the contemplation of the truth. God rested by contemplating Himself. We rest in this life in proportion as we can engage in the religious activities of prayer and worship; for contemplation represents the religious aspect of our lives. In this earthly life of ours, prayer and worship are a remote anticipation of heavenly rest.

For your purposes, certainly your professional purposes, I am going to leave sleep and rest aside. I think you have very little to do with either professionally. Leaving these two aside as clear, I shall now attempt to clear up the other three parts of life. These are very troublesome, indeed. All of us use these words—work, play, leisure—all the time. Yet most of us, I think, if put to it, cannot satisfactorily draw the lines which separate them or say of a particular activity, which it is and why.

I am going to try to do this for you in a series of steps. I will attempt a first approximation to a definition of work, play, and leisure; and then see if I can perfect it, so that no one in this room will ever get those three things mixed up, or ever be in doubt as to what kind of activity he is engaging in—whether it is work, play, or leisure.

Let me begin with a first approximation to the definition of work. I am going to use the words “work,” “toil,” and “labor” as synonyms. Just as sleep and the things associated with sleep are *biologically necessary*, so work comprises all those activities which are *economically necessary* for the individual. Work consists of the things that we do to earn a living, to obtain the means of subsistence. I want you to note that work is *not* biologically necessary, nor is it even humanly necessary. If any one of us in this room had the good fortune, or maybe the bad fortune, to inherit a very large estate that would exempt us from ever having to work for a living, we would not be biologically deprived in any way and we could lead decent human lives. Work is not humanly necessary, nor biologically necessary; it is only economically necessary for those who, for whatever reason, must earn by their labor the subsistence they need.

The reason why I say this is that it is possible to conceive a society in which work is entirely eliminated. In fact, you are seeing that happening before your eyes. With technological progress, work is being gradually eliminated. If we could look into that crystal ball

which Mr. McMillon had on the platform this morning, we would probably see that, five hundred years from now, there will be very much less work in the world than there is now; and in a thousand years, even less. Work can become a diminishing aspect of life precisely because it is neither biologically nor morally necessary. It is only economically necessary; and as such, it was much more necessary in the past, prior to the present era of industrial production.

Work and sleep, taken together, limit our amount of free time; for free time is strictly the time that is left over from the consuming activities of work and sleep. Free time is what is left when these two compulsory activities are completed—when the biologically necessary and economically necessary activities are done. How do we use that free time? This is where play and leisure come in.

A first approximation to the definition of play must point out that it consists in those things which we do *simply for the pleasure of doing them*. You can, of course, consider play as recreational. Play can be relaxing or refreshing; in which case, it is exactly like sleep. When you play in order to wash away the tensions of work, play is functioning exactly in the same way that sleep does. It then has a utilitarian aspect. But play is not just that. You sometimes play when you do not need to. You play because it is pleasant. In fact, when you are on vacation, and do not have the fatigues of anything except the barroom to wash away, you play on the golf links, in a boat, mountain climbing, or horseback, or while fishing, for the pure pleasure of the process, not for the sake of removing fatigue or providing relaxation.

Pure play, then, apart from all biological utility, is simply what we do to amuse ourselves—what we get pleasure from doing. It is quite justifiable in moderation; for, in Aristotle's analysis of the human goods, pleasure is a normal good when pursued in moderate quantities. The only moral problem here is one of avoiding the excesses to which a playboy goes—playing all the time, wasting his time—or one of avoiding the licentiousness or depravity of those who play corruptly.

Play is not diversion or time-killing. Diversion is like recreation; it is therapy for mental strain, just as sleep is therapy for bodily fatigue. And time-killing indicates a complete failure to solve the problem of free time. Play is something positive and enjoyable, worth doing for the intrinsic pleasure of doing it.

If that is what play is, what, then, is leisure? Let me call your attention to the fact that we speak of play-time, yet we all recognize



that play is not itself a portion of time. Play is an activity with which we occupy free time. This should help us to see that when we speak of leisure-time, we are not talking about a portion of time. We are really talking about our *free* time. Leisure activities, like play activities, may occupy such time. Many of us use the word “leisure” as if it were synonymous with free time. That is a great mistake. It is no more synonymous with free time than play is synonymous with free time. Leisure and play are distinct occupations of free time.

This brings us back to the question: How is leisure, as an activity, as an occupation, distinct from work and play? To answer this question, let us consider for a moment, the case of a man who does not have to work for a living. You may know such a man; there are such men in our society. There certainly were in the past. In all the pre-industrial aristocracies of the past, from the Greeks down to our own pre-industrial aristocracy of the 18th century, most of the gentlemen who were the leaders of society, who were its statesmen and its contributors to the arts and sciences, were men who did not work for a living. The men who wrote the Constitution, the men who signed the Declaration—the Adamses, Jeffersons, and Hamiltons, the Madisons and Jays—were men of property.

How did they spend their free time? How should we spend our free time? Use it all for play and sleep? Even if we tried to use it all and had all of it to use in this way, we would still find that we had a goodly portion of it to kill. We could not occupy all of it in play. And our ancestors could not either—except in the extreme cases of the corrupt and depraved playboys, who were relatively infrequent.

The answer to the question lies in leisure, conceived as those activities which are worth doing for the intrinsic rewards they yield, as compared with work which in essence one does for an extrinsic reward. Since work consists in earning a living, no one would work without receiving compensation for the work done. Compensation is an extrinsic reward; it comes in the form of wealth. Whatever the form of payment may be, it gives you the things you need—the comforts and conveniences of life. Leisure earns or gains no extrinsic compensation. Leisure activities produce intrinsic rewards. They are activities worth doing even if they are not entirely pleasurable. (In fact, as you will see, leisure activities frequently have an element of pain. Unlike play, they are often difficult, involving strains and fatigue; so much so that it may be necessary to sleep or play in order to get relief from leisure, just as it is necessary to get relief from work. Leisure is so exacting and so exhausting, when one does it properly, that play is a necessary complement to leisure as a recreational device.)

The intrinsic rewards of leisure take two forms: leisure activities *either* produce a growth in the human person, a development of the self, *or* they produce advances in civilization, developments in the arts and sciences. Any form of learning, any form of creative work, any form of political or socially useful activity is a leisure activity. Anything which contributes to the growth of the individual person or to the advancement of society is a leisure activity. It follows, then, that leisure activities are those which are *morally obligatory*. Just as work is *economically necessary*, just as sleep is *biologically necessary*, just as play is *simply desirable*, so leisure consists of those activities which the man of virtue, in consequence of his being virtuous, engages in.

Now let me see if I can tie all this together in summary form. Let me first contrast work and leisure with play. Work and leisure are serious; play is fun. Both work and leisure are useful; both produce goods other than the pleasure of the process itself; whereas play or amusement is for the sake of that pleasure and nothing beyond it. Both work and leisure lead to goods beyond themselves. I tried to stress this similarity between work and leisure in a book which I wrote with Louis Kelso a couple of years ago—*The Capitalist Manifesto*. We invented the phrases “leisure work” and “subsistence work” in order to suggest that both of these are serious activities which take pain and effort. They both produce goods—subsistence work, the goods of the body, the comforts and conveniences of life; leisure work, the goods of the spirit and the goods of civilization.

The difference between these two kinds of work is that we may be—though we need not be—economically obligated to engage in subsistence work, while all of us are morally obligated to engage in leisure work. Subsistence work is the work we must do in order just *to live*. Leisure work is the work we must do in order *to live well*. Obviously, just subsisting is not enough for a good human life. Work is for the sake of leisure, as sleep and play are for the sake of both work and leisure, or as play—pure play—is for the simple pleasure involved in it.

Let me turn to leisure and play, taken together and contrasted with work or toil. How do leisure work and play differ from subsistence work? The answer is that both leisure and play give us intrinsic rewards whereas work or toil is strictly for extrinsic compensation. Both leisure and play occupy our free time. We can live without them, whereas we cannot live without sleep and work—when we are economically required to work for a living. Both leisure and play are voluntary in the sense that they are not necessary in order

just to live. It is possible for us to live without living well, but all of us have a natural instinct to preserve life itself.

I must now call your attention to one important qualification of the distinction between work and leisure. Serious activities, as opposed to play, can be divided into two kinds, *qualitatively speaking*. I am sure you all recognize this in the things you do. Either the activity is repetitive—something done over and over again, almost automatically by you—or it is creative; it raises problems you have to think about and solve. The repetitive or routinized activities are those which are strictly mechanical. These, because they are mechanical, ultimately stultify the human spirit. (Too much play can also stultify the human spirit, because it, too, tends to be repetitive.) In contrast, creative activities, those which involve novelty and require thinking, ultimately produce growth and learning. The contrast between work in its worst forms and leisure at its best is that work tends toward the mechanical, the repetitive and the stultifying, whereas leisure involves the creative and, therefore, contributes to learning and growth.

A remarkable confirmation of the relation between leisure and the creative lies in the fact that the Greek word for leisure was the word *scholé*, which in Latin became *schola*, and in English became *school*. The Greek word for leisure is a word that essentially means *learning*. They understood leisure to consist in those activities by which individuals grow, learn, and develop themselves.

All serious activities can be qualitatively mixed. They can have aspects of both the creative and the repetitive. At one extreme, we have what I am going to call *pure work*. By pure work, I mean mechanical drudgery—something which no one in his right mind would do except for compensation. All such drudgery, I would hope, automation should eventually eliminate completely from our lives. This is what we should automate out of existence, and we will.

At the other extreme, we have *pure leisure activity*—purely creative, nothing repetitive about it—which anyone would do if he never had to earn a cent. Automation will never touch such activity because it involves mind and learning. I say to you, with dogmatic assurance, that the machine will never do what the human mind can do. The human mind will never be replaced by the machine. Only those aspects of what the mind can do mechanically will machines ever be able to do. The mind is creative; machines will never create anything.

In between these two extremes, we have subsistence work with a

leisure aspect. Most of the executive jobs, most of the technical jobs, and the professional work that you and I do, are subsistence work; first, because we do earn a living thereby; and, second, because they have certain repetitive aspects, which we sometimes refer to as our “chores.” But there are creative aspects to professional, technical, or administrative work, and these creative aspects give that work a leisure aspect—so much so that you and I might do what we are doing even if we did not have to earn a living by doing it. I enjoy lecturing. I think that, if I had a fortune, I might even pay audiences to listen to me, which shows that what I am now doing is leisure, not work. In fact, it has the aspect of work only because there happens to be some extrinsic compensation attached to it, but it is primarily a form of leisure. Thus we see that leisure work often has a subsistence aspect. One may earn a living by doing leisure work, but it remains leisure work because one finds it intrinsically rewarding—a contribution to one’s own good or to the good of society.

This last point—that most of the work we do has a leisure aspect—has great significance for the retirement of men who work hard and have little time for leisure apart from the work they do to earn a living. However, this, by itself, is not the whole answer to the problem of retirement. The work that we do to earn a living seldom has enough of a leisure aspect to solve the problem of retirement. Let us turn to that problem now.

## II.

The shape the problem of retirement takes for us is determined by a number of things: by the fact of the increasing numbers of men who can or must retire; by the fact that the retirement age is coming down from 70 to 68 to 65 to 60 and may, in the course of the next 25 or 50 years, go below that; and by an additional fact, which complicates the matter considerably, that life gets longer—that retirement is something which happens in the prime of life, not in old age, not in feebleness.

Retirement is a long stretch of free time in what is the prime of life, characterized by exemption from work, that is, from earning a living. We are faced with the same old question: What shall we do with that free time? As I have indicated in the course of what I have said so far, the wrong answer to that question would be: play, recreation, or idleness.

It is *biologically* the wrong answer, for retirement, conceived as a protracted vacation, is a form of suicide. No animal (and man is an animal) retires from activity without dying. Dr. Theodore Klump, a

noted heart specialist, in an article printed in the IBM magazine, *Think*, said: “I believe we must do everything we can, as we grow older, to resist the inclination to slow down the tempo of our living.” Otherwise, we will be engaged in a slow retreat into oblivion. He went on to say: “I am convinced that one who just sits and waits for death to come along will not have long to wait—we don’t wear out, we rust out.” Finally, he said: “Throughout the realm of living things, nature tends to eliminate those that have relinquished their functional usefulness.” Men relinquish theirs when retirement takes the form of a permanent vacation. That amounts to giving up all functional usefulness and is a form of self-elimination or suicide.

This is not only wrong biologically, it is also wrong *morally*; for what justifies recreation except a need to refresh oneself from toil or from leisure—from activities that impose strains and fatigues upon the body or the mind. If you are not engaged in anything that involves strain and fatigue, what right have you to recreate yourself? What right have you to refresh yourself continually? You always retain the right to play moderately; but a life full of recreation, full of play, is not morally justified; and idleness or time-killing is one of the seven deadly sins—sloth.

It is not only morally and biologically wrong, but also *psychologically*, because everyone knows how boring a vacation can become if it is too protracted. Retirement, thus constituted, would involve the boredom or vacancy of a permanent and unending vacation. (Please note that the word “vacation” has the same root as the word “vacancy.”)

What is the right answer to this very difficult question—a question which the labor unions of the country have become increasingly concerned with, no less than management. In my judgment, this is one of the most serious questions that our society faces today. What is the right answer to it? Just this: that retirement should be a transition from toil to leisure. It should be a transition from devoting *part* of one’s time to *earning a living* to devoting all of it to *living well*.

Robert Browning, in that great poem of his, *Rabbi Ben Ezra*, wrote: “Grow old along with me, the best is yet to be, the last of life for which the first was made.” That describes an advance, not a recession—*the last of life for which the first was made*. Retirement should be a transition to pure leisure work—to government, to teaching, to creative activities of one kind or another, to learning or study, or even to some form of subsistence work with a leisure aspect and without extrinsic compensation.

This last point is important because retirement is economically required to enable young men to climb up the ladder. I see nothing wrong with a banker remaining a banker at a dollar a year if banking interests him as a leisure activity, nor anything wrong with an executive vice-president of an industrial corporation remaining executive vice-president if he does not earn a living doing that, but engages in the activity for the leisure involved in it—the contribution that he thereby makes to society and to himself. If his ordinary day to day job has a leisure aspect, let him continue to do it without compensation, or let him turn to other activities.

When you understand retirement in this way, you realize that “retirement” is a bad word for a good idea. I wish we could retire the word “retirement” itself; for the word “retirement” suggests *inactivity*, going on the shelf or into the discard or lapsing into idleness. The right word should be “graduation”—moving up, stepping up from a lower to higher grade of life.

My friend Clarence Randall said, when he retired as head of Inland Steel and went into government service, that he had graduated. He was stepping up, not down. He was not retiring, he was graduating to a better, a more important, mode of life.

If retirement is to be truly a graduation, how does one prepare for it? How does one school one’s self for it?

If, during the years of making a living, all of an individual’s free time has been devoted to play or recreation, that individual is totally unprepared for retirement as graduation; he is prepared only for demotion to the progressive emptiness of a life of play or vacation, not for graduation to a fuller, richer life.

If retirement, properly understood, is graduation to leisure activity, then the preparation for it lies in the forms of leisure that one engages in during the free time that one has in the years of working or making a living. The only way to prepare for full devotion to leisure later is partial devotion to it now. If we postpone everything that is important during the years when we have so many urgent things to do, we will never be ready for the important things when all the urgencies have disappeared. During the years when we are occupied with the urgencies of business, we must give sufficient attention to the important things of life—not play—in order to occupy our last years with nothing but important things.

This is the reason for the great importance of all forms of adult liberal learning. They are all preparations for retirement. This is, in

my judgment, the significance of the great books program for adults. It is something that one can continue to do more fully, more richly, more completely in the later years when one has more time to devote to reading and study. But one must begin it now. If we postpone it until we are ready to retire, it will be too late,

Professor L. D. Cory, at the 10th Annual Gerontological Conference, said that a successful adjustment to retirement appears to depend on how long the individual has gone to school—the better the education, the better the adjustment. I would go further than that and say that the more real learning an individual engages in during the working years of his adult life, the better his solution of the problem of how to live well in the years when work is done, because such leisure activity is a schooling (leisure, remember, is scholé)—a preparation—for what one must do in order to live well in the years when work is finished. What a man has learned to do well as leisure activity between the ages of 25 and 50 or 60, he can continue to do well after 50 or 60 for many years to come.

Grow old along with me;  
The best is yet to be,  
The last of life, for which the first was made.

—Robert Browning

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## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**Victor E. Portanova**

**Ernest C. Raskauskas, Sr.**

***We welcome your comments, questions or suggestions.***

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