

Adulthood Stage Of Life

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Physical and Physiological Development in Adulthood

When a child is born, they begin growing and getting older as life progresses and time passes. In their childhood years, children are dependent on their parents in everything. It is a time in which characters and values are built into their lives. As they grow older, a sense of responsibility comes in with age in which the parents expect them to become responsible and independent in thought, actions and provision of their needs.

Most societies believe that adulthood begins at 18 years old. However, the age at which one is considered an adult varies depending on the culture of people. While adulthood may be considered through age, some individuals develop adult characters and maturity before attaining the age for adulthood. On the other hand, some people attain an age past adulthood and yet still are not able to portray the maturity and responsibility that comes with adulthood.

Adulthood is a stage in life that progresses from 18 years old until the time one dies. Adulthood can be classified into early adulthood, middle age adulthood and old age. Adulthood cannot be generally defined as childhood since a person ages 20 years old may be a child to their parents or a parent to a child. This stage comes with a lot of changes throughout humanity's lifespan. These changes range from physical, psychological, physiological and social changes. A lot of development takes place over these stages, and still yet, much decline occurs. (Willis & Martin, 2005)

Among the physical changes that occur in early adulthood is the development of the physical abilities of the young adult. For instance, muscular strength, sensory keenness reaction time and cardiac output are normally at their peak during these youthful years. At this time, they are most active and very energetic. They are very radiant, ambitious, and eager to attain high goals and fulfil their desires. As time progresses, these physical powers begin declining. In the early forties, the changes may go unnoticed, but as they get older, they become more pronounced. However, some physical changes depend on a person's lifestyle. For example, a 50-year-old who is physically fit can run miles comfortably without getting exhausted, while a 22-year-old gasps for breath after running only a few metres.

Other physical and physiological changes that take place in a person entail sexuality. In early adulthood, the youth are very active and energetic sexually, with very high sexual urges. Their sexual fertility is high as well, and the rate at which females conceive at this time is higher than that of those aged 35 years and above. As they enter middle adulthood, sexual desire, strength and fertility

decline. Females get to menopause while the male sperm count reduces as they approach late adulthood. However, even in this stage of reduced sexual activity, couples still get sexual satisfaction.

Sensory Capacity, Cognitive Change, and Aging

Young adults also enjoy clear sensory abilities, strength and stamina. At a young age, they have clear vision and response to sound, unlike their older counterparts. The older they get, the less visual clarity they can see, and adjustments to various intensities of light become a challenge. Ideally, persons in their old age receive only a third of the light that young adults receive in their retinas. That is why the old always need enough light for them to read. The stamina and strength to work diminishes in old age. At this time, the old prefer to concentrate on their social life and relationships rather than working.

Changes in terms of health also occur in adulthood. Young adults usually possess the highest immunity. Their bodies are able to withstand the use of tobacco, and their system can digest foods such as French fries. As they approach their forties, the results of their youthful lives begin showing up. Their immunity reduces, and they begin suffering from lifestyle diseases. At old age, the immunity becomes very weak, and the individuals become more susceptible to diseases such as pneumonia. However, due to accumulated antibodies over the years, old people rarely suffer from short-term illnesses. As people get older, they become more concerned about how their bodies function than how they look.

Changes in the brain also occur in adulthood. Young people have the most active brains and are able to process information faster than older people. They have a sharp memory and synchronize information very fast. As they get older, brain cells undergo wear and tear. Memory diminishes, and the rate of processing information becomes slower as neural activity decreases. However, the brain power can be improved through exercise. People who engage in physical exercise normally experience better memory compared to those who do not engage in exercise at all. Exercise enhances the development of brain cells and neural connections. It also strengthens bones and enhances muscles, giving more energy to life. (Erber, 2012)

Social Development, Work, and Family Responsibilities

Important social development also takes place in adulthood. In their early lives, young people form wide social networks. In their energy and vigour, they interact with many people they meet at various institutions and workplaces. At this time, they attend many social gatherings and activities where they form wide connections. Eventually, most of them identify and get married. Their social network is reduced, but even at this stage, they get satisfaction and happiness in the intimacy and friendship of their spouse. Satisfaction and joy increase when they bear children and are able to share love and

bear the responsibility of parenting. However, parenting comes with pressure as the children start consuming time, money and emotions. If not careful, most marriages break in middle adulthood, when the individuals desire to go back to their former life. Depression may come in when they realize that their life is going to be more of the past than the future.

When people get to old age, their children leave them, and they go back to their early youthful years when they met. Their social network is reduced, and so is their desire to work. They focus on strengthening their family relationships with their children and grandchildren and often make visits.

There are also commitments that come along with adulthood. These entail working, building careers and families, and nurturing children. When people become adults, they develop a desire for what they want to do in their lifetime. Most people select careers that suit their interests, talents and hobbies. They desire to build their careers to have a sense of identity, belonging and competence in society. People with more challenging, prestigious and well-paying jobs are usually among the happiest people.

Intimacy, Family Life, and Bereavement

Adulthood also brings commitment to loving and building a family with [your life partner](#). People derive happiness, social health, and financial support when they find someone they can love and share friendships with. When they bear children, they bring them up together and experience the joy and pains together. They are able to feel the experience of what their own parents went through. More joy comes when they live to see their children growing successfully and reciprocating the same love and affection to them. However, as children get older and leave their parents, their love for each other still strengthens much more.

Another reality that cannot be avoided in adulthood is death. People always experience the loss of loved ones, and it is always a painful process. Some cultures usually encourage grieving and wailing, while others hide their grief. Some people take a long time to heal, while others take a shorter time. Some develop depression while others do not. People may experience the loss of their child, relative or spouse. An old couple always has the constant fear of losing their partner at any time due to the fact that their age is fast approaching the grave. It is more painful when one loses a spouse at an earlier age and in an unexpected way. Through these painful times, they learn to get along with the pain and bear the loss.

Reflection on Well-Being Across Adulthood

Life is happy if we focus only on beautiful things. We can learn to handle tough times and live through the seasons to embrace each moment with happiness and gladness no matter what befalls us. We need to master the art of living and put our trust in God to establish our plans.

References

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Erber, J. T. (2012). *Aging and Older Adulthood*. Chichester: Wiley.