

50+Living our best lives now and in the future!

A Game Changer

Once a professional baseball player, Gordon Avery built a successful business and continues to work as a real estate developer. A few years ago, he made a necessary and significant life change. Today, he practices meditation, is learning to garden, loves fishing, and enjoys spending time with his canine companion, Bernie. His passion is to give back and make the world a better place.



A Wrestling Champion and Future Professional Baseball Player

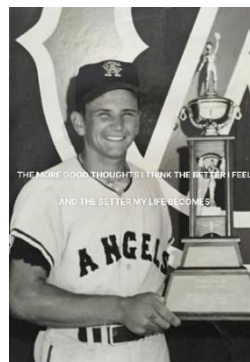
From the moment he started high school in Sutherlin, Oregon, Gordon Avery's dedication to sports was evident. He was an 85 lb. 4' 11" district wrestling champion but soon found himself playing second base for the school baseball team. Baseball was more than just a game for him—it was a family legacy. “My dad was a baseball player. He spent many hours pitching balls. We had no video games or television in those days—just baseball.”

Gordon's talent was recognized when his family moved to California, where he played one game of JV and then was placed on the varsity team; “I made the All-Star Team from Northern

California.” After a move back to Southern Oregon, Avery played baseball for Roseburg High School. That year, his team won the American Legion State Championship. By then, he weighed 160 lbs. and was 5' 10”.

Avery was offered a full baseball scholarship from the University of Oregon. “It was the only full scholarship provided.” He played shortstop until he injured his arm. Then he played second base. After the Vietnam War started, he spoke to a Coast Guard Reserve Recruiter about signing up but was told they could only take two to three recruits a month. “I talked about baseball and did my best sales job ever. The recruiter got me in.” Eventually, Avery also earned his degree in recreational management.

Recruited as a Professional Baseball Player



After his sophomore year, Bobby Doerr, a scout for the Boston Red Socks, offered him a \$4500 bonus to sign with the minor team. Avery celebrated by spending \$3000 of his bonus on a new Chevrolet Super Sport, aqua blue and loaded.

Later, he was traded to the California Angels, where he was recognized with a trophy for being the most dedicated and improved

player during spring training. “I played with the California Angels until I was about thirty.”

The Legacy Continues

Not only did his father play baseball, but his son played shortstop for a baseball team but injured his arm. Avery’s grandson played shortstop for Roseburg High School. “It runs in the family.”

Business Success

After ending his baseball career, Avery got into the real estate business with a lifetime friend. “I was always very interested in real estate but didn’t know anything about it. We had to learn. We opened a real estate office in Roseburg, Oregon, with 35 salespeople.” Eventually, the market crashed, and everyone got out. Then, through the common bond of baseball, Avery met a developer who gave him a plan for an affordable house. He began building and selling homes in Sutherlin. Following the principles from Deepak Chopra’s 2015 book, [7 Spiritual Laws of Success](#), he has built several houses in his community over the years. He continues to work in his business, as do his two sons.

Game Changer

About 15 years ago, Avery acknowledged that his waist had ballooned to 44 inches along with his weight. He had also developed Type 2 Diabetes. “I had been living on the standard American diet.” He told himself, “You can keep doing what you’re doing or change your lifestyle.” He changed his eating and exercise habits “then and there.”

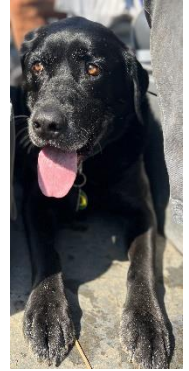
After educating himself, Avery no longer eats red meat, sugar, or processed foods and is primarily a vegetarian. “Now I weigh 160 lbs. again. Forget the diet. Change your lifestyle.” To help encourage others to live healthier lives, he highly recommends the 2018 book [What the Health](#).

In addition to changing his diet and exercise habits, Avery began practicing meditation after attending a

retreat with Deepak Chopra. More recently, he also started taking yoga classes for increased flexibility and has started gardening.

Life with Bernie

Avery grew up with dogs but couldn’t have another one for many years. Eight years ago, his son bought him a Labrador Retriever. ‘Bernie’ is a constant companion who is always overjoyed to see his master and is “a teacher of unconditional love.” However, this sweet boy once pushed his limits as a puppy. While alone in his ‘dad’s’ newer sports car for a few minutes, Bernie entertained himself by chewing up the upholstery and console.



A Passion for Helping Others

“Dad went through the Depression, and we didn’t have bikes.” One way Avery loves giving back to the community is to buy 50 bicycles each year for low-income children in partnership with a Fred Meyer Store that assembles and discounts the bikes. He then gives them to the local fire department to distribute as “gifts from their parents.” He continually finds other ways to “add a little love to this world,” such as donating turkeys to families for Thanksgiving or regularly buying coffee for strangers.

For Relaxation

“Fishing is very relaxing.” With a cabin and a boat nearby on the Umpqua River, Avery enjoys getting away almost daily, often seeing blue herons, osprey, and other birds that freely glide over the river.

Advice

“Find something you can do to be of service to others.” As Ralph Waldo Emerson is credited with saying, “Without a rich heart, wealth is an ugly beggar.”

‘One Kind Thought’

Gordon Avery encourages each of us to discover ways we can make the world a better place, starting with “One Kind Thought.” Even the smallest acts of kindness can make a difference in the lives of others.

The ‘Standard American Diet’ and Our Health

A [Health Day](#) article notes the standard American diet “consists of excess salt, saturated fat, refined grains, calories from solid fats, and added sugars.” Various other sources indicate that the American diet tends to be ultra-processed, stripping it of essential nutritional value and infused with addictive, harmful substances.

Sugar-Coating an Addictive, Dangerous Substance

A 2020 article by Robert H. Lustig, M.D., [reprinted](#) in the National Library of Medicine, stated, “Some form of sugar has been added to 74% of the food supply because the food industry knows that when they add it, we buy more.” Of even greater concern, a 2022 study from the [Journal of Cancers](#) reported a link between excess sugar consumption and the development and progression of cancer.

A Diet of Ultra-Processed Foods



Medscape, a reputable healthcare resource, recently presented a [report](#) on ultra-processed foods (UPFs). As described

in the report, UPFs are “highly manipulated, low in protein and fiber, and packed with added ingredients, including sugar, fat, and salt.” These ‘foods’ are manufactured with additives for longer shelf lives and consumer appeal. Examples of UPFs

include fast foods, highly processed meat, packaged snacks, and many breakfast cereals.



The consumption of UPFs is [on the rise](#) globally, with the United States leading the trend. In fact, adults in the US derive a whopping 58% of their daily energy intake from UPFs. A large study revealed that children aged 2-19 years get 67% of their total energy from UPFs.

Putting Our Health at Risk

Various studies link UPFs to metabolic health problems, including obesity. UPFs are also “associated with an increased risk for type 2 diabetes.” Further, UPFs have been [linked](#) to Crohn’s disease and Inflammatory Bowel Disease.

As reported in [Med Page Today](#), “In one study, increasing UPF “intake by 10% increased your risk of cognitive impairment by 16%.” However, “eating more unprocessed or minimally processed foods was linked with a 12% lower risk of cognitive impairment.”

Our Health, Our Choice

We must be informed and vigilant to better protect our health. A free, 43-page downloadable booklet from the American College of Lifestyle Medicine, [Food as Medicine](#), could be a good place to start.

Stress on the Brain

From a 2024 Study Finds [article](#), cognitive reserve, identified in the 1980s as “certain life experiences and behaviors” that can protect us from cognitive decline, may be no match for the eroding effects of stress. A Swedish team of researchers suggests that the stress hormone cortisol may compromise the benefits of cognitive reserve. To better protect ourselves, researchers indicate that “techniques like mindfulness and meditation, which can lower cortisol levels, might be a powerful addition to existing lifestyle interventions.”

Practicing Mindfulness through Meditation

As a UC Davis blog [explains](#), regular meditation practices can benefit us in numerous ways, including lower stress levels, improved sleep, less anxiety and depression, and greater compassion for ourselves and others.

According to a Mayo Clinic [article](#), mindfulness is one type of meditation that helps us focus on what we are “sensing and feeling in the moment without interpretation or judgment.”

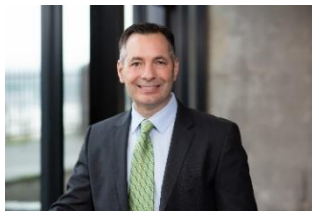
Glenn Harrold (a Gordon Avery suggestion) offers mindfulness meditations through YouTube or by subscription. For stress and anxiety, [here](#) is one you might find helpful.

Fostering Joy in Your Life

A wide range of literature suggests that we can create more joy in our lives by practicing gratitude, being “present in the moment,” cultivating and acting with a sense of purpose, and reducing stress.

Financial Planning Series for Older Adults Available on YouTube

Founder of Elevate Wealth Advisors and financial planner, Ben James, CFA, CFP, describes his view on money in his book, [The Playbook: 7 Fundamentals of Financial Planning](#), as “...necessary and useful, but it is just one of many tools available to us (p.12).” Nonetheless, James knows managing the money we have is essential.



Drawing on valuable insights from his book, James led a four-week online series on financial planning for older adults. Coming of Age, New York hosted this free series and will soon make it available on YouTube. (Check this channel [link](#).)

Session 1—Take Charge: Understanding Your Goals & Objectives.

Session 2—Build a Strong Foundation: Financial Statements Explained.

Session 3—Protect Your Legacy: Essential Estate and Legal Documents.

Session 4—Safeguarding Your Assets & Streamlining Taxes: Insurance, Social Security & Tax Strategies.

Celebrating Father’s Day June 16

History of Father’s Day: After Sonora Smart Dodd, a Spokane, Washington woman, actively campaigned for the recognition of fathers on a particular day each year, “Washington State celebrated the nation’s first Statewide Father’s Day on June 19, 1910.” By 1924, recognizing all fathers was starting to gain a little steam. “President Calvin Coolidge urged state governments to observe Father’s Day.” However, it wasn’t until 1972, “In the middle of a hard-fought presidential re-election campaign,” that Richard Nixon signed a proclamation making Father’s Day a federal holiday.”

A Unique and Enduring Gift

Rather than spending money on more ties, socks, or pajamas, here’s an especially thoughtful and enduring way to honor fathers: You can [purchase a brick](#) for that special dad with his name and a personal message. The brick will later be installed on the plaza above the Oregon City Elevator at the end of the Oregon Trail. This is also a great way to honor a father who is no longer here.

Boomer Best U does not provide medical, dietary, legal, or financial advice. As appropriate, consult your doctor, a legal professional, or a financial expert when considering health-related, legal, or financial changes.

Subscribe/Unsubscribe: Paula@boomerbestU.com