

Popular Myths regarding the aging adult

What's up with Aging?

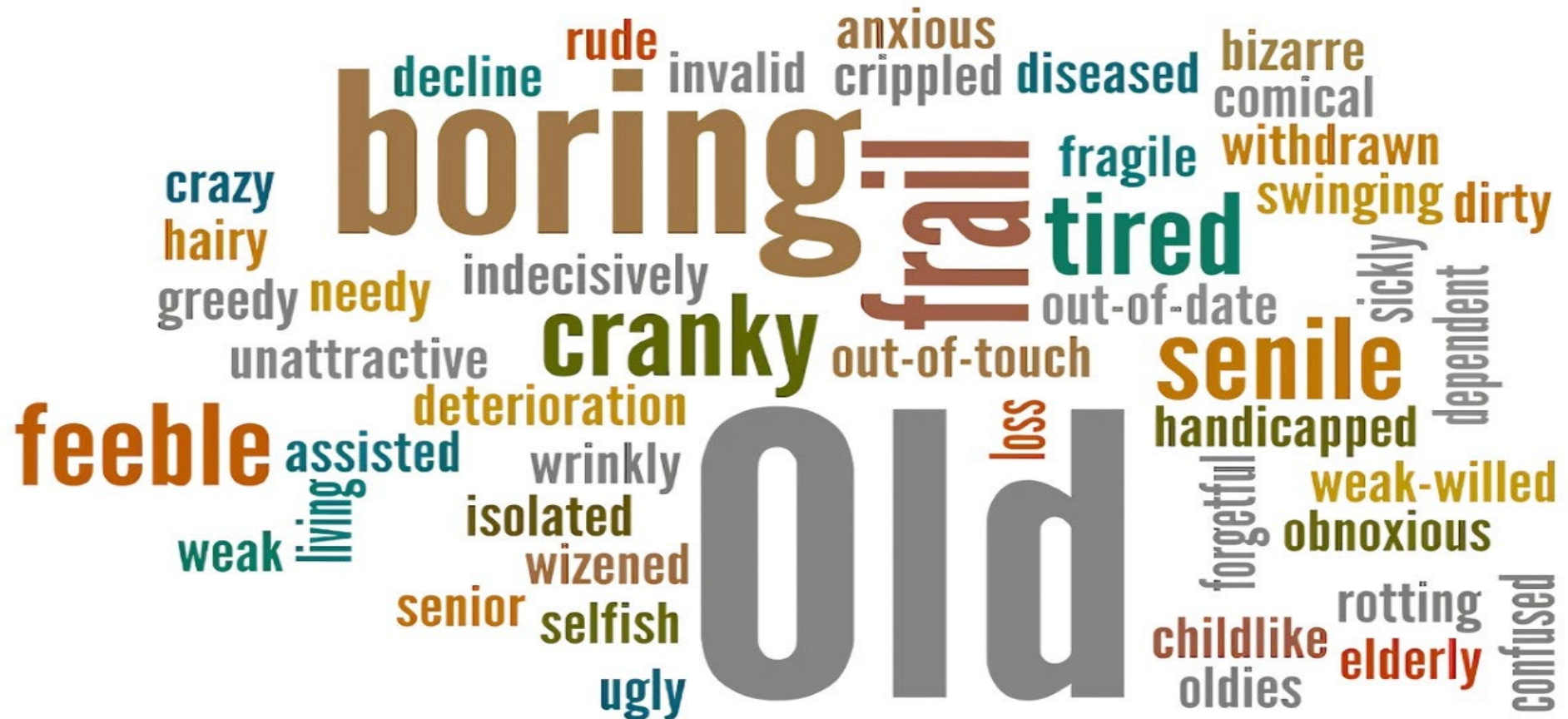
Are older individuals interesting in the outside world?

Are older individuals interested in relationships?

What about contributions to society? Are the elderly set in their ways?

And other such questions.....

A few Words about Aging that seem popular, but are they accurate, or are they labels?



Changing perceptions of Aging

- These numbers are updating all the time, but everyday 10,000+ are turning 65.
- The Population Reference Bureau estimates that folks ages 65 and older will make up about 20 percent of the U.S. population by 2029.



What do we think of when we talk aging?

1. When we think of old age, we tend to envision a slowdown or a person napping in a rocking chair.
2. The fallacy of judging another person's state of mind, actions or behaviors based on our own experiences, state of mind, actions or behaviors propagates widespread misconceptions about aging.



Contrary To Popular Belief.....

- 1. Contrary to popular belief, there is no typical “older personality.”
- 2. Our basic personality is formed probably before six months of age but is modifiable.
- 3. These are some ideas to keep in mind as we examine some common myths of aging.



A short video on benefits of exercise

- [\(14\) The Emotional Benefits of Exercise - YouTube](#)

Aging and Forgetfulness

- [\(14\) Is Forgetfulness Normal or Not? - YouTube](#)

Let's Examine some Myths regarding aging

- Many people make assumptions about aging, what it is like to grow “old”, and how older age will affect them. But as we are getting older, it is important to understand the positive aspects of aging. Research has shown that you can help preserve your health and mobility as you age by adopting or continuing healthy habits and lifestyle choices. Read on to learn about 10 common misconceptions related to aging and older adults.

MYTH NUMBER 1.

Depression and Loneliness are normal in older adults!

The truth is.....

MYTH Breaker #1

- As people age, some may find themselves feeling isolated and alone. This can lead to feelings of depression, anxiety, and sadness. However, these feelings are not a normal part of aging as growing older can have many emotional benefits, such as long-lasting relationships with friends and family and a lifetime of memories to share with loved ones. In fact, studies show that older adults are less likely to experience depression than young adults. So, when should you be concerned? It's important to remember that older adults with depression may have less obvious symptoms or be less likely to discuss their feelings. Depression is a common and potentially serious mood disorder, but there are treatments that are effective for most people.

MYTH # 2

The Older I Get The Less Sleep I need

The truth is.....

MYTH Breaker #2

- As people age, they may find themselves having a harder time falling and staying asleep. A common misconception is that a person's sleep needs decline with age. Older adults need the same amount of sleep as all adults — 7 to 9 hours each night. Getting enough sleep keeps you healthy and alert. Adequate sleep can also help reduce your risk of falls, improve your overall mental well-being, and have many other benefits.

MYTH #3

- Older Adults Simply Cannot Learn New Things.

The Truth is.....

MYTH Breaker # 3

- Not true! Older adults still have the ability to learn new things, create new memories, and improve their performance in a variety of skills. While aging does often come with changes in thinking, many cognitive changes are positive, such as having more knowledge and insight from a lifetime of experiences. In fact, trying to learn new skills may improve cognitive abilities.
- For example, one study found that older adults who learned quilting or digital photography had improved memory. Seeking out new social connections with others and engaging in social activities, such as a dance class or book club, can keep your brain active and may also boost your cognitive health.

MYTH #4

- It Is Inevitable that older people will get Dementia.

The Truth is.....

MYTH Breaker #4

- Dementia is not a normal part of aging. Although the risk of [dementia](#) grows as people get older, it is not inevitable, and many people live into their 90s and beyond without the significant declines in thinking and behavior that characterize dementia. Occasionally forgetting an appointment or losing your keys are typical signs of [mild forgetfulness](#), which is very common in normal aging. Nevertheless, you should [talk with a doctor](#) if you have serious concerns about your memory and thinking, or notice changes in your behavior and personality. These problems can have a range of different causes, some of which are treatable or reversible. Finding the cause is important for determining best next steps.

MYTH #5

Older Adults Should take it easy and Avoid exercise.

The truth is.....

MYTH Breaker #5

- As you age, you may think exercise could do more harm than good, especially if you have a chronic condition. However, studies show that you have a lot more to gain by being active — and a lot to lose by sitting too much. Often, inactivity is more to blame than age when older people lose the ability to do things on their own. Almost anyone, at any age and with most health conditions, can participate in some type of physical activity. In fact, physical activity may help manage some [chronic conditions](#). [Exercise and physical activity](#) are not only great for your [mental](#) and [physical health](#), but can help keep you independent as you age. [Tai Chi](#) and similar mind and body movement practices have been shown to improve balance and stability in older adults and this can help maintain independence and prevent future falls.

MYTH #6

- If a Family Member has Alzheimer's Disease then so will I.
- The Truth is.....

MYTH Breaker #6

- A person's chance of having Alzheimer's disease may be higher if he or she has a family history of dementia because there are some [genes](#) that we know increase risk. However, having a parent with Alzheimer's does not necessarily mean that someone will develop the disease. Learn about your family health history and [talk with your doctor](#) about your concerns.
- Environmental and lifestyle factors, such as exercise, diet, exposure to pollutants, and smoking also may affect a person's risk for Alzheimer's. While you cannot control what you inherit, taking steps to stay healthy are in your control.

MYTH #7

- Now That I am Older I will Have to Give up driving.

The truth is.....

MYTH Breaker #7

- As the U.S. population ages, the number of licensed older adults on the road will continue to increase. The [Federal Highway Administration](#) (FHWA) recorded a record-high 221.7 million licensed drivers in the U.S. in 2016, including 41.7 million — or almost one in five — who are 65 years or older.
- Natural changes can occur which may affect a person's ability to drive, like having slower response speed, diminished vision and hearing, and reduced strength and mobility. The question of when it is time to limit or stop driving should not be about age, rather, it should be about one's ability to drive safely.

MYTH #8

- Only Women Need to Worry about Osteoporosis.

The truth is.....

MYTH Breaker #7

- Although [osteoporosis](#) is more common in women, this disease still affects many men and could be underdiagnosed. While men may not be as likely to have osteoporosis because they start with more bone density than women, one in five men over the age of 50 will have an osteoporosis-related fracture. By age 65 or 70, men and women lose bone mass at the same rate.
- Many of the things that put men at risk are the same as those for women, including family history, not enough calcium or vitamin D, and too little exercise. Low levels of testosterone, too much [alcohol](#), taking certain drugs, and [smoking](#) are other risk factors.

MYTH #9

- I'm Too Old Too Quit Smoking or Any other unhealthy habit.

The Truth is.....

MYTH Breaker #9

- It doesn't matter how old you are or how long you have been smoking, quitting at any time improves your health. Smokers who quit have fewer illnesses such as colds and the flu, lower rates of bronchitis and pneumonia, and an overall better feeling of well-being.
- The benefits of quitting are almost immediate. Within a few hours, the carbon monoxide level in your blood begins to decline and, in a few weeks, your circulation improves, and your lung function increases. Smoking causes an immediate and long term rise in your heart rate and blood pressure, but quitting can lead to a lowering of heart rate and blood pressure over time. Quitting smoking will also lower your risk of cancer, heart attack, stroke, and lung disease.

Finally, MYTH # 10

- My Blood Pressure Has Lowered or Returned to Normal, so I can stop my medication treatment.

The truth is.....

MYTH Breaker #10

- High blood pressure is a very common problem for older adults — especially those in their 80s and 90s — and can lead to serious health problems if not treated properly. If you take high blood pressure medicine and your blood pressure goes down, it means the medicine and any lifestyle changes you have made are working. However, it is very important to continue your treatment and activities long-term. If you stop taking your medicine, your blood pressure could rise again, increasing your risk for health problems like stroke and kidney disease. Talk with your doctor about possibilities for safely changing or stopping your medication.

What do you think about the aging process?

- Mark Twain supposedly said, “Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don’t mind, it doesn’t matter.”
- We mind and it does matter. Think positively and you can live longer and better.



Some reference links:

- [10 Common Misconceptions About Aging - AgingCare.com](#)
- NIH National Institute on Aging website.
- [Myths of Aging | Psychology Today](#)
- [Older adults' perceptions of ageing and their health and functioning: a systematic review of observational studies - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#)
- [Older Adults' Self-Perceptions of Aging and Being Older: A Scoping Review | The Gerontologist | Oxford Academic \(oup.com\)](#)