



Losing It: In which an Aging Professor laments his shrinking Brain?.

William Ian Miller

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In *Losing It*, William Ian Miller brings his inimitable wit and learning to the subject of growing old: *too old to matter, of either rightly losing your confidence or wrongly maintaining it, culpably refusing to face the fact that you are losing it*. The “it” in Miller’s “losing it” refers mainly to mental faculties—memory, processing speed, sensory acuity, the capacity to focus. But it includes other evidence as well—sags and flaccidities, aches and pains, failing joints and organs. What are we to make of these tell-tale signs? Does growing old gracefully mean more than simply refusing unseemly cosmetic surgeries? How do we face decline and the final drawing of the blinds? Will we know if and when we have lingered too long?

Drawing on a lifetime of deep study and anxious observation, Miller enlists the wisdom of the ancients to confront these vexed questions head on. Debunking the glossy new image of old age that has accompanied the graying of the Baby Boomers, he conjures a lost world of aging rituals—complaints, taking to bed, resentments of one’s heirs, schemes for taking it with you or settling up accounts and scores—to remind us of the ongoing dilemmas of old age. Darkly intelligent and sublimely written, this exhilarating and eccentric book will raise the spirits of readers, young and old.

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