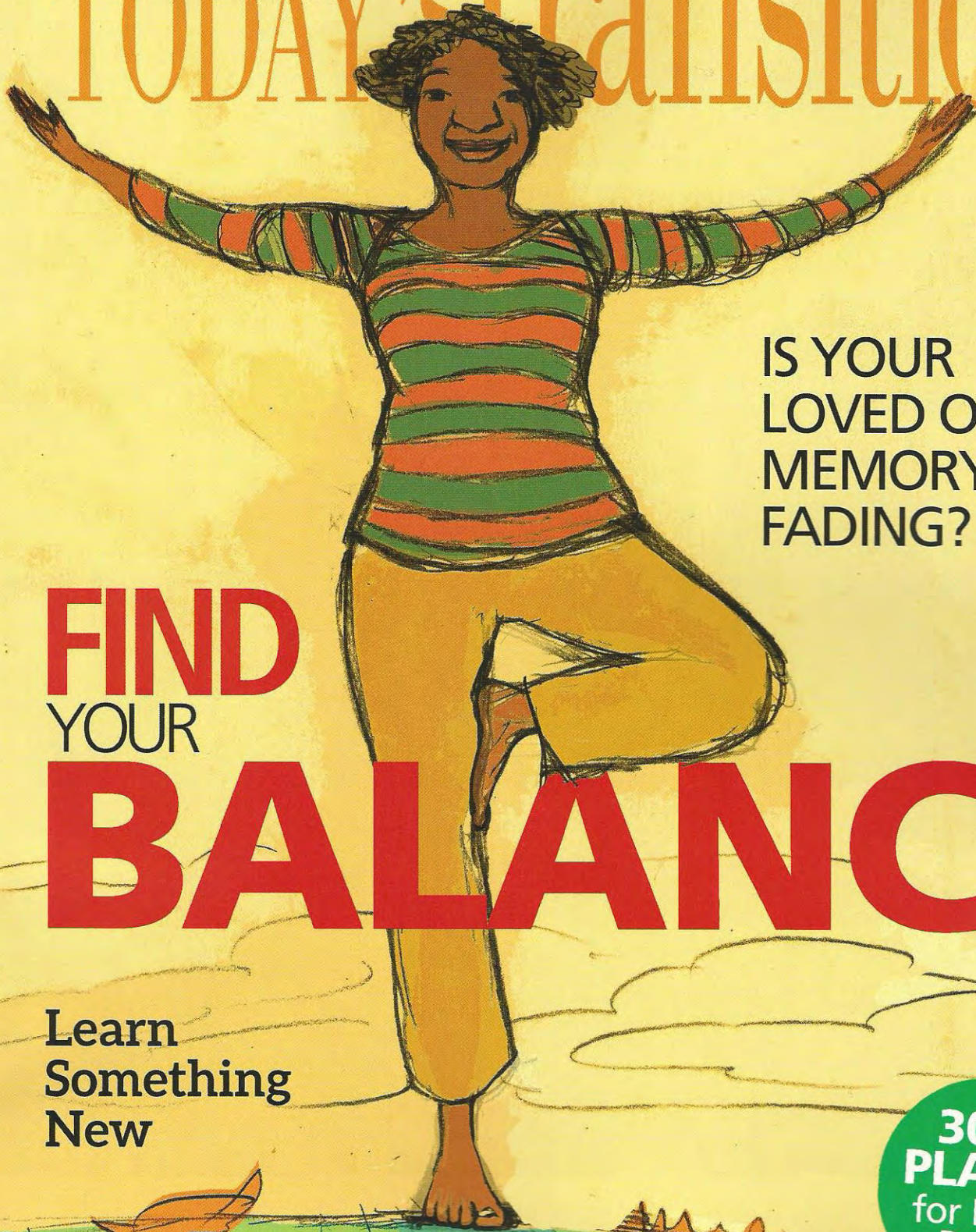


FALL 2017

TODAY'S Transitions



IS YOUR
LOVED ONE'S
MEMORY
FADING?

FIND
YOUR

BALANCE

Learn
Something
New

300+
PLACES
for Living
Better

Merrily Orsini

Merrily Orsini is 70 "and proud of it." She founded Eldercare Solutions in 1981, sold it in 1996, and in 1998 founded Corecubed, which specializes in marketing for aging care companies. She continues to serve as president and CEO of the company and is a well-known conference speaker on aging care.

BY LUCY M. PRITCHETT

What was a defining moment in your career?

In 1981 when I started my first business Eldercare Solutions. I was asked to provide homecare for a woman who had Alzheimer's. That first client inspired me to learn about Alzheimer's and dementia and how to provide a better place for people to age in place.

What drives you now?

I still get up and go to work every day. I still have that passion for providing solutions to aging care. Also my grandchildren are reasons to stay healthy and stay active.

What advice would you give the younger you?

I would have put a little more balance in work and family. I was a single mom, and I didn't take much time to smell the roses.

How can a woman make her point without raising her voice?

Lower her tone. Women's voices tend to get a little screechy. But if you repeat your message calmly and in a lower tone, you can get your point across.

What should a woman taste at least once?

Indian food. Turmeric, a spice often used in Indian cooking, is currently popular in terms of longevity and mental clarity.

What book has influenced you?

Being Mortal: Medicine and What Happens in the End by Atul Gawande.

The author is a surgeon, and the book discusses that although medicine has extended our lives, the end goal should be quality of life for patients and families.

What were your plans for yourself?

I was supposed to be a lawyer, and I was heavily involved in politics. I attended the 1968 Democratic National Convention as a delegate from Arkansas. That's when I lost my respect for politics.

What was your greatest loss, and how did you get through it?

The death of my mother. She was so instrumental in my life. I used to talk to her every day. I got through the loss by staying busy and loving more intensely those around me.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MERRILY ORSINI

Merrily Orsini

What did you learn from your mom?

She was an attorney and a very wise woman. She taught me to love travel and to respect people of all kinds. She taught me to be self-sufficient. I was never hampered by the fact that I was a woman.

Who was a role model when you were young?

Federal Judge Florence Allen. I met her when I was 8 at a luncheon that I attended with my mom. We got into a conversation that continued for many years. From the time we met until I was 14 or so we wrote to each other. She mentored me in so many ways.

Pet peeve?

People not listening and formulating a defensive response before they've heard the question.

Mantra?

For a long time I have used "Onward and Upward." Pick yourself up and keep going.

Biggest issue in aging today?

Demographics. Our population is aging so rapidly. We are trying to cut costs in a system in which the usage of that system is increasing. It is like the pig and the python. This year, 2017, is the first year in the U.S. when there are more people over 65 than under 5. ■