



# AGING IN AMERICA SURVEY

Executive Summary Results

May 2017

The first annual Parker “Aging in America Survey” examines the nation’s changing attitudes and opinions around growing older in the U.S. The goal is to create an annual, longitudinal survey that tracks opinions over time, helping to inform the conversation around aging in America—and how we can move from society telling us what we can’t do as we grow older to focusing on what we want to do more of.

- 1 “Old” as a number
- 2 Fears about aging
- 3 Positive and negative reflections about aging
- 4 Technology & the aging
- 5 Aging & ability
- 1 Staying young at heart

**Survey Methodology:**

*Parker’s “Aging in America” survey was conducted from March 23-26, 2017 using ORC International’s Telephone CARAVAN® omnibus using two probability samples: randomly selected landline telephone numbers and randomly selected mobile (cell) telephone numbers. The combined sample consists of 1,018 adults (18 years old and older) living in the continental United States. Of the 1,018 interviews, 518 were from the landline sample and 500 from the cell phone sample. The margin of error for the sample of 1,018 is +/- 3.07% at the 95% confidence level.*



# AGE IS ONLY A NUMBER

**Increasingly, Americans do not ascribe being “old” with a particular number or decade.**

**78%** of Americans do not consider people in their 50s and 60s to be “old.”

**84%** of Baby Boomers (50s/60s) don't consider themselves to be old.

# FEARS ABOUT AGING

Americans seem less afraid about aging

**71%** The vast majority of those surveyed do not fear or worry about aging very much or at all.

**29%** Only 29% of those surveyed fear or worry about aging sometimes or very often.

# REFLECTIONS ON AGING

**Those surveyed were evenly split between using positive and negative words in describing the experience of growing older in America today**

**49%** of those surveyed used positive words like “hopeful,” “relevant,” and “vibrant” to describe the experience...

**49%** . . . while 49% used negative words like “scary,” “depressing,” and “lonely.”



# BRING ON THE TECH

Americans feel that Silicon Valley needs to pay more attention to its elders

**59%** Nearly two-thirds of Americans feel that not enough technology innovation focuses on the lifestyles of older people.\*

\*The implications of this for technology companies is profound, given the growing demographic and economic power of our nation's elderly: According to [SeniorCare.com](https://www.seniorcare.com), there are currently more than 50 million people in America ages 65 and over, a figure that is expected to reach 83 million by 2050. This rapidly growing group of consumers also has significant buying power.

# AGING & ABILITY

## Americans believe older people can do great things

A vast majority of those surveyed believe that 80 is not too old to. . .



Serve in Government



Run a marathon



Practice yoga



be CEO of a Fortune 500  
company



Teach a class

# STAYING YOUNG AT HEART

Social interactions are the key to staying youthful

**61%** By more than a two-to-one margin, those surveyed suggested that having a positive attitude or staying close with family and friends (61% total) is more important to staying “young at heart” than regular exercise or healthy eating (26% total).

**31%** said spending more time with family and friends was the most positive thing about getting older...

**8%** ...believe it's getting closer to retirement age.



# STAYING YOUNG AT HEART

Wisdom beats wealth when it comes to why we should look forward to aging

**38%** of Americans feel the most positive thing about getting older is gaining more experience and wisdom...

**1%** ...believes it's acquiring greater wealth and material goods.



THANK YOU!

For additional information about this survey please visit:  
[www.parkerlife.org](http://www.parkerlife.org)