

Chapter 14: Late Adulthood

Old....

- Late adulthood: 65 +
- Many living to 90's
- Ageism: prejudice and discrimination based on age
- Memory comments: I'm having a senior moment, I'm getting Alzheimer's

Stereotypes

- Positive or negative can affect individual
- Internalize across life span
- Operate unconsciously
- Become self-referential
- Influence future choices
- Subliminally exposed to negative stereotypes
 - Handwriting - shaky

Stereotypes

- If you believe that you are independent and in control, live healthier, psych and physical
- Ageism impairs daily life
- Also impacts those around them and treat them accordingly

Elderspeak

- Like parentese
- Simple and short sentences
- Slower, higher pitch, louder
- Frequent repetition
- Elders: harder to hear high pitch, stretching words out ↓ comprehension
- Shouting ↑ anxiety and stress
- Simple words ↓ precision of language

Theories of Aging

- *Wear & tear*: for some parts of the body but not all
 - Exercise ↑ heart and lungs
- *Genetic clock*: Mechanism in DNA that regulate age
 - Hutchinson-Gilford Syndrome (Progeria)
- *Cellular aging*: molecules & cells, replace themselves.....over time imperfections ↑
 - *Hayflick Limit*: healthy cells stop replicating

Cognition

- Deterioration of cognition, slower walk, and physical disability
- Grey matter (crucial for processing new experiences) is ↓
- White matter ↓ but white lesions ↑ which affects the time for a thought to be processed

Information Processing after 65

- Need to know how to combat stereotypes
- *Input*: sensation precedes perception
 - Info must cross *sensory threshold*, what is sensed, what is not
 - May not realize their senses ↓
 - Think they are looking AT you but not (miss social cues)
- *Memory*: suspect memory is fading...anxious....

Information Processing after 65

- Need to teach/learn memory strategies (e.g., envisioning X vs. reading it)
- *Output*: abstractions and speed fade the most
 - Learn strategies based on individual interests and abilities

Alzheimer's

- Over 70 different types of dementia, most common – Alzheimer's
 - First signs: loss of memory for recent events, family names and tasks
 - Higher aggression, anxiety, lower interest in others and previous activities

Erikson: Integrity vs. Despair

- Life comes together – looking back; re-synthesis of all resilience and strength over time
- Seeking integrating of personal experiences with their vision of community
- Integrity: honesty, feeling of being a whole, comfortable with oneself

Erikson: Integrity vs. Despair

- Life comes together – looking back; re-synthesis of all resilience and strength over time
- *Maslow*: Self-actualization
 - Aesthetic, creative, philosophical, and spiritual understanding
 - Can happen at any age

Wisdom

- Top 3: who is the MOST wisest persons
- Wise: expertise knowledge
 - Putting aside one's personal need (self-actualization)
 - Self-reflective honesty (integrity)
 - Perspective of the past (life review)

Centenarians: 100!!!

- Lifestyle
- *Diet*: mainly veg, little meat
- *Work*: doing something like chores
- *Family, community*: well integrated
- *Exercise & relaxation*: walk in morning or night, took nap, socialized in evening

Chapter 15: Late Adulthood

Positive Effect

- Age 50 +: more likely to perceive, prefer, remember positive images and experiences

Activities

- *Paid work*: provides social support, status, self-esteem
- Allows for generativity, effectiveness, independence
- When will you retire? How will you decide?
- *Retirement*: those who fully retired ↓ general health, ↑ chronic health issues, ↓ physical activity
 - BUT! May be above that caused one to retire

Volunteerism

- Benefits!
 - Those who volunteer earlier more likely to continue
- Put in more hours than other age groups in particular arenas: religion, hospitals, social services

Relationships: Older & Younger Adults

- Filial responsibility
- China's new law (2013): *The Law on Protection of the Rights and Interests of the Elderly*: family members should visit relatives who are aged over 60 "often"

Relationships: Older & Younger Adults

- Assistance arises both from need and from ability to provide
- Frequency of contact – geographic, not affection
- Love infl. by childhood memories
- Sons – obligation; daughters - affection

Grandparenting

- *Remote*: emotionally distant; honoured, respected, obeyed and get help whenever
- *Compassionate*: fun-loving, entertaining, "spoil"
- *Involved*: day-to-day
- *Surrogate*: caregiving grandchildren

Elder Abuse

- Abuse is gradual, no one factor
- Change in lifestyle
- Employment or financial difficulties
- Disputes over property/money
- Physical illness
- Mental/psychiatric illness

Elder Abuse

- Addictions
- Lack of adequate supports
- Isolation
- Changing relationships with family, friends
- Declining independence

Bottom Line

- Relationships, family, friends, are important at ALL stages of life!
- Don't take anything for granted ☺