

Ageing Means Carrying On:

The Inspiring Story of Kátia Galvão, Author of the book “50etcetera: Chronicles of Life 50+”

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“Our story after 50 is not an end point, just a comma.”

This is the message that runs through “50etcetera: Chronicles of Life 50+”, the book by Kátia Galvão, a teacher, communicator and chronicler with extensive experience in education and reflective writing.

The book came about unexpectedly. For around ten years, Kátia wrote short chronicles about the experiences, changes and discoveries she went through after turning 50. Some were published on a blog dedicated to ageing, whilst others remained unpublished until a publisher discovered her writing and challenged her to turn it into a book. The result is a collection of stories that blends humour, sensitivity and reflection, showing that maturity is not the end of discovery, but an opportunity to live more authentically.

More than just a book about ageing, 50etcetera reflects the author’s own life.

What does growing older mean? For many people, the answer is still fraught with preconceived notions: stopping, slowing down, accepting limitations or giving up on dreams. But for Kátia Galvão, growing older has meant precisely the opposite: continuing to discover, learn, love and start afresh.

Throughout her life, Kátia has built a career in education, raised two daughters, travelled the world and never lost the curiosity that has been with her since she was young.

“What hasn’t changed are my values, my passion for discovering new things and my love of being with people.”



Whilst the inner self remains the same, the body naturally changes. Kátia talks about these changes with humour and light-heartedness, without glossing over the challenges.

“Things are falling out, there are grey hairs, and my memory isn’t what it used to be. But that just means we need to look after ourselves in a different way.”

It’s Possible to Reinvent Yourself at Any Age

Kátia’s life has also been marked by profound losses. Some time after her divorce from her long-term partner of 17 years – whom she had known since her youth – she found a new love and remarried at the age of 50. However, fate decreed that she would lose this husband to cancer. It was a time she describes as one of the most difficult of her life. But rather than allowing the pain to define her future, she decided to do something she had always wanted to do: travel alone. She studied French in Paris, visited Portugal and eventually found a new home in Porto. She sold practically everything she owned in Brazil, applied for a Master’s degree in Humanitarian Action, Cooperation and Development, and began a new chapter in her life. Today she continues to invest in her education through a PhD and takes part in various projects, showing that learning knows no age limits. At 60, she found love again in Portugal. Her story shows that there is no age limit for starting afresh.

Menopause Remains a Taboo Subject

During the conversation, Kátia also addresses a topic that remains shrouded in taboo: the menopause. Her experience shows how every woman goes through this process differently. Thanks to specialised medical care in Brazil, she began hormone therapy at an early stage, which enabled her to get through this phase with few symptoms. Later, once in Portugal, she was advised to stop this treatment. Shortly afterwards, she ended up experiencing a late menopause, which was much more intense and difficult.

For Kátia, this experience highlights a problem that still exists: many women feel that their complaints are dismissed or treated as something ‘normal’ simply because they are getting older.

“Women’s health is still often treated as a mystery.”

Discussing the menopause, ageing and women’s health remains essential to ensure that more women have access to up-to-date information and appropriate care.

The Burden of Stereotypes

One of the most striking moments in the interview comes when Kátia reflects on what most influences the ageing process: not age, but society’s expectations.

Throughout our lives, we constantly hear messages such as:

“You’re getting on a bit now.”

“That’s not for you anymore.”

“It’s time to settle down now.”

According to Kátia, these little phrases end up shaping the way many people see themselves.

“The important thing is not to listen to that voice that tells us we can’t do it anymore.”

It is precisely this resistance to stereotypes that has enabled her to continue her studies, move to another country, build new relationships and take on new projects.

The conversation also touched on the different ways in which men and women are viewed as they grow older. Whilst grey hair in men is often associated with charm and maturity, in women it is still frequently seen as a sign of a loss of social value. For Kátia, this difference stems from a society that still places far greater pressure on women regarding their physical appearance.

“A man with grey hair is considered charming. A woman with grey hair is considered old.”

Despite social changes, she believes there is still a long way to go in combating ageism and sexism, which remain present in many aspects of life.

It’s Never Too Late to Live Life to the Fullest

Kátia’s story reminds us that growing older does not mean we stop growing. Every stage of life brings challenges, losses and changes, but also new opportunities to learn, forge relationships, discover new interests and embark on new projects.

As part of the Never Gets Old project, stories such as Kátia’s help us to challenge the myths surrounding ageing and to promote a more positive, inclusive and realistic view of old age. As she demonstrates in her book and through her own story, the real challenge is not growing older, but freeing ourselves from preconceived notions about what we can or cannot do at a certain age. Because age, in itself, should never determine what we are capable of doing. Perhaps the greatest lesson Kátia leaves us with is a simple one:

It’s never too late to start afresh!

