

FOREWORD -- 40 PLUS AND FABULOUS

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By: Tonoa Bond

We all know how the adage goes: "When you're young you want to be older, and when you're older you want to be young again." Many of us can identify with this, right? We spent a great deal of time in our youth in a race towards the golden finish -- turning 18. We then spent another three years eagerly anticipating the pièce de résistance, turning 21. We couldn't wait until we were legal... legal to drink, legal to drive and legal/able to have the means to move out of our parents homes, make our own decisions and live the lives we wanted to live. Yes, this sense of urgency was present in all of us because as teenagers, who were desperate for a modicum of power and the ability to finally control our own lives, age translated to independence; and oh how we so wanted to be free!

And then, for a great deal of us, the shift happens. While some of us move happily along in our lives eagerly adding each successive age to our birth tally and proudly wearing our age on our sleeves, others are gripped by an overwhelming fear. And it is this fear that seizes the lives of those who, after the age of 21, fear what age and getting older means for their lives, loves and careers. They allow themselves to buy into the myth that aging is a bad thing and tend to waste a great deal of time refusing to acknowledge it while desperately trying everything possible to reverse it. And it is this mindset that is so apparent in our culture today.

So many in our society are investing huge amounts of time and money, lifting, tucking, botoxing and lying about their age; fighting hard against that one thing we were born to do... get older. And what they learn, when they finally give themselves a chance to embrace it, is that age is their calling card to a world yet explored. That it is not so much about getting older than it is about growing bolder and that there is an entire world out there awaiting them -- all they have to do is have the audacity to believe it!

Growing older really is about "moving forward fierce, focused and full of life." In her debut book, *40 Plus and Fabulous*, Sondra Wright is showing us how to live this quote to the fullest. Sondra has brought us stories of empowerment and boldness from women of differing ages and various backgrounds. Many of these women are in the public eye and have embraced their age in a way that speaks to a life of exclusivity. A life that one would be and should be jealous of if they were not actually given the chance at the same opportunity. But thankfully, growing older is an equal opportunity for all and no one has to be left behind unless they so choose to do so.

As I write these words, I am sitting on the precipice of my golden birthday -- the big 4-0 and I cannot wait. My own journey to forty has too been marked with changing my age for the benefit of others; although mine was more about me adding years to my age frame and appearing older than what I was. I would say I was 30 when I was only 27... or that I was nearly 35 when I'd just turned 32. I have an extremely young looking face, which is both a blessing and a curse, and I believed I needed the construct of age to add credibility to my life and experiences. And now with the golden age of 40 fastly approaching I feel as if I've arrived and am no longer needing a false sense of security to do what age and the wisdom of years can and will do for me naturally. So exciting... so exciting! Life really does begin at 40 and with Sondra's words and research I can embrace this time in my life feeling nothing short of fabulous! And you can too!

Allow this book to teach you how to stand toe-to-toe with the cultural giants of our time who are painting a picture of death and doom after 40. Adopt the mindset of the women interviewed in this book so that you can profess to yourself and the world, "I am not getting older, I am getting bolder and there is nothing the world can do to stop me!" Sondra has set out on a personal journey to change the mentality of women around the world reminding them of what it truly means to age gracefully. Teaching them through the example of herself and others that acknowledging who you are at your core means embracing all facets of your life and standing in a truth that no one else can claim. And that age brings with it a fierceness and boldness that really is wasted on the young.

So embrace your age, create your own fountain of youth and be bold enough to stand in the face of a society that would demand that you need to be younger in order to be relevant and show them the true beauty of who you are, age and all. Demand the best of your life and never allow anything, especially your age, to stop you from living your dreams. Because as I stated earlier, your life is waiting for you... you just have to have the audacity to believe it!

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Thank you for taking the time to read this foreword for this amazing book. To book Tonoa for your events, please contact us: media@tonoabond.com