

## **A personal experience about learning ICTs in later life, by students from E-Seniors**

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I was born in Iowa USA on a farm and spent my life in the Midwest until after my masters degree (Iowa, Minnesota, Ohio and Michigan) After University I married a Palestinian and worked as foreign student advisor at Michigan State University until my husband received his PHD.

He took a position at IBM in Kingston New York where our two daughters were born.

When the girls were 6 and 9 we decided that their surroundings were too traditional for children of a bicultural marriage and he asked for a foreign assignment to broaden their horizon. We came to France where he worked on European telecom projects. We placed the girls at Marymount in Neuilly because it was the most cosmopolitan English speaking school in the Paris area.

We returned to the Hudson Valley in New York to the same home we had left. After seven years we both felt that it was time to try for another foreign assignment and ended up back in France where I have been ever since arriving in 1983.

In France, after receiving permission to work, I was offered the position of housing director of the American University of Paris which I accepted. After being fired for who knows what reason I decided to start my own business as an intermediary doing short term housing searches for foreigners coming to Paris. Upon reaching the age of 62, I took social security retirement from the US and terminated my business.

I was shamed into getting an email account. A friend simply walked me into an internet facility and opened an account for me. It took about ten minutes. Then she wrote me a couple of confirmation messages which I received and answered and I was hooked and hooked up. Having daughters in Seattle and Senegal at that point it was useful to communicate with them because of the time differences - 9 hours for Seattle!

I felt I should learn more so enrolled in an E seniors class in French but it went a bit too fast for me and tried to teach me how to do things that were not very interesting for me as a beginner. So I kept asking questions at the internet cafes and gradually figured out how to use google as it got more user friendly. By this time I had a mailing list of over 200 organizations, family and friends so said yes when my grand daughter in Indonesia asked me to join facebook. I never post messages but reply to those sent to me from others.

I do word processing but do not know how to save and file for later correction and I should step up to this application soon.

I hate spam and keep the machines out of my home so I can look at messages when I want to and not be stressed to consult email on my down time.

Betty Abugheida - 73 years old

Betty Abugheida

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Dear Friends,

Unfortunately I will not be with you to tell you my experience with computers... my 2<sup>nd</sup> son, Laurent, who stayed for long time in Seattle, at Bill Gates' says : « But dad, your English is good, you should go there » ... but the dates were not convenient for me !

In 2006, Monique Epstein, our director, launched her courses. It was immediately a great discovery. Since my first eMail, my son was surprised! « What?! Dad surfs the Internet? » Of course, that have continued.

The lessons were difficult!

It required implementation, with the help of handouts, kept precious!

And then: inbox, received emails, answered, many contacts.

I discovered through google all the medical information on Wikipedia, Doctissimo etc... We made our own diagnosis with sym/rousset which could irritate the doctors.

There are many anecdotes but the results are positive and real!

You can find friends, bring together the family. Everything goes 100 times faster. You receive news instantly. Meeting are fixed frequently on yahoo messenger, the exchanges et various impressions merge from all over and there is a need to answer and continue, send photos to these we appreciate and who are interested in us.

It's not always easy! For example: my older son, before moving away for his job, gave me his I-Mac with skype so that I can see my grandchildren. But this is too difficult for me.

Fortunately, I have a neighbour who is an expert and helps me.

All that, takes a lot of time if you want to get better and become an expert like you are.

I still haven't made my tax declaration on the internet. There are too many numbers in my case!!!

I still don't buy my vacations or any other objects – I don't trust much! But I get informed!!!

I wish you a great time, a good learning!

I thank Monique Epstein, again, for trusting me. And Jean-Michel Damianth, who might be with you – that's an expert who likes to tease me!

See you soon in Paris,

Sincerely yours.

Jacques Leclercq

PS:

I would not tell you about all the useless and uninteresting files that I've sent. Luckily there is garbage that I can empty or save in personnel sectors.