

THE *ten*
SMARTEST
DECISIONS
A WOMAN
CAN MAKE
AFTER *forty*

TINA B. TESSINA, P.H.D.

**THE TEN SMARTEST
DECISIONS A WOMAN CAN
MAKE AFTER FORTY**

Tina B. Tessina, Ph.D.



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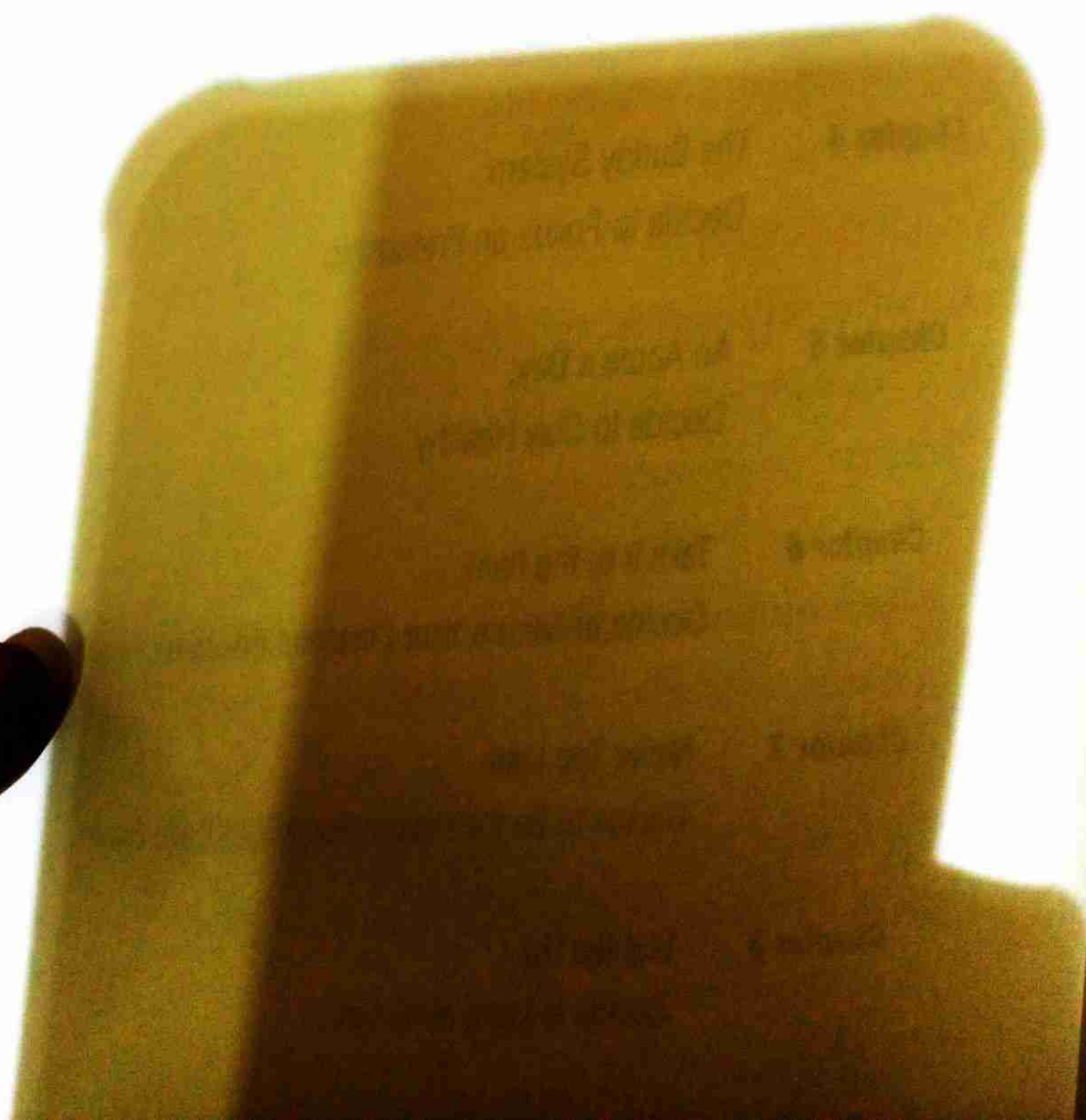
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Maturity: The Freedom to Decide

And then, not expecting it, you become middle-aged . . . You achieve a wonderful freedom. It is a positive thing.

—Doris Lessing

Around the age of forty, we develop a new set of expectations. Forty represents midlife. Psychologists generally use the phrase “midlife crisis” to describe a period experienced by men. As depicted in popular culture, the midlife crisis male will often develop a need to buy an expensive car and leave his wife for a younger woman. But what of women? Women who are afraid of aging approach forty with dread, but many women, who have devoted their lives to raising children and caring for others, or who have focused on making a success of their careers, secretly see forty as a new opportunity. At forty it is possible to view life from a new perspective. You have goals and aspirations yet to achieve, but you also realize that you’re not getting younger. Forty is a time for readjusting your focus, and for getting your whole act together. If you do, you’ll remove the fear that comes with