

Chapter 1

Themes and Issues in Adult Development and Aging

As the opening chapter to the book, the material covered here provides the orientation to the course. There is enough material in this chapter to cover two to three lectures. During the first lecture, it is particularly important to provide students with a sense of excitement about the field. Reflect on your own enthusiasm for teaching this topic and, if appropriate, relate personal experiences that have led you to want to become involved in adult development and aging. It would also be useful to find out why students have chosen to take the course, as it is quite likely that many of them are there for personal reasons as well.

LECTURE GUIDELINES

There is a logical break between the theoretical issues in the first part of the chapter and the demographic material presented at the end. The lecture on demography can begin with a discussion of current issues relevant to aging, such as the effect on the population of the "graying of America". A discussion of the "Baby Boomers" would also be interesting, as many of the students have parents, or possibly grandparents, in this generation. You can also encourage students to contrast their views about Baby Boomers with "Millennials," "Gen-X'ers," and the like. Ask them if they believe that generational labels are helpful in understanding the behavior of individuals. Check the website for the Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP), www.carp.com, for articles and profiles of older adults, centenarians, life expectancy, and numerous age-related issues in Canada. Zoomer magazine, published in conjunction with CARP, is an relevant source of Canadian perspectives on aging and ageism.

VIDEOS AND FILMS

There are many potentially relevant materials to include in the lectures based on this chapter. Keep your eyes open for news items that concern aging in Canada, the U.S., and the world relevant to the economy, social trends, and population dynamics. Non-stereotypic older adults can also be shown to counter negative representations that students may have such as older persons engaging in activities that would not normally be associated with aging. There are two excellent films by PBS: "The Way We Get By" (<http://www.pbs.org/pov/waywegetby/>) and Frontline "Living Old" (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/livingold/view/>).

Because there are many statistics to summarize in the demography section, it is helpful to provide anything that will put a human face to the numbers.

There is an excellent series available on YouTube divided into five parts, called "The World's Oldest People": http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bjd8_9dtLHo

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

THE BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL PERSPECTIVE

- Why is the biopsychosocial perspective important?
- How does the material in this course relate to other courses that you have taken which employ an interdisciplinary perspective?

FOUR PRINCIPLES OF ADULT DEVELOPMENT AND AGING

- Do you feel that you are a different person than you were when you were younger?
- Do you know of individuals who illustrate the principle of individual differences in development?
- What are the important intraindividual dimensions that psychologists should study?
- What are the implications for the field when you consider that the only people we can study in old age are those who survived?
- How can you be a survivor?
- Name some changes that you think are age-related and see if they are in fact age- or disease-related.
- How many of the Public Health Agency of Canada (2013) "Five Ways to Shorten Your Life" lifestyle habits do you follow?
- Ask students to complete one of the Canadian on-line life expectancy surveys e.g., "Will you live to be 100"? What factors are amenable to change/modifiable and which are not?

THE MEANING OF AGE

- How would you define a person as an "adult"? Do you feel that you qualify as an adult? What are appropriate criteria to use for this distinction other than or in addition to age?
- What are the pros and cons of using these age-based divisions?
- How could the alternative indices of age be implemented in a practical sense so that they would replace chronological age?
- Can you come up with examples of influences on development that have affected you?

KEY SOCIAL FACTORS IN ADULT DEVELOPMENT AND AGING

- How is your identity affected by your gender?
- Why is ethnicity an important factor in adult development and aging? Consider some of the implications of Canada's multicultural policy for its diverse population.
- How does Statistics Canada measure the multicultural background of the population? Consider some of the difficulties with use of the grouping: Canadian-born, immigrant, visible minority, and Aboriginal populations.
- How has your social class affected your own life so far?
- How do you think social class will affect your life in the future?
- What sorts of influences do you think that social class has on people's lives and why is it important in development?
- How has your religion affected your own development?
- Why do you think religion has not been examined in previous research on adult development and aging?

THE BABY BOOMERS GROW UP: CHANGES IN THE MIDDLE-AGED AND OLDER POPULATION IN CANADA AND THE WORLD

- What are the implications of an aging population?
- Will the aging Baby Boomers change the way that we think about aging, or have they done so already? Who are famous aging Baby Boomers you can think of in the media who defy traditional stereotypes?
- What are the implications of changes in the racial and ethnic distribution of the aging population?

Test Bank

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Research on adaptation to aging suggests that the most important factor determining your health, happiness, and longevity may very well be your _____ age.

- a) chronological
- b) subjective
- c) biological
- d) sociological

Answer: b

Section Reference: Aging Today

2. The term _____ captures the concept that aging involves an interaction among processes such as physical changes, cognition, and social context:

- a) biopsychosocial
- b) physiocultural
- c) multidirectional
- d) transformational

Answer: a

Section Reference: The Biopsychosocial Perspective

3. Of the following areas of aging, which would be considered a “biological” component of the biopsychosocial model?

- a) Changes in muscle mass.
- b) Loss of a spouse.
- c) Retirement from a job.
- d) Gains in vocabulary skills.

Answer: a

Section Reference: The Biopsychosocial Perspective

4. Which of the following would be considered a “social” age-related factor in the biopsychosocial perspective?

- a) Improving in wisdom.
- b) Losing muscle strength.
- c) Becoming a grandparent.
- d) Increasing in conscientiousness.

Answer: c

Section Reference: The Biopsychosocial Perspective

5. The changes that individuals experience in income and residence when they retire and move out of the home where they spent their working lives would fall into the _____ domain of the biopsychosocial model.

- a) psychological
- b) sociocultural
- c) biological
- d) cognitive

Answer: b

Section Reference: The Biopsychosocial Perspective

6. Changes over time in an individual's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors as they cope with the physical changes involved in aging fall into which domain of the biopsychosocial perspective toward aging?

- a) Sociocultural
- b) Biological
- c) Gerontological
- d) Psychological

Answer: d

Section Reference: The Biopsychosocial Perspective

7. According to the continuity principle of adult development and aging, the experiences you have as a young adult will play what role in your development?

- a) Young people are able to make up for any damage they do their bodies when they get older.
- b) The friends people have in their college years will most likely be the same ones they have later in life.
- c) People retain their identities about as they get older, even though their appearance changes.
- d) Older adults would prefer to be treated as "old" rather than as the people they were when younger.

Answer: c

Section Reference: Four Principles of Adult Development and Aging

8. The _____ principle of adult development and aging proposes that changes build on themselves over life in a cumulative fashion.

- a) selection
- b) continuity
- c) individuality
- d) normative

Answer: b

Section Reference: Four Principles of Adult Development and Aging

9. Because the _____ are the individuals we study in later life, researchers caution that the findings may not be true for everyone born in a given period of time.

- a) institutionalized
- b) less able
- c) young-old
- d) survivors

Answer: d

Section Reference: Four Principles of Adult Development and Aging

10. Which of the following might account for the fact that the people who live to old age are the "survivors"?

- a) They ate foods that are rich in dietary cholesterol.
- b) Their families provided a strong support network.
- c) They have lived a life in which they took high risks.
- d) They avoided exercising or being too physically active.

Answer: b

Section Reference: Four Principles of Adult Development and Aging

11. How does the fact that older adults are survivors influence research on aging?

- a) Researchers must adapt their test instruments to accommodate them.
- b) Healthy older adults tend to be the exception rather than the rule.
- c) Psychological studies have less validity than studies on biology of aging.
- d) The available samples are positively selected on important characteristics.

Answer: d

Section Reference: Four Principles of Adult Development and Aging

12. The Public Health Agency of Canada (2013) regards which of the following as one of the five most important "bad habits" that can reduce the quality and quantity of a person's life?

- a) Cigarette smoking.
- b) Eating too many fruits and vegetables.
- c) Taking in too little alcohol.
- d) Being underweight.

Answer: a

Section Reference: Four Principles of Adult Development and Aging

13. 75-year-old Mrs. A. has difficulty with her vision due to cataracts but her friend Mrs. B., also 75, can see perfectly. However, Mrs. B.'s arthritis makes it difficult for her to walk while Mrs. A. recently ran a senior marathon. This example illustrates which principle of adult development and aging?

- a) Interindividual differences.

- b) Normal aging is different from disease.
- c) Survivors are an increasingly select group.
- d) Changes are continuous over the life span.

Answer: a

Section Reference: Four Principles of Adult Development and Aging

14. A 77-year-old man has loved to jog for his entire life, and he is still able to keep up a pretty good pace. However, he is suffering hearing loss which makes it difficult for him to enjoy the music he likes to play while out on his run. In addition, he's noticing that it's getting harder for him to see the street signs unless the sun is brightly shining. This man illustrates which principle of aging?

- a) continuity
- b) multidirectionality
- c) survivor effects
- d) tertiary aging

Answer: b

Section Reference: Four Principles of Adult Development and Aging

15. Researchers studying the volume of the hippocampus within the brain showed the importance of examining individual differences in aging by finding that:

- a) most of the adults 70 and older had greater hippocampal volume than the younger adults.
- b) the overall direction of hippocampal volume change was slightly positive starting at age 30.
- c) at least some older adults studied had equal or higher brain volume than some young adults.
- d) the greatest variation in hippocampal volume occurred among adults who were in their late 20s.

Answer: c

Section Reference: Four Principles of Adult Development and Aging

16. The idea there are differences within the individual in the rate of aging is referred to as:

- a) interindividual variability.
- b) multidirectionality.
- c) personal aging.
- d) nonnormative influences.

Answer: b

Section Reference: Four Principles of Adult Development and Aging

17. The idea that people become more different from each other as they grow older is known as the principle that:

- a) changes are continuous.
- b) aging is interdisciplinary.
- c) individuality matters.

d) only the survivors grow old.

Answer: c

Section Reference: Four Principles of Adult Development and Aging

18. The rapid loss of functioning that individuals may experience at the very end of their lives is known as _____ aging:

- a) tertiary
- b) primary
- c) normal
- d) accelerated

Answer: a

Section Reference: Four Principles of Adult Development and Aging

19. Changes due to normal aging include which type of processes?

- a) Abnormal and disease-related
- b) Sudden and rapid
- c) Preventative and compensatory
- d) Universal and progressive

Answer: d

Section Reference: Four Principles of Adult Development and Aging

20. Which of the following would be considered an example of “normal” age-related psychological changes?

- a) lowering of self-esteem
- b) moderation of personal qualities
- c) development of sleep problems
- d) losing interest in hobbies

Answer: b

Section Reference: Four Principles of Adult Development and Aging

21. Which of the following is considered an example of secondary aging?

- a) Developing diabetes at the age of 67.
- b) Marrying for the third time at age 55.
- c) Working part-time at the age of 72.
- d) Moving to a retirement community at age 62.

Answer: a

Section Reference: Four Principles of Adult Development and Aging

22. Due to the process of _____ aging, an older adult may develop a disease such as skin cancer after years of exposure to the sun.

- a) primary
- b) tertiary
- c) secondary
- d) normal

Answer: c

Section Reference: Four Principles of Adult Development and Aging

23. A term in gerontology used to refer to people who are in the age group of 65-74 is:

- a) oldest-old
- b) middle-old
- c) healthy-old
- d) young-old

Answer: d

Section Reference: The Meaning of Life

24. People referred to as "old-old" have which specific characteristic?

- a) Prematurely gray and wrinkled
- b) Between the ages of 75-84
- c) Retire after the age of 65
- d) Become grandparents in middle age

Answer: b

Section Reference: The Meaning of Life

25. A centenarian falls technically into the category of which division of the older adult population?

- a) young-old
- b) oldest old
- c) old-old
- d) super-old

Answer: b

Section Reference: The Meaning of Life

26. People now considered supercentenarians, such as Jeanne Louise Calment, live past the age of:

- a) 100.
- b) 90.
- c) 130.

d) 110.

Answer: d

Section Reference: The Meaning of Life

27. The index of age that represents a person's functioning on measures such as intelligence, memory, and learning ability is called _____ age.

- a) Psychological
- b) Social
- c) Biological
- d) Secondary

Answer: a

Section Reference: The Meaning of Life

28. A world-class tennis player decides to end her career and retire at the age of 24. Her _____ age would be approximately 65 years old.

- a) psychological
- b) biological
- c) physiological
- d) social

Answer: d

Section The Meaning of Life

29. Individuals who are in the period of emerging adulthood are likely to show which qualities?

- a) Early signs of the normal aging process.
- b) Transition to responsible family and work roles.
- c) Difficulties in interacting with older family members.
- d) Psychological but not physiological maturity.

Answer: b

Section Reference: The Meaning of Life

30. Genevieve is 27 years old, finishing graduate school and living with her parents. As she makes her transition into adulthood, psychologists would consider her an example of someone in the age period called _____ adulthood:

- a) emerging
- b) young-old
- c) psychological
- d) normative

Answer: a

Section Reference: The Meaning of Life

31. The large impact that Hurricane Sandy had on residents of the Northeast U.S. in 2012 makes it a _____ influence on development.

- a) secondary aging
- b) normative history-graded
- c) personal aging
- d) normative age-graded

Answer: b

Section Reference: The Meaning of Life

32. The term "gender" refers to:

- a) biologically assigned characteristics.
- b) self-identification as male or female.
- c) treatment of women in society.
- d) orientation toward sexual partners.

Answer: b

Section Reference: Key Social Factors in Adult Development and Aging

33. The main focus of the large British study known as Whitehall II is on the role of _____ as a factor in development.

- a) historical change
- b) racial disparities
- c) social class
- d) nationality

Answer: c

Section Reference: Key Social Factors in Adult Development and Aging

34. As indicated in the text, according to the 2006 Census, in Canada the largest visible minority group aged 65 and older is:

- a) Hispanic; Latin American
- b) Asian
- c) Black
- d) Aboriginal

Answer: b

Section Reference: Key Social Factors in Adult Development and Aging

35. Which of the following topics would be considered to provide evidence on the effect of sex in development?

- a) Disparities in income.
- b) Social role expectations.
- c) Identification as a male or female.
- d) Role of hormones in behavior.

Answer: d

Section Reference: Key Social Factors in Adult Development and Aging

36. Highly developed countries that have nearly equal birth and death rates have an age-sex structure that resembles which shape?

- a) Trapezoid.
- b) Circle.
- c) Diamond.
- d) Rectangle.

Answer: d

Section Reference: The Baby Boomers Grow Up: Changes in the Middle-Aged and Older Population in Canada and the World

37. The term _____ is used to refer to individuals who fought in World War II:

- a) Greatest Generation
- b) Baby Boom
- c) Millennials
- d) Gen Xers

Answer: a

Section Reference: The Baby Boomers Grow Up: Changes in the Middle-Aged and Older Population in Canada and the World

38. According to Statistics Canada, as of July 1, 2012 the number of people 65 plus and older in Canada is approximately _____ million.

- a) 40.3
- b) 13.1
- c) 34.9
- d) 83.7.

Answer: c

Section Reference: The Baby Boomers Grow Up: Changes in the Middle-Aged and Older Population in Canada and the World

39. As of the latest estimates in 2012, the percentage of people in the Canadian population 65 years and older is:

- a) 5.8
- b) 14.9
- c) 25.7
- d) 36.8

Answer: b

Section Reference: The Baby Boomers Grow Up: Changes in the Middle-Aged and Older Population in Canada and the World

40. The term life _____ refers to the maximum number of years that a species lives, reflecting its genetic inheritance.

- a) length/expectancy
- b) span
- c) limit
- d) potential

Answer: b

Section Reference: The Baby Boomers Grow Up: Changes in the Middle-Aged and Older Population in Canada and the World

41. The increased population of adults aged 65 and older in Canada can be attributed specifically to the higher life _____ being achieved by current generations.

- a) length
- b) expectancy
- c) growth
- d) span

Answer: b

Section Reference: The Baby Boomers Grow Up: Changes in the Middle-Aged and Older Population in Canada and the World

42. The number of years a person can expect to live with relatively little disability is known as:

- a) life span projection
- b) morbidity-free span
- c) functional age
- d) health-adjusted life expectancy

Answer: d

Section Reference: The Baby Boomers Grow Up: Changes in the Middle-Aged and Older Population in Canada and the World

43. The parents of people in the Baby Boom generation are known as:

- a) Gen B
- b) Senior Boom
- c) Silent Generation
- d) Pioneer Cohort

Answer: c

Section Reference: The Baby Boomers Grow Up: Changes in the Middle-Aged and Older Population in Canada and the World

44. According to Statistics Canada (2013) the average life expectancy at birth is ____ for women and _____ for men.

- a) 75; 72
- b) 78; 75
- c) 80; 76
- d) 83; 79

Answer: d

Section Reference: The Baby Boomers Grow Up: Changes in the Middle-Aged and Older Population in Canada and the World

45. According to Statistics Canada (2013) the health-adjusted life expectancy for Canadians is _____ years.

- a) 58.7
- b) 62.5
- c) 68.9
- d) 74.5

Answer: c

Section Reference: The Baby Boomers Grow Up: Changes in the Middle-Aged and Older Population in Canada and the World

46. The highest percentage of Canadians aged 65 and older are located which province(s)?

- a) Nova Scotia and New Brunswick
- b) Quebec
- c) Manitoba and Saskatchewan
- d) British Columbia

Answer: a

Section Reference: The Baby Boomers Grow Up: Changes in the Middle-Aged and Older Population in Canada and the World

47. According to Statistics Canada, as of July 1, 2012, the median age of the Canadian population is approximately ____ years.

- a) 32
- b) 35
- c) 40
- d) 45

Answer: c

Section Reference: The Baby Boomers Grow Up: Changes in the Middle-Aged and Older Population in Canada and the World

48. The number of people 65 and older projected to be alive around the world in 2050 is approximately:

- a) 106 million
- b) 2.3 billion
- c) 1.5 billion
- d) 670 million

Answer: c

Section Reference: The Baby Boomers Grow Up: Changes in the Middle-Aged and Older Population in Canada and the World

49. The country with the highest number (not percent) of individuals 65 and older is:

- a) China
- b) Italy.
- c) Sweden
- d) United States.

Answer: a

Section Reference: The Baby Boomers Grow Up: Changes in the Middle-Aged and Older Population in Canada and the World

50. The least percentage growth in populations over the age of 65 will occur around the world in countries that are described as:

- a) developed.
- b) agrarian.
- c) non-industrialized.
- d) developing.

Answer: a

Section Reference: The Baby Boomers Grow Up: Changes in the Middle-Aged and Older Population in Canada and the World

51. The effects of a changing environment including normative-graded, history-graded, and non-normative changes refer to:

- a) Biological aging
- b) Psychological aging
- c) Social aging
- d) Personal aging

Answer: c

Section Reference: The Baby Boomers Grow Up: Changes in the Middle-Aged and Older Population in Canada and the World

Short Answer

52. Provide examples of concepts from the fields involved in the biopsychosocial perspective.

Section Reference: The Biopsychosocial Perspective

53. Why is the biopsychosocial perspective important in understanding the processes of adult development and aging?

Section Reference: The Biopsychosocial Perspective

54. What are the four principles underlying the study of adult development and aging?

Section Reference: Four Principles of Adult Development and Aging

55. Why is it important to distinguish normal aging from disease?

Section Reference: Four Principles of Adult Development and Aging

56. What are advantages and disadvantages of using a particular age to define "adult"?

Section Reference: The Meaning of Life

57. Define and explain the purpose of using alternative indices of age.

Section Reference: The Meaning of Life

58. List the three influences on development and provide examples of each.

Section Reference: The Meaning of Life

Essay

59. Why do researchers believe it is important to distinguish personal from social aging?

60. List and define the 5 major social categorizations used in describing the findings and theories in adult development and aging.

Section Reference: Key Social Factors in Adult Development and Aging

61. What might be the reasons for so few studies on the role of religion and spirituality in aging? What might researchers be missing by failing to study this topic?

Section Reference: Key Social Factors in Adult Development and Aging

62. What are the two main factors that have contributed to changes in life expectancy in the last 100 years?

Section Reference: The Baby Boomers Grow Up: Changes in the Middle-Aged and Older Population in Canada and the World

63. What are the four main implications of changes in the age distribution of the population in Canada over the next 30 to 40 years?

Section Reference: The Baby Boomers Grow Up: Changes in the Middle-Aged and Older Population in Canada and the World

64. What is the value of using age as a means of understanding development? Would alternative indices be more useful? Why or why not?

65. Why is it important to understand individual differences in the process of development in later life?

66. How will changes in the age distribution of the population affect society as a whole? Provide specific examples.