Who is this book for?

This book is for anyone who wonders about how best to use their resources to maximize their quality of life as they age. We summarize what we heard from our interviewees about the factors that have enabled them to have fulfilling later-life experiences and show how they have leveraged their resources to cultivate these factors. We also focus on the intersection of aging and financial resources, delving into questions like “If you have the resources to age well, how do you optimally use them? How should you invest your time and money to design a life that will enhance your ability to age well? And what planning should you do now to maximize your chances that the resources you leave behind will positively rather than negatively impact your family after you’re gone?”

While this book is about aging, it is not just for people currently at a later stage in their lives—it is also for their children. How often have we heard from friends or colleagues whose parents’ later-life experiences proved to be terrifying, exhausting, financially draining, or confusing for their children? All too frequently, the impulse is to wait another day before facing the reality of aging; we tend to underestimate the importance of clearly stating our wishes and planning ahead to make sure our wishes can be carried out without causing conflict or pain in our families. This avoidance leaves the younger generation holding the full burden of responsibility for making choices in times of extreme stress. Our hope is that an adult child in the throes of helping an aging parent might be buoyed by these stories and may find in this book the resources necessary either to help make their situation more manageable or inspire their parent to action that would positively impact their family.