

We Have Three Questions for You

Jeanne Lee

When in the hospital in days gone by, the staff would enter the room with three questions to see if you were “aware”: What is the day and date and who is President? I had a precious 97 year-old friend who was being considered to be “unaware” because she was not giving the name of the President. When she came home, I asked her why she never answered the question because she was certainly aware of who it was. Her reply was, “I didn’t vote for him and I won’t say his name out loud!”

The other two questions about day and date are not asked so much anymore. Rather there are now white boards in hospital and nursing homes which include the day and date and often the names of caregivers on that shift.

My calendar is on my phone along with all of my contacts. If the phone is lost or dies, there will be more than three questions that I won’t be able to answer! Happily, I have been able to download all of my contacts and do have them on paper. Doctor appointments and other important dates are written down too.

As for the day of the week and date, that is something that I have found not to be all that critical during my retirement – especially since I’m pretty much at home these days with no meetings or activities. I know that today is today, yesterday was yesterday – though don’t ask me what I did! – and tomorrow will be tomorrow. That accounts for three of the seven days in a week, which is almost half of the week.

Looking through some boxes that have not been opened since moving in years ago, I found a Day Timer from when I was working with notes, projects and meeting on nearly every page. I got exhausted just glancing through the pages.

Often I’ve been asked how I accomplish all that I seem to be doing. Well, letting a secret out of the bag, when I show a calendar to someone on my phone, there are some hidden secrets. In order to have time for myself without scheduling all of my waking hours, I plug in favorite TV shows, projects, reminders and other miscellaneous “events” in order not to schedule too many outside events. Although I do enjoy all of the activities in which I participate and the people I meet, I am definitely trying to take charge of my calendar instead of my calendar taking charge of me.