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Nyack College, Spring, 2020

Assignment: Unit 8 Essays

Required Question: Please identify and briefly describe the significant physical and physiological changes that occur in the late adulthood developmental period.

Generally speaking, a transition is a very important aspect of life. Especially, in the late adulthood developmental period where significant physical changes occur. So, it is time to start dealing with aging and its complications where physical decline is unavoidable. Let us talk a little bit about some physical changes that occur as we age such as changes in physical appearance and movement, changes of the senses, and changes in our circulation and lungs.

One of the visible changes in physical appearance in the late adulthood development period is that our weight usually drops after we reach 60 years of age. Basically, this happens because we start losing muscle which gives our bodies a “saggy skin” look which is not pretty at all.

When it comes to changes in the senses, hearing, seeing, and other aspects of sensor functioning starts declining as we age. In fact, we begin to develop vision problems such as cataracts, glaucoma, and macular degeneration. Then, as hearing declines we begin to use hearing aids for those with moderate hearing loss. Also, in sensory development, older adult loses some of their sense of smell when they are around 60 years of age.

Changes in our circulation and lungs occur as we age as well. According to Emery Anderson, and Goodwin, cardiovascular disorders increase in late adulthood. Also, lung capacity drops 40% between 20 and 80 of age; and the lungs lose their elasticity, the chest starts shrining, and the diaphragm becomes weak. The good news is that you can improve your lung functioning by exercising.

In the late adulthood developmental period, significant physiological changes occur as well. The brain changes during late adulthood. In fact, the brain shrinks and slows as we age but still has a

substantial adaptive ability. The good news is the human brain has a remarkable capacity to change, repair, and grow, even in old age.

2.- Late adulthood is the time when a person retires from his job means after almost 65 years late adulthood ends. At this age, many psychological and cognitive changes occur in the body. In late adulthood there are many changes occur related to cognitive loss of attention, most memory which is a part of information processing and there is an increase in wisdom.

Memory changes with increment in age this due to the hippocampus, a region in the brain which involved in the information and retrieval of memories deteriorates with an increase in age. This is because Older people experiences decreased blood flow to the brain, which can impair memory and lead to changes in cognitive skills. There few more changes in late adulthood like loss of hearing and vision, skin lost elasticity, and there is a loss in muscle strength. The aging process generally results in changes and lower functioning in the brain, leading to problems like memory loss and decreased intellectual function.

Memory also diminishes with age, and older people tend to have face difficulty while remembering and attending to information. In general, an older person's procedural memory is the same as before but their working memory declines to a larger extent. Procedural memory is the memory for performance and actions. It guides the processes we perform in daily life and resides below the level of conscious awareness. In contrast, working memory is the system that actively holds multiple parts of transitory information in the mind where they can be manipulated and redesigned. The reduced capacity of the working memory becomes evident when tasks are complex. Semantic memory is the memory of understanding things and other concept-based knowledge. These are the memory changes occur in late adulthood.

3.- Cognitive performances are the accomplishments achieved through the functions of the brain or through reasoning, feeling, and realization. As a person ages, his/her cognitive achievements tend to decline along with the numerous changes in the brain. According to research, it is found that the degeneration of cognitive performances is not the same for everyone who is aging. Some people experience more decay in their cognitive achievements when they start aging than others,

who despite advancing age are fairly able to maintain their cognitive performances. Education, work, and health do affect the cognitive performance of older adults.

The people who are highly educated naturally have an increased degree of mental functions as the brain is adequately stimulated during the process of taking education and the effects of which last for a long duration. The brain remains active while one is pursuing education and the people who are continuously updating their knowledge do not let the brain rest. Learning retention and figuring out complex problems lead to the maximum utilization of the brain. The process of gaining an education is nothing but challenging and keeping the brain functioning which extends into a person's old age. Research has proved that the people who read a lot and played brainy games like chess, puzzles, etc, were less likely to experience brain decay in the older age than the people who preferred to engage in mentally unstimulating activities like constantly viewing television or spending time alone or increase devoutness. The people who do not have high educational aspirations or achievements are found to have a higher level of cognitive decline in their old age as stagnancy creeps in.

Research has also proved that people who work even after retire have better cognitive abilities. Work is a motivation that makes old people leave their lethargy and health issues behind to face the world, meet people, use their mental ability, meet deadlines, and targets. The fact that in the workplace, one is answerable to the superiors, makes people very alert and active. The aged people who are thus motivated and required to be mentally attentive. Some aged people have their own business and spend their time managing the business, which keeps them occupied, and hence their cognitive performances are much better than the people who do not work. Although the older employees take more time to learn the new technologies used in the work fields nowadays, they make up the delay with the rich experience they have gained with time.

Health is an important factor that affects the cognitive performance of an individual, not only in the old age but also during childhood and adulthood. Physical health has a very crucial impact on the mental health of a person. As a person starts aging, health starts declining especially more in the people who live an unhealthy lifestyle. The people who indulge in smocking alcohol and drugs during their young age show poor health in their old age. The sedentary lifestyle with poor nutrition or overindulgence in unhealthy food habits takes a toll on a person's health and in turn on the cognitive performance also. A person who is healthy and takes measures to remain fit

throughout his/her life span can maintain better cognitive performances later in life. A healthy diet with the appropriate intake of vitamins and nutrients ensures that the brain remains active and can grasp and help the individual to perform the activities even in the old age. Certain health conditions like high or low blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, and depression also contribute to the worsening of cognitive functions.

Thus, although the cognitive performances of older adults are bound to decrease due to many degenerative factors in the brain, a healthy and active lifestyle which practiced and maintained during childhood and young age goes a long way to promote good physical and cognitive health in the old age as well. A person who pursues education or updates his/her knowledge continuously keeps himself/herself active in old age by working and also takes health-conscious measures can have better cognitive performances in the old age.

4.- Wisdom is one of the qualities that are not easy to define because it encompasses so much. But people generally recognize when they encounter it. Psychologists tend to agree that wisdom involves an integration of knowledge, experience, and deep understanding that incorporates tolerance for the uncertainties of life as well as its ups and downs. There is an awareness of how things play out over time and it confers a sense of balance. It can be acquired only through experience but by itself, experience does not automatically confer wisdom. Wise people generally share an optimism that life problems can be solved and experience a certain amount of

calm in facing difficult decisions. Intelligence, a sense of proportion, and considerable retrospection also contribute to the development of wisdom.

World life expectancy is increasing and many populations will begin to age rapidly. The impending prevalence of a greater number of older people's lives will have significant social and economic implications. Aging can be associated with a phenomenon of decline and also greater wisdom.

14.- Late adulthood is the period of human development that begins at 65 years. It is also called as old age or aging. There are various developmental tasks at this stage. According to Erikson, it is ego-integrity versus despair. Integrity involves the task of a realization that they have come a long way and live their life with all the possible happiness whereas despair involves dissatisfaction from life, there is anger, unhappiness, and failure that their wishes are not fulfilled.

16.- Ageism is defined as the act of discrimination and systematic stereotyping against old people. It may also refer to sexism or racism. In other terms, Ageism occurs when there is any prejudice in favor of an age group. The two examples of ageism are stereotypes and discrimination.

24.- These days the definition of death becomes more complex due to the advancement in technology and more knowledge in the medical field. In a simple way, death is the cessation of life which means that there is no motion when it comes to your body; and it becomes rigid with no signs of breath come out from your nose or mouth. Meanwhile, from a medical standpoint, doctors actually talk about brain death as another alternative that relates to the definition of death which is a new way of thinking about the death of a person. Thus, brain dead can be seen as a neurological definition is that where there is no electrical activity in the brain for a specific

period of time. Also, one of the criteria of brain death is when a flat electroencephalogram is recording for a specified period of time.

26.- People who are death acceptance have accepted the reality of death. In fact, they understand that one day everybody will face death anyway; so, they are not afraid to talk about it and typically seems ready when the time has come. Nevertheless, few people in the United States are death acceptance compared to death avoidance. Also, people who mostly death acceptance are typically religious and have not fallen to the secularization our nation seems to be headed for.

People who are death avoidance will typically try to find any way possible to have a long life span. These days, this is something that American society takes seriously to find medical advancement which can make them live longer. That is why we are constantly coming up with new medical technology and new machines that are able to keep people alive much longer.