

30 - Phases of retirement

Phases of retirement:

© SPMM Course 12. Adaptation with ageing Age is the first social category learnt by a child even before number concept develops. The effect of ageing on cognitive abilities: The mass of the brain reduces with ageing (in some cases this can be pathological). Memory is often cited as the cognitive function most susceptible to decline with age – particularly working memory and incidental memory. Attention also declines with age. The effect of ageing on body physiology: Bone loss results in a reduction of mechanical strength, collagen fibres deteriorate causing loss of elasticity of the skin, and the efficacy of organs deteriorates with age. Ageing and socioeconomic independence: Older adults are an economically vulnerable group and with an increasing older population, there are concerns they may outlive their financial resources. The decline in socio-economic status can result in a decline in their physical and mental health. Reduced mobility from physical health problems impacts their independence and ability to maintain social ties. Old age – theories of role change:

1. Social disengagement theory: Mutual withdrawal of society and the individual occurs; increased individuality and shrinking life space are inevitable moves towards death.
2. Social (non) reengagement theory (aka activity loss theory): Ageist society reduces the social interaction that older adults can have; withdrawal is not mutual but forced.
3. Social exchange theory: Age robs people of the ability to engage in reciprocal roles; retirement is a special social contract wherein productivity is exchanged for increased leisure and decreased responsibilities.
4. Socio-emotional selectivity theory: Wise investment of social energy in old age is to limit social interaction to those who are most familiar. Phases of retirement:
5. Pre-retirement phase: Increasing anxiety with the retirement of friends and colleagues.
6. Honeymoon phase: Immediate post retirement phase where increased freedom is enjoyed.
7. Disenchantment: Slowing down occurs, feels let down, worse if inadequately prepared for retirement.
8. Reorientation – explores new avenues, more realistic.
9. Stability – makes choices, mastery attained in chosen leisure.
10. Termination – frailty, death.