

Gerontology aging simulation

Life



Age Simulation Reaction I often times sit back and think of myself as elder later on in life. So many thoughts come to mind about my physical appearance; not so many thoughts in regards to my own mindset or the mindset of others that surround me, both seniors and young people. I have never been a person to care how others feel about me, but this one day in particular when I was put in the shoes of an elderly person my world was turned upside down by the words, looks, and thoughts of others. Going into this simulation I looked at it on the surface, how could being in the shoes of an older person for one day get so deep?.

Of course there was an expectation of being limited to a degree but the limitations I was stuck with were difficult beyond belief. Minuscule things became very complex to me, things like writing or picking something up were so troublesome because of the decrease of my fine motor skills. Or how about being able to partake in a simple game of Uno or reading a newspaper being suddenly hard for you. These are just a few of the past pleasures that were current irritations. Over the next couple of day I began to ponder on how I take granted the simple, everyday activities or joys of life.

I also wondered how I could improve the way I treat elders, whether it's someone I come in contact with regularly or just a senior in front of me driving slow. I have to learn to control my feelings and expressions towards them, I actually salute them. I don't know how an elder person keeps on fighting, I experienced their life for one day only and it seem as though the world around me was craving in. Being blind and having hip arthritis wasn't so easy to cope with, I wasn't able to be as mobile as I would have liked.

In fact, I not being as mobile resulted in other health issues. Those around me were in worse condition, on top of the little impairments that affected me, they had limitations such as deafness, having had a stroke, knee injuries, major illnesses, and lastly a death of one person closely connected to me. We all started off playing Uno with no problems but as time went on we were unable to play. We couldn't see the cards, hear each other, and also had trouble even grabbing the cards due to loss of fine motor skills or mobility of some limbs in whole.

Those having strokes definitely slowed up the process, most time they were asking me to hand them something or do something for them. I had to have patience when dealing with Morgan, Suzy, and Kelsey; they were very limited. It was kind of stressful to know that I had it better off than them and they relied on me. It was like I felt guilty not helping them because their conditions outweighed those of mine. I was handing this one this and helping that one with that; it was not easy at all. Participating in this exercise gave me anxiety to know that I will one day be face to face with these problems in reality.

Also sadness came over me knowing that actual people have to deal with this in life, as the public or on the outside looking in you don't think of how elders feel or think. I, myself was guilty of some prejudices placed upon seniors. I didn't really think of elders as individuals anymore, I didn't think of them as able person and this is said to be a myth in "The Nine Myths of Aging" by Douglas Powell. In this article he talks about how elders are grouped together and treated as a whole not separate.

Another myth in which I found to be exactly that is an unsound body is equal to an unsound mind, I find those with more time here on Earth to be some of the most intelligent individuals. Some of the knowledge I now have has come from my grandmother or my elder colleagues. They are so insightful, they don't just make decision swiftly but they take time to think and contemplate on all the outcomes and resources available. Look at it this way most of them made it this far in their journey and it has resulted in them being wise.

I am a true believer that old dogs can learn new tricks, I work in a factory with people are biologically old yet can adapt to new ideas and functions, in some cases are the innovators. Use it or lose it in some cases can be true but I don't think we should stereotype all older people under this belief. Although my grandmother has health issues I don't see the depression, self-centeredness, or isolation people talk about. She loves to go places with people of all ages and interest. So that shows me that a lot of thoughts of others are false, nowhere near the truth.

I now believe elders to be useful and most enjoyable people to be around. Often times even those who job is to work with seniors don't see the value that they hold. You can tell by the way in which they treat and talk to them. While they are professionals and trained on how to interact with them, that is actually their downfall. They are trained on how to speak, interact, and respond to others; they lose sight of the feelings or connection that makes an interaction favorable. For some seniors the only real interaction they get comes from a professional and for it not to be pleasant can be damaging.

Between all the illnesses, impairments, and stresses feeling appreciated or respected by others could go a long way. Even though it was simulation, I

got a chance to see from the inside looking out how elders are treated and talked to. During the simulation I was talked down upon with little cheesy terms of endearment, Hun or honey. When time for meds or snacks I wasn't an opinion or explained. I felt like a prisoner to others just because I had aged. Communication goes a long way with everyone not just elders, so it is especially important when it comes to them.

Everyone knows to be polite and respectful to others on general principle. Though I was hard of hearing, instead of yelling distastefully one could stoop or sit to be on the same level as me and close in distance repeat clearly. As said in, " Communicating Respectfully With Older Adults. " Up until reason I used to find myself trying to quickly finish the thoughts of elders with thoroughly listening to their thoughts, it always seemed to take to long for them disclose them fully. Another thing I would do is make decisions for older adults because it seems like it takes them forever to do so.

There's been times when I have went to volunteered at a nursing home where my great aunt is and I would be assigned with helping with meals. During this some of the seniors needed to take meds, I was used to give them instructions fast because I assumed it was a part of their routine. I was always repeating things, but I never thought to slow down and ask them if they had any questions. I just was worried about achieving the goal not how it was achieved. That is a slip on my end. At the end of the day I learned so much about being an elder.

I took away lessons that I could only learned by being in these shoes. I have a different outlook on how elders feel, I don't think it's fair how we pass judgment on them; they are individuals just like us. I think all the prejudices

that come up when elders come to mind are from us on the exterior. We don't give them a chance to express how they feel or make decisions. We don't give them a chance to do things on their because of the rate in which they do them. We are the one damming them to be useless. We have got to do better by those ones who made a way for us.