FaceApp is taking over social media. It also may help procrastinators focus on long-term goals, like retirement. The face recognition smartphone application is available for free download; a Pro version is available for a fee. The features available in the free version are enough to motivate you to immediately (possibly dramatically), increase your retirement account contribution percentages. So, what is FaceApp? FaceApp is artificial intelligence facial software which allows users to change up their face ? add smiles, beards, impressions, change hair colors, hair styles, add glasses, tattoos, makeup. All in a manner that appears hauntingly realistic. Users can also hit the ?age editor,? to see how they look young and most important, old. Whether it?s off the mark or not, staring at an eerily-realistic, much older, future, frailer-looking iteration of self in a mirror today may be compelling enough for financial procrastinators to face a future reality (literally), motivate one to ask ? *Am I saving enough for retirement? Am I taking care of my health?* To see yourself in a physically vulnerable state of being, to immediately pull a future into the present day, may jumpstart a brain to also clarify long-term nebulous inevitabilities like aging (in my case you?ll see, not so gracefully), and push a user to get serious about finances, complete a comprehensive financial plan, get that estate plan updated, increase contributions to retirement accounts. You get the picture. It sure scared me straight to consider the viability of my long-term goals and examine the pitfalls in my financial strategy and I create financial plans for a living! Listen, this isn?t a new concept. Years ago, Merrill Lynch launched an application which ages a picture of a user and shows how one may look even after 100 years old. Along with the aging photos, Merrill also showcased messages about the impact of inflation on everyday goods like milk and bread. Smart. The idea of linking facial recognition software to financial viability was founded through experiments conducted at Stanford University and published in a November 2011 edition of the [Journal of Marketing Research](). Stanford?s studies discovered that people who viewed their aged selves, considered allocating more money to their retirement vehicles.

From the study: *?Many people fail to save what they will need for retirement. Research on excessive discounting of the future suggests that removing the lure of immediate rewards by precommitting to decisions or elaborating the value of future rewards both can make decisions more future oriented. The authors explore a third and complementary route, one that deals not with present and future rewards but with present and future selves. In line with research that shows that people may fail, because of a lack of belief or imagination, to identify with their future selves, the authors propose that allowing people to interact with age-progressed renderings of themselves will cause them to allocate more resources to the future. In four studies, participants interacted with realistic computer renderings of their future selves using immersive virtual reality hardware and interactive decision aids.* **In all cases, those who interacted with their virtual future selves exhibited an increased tendency to accept later monetary rewards over immediate ones.?** I don?t believe FaceApp is going to magically turn financial profligates into saints. However, I do believe that a long-term financial dilemma which weighs on one?s mind coupled with a photo of one?s aged self, may push a procrastinator to take a positive, financial action. Try it and let me know if the application helped you get out of the fiscal foxhole and make a run at a financial goal that has been weighing on your mind.