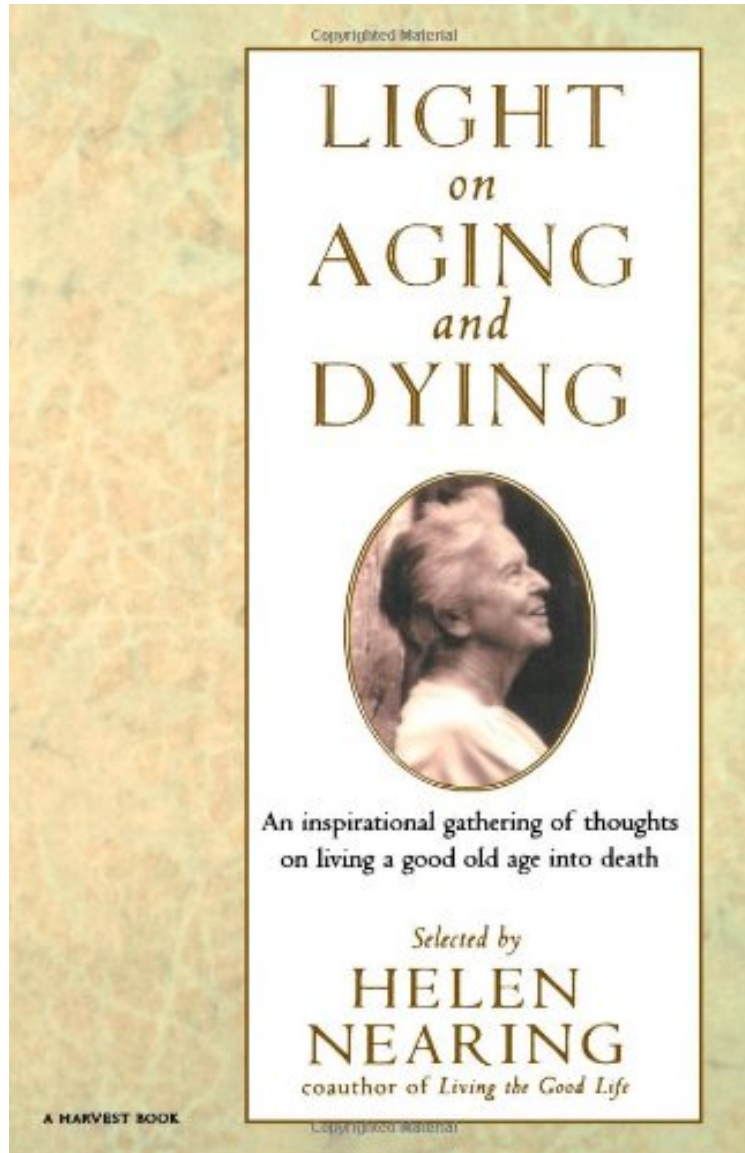


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## Light on Aging and Dying: Wise Words

*Helen Nearing*

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**Helen Nearing : Light on Aging and Dying: Wise Words** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Light on Aging and Dying: Wise Words:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Very Uplifting! By J. Sanders Not only am I a fan of Scott and Helen Nearing, especially Helen, but I am also someone who has read many books on the spiritual aspects of death and dying.

I think this book is inspirational for people of all ages. It would be an excellent read for someone who is getting older or perhaps someone with an illness who realizes the time of their transition is approaching....but it is also a good book for people who are younger and healthy, as it will help them have a better understanding of life and living life. I am very glad that Helen discussed her husband's death in the Foreward. Scott lived his life fully, right up to the very last breath, and he was very much aware that his time of transition had arrived. He had an awareness that his time had arrived, so he made the choice to leave this world with such dignity. This is an excellent book and it really shines a beautiful light not only on aging and dying, but also on living in the now!3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Fantastic book! Helen Nearing talks about living and dying ...By PEPFantastic book! Helen Nearing talks about living and dying in a very readable, conversational tone yet she touches on everything anyone thinks about in relation to life and death. Really illuminating!Loved it!2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Thinking about the inevitableBy Henry Frederick SimonThoughtful and eloquent collection of short quotations on the subject of dying and death.

A treasury of wisdom on growing old gracefully-featuring the words of Ovid, Thomas Jefferson, Walt Whitman, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Henry James, Carlos Castaneda, Annie Dillard, Anatole Broyard, and many others-compiled by the renowned coauthor of *Living the Good Life* just before her death at age 91.

About the AuthorHelen Knothe Nearing (1904-1995) and Scott Nearing (1883-1983) were well known American back-to-the-landers who wrote extensively about their experience living what they termed "the good life". The Nearings began their simple life on an old farm on the foot of Stratton Mountain near Jamaica, Vermont in 1932, in the pit of the Great Depression. In 1952 they moved to Maine, ultimately settling on their "Forest Farm" at Cape Rosier (in the village of Harborside, within the town of Brooksville), where they lived until their deaths. Scott remained a thinker, writer, and lecturer on economics and social issues for many years. Their best known books (those which they wrote together) are *Living the Good Life* (published 1954) and *Continuing the Good Life* (1979). The first of these is often credited with being a major spur to the U.S. Back-to-the-land movement that began in the late 1960s. Helen and Scott were devoted to a lifestyle giving importance to work, on the one hand, and contemplation or play, on the other. Ideally, they aimed at a norm that would divide most of a day's waking hours into three blocks of four hours: "bread labor" (work directed toward meeting requirements of food, shelter, clothing, needed tools, and such); civic work (doing something of value for their community); and professional pursuits or recreation (for Scott this was frequently economics research, for Helen it was often music - but they both liked to ski, also). They clearly honored manual work, and viewed it as one aspect of the self-development process that they felt life should be. The Nearings were experimenters and were also very widely read. They frequently quoted authors of centuries past in their own books. They found wisdom in some of the attitudes of the past, but did not feel tied to the life patterns or technologies of the past. Apart from the necessity that drove them to the land, when they sought a good life during the Depression, keys to their success in the lifestyle included intelligence, commitment, and self-discipline. Their best-known books draw mainly on their personal experience on their homesteads. Secondary content is drawn from reflections on mainstream-American society (which they were critical of and basically rejected), their neighbors, and the positive values they believed in: self-responsibility, healthy exercise and diet, social cooperation, environmental consciousness, etc. The cycles and rhythms of nature were the Nearings' guide as they successfully provided for about 80% of their food needs. Their approach to living, based largely on the reduction of wants and a mostly non-monetary return from their organic horticulture and other sorts of labor, appealed to many people. The Nearings offered an almost "open-house" situation on their land for several decades, so that visitors could experience this way of life and learn a bit from them.