

DRIED UP

- "Al tashlichaynu le-ayt ziknah...." (Uploaded by Doniel Kramer)

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by Marion Smith

Toward the end of summer last year I saw a field full of wild Black Eyed Susan flowers. A few of them were still in bloom- so pleasing to behold as they swayed in the warm Texas breeze. Most of them, however, were withered, brown and dried up .They weren't as attractive to look at without the pretty petals, but they still served a purpose. Their time of beauty to the eye was over, but in nature's miraculous plan, there remained a design and a use for them. They were still needed, for the seeds in the center of each flower would feed many a bird and these seeds would also drop to the ground to propagate new growth.

I have visited many elderly people in retirement and nursing homes. Some of these folks feel so useless- they think they are burdens to their family and society, and that they have no worth at all.

This makes my heart sad, because I believe God still has a purpose for their lives, even if their bodies are failing. If their minds are alert, they can be prayer warriors. They can encourage others in the facility where they live- or- even visitors. They can be good listeners for others who need to share burdens or joys, and they can share their faith with others.

At one time I regularly visited an elderly lady living in a nursing home. My motive was to bring a little happiness into her life and give her a visitor to look forward to seeing on a regular basis. Once again!- God gave me the blessing! For I learned so much from this lovely lady: how to age gracefully, how to share your faith, and how to be thankful for each day God gives you.

The life expectancy of people today is much longer than even 10 years ago. We should pray for our elderly relatives and acquaintances that they would never feel "dried up" • and useless.

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