

Published based on [The Day I Brushed My Teeth with Preparation H](#)

The Day I Brushed My Teeth with Preparation H



Vision is a wonderful gift. I appreciate it more and more as I 'age'. I began to complain a few years ago to my optometrist about the changes in my vision. He proceeded to tell me that I was one of the lucky ones who had never had any vision problems and that what I was describing was just normal changes that occur as we 'age'. He informed me that I was just noticing these changes more than the average person because my vision had previously been so perfect which was unusual for my 'age'.

That's what I call a back-handed compliment that feels like a slap. You know, "You've been above average, but now, the inevitable is happening; you are getting old." Being interpreted, your body is beginning to fall apart. How's a woman to take such words?

So for me, recent years have brought the advent of reading glasses and contact lens. I've had to humble myself and admit that I can no longer read without help.

Anyway, I recently had a few fun days with my daughter while she was working a conference in Nashville. One particular morning, I was rushing to get ready for the day. I skipped putting in my contacts because, after all, it takes two minutes. No time to grab my glasses either.

I grabbed the travel size tube of toothpaste, loaded up my toothbrush, and began to brush.

Hmm. Strange. My brain said, "Something is wrong. Tastes weird. Feels greasy."

I'll admit I was processing a little slower than normal. I kept brushing.

I hadn't slept much the night before. My hotel room coffee didn't have as much kick as I would have at home. And my final excuse, I had left my own toothpaste at home and had to have the bellboy bring up a sample to my room. How could I be expected to recognize such a tube without my glasses or contacts?

I thought, "What kind of toothpaste is this?" But then, my neurons began to process a little better and I knew.

Embarrassment surged through my body. I blushed as I rushed to quickly rid my toothbrush and my mouth of the greasy material which was not intended for my mouth. It was not that easy. The greasy stuff had coated my teeth and tongue. I am quite sure my lips had begun to shrink already. I brushed and brushed – with toothpaste - and spit and rinsed. No wonder you can apply it at bedtime and know it will still be working in the a.m.

I rushed to hide all evidence of my stupidity. My instinct was to never admit, to my daughter or anyone else, what I had just done. After all, such a mistake must mean that I am an idiot.

I capped the Preparation H and moved it far away from my toothpaste.

Now in order to appear more dignified to you all because there must be some sort of shame in having hemorrhoids, I will tell you that I was using the Preparation H for the puffy bags under my eyes.

I read the suggestion in an article. (Those who know me are smiling; I am always quoting some ambiguous article as a source of truth.) Having tried other more expensive solutions without huge success, I have resorted to using Preparation H and I will tell you that it does help with the swelling of facial tissues, too!

I moved beyond my initial reaction to 'never tell', confessed to my daughter, and laughed with her at my human mistake.

As I evaluate my life at this 'age', I find that I have learned to embrace my humanity more than ever. I've almost quit pretending I've got it all together and am on a journey to accept that this 'age' carries with it two things for me.

One, a new kindness for my humanness, and two, a new awareness of wishing I had been more comfortable in my own skin much earlier. A grief of sorts. However, it seems that for most of us, that kind of acceptance comes along with the aging process.

I must admit that I am ambivalent about aging. I can't really rejoice in diminishing vision, age spots, and aching joints.

I do so wish I had taken better care of my body when I was younger. You know, in hindsight, I should have avoided sun-tanning and jumping off human pyramids during high school probably was not so good on my knees (which complain now), but who cares about that when you are 16 and wearing a cute little cheerleader uniform? Now I just wish I could still get into the uniform; to heck with the climbing and jumping.

Much deeper though is the regret that I feel about the many years that not only did I not listen to my physical body, but I did not listen to my heart. I ignored the signals to slow down and honor the limits of my humanity.

So while I am struggling to accept some of the results of my physical aging process such as a change in my vision, I simultaneously rejoice that my spiritual and emotional vision is healthier. My heart and soul are more at rest. I can laugh at my humanness.

After all, I think my teeth are looking noticeably healthier, too.

You can also find this article published on [The Day I Brushed My Teeth with Preparation H](#), and on the tag pages [Aging](#), [emotional health](#), [humanity](#), [humanness](#), [Preparation H](#), [spiritual health](#).