

# What I've Learned About The Soul at 76

Reflections on time, gratitude, and the quiet work of becoming kinder.

As a new year begins, many of us take stock of our lives. Earlier in life, that often meant setting goals and making plans for what lay ahead. Later in life, the reflection feels different. It's less about becoming something new and more about understanding who we already are.

LOVE  
YOUR  
SELF

I'm 76 years old, and I'm aware now, more than ever, that the time ahead is shorter than the time behind. That awareness doesn't bring sadness so much as clarity. It sharpens my gratitude. I'm thankful for the opportunities I was given, the people I met along the way, and the experiences that shaped me, even the difficult ones.

As seniors, many of us have spent decades meeting responsibilities. We built lives, raised families, worked, cared for others, and did what needed to be done. There wasn't always time or space to think about the soul. That isn't a failure. It's simply how life unfolded.

“Feeding  
the soul  
doesn’t  
require  
grand  
changes.  
It often  
happens  
quietly.”

Connect with [Jean Janki Samaroo](https://www.jeanjankisamaroo.com)  
[jeanjankisamaroo.com/books](https://www.jeanjankisamaroo.com/books)



amazon



Caring for the soul is rarely something we’re taught. It doesn’t come with instructions, and it isn’t easily separated from rules, beliefs, or expectations that may or may not have suited us. For me, caring for the soul has become less about following a prescribed path and more about paying attention to the heart. What lives there now? What has softened? What still needs care?

Feeding the soul, as I understand it at this stage of life, is largely about how we love. Not in a romantic sense, but in the everyday human sense. Learning to be unselfish. Learning to be patient and considerate and learning to listen. And just as importantly, learning how to be kind to ourselves.

Self-care later in life isn’t about self-improvement or fixing what’s “wrong.” It’s about compassion. About forgiving ourselves for what we didn’t know then. About accepting our limits and allowing ourselves rest, reflection, and gentleness.

As we grow older, the measures of success tend to shift.

Achievements matter less than relationships.  
Being busy matters less than being present.

The question becomes less “What have I done?” and more “How have I lived?” Did I act with kindness? Did I leave people feeling heard? Did I meet life with as much grace as I could manage?

I often think of this line by **G.K. Chesterton:**  
**“The object of a new year is not that we should have a new year, but rather that we should have a new soul.”**

To me, a “new soul” doesn’t mean reinventing ourselves. It means tending what remains alive and growing within us. It means softening old edges. Letting go of what no longer serves us. Giving the inner life the care it deserves.

Feeding the soul doesn’t require grand effort. Often it happens quietly. In a thoughtful conversation. In a small kindness. In moments of stillness where we allow ourselves to simply be.

### A Thought for the Year Ahead

If you’re in the later chapters of life, perhaps this new year offers a gentle invitation rather than a challenge. An invitation to listen more closely to your inner life. To notice what brings peace. To let go of what feels heavy.

If you’d like, I invite you to share your thoughts in the comments. What has nourished your soul over the years? And what feels important now?

Sometimes, especially at this stage of life, sharing our reflections can be a gift to one another.

Happy New Year!