

Psychological changes during the aging process



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This paper is about typical grades of growing -up. A summary of the content of readings and discussions as we obviously cannot include everything .

There are different definitions of age level (early adulthood, middle adulthood)and the adaptation to the age is different too. The problems of adaptation to the late adulthood and the concept of ageing, propositions to make life of old people more interesting and easier in the conditions of the Nurse House can help in the Health Care Assistants.

Lifespan Psychology Reflective Learning Journal

Changes in thinking, the person and behavior of adults depend on chronological age or from specific biological changes, than from personal, social and cultural influences or events much less. Social changes, cultural requirements of young adults can support, develop or destroy the templates of the behavior which has been put in pawn in teenage years. It is necessary to make of the decision and to overcome difficulties, proceeding from a daily life. A distinctive sign of a maturity is ability to react to changes and to adapt to new conditions.

We conditionally divide years of growing-up on early adult (the second and third decades of a life), average (the fourth and fifth decade) and late adult (age of 60-65 years and above). Value of age for a separate individual can vary considerably . What prospects of classification and research of development of adults in the presence of the big number of specific features? For lack of other indexes, except any age ranges, we will address to concepts of age hours and social norms.

By the end of the period of a youth (approximately by 30 years) the person worries a crisis condition, a certain crisis in the development, connected by those representations about the lives which have developed between twenty and thirty years, do not satisfy him. Analyzing the passed way, the achievements and failures, the person finds out, that at already developed and outwardly safe life its person is imperfect, that it is a lot of time and forces is spent for nothing, that he has a little made in comparison with that could make, etc. Differently, there is a reevaluation of values, critical revision of the “ I”. The person finds out, that he cannot change much in the life any more, in itself (himself): a family, a trade, a habitual way of life. This crisis testifies that the person passes to a new age step – a grown-up age.

(Feldshtejn D. I.)

According to Shaji, in the middle age the person uses the cognitive abilities to solve problems of others – in a family and on work. At some these duties can become difficult enough, demanding adjustment of relations in working collective and assuming possession of the person of versatile knowledge. Such people have possibility to show the cognitive abilities, carrying out administrative functions. At later age, according to Shaji, character of solved problems varies again. The problem reintegration subjective traces of events all previous life, judgement of the life as whole and an estimation of the passed way becomes the main task.

People of middle age should adapt to changing requirements and roles of old parents. When parents have good health and there can live independently, their relations with children are often characterized by mutual equality; it means, that parents and their adult son or the daughter

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render each other the concrete help. Such relations usually change, when parents fall ill or become too weak to live independently.

The duty to look after parents brings not only satisfaction, but can be a stress source. It causes pressure in some between dependence and independence. The old conflicts connected with children's dependence or other problems of family relations between parents and the child or between siblings can become more active again. Sometimes old attachments and the unions between members of a family or old rivalry again revive. Besides, care of parents serves as an omen of the future position of people of middle age which now look after the parents, but in near already the old age it should face own dependence on children.

Decrease of physical strengths and appeal – one of the main problems which the person in days of crisis of middle age and then faces. For those who is necessary on the physical qualities when was younger; middle age can become the period of heavy depression. Histories of the beautiful and charming women struggling with destructive action of time became banality. Act of nature of falling physical strengths of people of unexpectedly wide range of trades, including, artists and actors. University professors regretfully recollect the ability in student's years to spend some days without a dream if that was demanded by an important issue. Many people simply complain that they start to get tired too often. Though well thought over program of daily exercises and a corresponding diet has the an effect, the majority of people in the middle age start to rely more and more on "brains", instead of on "muscles". They find new advantages in the knowledge accumulating life experience, get wisdom (Bentley, E. (2007).

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The period of grown-up is characterized by that the basic or higher achievements of many kinds of creative, theoretical activity have these years. During this period there is a new differentiation of the separate parties of intelligence and at the same time – its higher level of the general integration. So, in an interval from 34 till 37 years there comes the second peak in development of thinking of the adult person, more and more close and steady communications between figurative, verbally-logic and practical thinking (Pinjaeva S. E., Andreev N. V. Personal and professional development in a maturity//Questions in Psychol. 1998. â„-2. p. 7).

Let's address to group investigated by us with favorable forms of mental ageing. The following age group – people 70 – 80 years (« the second life»). This time when there are significant such illnesses of an old age as easing and restriction of impellent activity, the sight and hearing decrease, complicating habitual forms of activity. However the share of persons with the positive relation to ageing here again in essence does not vary, despite more significant for this group the factor of physical weakness, the big depth of physical decline.

The physical condition of old men substantially depends on their psychological state of health: optimistically adjusted old men shipped in the affairs feel much better, than the despaired, hypochondriac people concentrated to the misfortunes. Certainly, creative people worry ageing is easier – with them there is the favourite business, the saved up experience, the got wisdom. The history knows many examples of activity of writers, poets, artists, the musicians who lived to a ripe old age and have kept clearness of mind, taste by a life, creative abilities even contrary to a

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physical infirmity or illnesses. Goethe, Voltaire, Swift, Michelangelo, Renoir, Monet, Verdi, Beethoven derived strength for struggle against an old age in immense enthusiasm for the business; others, less known, but also causing respect, keep from own advantage.

It is possible to note and one more characteristic fact testifying in favour of adaptive value of senile concern: motivational conditionality of a condition of alarm informs emotional experiences in structure of this condition bright partiality [Bennet, Pravits]. G., 1987; Lazarus R. S., Averill J. G., 1972].

Emotional experiences of alarm (as a whole characterized as unpleasant) are incompatible with experiences of boredom and give a sharpness to a subjective picture of the surrounding validity. Concern concerning the health that is often shown at old men in shape hypochondriatic fixings... Induces development of new interests and requirements for enrichment by medical knowledge in the field of the best ways of treatment and other forms of struggle against senile illnesses. Old men receive great pleasure from stories about the illnesses and thus they do not confuse, that surrounding these stories are perceived as persuasive – older persons sincerely do not notice it as the life out of a society promotes decrease at them the behavioral control. But conversations on illnesses, infinite treatment and self-treatment is a process, it is a way, instead of the way end. It is interesting that within the limits of this strategy of adaptation concern in health of relatives extends basically on the narrowest circle of relatives on which the life and well-being of old people directly depends.

Other characteristic emotional condition of older persons, according to the given strategy of adaptation, age-situational depression in the absence of

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complaints to this condition is. As a whole, senile depression is shown in easing of an affective tone, delay of the affective vivacity, set aside[™] affective reactions; thus the person of the old person is limited in possibilities to transfer sincere emotional movements [Shahmatov N. F., 1996; Santrock J., 1995]. Older persons inform on feeling of emptiness of a surrounding life, its vanity and uselessness. All event before their eyes seems to them insignificant and uninteresting; interesting, full of sense the life in the past is represented only, and it never will return. But these experiences are perceived by older persons as usual and do not carry painful character. They grow out of life reconsideration, carriers of new senses and have adaptable value as protect the person from aspirations, struggle and for the excitement interfaced to them which is the extremely dangerous to old men.

Interpersonal conflicts – a daily element of a life of the house for aged. People get to such houses-boarding schools with the broken destiny, growing old on(E. Erikson's) “ unsuccessful” type, suffering from the former mental traumas which have not lost urgency, as a rule. They get here many blessings, but, at the same time, are exposed to the negative socially-psychological influences which are a consequence « hostel way of life» and the “ state” unified maintenance. It is rigid deformation of a personal existential continuum, free will restriction, depersonalization, etc. Neurotic conditions in which depressive passivity alternates explosive affective displays become result of negative influences.

As a result of the listed tendencies mentality of the old person living in the house-boarding school, it is deep neurotic, that leads to its frequent collisions with associates. Such person creates round itself the disputed

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environment and itself becomes its victim. He gets to a vicious circle: a neurotic condition – the conflict – the new neurotic condition generated by the conflict. The person from this circle cannot independently be pulled out, the qualified psychological help is necessary for it.

At the age of 60 years also is more senior the most widespread kind of pathology illnesses of system of blood circulation are. Following rank places occupy illnesses of bone-muscular system and a connecting fabric, bodies of breath, digestion, nervous system and sense organs, new growths. On these six classes of illnesses it is necessary about 90 % of all diseases at persons of elderly and senile age.

The number of the older persons suffering because of death of the favourite person is amazingly great: about 12 million become a widow/widower older persons live in the USA, and over 800 thousand from them have become a widow/widower less than year back. At the age of 65 years more than half of women and 10 % of men have become a widow/widower at least once.

Among those to whom for 85 years, 81, 3 % of women and 40, 5 % of men have become a widow/widower (Gibson, H. B. (2002.)

Reactions of the person to heavy loss are characterized by especial scale of feelings, thoughts and behavior in which most often tested emotions are the grief and grief. The sharp melancholy and languor concern other reactions on died, a shock, catalepsy, hallucination experiences, anger, feeling of fault, depression, problems with health, irritability and feeling of senselessness of existence is equal as feeling of simplification and hope. Naturally, not all people, worrying heavy loss, test all or the majority of the listed emotions,

therefore is difficult to divide normal and pathological reactions of experience of a grief.

As consider M. Marshall and M. Dikson, « if we have no positive experience of dialogue with old people in a daily life, the risk increases to see all old people in identical light, namely in what we see them on the work. And see we them as invalids, helpless problems having many» [Marshall M., Dixon M., 1996, with. 28]. Moreover, social workers and psychologists usually contact to old people and their families when they are in a difficult, crisis vital situation. Thus, if working with older persons have experience of dialogue with them only as with the patients and clients they usually have a confidence, that advanced age is time involution and difficulties of the most different plan. And after all older persons are capable to study, develop abilities, to get new interests.

Social workers should listen older persons who tell them about the life; they can feel thus their grief, despondency, disappointment. However older persons have not only bitter experience. About many events which took place in their life, they do not recollect. Events for older persons become significant only in the event that they find reflexion in their late life.

The psychologists working with elderly and old people, should have base education under personal and psychological characteristics of people of late age. Starting to work with the elderly and old people, many experts receive a shock from the clients « client shock» [Britton P. G., Woods R. T., 1999, with. 20] already in the first week of work. Roots of this shock lay in insufficient understanding of old people, underestimation of their requirements and

potential. The reason of other stress which experts can receive, is covered in a lack of abilities and the competence, necessary in work with this age group. It is possible to name and other problems – necessity of knowledge of religion of that cultural group of the population which they serve, sexuality of old people (the taboo on this theme until recently has been imposed), personal changes in result of mental diseases. The main danger to those who works with older persons is sensitivity loss to their individual requirements.

L. Brejtspraak allocates for experts three basic managements in work with older persons:

- Not to allow older persons to be involved in negative image of ageing, for example, it is necessary to help for them to see and understand, that the source of their problems lays in a situation, but not in them;
- To demand from elderly to take responsibility for the life there where it is possible;
- To stimulate activity of older persons who supports sensation of integration and integrity of a life.

Old people sometimes become agers in relation to the age group. Therefore the problem of our personnel is softly to resolve their own relation to the age and to the age group.

As a whole work [with older persons] in the psychological plan consists in the following:

- Maintenance and increase of social activity and a self-estimation of the person, prompting to expansion of social contacts;
- Creation of optimum conditions for training of skills on self-service and social functioning taking into account age changes;
- Stimulation of potential mental possibilities and creative abilities;
- Carrying out of special exercises and training to the skills compensating age changes.

Work forms can be the most different. For me co-education of older persons and children in which course they operate in common is very effective and help each other, for example, training to computer games and games of type “Dandy”. Overall objectives of such training is derivation of older persons from thoughts on the past, studying them to live in the present by an establishment of friendly relations with young generation, search of the general interests connecting generations, and reception of pleasure from these communications and interests. Creation of clubs and circles on interests where would enter not only elderly, but also people of all age is effective. They promote dialogue, occurrence of feeling of aesthetic satisfaction, emotional support, raise pithiness of pastime, improve state of health and bring calm.

To make the conclusion of the work, I’d like to say that old people like kids need our attention, understanding and love. This age is the most non-protecting part of human beings. If they feel lonely,

they must be heard by us. Our Nursing Home tries to keep the high level of living place for old people.

We do the best to make them feel there like at home.