

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.

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 the U.S., Canada, 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 CDC "Five Ways to Shorten Your Life" lifestyle habits do you follow?

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 race a difficult concept to measure?

Do you feel that the U.S. Census measure of race is an appropriate one? What might be its problems?

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 THE UNITED STATES 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?

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

AGING TODAY

1. SUBJECTIVE AGE

Difficulty: Hard

Correct choice: B

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

THE BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL PERSPECTIVE

2. DEFINITION- CHOICE

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: A

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

3. BIOLOGICAL EXAMPLE- STEM

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.

4. SOCIOCULTURAL EXAMPLE- CHOICE

Difficulty: Easy

Correct choice: C

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.

5. SOCIOCULTURAL EXAMPLE- STEM

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: B

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

6. PSYCHOLOGICAL- CHOICE

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: D

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

7. CONTINUITY OF CHANGES- STEM

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: C

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.

8. CONTINUITY OF CHANGES- CHOICE

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: B

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

9. THE SURVIVORS GROW OLD- CHOICE

Difficulty: Easy

Correct choice: D

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

10. SURVIVOR BEHAVIORS

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: B

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.

11. IMPLICATIONS OF SURVIVOR PRINCIPLE

Difficulty: Hard

Correct choice: D

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.

12. CIGARETTE SMOKING- CHOICE

Difficulty: Easy

Correct choice: A

The Centers for Disease Control 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.

13. INTERINDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES EXAMPLE-CHOICE

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: A

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.

14. MULTIDIRECTIONALITY EXAMPLE- CHOICE

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: B

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

15. INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN HIPPOCAMPUS

Difficulty: .80

Correct choice: C

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.

16. MULTIDIRECTIONALITY- CHOICE

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: B

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.

17. INDIVIDUALITY- CHOICE

Difficulty: Hard

Correct choice: C

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.

18. TERTIARY AGING - CHOICE

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: A

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

19. NORMAL AGING- STEM

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: D

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

20. NORMAL AGING EXAMPLE- STEM

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: B

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

21. SECONDARY AGING EXAMPLE- STEM

Difficulty: Easy

Correct choice: B

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.

22. SECONDARY AGING EXAMPLE- CHOICE

Difficulty: Hard

Correct choice: C

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

THE MEANING OF AGE

23. YOUNG-OLD

Difficulty: Easy

Correct choice: D

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

24. OLD-OLD- STEM

Difficulty: Easy

Correct choice: B

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

25. OLDEST-OLD

Difficulty: Easy

Correct choice: C

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

26. SUPERCENTENARIAN- STEM

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: D

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

- A. 100.
- B. 90.
- C. 130.
- D. 110.

27. PSYCHOLOGICAL AGE

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: A

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

28. SOCIAL AGE- STEM

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: D

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

29. EMERGING ADULthood- STEM

Difficulty: Easy

Correct choice: B

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.

30. EMERGING ADULTHOOD EXAMPLE- CHOICE

Difficulty: Easy

Correct choice: A

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

31. NORMATIVE HISTORY-GRADED EXAMPLE- CHOICE

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: B

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

KEY SOCIAL FACTORS IN ADULT DEVELOPMENT AND AGING

Difficulty: Easy

Correct choice: B

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.

32. WHITEHALL II FOCUS

Difficulty: Hard

Correct choice: C

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

33. RACE CATEGORIES IN U.S. CENSUS

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: B

Which of the following categories would be considered an example of “race” as used in the 2010 U.S. Census?

- A. Hispanic
- B. American Indian
- C. Asian American
- D. Latino

34. SEX AND GENDER INFLUENCES

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: D

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.

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

35. AGE-SEX STRUCTURE

Difficulty:

Correct choice: D

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.

36. GREATEST GENERATION- CHOICE

Difficulty:

Correct choice: A

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

37. NUMBER OVER 65- CHOICE

Difficulty: Easy

Correct choice: A

Census 2010 estimates that the number of people 65 plus and older in the U.S. is _____ million.

- A. 40.3
- B. 13.1
- C. 35.4
- D. 83.7.

38. PERCENT OVER 65- CHOICE

Difficulty: Easy

Correct choice: B

As of the latest estimates in 2010, the percentage of people in the United States population 65 years and older is:

- A. 3.1
- B. 13.0
- C. 36.7
- D. 40.2

39. LIFE SPAN DEFINITION- CHOICE

Difficulty: .98

Correct choice: B

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

40. LIFE EXPECTANCY CHANGES

Difficulty: Hard

Correct choice: B

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

- A. length
- B. expectancy
- C. growth
- D. span

41. HEALTH EXPECTANCY DEFINITION- CHOICE

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: D

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 expectancy

42. SILENT GENERATION

Difficulty: Easy

Correct choice: C

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

- A. Gen B
- B. Senior Boom
- C. Silent Generation
- D. Pioneer Cohort

43. LIFE EXPECTANCY VALUE IN 2010

Difficulty: Hard

Correct choice: B

What was the average life expectancy at birth in 2010?

- A. 89.3
- B. 78.7
- C. 47.8
- D. 84.1

44. GENDER PROPORTIONS

Difficulty: Easy

Correct choice: C

What percent of the total U.S. 65 and older population is male?

- A. 31
- B. 56
- C. 42
- D. 39

45. STATE PERCENT

Difficulty: Moderate

Correct choice: C

Because the state of _____ has such a high percentage of adults 65 and older, political candidates put heavy emphasis into making promises about Medicare and Social Security when they campaign there.

- A. California
- B. South Carolina
- C. Florida
- D. New Mexico

46. MINORITY POPULATION CHANGES U.S.

Difficulty: Hard

Correct choice: C

Which racial/ethnic minority group in the U.S. is expected to show the largest decrease in the U.S. population between 2010 and 2050?

- A. Asian alone
- B. Non-hispanic Black
- C. Non-hispanic White
- D. Hispanic of any race

47. WORLD POPULATION IN 2050

Difficulty: Hard

Correct choice: C

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

48. HIGHEST NUMBER IN WORLD

Difficulty: .94

Correct choice: A

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

- A. China
- B. Italy.
- C. Sweden
- D. United States.

49. DEVELOPED VS. DEVELOPING NATIONS

Difficulty: Hard

Correct choice: A

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.

50. NUMBER OF 65 AND OLDER IN THE WORLD IN 2050

Difficulty: Hard

Correct choice: C

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

- E. 106 million
- F. 2.3 billion
- G. 1.5 billion
- H. 670 million

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

THE BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL PERSPECTIVE

1. Provide examples of concepts from the fields involved in the biopsychosocial perspective.
2. Why is the biopsychosocial perspective important in understanding the processes of adult development and aging?

FOUR PRINCIPLES OF ADULT DEVELOPMENT AND AGING

1. What are the four principles underlying the study of adult development and aging?
2. Why is it important to distinguish normal aging from disease?

THE MEANING OF AGE

1. What are advantages and disadvantages of using a particular age to define "adult"?
2. Define and explain the purpose of using alternative indices of age.
3. List the three influences on development and provide examples of each.
4. Why do researchers believe it is important to distinguish personal from social aging?

KEY SOCIAL FACTORS IN ADULT DEVELOPMENT AND AGING

1. List and define the 5 major social categorizations used in describing the findings and theories in adult development and aging.
2. What might be the reasons for so few studies on the role of religion in aging? What might researchers be missing by failing to study this topic?

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

1. What are the two main factors that have contributed to changes in life expectancy in the last 100 years?
2. What are the four main implications of changes in the age distribution of the population in the U.S. over the next 30 to 40 years?

ESSAY QUESTIONS

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

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

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