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Chapter Presentation

Week 12

I found it really important to learn about the challenges late-adulthood faces and the importance of being intentional in speaking against ageism. As a therapist, I can develop educational programs to help foster a positive attitude toward aging. People with a positive attitude toward aging are more likely to feel satisfied with themselves and successfully establish ego integrity.

In addition, how the person views aging will significantly affect how they cope with the changes that will happen in the future.

I also found it necessary to learn about Dementia grief, which is predeath grief of dementia since it brings many emotional challenges for the family and caregivers.

Dementia grief can be similar to anticipatory grief but is distinguished from disruptions in communication and impairments in awareness that occur early in the disease.

I have never thought before that in addition to the ambiguous loss, the caregivers of a person with dementia also lose the opportunity to resolve conflicts.

With most terminal medical conditions, there is an opportunity for conflict resolution and sharing feelings between the dying person and their family members up until death. However, the chance for a similar solution is lost for dementia caregivers because of the difficulty in communicating and disruptions in reasoning that can manifest in the early stages of dementia.

Thankfully, there are interventions to help with this type of unfinished business. And this is my third takeaway: learning more about the Gestalt technique of the empty chair, where clients can

complete those unfinished businesses by talking directly to the deceased in the present tense instead of only talking about the dead to the therapist.