

Brain still works when you retire

To the Editor:

You have worked very hard for many years. As your physical faculties weaken, shouldn't you be slowing down? Hasn't the time come to reap the rewards of life? Society's solution, of course, is retirement. But have we considered the effects of retirement on our spirits? Why are so many

of our elderly so unhappy? Why do they experience such emptiness in their lives? All of us, if we are fortunate, will grow old. Should we look toward that time with enthusiasm or with dread?

If a human being reaches a certain age, whether it is 55, or 65 or 75, and suddenly announces, "I'm going to retire," the question must be asked: Retire from what? Ambition? Creativity? Such an attitude means that you are simply preparing for the end, which is unacceptable for a person who comes into the world with a mission to produce. One does not retire from life.

The perception of retirement is an erroneous one. It assumes that our goal in life is to amass the right amount of wealth so that we can shut down our productivity at a certain age and revel in our material success and free time.

This is not to say that we should not enjoy the fruits of our labor — only that we should never forget the reason that the labor has been done in the first place. Nor must we devote our entire lives to earning a living. But we should never abandon the world of work and productivity for a world of inactivity, a world that doesn't challenge us, a world that isolates us from contributing.

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