# the CATALYST

Social Justice Journal

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Stories of people who have faced ageism

Valerie Momas:
Depictions of
Elderly in Movies

Stereotyping and discrimination against older workers

KATRIN HRISTOVA

Epopee of Age

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## Editor's Note







Ageism is not solely about chronological age; it encompasses biases, stereotypes, and discriminatory practices based on someone's age. In this issue, we feature a collection of thought-provoking articles, research studies, and personal narratives that explore the causes, consequences, and challenges associated with ageism. By delving into these topics, we hope to deepen our understanding of ageism and its far-reaching implications.

Through the valuable contributions of our esteemed authors, we strive to foster awareness and initiate meaningful conversations surrounding ageism. Their insights provide a foundation for reflection and dialogue, challenging prevailing attitudes and calling for action. We encourage readers to engage with these diverse perspectives and consider how ageism intersects with other forms of discrimination, such as sexism, ableism, and racism.

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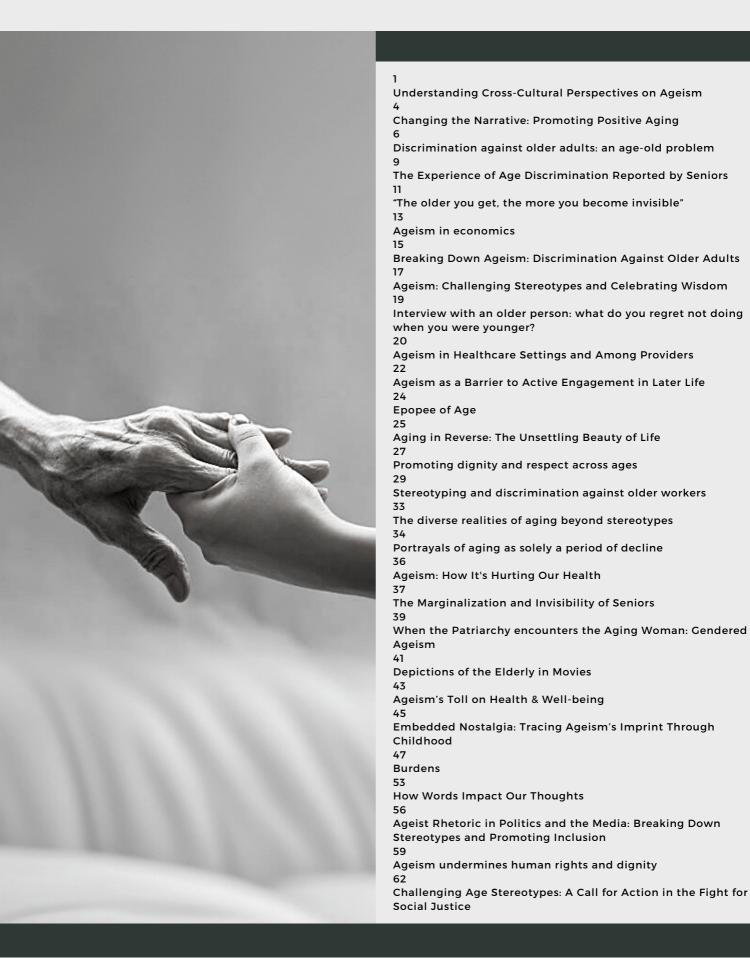
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And

Dana Koptleuova Editor-in-Chief

#### THE CATALYST

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### Understanding Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Ageism *by Zainab Malik*

In today's globally connected world, delving into the manner in which societies perceive and react to ageism unfolds an intriguing journey that unravels a diverse tapestry of cultural beliefs. Ageism, signifying the unjust treatment of individuals based on their age, emerges as a crucial concept that spotlights the myriad ways people think. This exploration reveals the intricate interplay of history, societal behaviors, and profound values that mold the contours of ageism across various From displaying cultures. reverence towards elderly wisdom to valuing youthful vigor, the array of stances toward ageism underscores the multifaceted array of human experiences. underscores the necessity of embracing distinct viewpoints and cultivating inclusivity in an interconnected global setting.

#### The Cultural Lens of Ageism:

Exploring age discrimination through the lens of cultural perspectives opens up a wide array of insights. This angle of viewing uncovers the intricate nature of ageism, which, much like aging, is far from uniform. It's influenced by historical context, societal dynamics, and the cultural fabric, all of which contribute to how it takes shape.

In each culture, age discrimination takes on its unique characteristics. These various viewpoints emphasize that age discrimination isn't a one-size-fits-all concept. It's akin to a tapestry woven with different cultural threads. Examining

specific societies underscores the idea that age discrimination is molded by historical narratives, societal expectations, and the underlying cultural values.

#### **Respect and Reverence:**

Certain societies highly value their older members, holding them in the highest regard as bearers of wisdom and a wealth of life experiences. In West Papua, older individuals hold the traditional role of leading communities during periods of transformation. Similarly, men in the Middle East view old age as life's summit, which leads to an associated increase in These cultural perspectives status. provide insights into varying views on aging, showcasing how societal norms can shape perceptions in ways that challenge ageist notions. Indigenous communities further exemplify admiration, where their elders not only command respect but also assume an essential role in the preservation of their rich cultural heritage. In these distinct cultural contexts, the veneration of the elderly transcends mere tradition; it emerges as a vital force that magnifies the collective knowledge and essence of the community.

#### Youth and Modernity:

In stark contrast to societies valuing age, there exists a group that fervently upholds youth and modernity, often inadvertently nurturing an atmosphere conducive to age-related discrimination. Particularly observable in modern societies, an emphasis on youthful ideals of beauty and contemporary values takes center stage, which inevitably leads to the marginalization or erasure of older individuals. This deeply rooted form of age discrimination becomes most

evident in sectors like the entertainment industry, where the limited availability of roles for senior actors and actresses echoes the overarching youth-centric trends. Consequently, these societies, while advancing on the path of modernization, simultaneously contribute to a concerning climate that sidelines those in the later stages of life.

#### **Cultural Nuances and Unseen Biases:**

In the context of ageism across cultures, the lack of awareness about biases related to age becomes even more complex. Different societies varying norms and beliefs about age, leading to deeply ingrained age-related biases within their cultural customs. these cultural environments. Within people might not realize the presence of age-related prejudices, as these biases seamlessly blend into the societal fabric. For instance. in cultures valuing youthfulness and modernity, age-related assumptions can subtly merge with everyday conversations, ads, and media portrayals, all without attracting attention. Similarly, in cultures that respect older individuals, unintentional ageism persists due to strict expectations about their roles. Not being conscious of these intricate cultural nuances can make it difficult to acknowledge the widespread prevalence of ageism in a society, thereby unknowingly reinforcing biased behaviors.

Ageism is not the same everywhere and varies based on different cultures and contexts. It's often linked to Western cultures that prioritize youth and devalue getting older. People thought Eastern countries were more respectful of older people, but research (North and Fiske, 2015) shows that's not always true.

Ageism can be different in different places, even within the same region. For example, TV ads in Taiwan and the UK both show ageism, but the way it's shown is influenced by cultural norms. In the UK, ageism often appears through unrealistic depictions of active and healthy older individuals. On the other hand, in Taiwan, ageism is reflected in ads that mainly focus on the ill health and vulnerability of older people. This tells us that ageism is affected by the culture and context of where it's happening.

#### Impact of Globalization:

consequences of globalization, characterized by the smooth exchange of ideas and values across borders, echo throughout the complex tapestry of cross-cultural ageism. The widespread proliferation of a culture centered around mainly propagated vouth. through Western media, transcends geographical confines, leaving an indelible imprint on how societies perceive age across diverse corners of the world. However, it's crucial to acknowledge that not all cultures passively accept these external influences. Some cultures embrace aging as a revered and meaningful phase of life. This distinctive standpoint challenges and reshapes the prevailing narrative that places youth as the ultimate measure of attractiveness, thereby emphasizing the potential for a nuanced reevaluation of the dominant youth- oriented mindset prevalent in other societies significantly affected by the sweeping tide globalization.

As cultures intermingle and blend within this global framework, the discussion around ageism takes on multifaceted dimensions. It underscores the importance of safeguarding cultural

diversity while also seeking common ground to cultivate values that include individuals of all ages. While certain societies grapple with the infiltration of youth-focused ideals perpetuated global media, others embody an alternative trajectory that resists homogeneity. This intricate interplay between cultural traditions and global influences propels us toward continuous dialogue about ageism that appreciates the complex interlinkage of local values and global trends. In this context, the influence of globalization on ageism serves as a poignant reminder of the necessity to honor cultural variations while collectively striving for a world that respects individuals regardless of age, irrespective of the societal norms that might seek to sway perception.

#### A Call for Inclusivity:

Appreciating cross-cultural attitudes toward ageism is important in the pursuit all-encompassing world. grasping the various ways societies address we can confront ageism, notions. unfounded preconceived prejudices, and discriminatory practices. endeavor This might encompass nurturing intergenerational interactions, constructing avenues intergenerational wisdom exchange, and fostering reverence for individuals regardless of their age.

#### **Final Thoughts:**

Exploring diverse cultural outlooks on age bias reveals how societies view and deal with this issue. Among shared ideas are unique cultural expressions that show us the chance for change. Learning from various cultures, we can imagine a world where age bias is eradicated and

replaced with respect for people of all ages and their diverse contributions. This collaborative narrative, woven from the threads of diverse cultures, unites us in the effort to combat age discrimination and foster a more inclusive world.

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## Changing the Narrative: Promoting Positive Aging by Zainab Malik

In a world where some individuals might think certain activities are reserved for the young generation, it is vital to highlight the incredible tales of older people who achieve extraordinary feats. These individuals challenge conventional beliefs and demonstrate that age doesn't from accomplishing hinder them remarkable goals. Let's explore the stories these people who achieved extraordinary things and consider how these stories can shift our perspectives on growing older.

## **Ernestine Shepherd: A Fitness Icon at Any Age**

Ernestine Shepherd's incredible journey from a nonchalant attitude towards health to becoming the world's oldest female bodybuilder at 81 is a testament transformative power determination and discipline. Her path towards fitness began at age 56 when she and her sister, Mildred Blackwell, decided to take a fitness class together to shed excess weight. When passed away suddenly in 1992, Ernestine made a solemn commitment to honor her sister's memory by pursuina bodybuilding. With quidance dedicated effort, she triumphed in her very first competition and caught the attention of the Guinness Book of World Records. Holdina multiple titles. Ernestine Shepherd is not only competitive bodybuilder but also a daily runner, weightlifter, fitness trainer, and professional model. Her remarkable journey illustrates how embracing an

active lifestyle, nourishing balanced diets, and nurturing unwavering support can turn back the clock on health issues and inspire people of all ages to realize it's never too late to embark on a path of wellness and strength.

## Khawaja Zaheeruddin: Cycling Enthusiast for Health and Joy

At 74 years old, Khawaja Zaheeruddin defies age barriers and inspires through his love for cycling. As the founder of Early Bird Riders (EBR) in Islamabad, he has fostered a community of cycling enthusiasts, breaking stereotypes about activity's associations. Khawaja's dedication to cycling is evident in his 280-kilometer ride to the Khunjerab Pass at the age of 70, showcasing his spirit of adventure. Beyond personal achievements, he advocates for cycling's physical and mental benefits, aiming to establish cycling clubs across major Pakistani cities. With background in pharmaceuticals and IT, Khawaja's journey spans continents, reflecting his belief in the unmatchable homeland beauty of his and aspiration for cycling to transcend societal norms in Pakistan.

## Yuichiro Miura: A Climber with Unyielding Spirit

Yuichiro Miura's incredible journey defies limits and exemplifies unrelenting determination. From setting records on the Italian Kilometer Lance in 1964 to skiing down Mt. Fuji, his audacious spirit knows no bounds. However, it was his triumphant ascent of Mount Everest three times at ages 70, 80, and 80 again that truly highlighted his indomitable will. Overcoming injuries, illness, and extreme conditions, Miura personified

resilience. His unwavering commitment to conquering challenges echoes his life mantra that adversity enhances the richness of life. At 88, Miura remains a steadfast source of inspiration, poised for further achievements, and proving that human potential is boundless.

Changing Perspectives and Fostering Collaboration

Promoting aging positive requires perception older altering our of The stories of Ernestine individuals. Shepherd, Khawaja Zaheeruddin, and Yuichiro Miura challenge stereotypes and inspire us to view aging as a phase filled with potential. Moreover, emphasizing positive aging encourages cooperation between different age groups. Older individuals can share their experiences, while younger individuals contribute fresh perspectives, resulting in a harmonious exchange of ideas.

In a world where mutual understanding across generations is paramount, these stories illuminate the power of uniting different perspectives for the collective benefit. By recognizing the potential within every age group and fostering collaborative efforts, we can reshape societal norms and create a more enriched and harmonious world.

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# Discrimination against older adults: an age-old problem by Fortune Nwachukwu

Discrimination against older adults, also known as ageism, is a pervasive social issue with profound implications for individuals, society, and global aging trends. It can be observed across various domains of life, from the workplace to healthcare and beyond. This article explores the multifaceted nature ageism, its impact on older adults' physical and mental well-being, and the broader societal consequences. Through an in-depth analysis of its underlying manifestations in various causes. domains, and potential strategies to combat it, this article aims to raise awareness about the urgent need for a more inclusive and equitable approach to aging.

Discrimination is an unjust act that has persisted throughout human history, affecting various demographic groups. While much progress has been made in addressing discrimination based on race, gender, and sexual orientation, there is another form of prejudice that often goes unnoticed; discrimination against older adults. This insidious problem known as significant Ageism has societal implications and is deserving of our attention.

#### What is ageism?

Ageism refers to the stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination directed towards individuals or groups based on their age, specifically against older adults. This form of discrimination can manifest in various ways, including social exclusion,

health care, and systemic barriers. Ageism can take subtle forms, such as assuming cognitive decline in older individuals, as well as more overt forms like denying job opportunities solely based on age. While often overshadowed by other forms of discrimination, ageism has significant and far-reaching consequences for the quality of life and well-being of older individuals.

#### Causes of ageism

- Cultural Factors: Many cultures prioritize youthfulness and associate aging with decline. This cultural emphasis on youth can contribute to ageist attitudes.
- Fear of Mortality: Ageism can stem from society's fear of mortality and a subconscious desire to distance oneself from reminders of aging and death.
- Economic Factors: In the workplace, older employees may be seen as more expensive due to pension plans and health care benefits, leading to age-based discrimination.
- Media Influence: Media often perpetuates stereotypes by disproportionately featuring young individuals, which can contribute to the marginalization of older adults.
- ➤ Fear Unknown: of the Technological advancements and societal changes have accelerated in recent decades, leaving some older adults feeling out of touch. This fear of the unknown can make younger generations hesitant to with engage older individuals, perpetuating stereotypes and discrimination.

#### Manifestations of ageism

- ➤ Employment Discrimination: One of the most tangible manifestations of ageism is the discrimination older adult's face in the job market. They might be overlooked for promotions, laid off under the guise of downsizing, or face difficulties when seeking new employment opportunities.
- ➤ Health care Disparities: Ageism can influence health care providers' attitudes and decisions, leading to suboptimal care for older patients. Treatment options might be limited, and their concerns could be dismissed based on age-related assumptions.
- Media Portrayal: The media often perpetuates negative stereotypes about older adults, portraying them as frail, technologically inept, or mentally incapacitated. Such portrayals reinforce ageist beliefs and attitudes.
- ➤ Social Isolation: Older adults might experience social exclusion due to ageist assumptions that they are less interesting or relevant. This isolation can lead to detrimental effects on mental health and overall well-being.

#### Impact of ageism

- ➤ The consequences of ageism on older adults are wide-ranging and detrimental:
- Psychological Effects: Ageism can lead to diminished self-esteem and psychological well-being among older adults. Constant exposure to negative stereotypes can contribute to a self-fulfilling

- prophecy of cognitive and physical decline.
- Physical Health: Stress resulting from discrimination can negatively impact physical health, potentially leading to cardiovascular issues, weakened immune systems, and other stress-related ailments.
- Economic Consequences: Employment discrimination can lead to financial instability for older adults who are unable to secure jobs or are forced into early retirement.
- Social Exclusion: Ageism can isolate older adults from social networks, depriving them of vital social interactions and support systems.

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#### Legal framework and challenges

Efforts to combat age discrimination have led to the implementation of legal protections in many countries. In the United States, for instance, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) was enacted in 1967 to prohibit discrimination against individuals aged 40 and older in employment settings. However, legal frameworks alone are not sufficient to eradicate ageism.

- **Enforcement:** > Challenges in Enforcing age discrimination laws can be challenging, as proving discrimination age-based often demonstrating requires intent, which can be difficult to establish. Additionally, many older adults may not be aware of their rights or may fear retaliation if they speak out against discrimination.
- ➤ Cultural Shift Needed: To address age discrimination effectively, a broader cultural shift is necessary.

Society must challenge ageist stereotypes, promote intergenerational understanding, and encourage inclusivity and diversity across all age groups.

#### Combating ageism

Addressing ageism requires concerted efforts at various levels. Public awareness campaigns can challenge stereotypes and promote positive narratives about aging. Educational initiatives can help younger generations understand the aging process and develop empathy towards older adults. Implementing and enforcing policies that promote equal opportunities for employment, health care, and social participation regardless of age is crucial.

Intergenerational programs that foster interaction between older and younger individuals can break down stereotypes and promote understanding. In the workplace, age-diverse teams leverage the strengths of different age groups and create a more inclusive environment. By challenging stereotypes, promoting positive interactions, advocating for policy changes, society can work towards dismantling ageism and creating an environment where people of all ages are valued and respected.

#### Conclusion

Discrimination against older adults is a pervasive issue with profound implications for individuals and society as a whole. By recognizing the causes, manifestations, and consequences of ageism, societies can work towards dismantling the barriers that prevent older individuals from fully participating in various aspects of life. Embracing an

inclusive and equitable approach to aging is not only a matter of justice but also a means of harnessing the potential of an aging population for the betterment of society.

As a society, we must recognize that older adults have valuable contributions to make and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect. By working together to combat age discrimination, we can create a more inclusive and equitable world for people of all ages. It's time to confront this age-old problem and ensure that no one is unfairly judged or marginalized because of their age.

## The Experience of Age Discrimination Reported by Seniors by Lemanja Mears

Age discrimination is a form of prejudice or discrimination based on a person's age. It can occur in any setting, but it is often seen in the workplace, healthcare, and social settings.

Seniors are particularly vulnerable to age discrimination. They may be passed over for jobs, denied housing, or treated with disrespect. Age discrimination can have a significant impact on a senior's physical and mental health, as well as their social and economic well-being.

#### Types of age discrimination

There are many different ways that age discrimination can manifest itself. Some common examples include:

In the workplace: Seniors may be passed over for promotions, denied training opportunities, or forced to retire early.

In healthcare: Seniors may be treated with less respect by healthcare providers, or they may be denied certain treatments or procedures.

In social settings: Seniors may be excluded from activities or events, or they may be made to feel like they don't belong.

In the media: Seniors may be portrayed in a negative light, such as being seen as frail, incompetent, or out of touch.

In advertising: Seniors may be excluded from advertising or targeted with ads that is aregeist in nature.

#### Effects of age discrimination

Age discrimination can have a significant impact on a senior's life. Some of the effects of age discrimination can include:

Physical health: Age discrimination can lead to stress, anxiety, and depression. These can have a negative impact on a senior's physical health, increasing their risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, and diabetes.

Mental health: Age discrimination can also lead to feelings of isolation, loneliness, and worthlessness. These can contribute to depression, anxiety, and other mental health problems.

Social and economic well-being: Age discrimination can make it difficult for seniors to find jobs, housing, and transportation. This can have a negative impact on their social and economic well-being.

Life expectancy: Studies have shown that age discrimination can shorten a senior's life expectancy.

#### How to combat age discrimination

There are a number of things that can be done to combat age discrimination. Some of these include:

Educating people about age discrimination: It is important to educate people about the negative effects of age discrimination. This can help to reduce the stigma associated with aging and make people more aware of the signs of age discrimination.

Advocate for seniors' rights: There are a number of organizations that advocate

for seniors' rights. These organizations can help to fight age discrimination and ensure that seniors have access to the resources they need.

Speak up against age discrimination: If you witness age discrimination, it is important to speak up. This can help to raise awareness of the issue and make it less likely to happen in the future.

Support organizations that fight age discrimination: There are a number of organizations that fight age discrimination. You can support these organizations by donating money, volunteering your time, or spreading the word about their work.

#### How to prevent age discrimination?

There are a number of things that you can do to help prevent age discrimination:

Be aware of your own biases: We all have our own biases, but it is important to be aware of them and to challenge them. When you see someone being discriminated against because of their age, speak up.

Educate others about age discrimination: Talk to your friends, family, and colleagues about age discrimination. Help them to understand the negative effects of this type of discrimination.

Support organizations that fight age discrimination: There are a number of organizations that fight age discrimination. You can support these organizations by donating money, volunteering your time, or spreading the word about their work.

#### Conclusion

Age discrimination is a serious problem that has a negative impact on seniors' lives. By taking action to educate others, speak up against discrimination, and support organizations that fight age discrimination, we can help to create a more inclusive society for all.

In addition to the above, here are some additional things to keep in mind about age discrimination:

Age discrimination is illegal in many countries. However, it can be difficult to prove, especially if the discrimination is subtle or unintentional.

There are a number of resources available to help seniors who have experienced age discrimination. These resources can provide legal assistance, emotional support, and practical help.

We can all play a role in preventing age discrimination. By being aware of the issue and speaking up when we see it happen, we can help to create a more just and equitable society for all.

## "The older you get, the more you become invisible" by Fortune Nwachukwu

They said nothing will ever make our love go away, you are our mom and grandma, our love is eternal. I believed them, I really did. I even stopped expecting the old people's home and began looking forward to spending my last few years with my family. I think to myself every morning, "your children are not Gracie's children, they would keep to their words, do not worry about it too much".

At first, it was good but the weaker and older I got, the more distant my family got. I would not blame them actually, I could tell they were stressed and tired of changing diapers, feeding me, taking me out for fresh air after a long day of work, all these were definitely not easy tasks. I did not want them to be stressed but I couldn't help it.

I used to be very active and I had a job I loved so much but I am retired and can not work there anymore. I tried searching for a job elsewhere to assist and lessen the burden but wherever I searched for a job, I was told that I was too old or too weak to work, I was told once that I would not understand how to use the equipments because they were now tech operated and truth be told, I do not understand this new AI technology thing the younger ones have going. Times were simpler when we did things the old fashioned one and it brought us closer to each other, well, I guess times have changed.

I used to love swimming, sometimes I wish I could go swimming but the last time I went swimming, I got stares, people probably kept wondering what an

aged person was doing in the pool. Someone called the lifeguard to keep an eye on me, and I think "do I look that old", I knew I could still swim well, I might be old but I have not forgotten how to swim or eat or have fun, they just don't see it.

They see older adults and see diapers, weakness, fatigue and loss of teeth. It's funny because that is not all we are, we still want to do things, we still remember things, we still have fun and we still have so much love to give.

Eventually, my age got to me and my children got tired, so here I am, lying in a hospital bed. I can hear and I can see, but I cannot move and I cannot answer when they ask me a question but I want to.

Doctors and nurses shuffle by my bed, my relatives come to visit but I am sleepy and tired, I hardly see them now. I know I am a drain on their finances – nappies, medication, bandages, but how can I change this? I don't want them spending their money on me...

The worst moments are when it's lunch time. The nurse puts the plate on my nightstand. I am a bit hungry, but I am too weak to reach for the plate, too weak to move. If only someone was here to help me eat. That would be good enough for me.

But the nurse is back and I hear her yell: "Oh, so you won't eat anything? What a spoiled princess you are!" I hear her take the plate with my untouched lunch and she is gone. It doesn't matter I suppose, I was not that hungry anyway. My son will come visit me later if he can get out of work, and he will bring me something to eat. I just hope they will let him off work during the visiting hours. I won't be sleepy then. I will tell him I am hungry. I just need some hot soup to get my strength back.

I am lying in the bed and I hear them talking about me. "Yes, she's quite old, she's lived for quite a few years" and I think "well, don't talk like that in front of me, I can hear everything, step outside, show some discretion".

I lie in my bed and think about how hard it is when you are powerless and weak. You lose your own name. You just become "some sick old lady". You used to be much more than a sick old lady.

I lie there thinking "if only I could wash my hair". I used to visit a hairdresser every week, I did my pedicure and manicures, I took care of my skin, oh, how I loved my skin. Now they haven't washed my hair for 15 days, my nails need trimming and I need my skin... Well, I should stop wishing for such things. I used to work in this hospital. I was a nurse. These are my colleagues. But I am not their colleague any more. I am just an older patient lying here, awaiting my destiny.

#### OLDER ADULTS ARE THE FOUNDATION OF OUR SOCIETY, THEY SHOULD BE TREATED THE SAME AS OTHERS AND BE RESPECTED.

This story depicts an Age growing problem which is Ageism. These are people with names and lives, members of the same society as us, living, working and aging.

When we speak about people with wrinkles on their faces, who were born in the first half of the 20th century, we should always be aware that we are speaking to our future self, a future coming faster than we even comprehend. Bearing in mind these are people who used to work, love and cry, and still do. They fought for their rights

and our rights too, and they deserve the same treatment as everyone else.

They carry with them life long wisdom knowledge beyond understanding, they carry experiences about life that we would never see but from. They learn should celebrated for their achievements and accomplishments. they should brought to the forefront of our society where they can impact lives. Ageism should not be encouraged in any way.

#### Ageism in economics by Ítalo Daniel Fonseca

The problem around population aging is taking place all over the world; countries such as China and Japan are changing their policies - or creating new ones - to avoid possible economic crises. Besides that, ageism stereotypes are a social and political issue that should be precisely evaluated by the government.

Moreover, here are some factors that show why older adults are the reasons for such a great impact on economics.

#### 3.9 trillion!

That is how much age discrimination costs a nation.

According to studies, losses due to age discrimination could climb to \$3-9 trillion by the year of 2050. Nevertheless, the damage is already being seen by society; in the year of 2018, age discrimination cost \$850 billion in gross domestic product.

#### What causes it?

Involuntary retirement: Many times, older people do not want to retire. In fact, when they are obligated to do it, the reason is often because of social embeddedness and exterior pressure.

Item	%
"Was your decision to retire (entirely) voluntary, or not?"	
Yes, voluntary	74
No, (partly) involuntary	26
Total	100
"You could say I retired against my will"	
Strongly agree	5
Agree	12
Neither agree nor disagree	15
Disagree	36
Strongly disagree	32
Total	100
"My (early) retirement choice was entirely voluntary"	
Strongly agree	29
Agree	38
Neither agree nor disagree	9
Disagree	14
Strongly disagree	10
Total	100

A public consultation in The Netherlands, focused on clarifying the retirement process in the country.

Digital exclusion: A great factor that influences why older people are getting away from work space is the digital development of these places. Older individuals may face troubles with accessing digital technologies; furthermore, they might feel judged by younger people for not knowing how to use "something simple and basic", in their opinion.

Wage disparities: Older workers are facing wage disparities, receiving less money than younger people. With that, they are having to quit their jobs and try to find a new one, leading to a new different problem: unemployment and part-time jobs, where they are, many times, not valued the way they should. The population is aging in the world and solutions to it.

Population aging happens in different proportions and velocities around the world; according to World Population Prospects, there will be 2 people older than 65 years old to 1 between 0 and 4 years old. With that, global leaders are having to find measures to overcome this problem.

According to the United Nations, 2020-2030 is the Decade of Healthy Ageing, and there are some measures that should be done to guarantee a dignified aging:

 To change how we think, feel, and act towards age and aging by generating evidence on ageism, building a global coalition to

- combat ageism, and developing tools and resources that can be used by others to take action.
- Develop age-friendly cities and communities, including through supporting the Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities.
- To understand, design, and implement a person-centered, integrated model of care by producing evidence, guidance, and resource packages.
- Provide technical support to countries for conducting national situation analyses of long-term care towards implementing a minimum package of long-term care as part of universal health coverage.

# Breaking Down Ageism: Discrimination Against Older Adults by Yuga Chopada

Ageism is a deeply ingrained prejudice that often goes unnoticed or unchecked in society. While discrimination based on factors like race or gender has garnered significant attention, ageism remains a pervasive issue that affects millions of older adults worldwide. This article aims to shed light on ageism, its various manifestations, and the profound impact it has on the lives of older individuals.

#### **Defining Ageism**

Ageism is a form of prejudice and discrimination based on a person's age, particularly when it is directed towards older individuals. It manifests in various ways, including stereotypes, bias, and unfair treatment, and it can occur in both subtle and overt forms. Ageism can be perpetuated by individuals, institutions, and even within societal norms and attitudes.

#### **Stereotypes and Negative Perceptions**

One of the most common manifestations of ageism is the perpetuation of negative stereotypes about older adults. These stereotypes often depict older people as frail, technologically inept, or mentally diminished. Such perceptions can lead to a devaluation of older individuals' abilities and contributions, both in the workplace and in society at large.

Discrimination in the Workplace

Older adults frequently face discrimination in employment. Ageist attitudes can lead to older workers being passed over for job opportunities, being subjected to involuntary retirement, or experiencing unequal pay and benefits. Employers may wrongly assume that older employees are less adaptable or less capable of learning new skills, despite evidence to the contrary.

#### **Healthcare Disparities**

Ageism can also be prevalent in the healthcare system. Older adults may encounter biases that affect the quality of care they receive. For instance, healthcare providers may assume that certain symptoms are a natural part of aging rather than investigating potential underlying health issues. This can result in delayed diagnoses and suboptimal treatment.

#### **Social Isolation**

Ageism can contribute to social isolation among older adults. Negative stereotypes about aging can discourage social interactions and lead to feelings of invisibility. Isolation can have detrimental effects on mental and emotional well-being, potentially exacerbating health problems and reducing overall quality of life.

#### **Impact on Mental Health**

The psychological impact of ageism should not be underestimated. Constant exposure to ageist attitudes can erode an older person's self- esteem and self-worth. The fear of discrimination can lead to anxiety and depression, further compounding the challenges that older adults face.

#### **Combating Ageism**

Addressing ageism requires a concerted effort from individuals, communities, and

institutions. Here are some steps we can take to combat ageism:

- Education: Promote awareness about ageism through education and public awareness campaigns. Encourage discussions about age bias to challenge stereotypes and prejudices.
- ➤ Legal Protections: Advocate for stronger anti-discrimination laws that protect older adults in the workplace, housing, and healthcare settings.
- Media Representation: Encourage more accurate and positive portrayals of older adults in the media to counteract harmful stereotypes.
- ➤ Intergenerational Activities: Foster intergenerational interactions to bridge gaps between age groups and promote understanding and empathy.
- ➤ Support Systems: Develop support systems for older adults to combat social isolation and provide resources for those who experience discrimination.

# Ageism: Challenging Stereotypes and Celebrating Wisdom by Shamir Asif

In a world that thrives on diversity and inclusivity, it's essential that we confront ageism—a deeply ingrained form of discrimination that affects millions of older adults worldwide. Ageism not only impacts the well-being of our senior citizens but also weakens the very fabric of our society.

In this blog post, we'll delve into ageism, exploring its definition, its profound effects, and the steps we can take to challenge it.

#### What is Ageism?

Ageism is the unfair treatment or prejudice against individuals or groups based solely on their age, typically directed towards older people. It can manifest in various forms, from subtle biases to blatant stereotypes and actions that limit opportunities for older adults. This form of discrimination is deeply rooted in societal perceptions, attitudes, and norms surrounding aging.

## Breaking Down Stereotypes: The Myths We Must Debunk

Let's start by busting some common myths and stereotypes about older adults:

## Myth 1: Older Adults Are Frail and Helpless

Reality: Many older individuals maintain active and healthy lifestyles. Age should not be equated with weakness.

## Myth 2: Older People Can't Grasp Technology

Reality: While some may be less familiar with the latest gadgets, many older individuals adapt and become proficient with technology.

### Myth 3: Cognitive Decline is Inevitable with Age

Reality: Cognitive changes can occur with age, but they are not universal. Many older adults maintain sharp minds.

### Myth 4: Older Adults Are a Financial Burden

Reality: Older adults contribute significantly to their communities through volunteer work, mentorship, and caregiving.

#### The Impact of Ageism

Ageism doesn't just stop at stereotypes; it has far-reaching effects on older adults:

#### **Physical Health**

Ageism contributes to disparities in healthcare access and quality for older adults. They may delay seeking medical care, receive underdiagnosis, or face barriers to specialized care. The stress of encountering ageism can exacerbate age-related health conditions.

#### Mental Well-being

The psychological effects of ageism can't be underestimated. Older individuals who experience age-based discrimination are at a higher risk of developing depression and anxiety disorders.

Social isolation, stemming from ageism, can lead to loneliness and further mental health challenges.

#### **Economic Consequences**

Ageism in the workplace can have significant economic repercussions. Older

workers may face challenges in finding new job opportunities or advancing in their careers due to age-based biases. This can result in economic insecurity and pension-related issues.

#### Combating Ageism: What We Can Do

The fight against ageism is not without hope. Efforts to combat it are gaining momentum:

#### **Promoting Age-Friendly Communities**

Age-friendly communities focus on creating environments where older adults can live, work, and participate fully. These initiatives provide support, services, and opportunities that empower older individuals.

# Interview with an older person: what do you regret not doing when you were younger? by Ítalo Daniel Fonseca

Although we can study and think about the experience of the elderly, we do not know about their struggles in society and how they see the world. For this reason, I asked 7 questions to an older person, to summarize what may be a constant doubt of younger people about what life in elderly looks like.

#### Social background

The interviewed was a white woman, 62 years old. Lived on the farm until she was 12 years old, when she went to the closest town to work as a maid, having to quit school in 5th grade. Married at 18 years old, having her first child at 21.

- When did you realize you were not a young person anymore?
- "I began to notice that I was not a young person when I started to have limitations about certain things physically and health mainly like dancing or doing exercises".
- What kind of things can you not do anymore because of your age?
  "Although I do have limitations, they are
- "Although I do have limitations, they are not a reason to stop doing the things I like. With this in mind, I can do the same things as I did when I was younger, but with a little bit of moderation."
- Have you ever felt belittled because of your age?
- "Yes, I did."

- In which places did you feel belittled?

  "The place where I most feel belittled is in the traffic; when I have to stop in the safety lane, and some younger people decide to not respect it and try to pass it but are forced to stop because I am in front of them- they often say: "Ah, it had to be an elderly" in a pejorative way.
- What was your vision about the elderly when you were younger?

  "Honestly, I had a pessimistic point of view of my elderly age, principally because of my financial situation, so I was expecting to have more issues and problems than I actually have."
- What do you regret not doing when you were younger that you can not do anymore?
- "The thing I regret the most is marrying too early. Also, besides, I did not have many options, I regret not studying as much as I wanted to, and now, it may be too late."
- Give a piece of advice to younger people.
- "Study a lot in your young, so you may have more chances of having a better lifestyle in your older age, when you can not work anymore"

### Ageism in Healthcare Settings and Among Providers by Anirudh Mannattil

Ageism, the systematic discrimination or stereotyping of individuals based on their age, is a pressing concern that permeates various aspects of society, including healthcare. Often overlooked underestimated, ageism can have profound implications on the well-being and quality of life of older individuals. This phenomenon not only affects patients but also extends to healthcare providers themselves. potentially hindering effective care delivery and exacerbating existing disparities. In this article, we delve into the issue of ageism in healthcare settings and among providers, shedding light on its consequences and possible discussina strategies addressing this deeply rooted problem.

Healthcare environments are expected to be places of healing and support for individuals of all ages. However, ageism subtly infiltrate these settings, leading to unequal treatment neglect of older patients. Stereotypes about older adults being frail, dependent, or resistant to change can influence providers' attitudes healthcare decisions. These negative stereotypes might result in undertreatment, overlooking preventive measures, or even assuming that certain conditions are a natural part of aging when they might warrant further investigation.

Moreover, older adults might encounter ageist attitudes when seeking healthcare services. They may face dismissive behavior from providers who attribute symptoms solely to their age rather than conducting a thorough examination. This lead to delayed diagnoses, inadequate treatment, and compromised health outcomes. Ageism can manifest in communication barriers. where providers unintentionally patronizing language or fail to involve older patients in medical decisions.

Ageism doesn't just affect patients—it can also impact healthcare providers themselves. As society becomes more age-diverse, healthcare teams consist of professionals spanning generations. Ageist assumptions can hinder effective collaboration, erode team morale, and obstruct the exchange of valuable insights. Moreover, healthcare providers might encounter discrimination due to perceptions that they are not as up-to-date with the latest medical advancements or are adaptable to changes.

To combat ageism in healthcare, a multifaceted approach is required. First and foremost, raising awareness and sensitivity to age-related biases is crucial. Healthcare institutions implement training programs that educate providers about ageism's effects harmful and encourage introspection. These programs can also highlight the diversity within older populations, emphasizing that health needs and lifestyles can significantly differ.

Promoting patient-centered care is another essential strategy. Recognizing that each patient, regardless of age, has unique needs and preferences fosters better communication and trust between providers and patients. Encouraging shared decision-making and actively involving older patients in their care plans can help address age-related stereotypes.

Furthermore, fostering age-diverse healthcare teams can help challenge ageist attitudes from within. Collaboration among professionals of different generations can lead innovative solutions and enhance patient care. Additionally, acknowledging the older contributions of healthcare providers and creating opportunities for ongoing professional development can counteract age-related discrimination among peers.

In conclusion, ageism in healthcare settings and among providers is a complex issue with far-reaching consequences. It can impact the quality of care delivered to older patients and undermine the cohesion of healthcare teams. Recognizing ageism's harmful effects and working to dismantle biases is essential for age-related fostering inclusive, patient-centered care. By addressing ageism head-on and promoting age diversity in healthcare, we can ensure that individuals of all ages receive the attention, respect, and support they deserve.

### Ageism as a Barrier to Active Engagement in Later Life by Anirudh Mannattil

Ageism, the prejudiced attitudes or discriminatory behaviors directed towards individuals based on their age, is a formidable obstacle that can hinder active engagement in later life. The pervasive societal perception that older adults are less capable or relevant often to their marginalization and exclusion from various spheres of life. In this article, we explore how ageism barrier to active operates as а engagement in later life and discuss potential strategies to overcome this issue and ensure a fulfilling and participatory aging experience.

One of the ways ageism manifests is through stereotypes that perpetuate negative perceptions of aging. These stereotypes often portray older adults as technologically challenged, frail, disinterested in new experiences. Such assumptions can lead to a lack of opportunities for older individuals to engage in meaningful activities or pursue new interests. For instance, older adults might be excluded technology-driven initiatives or cultural events under the assumption that they not interested or capable are participating.

Ageism also impacts older adults' employment prospects. The belief that older workers are less productive or adaptable can result in age-related discrimination in the workplace. This can lead to early retirement, depriving older individuals of the chance to contribute

their skills and experience. Moreover, when older adults are forced into early retirement, they might face financial insecurity, limiting their ability to participate in leisure activities or pursue personal goals.

Furthermore, ageism's effects extend to healthcare, where older individuals might receive inadequate medical attention due to assumptions that certain health issues are a natural part of aging. This can lead to undertreatment or delayed diagnoses, negatively affecting older adults' overall well-being and limiting their ability to stay active and engaged.

Overcoming ageism's barriers to active engagement requires a concerted effort from individuals, communities, and society as a whole. Raising awareness about ageism and its detrimental impact is a crucial first step. Society needs to challenge the stereotypes that perpetuate ageism and recognize the diversity of abilities, interests, and aspirations within the older population.

Encouraging intergenerational interactions is another effective strategy. Bringing together people of different age groups promotes mutual understanding and breaks down age-related biases. Intergenerational initiatives can create platforms for sharing experiences, skills, and perspectives, fostering a sense of belonging and reducing the isolation that ageism can induce.

Incorporating older adults into decision-making processes is equally important. Policies and programs should be designed with their input to ensure that their needs and aspirations are taken into account. This empowerment not

only counters ageism but also acknowledges the value that older individuals bring to society.

Moreover, providing opportunities for lifelong learning and skill development is essential. By dispelling the notion that older adults are not interested in learning new things, society can enable them to pursue new hobbies, acquire new skills, and remain engaged in various activities.

In conclusion, ageism poses a significant barrier to active engagement in later life. Addressing this issue requires a collective effort to challenge stereotypes, promote intergenerational interactions, and empower older adults to continue pursuing their interests and contributing to their communities. By dismantling ageism, we can create an inclusive and environment that individuals of all ages and ensures that aging is a time of fulfillment and active participation.

#### Epopee of Age by Katrin Hristova



Death and Life, Gustav Klimt, 1908. Courtesy of <u>www.Gustav-Klimt.com</u>

Epopea, épopée, epopoeia, epopœia means an epic poem, epicpoetry.

I searched for it on Dictionary.com which, in turn, posed a question for me:

Which word means 'lacking in decisiveness, without strength of character'.

I laughed.

I cried and wrote.

When to start teething?
When to say the first word?

When to start crawling?

When to smile?

When to take away the pacifier?
When to take a sip alone from a cup?
When to play tag and peek-a-boo?

When to teach time?

When to learn to read?
When to learn table manners?
When to go to learn at school?
When to learn a routine?

What do you like to learn?
What will you study?
Are you liked in school?
What would you like to do with your life?

When will you leave your parent's house?
When will you get a job?
When will you get a house?
What is your net worth?

When will you ask for a raise?
When will you get a girlfriend?
When will you get married?
When will you have children?

When is the holiday?
When do you go back to work?
When is the holiday?
When do you go back to work?
When will you visit us?

When will you retire?
Did you take your pills?
Did you get your prescription?
Did you cry at the funeral?

Did you enjoy life?

## Aging in Reverse: The Unsettling Beauty of Life by Katrin Hristova

Why the film that rewound aging—from a wheelchair to crutches to walking without help—has captivated audiences for generations?

Through diary entries, we touch upon Benjamin Button, a man born old who grows young.

Confusing, right?

Curious, too.



#### The Reversed March of Time

In 2008, David Fincher's *The Curious Case* of *BenjaminButton* redefined life as we know it. Button ages in reverse and his reversed march of time tells us exactly what is wrong in the way we perceive age. And what hurts the most in ageing.

Growing old is a bumpy road. There is a mingle between wisdom and regrets, beauty and pain, love and loss.

The signs on this bumpy road do not point towards what lies ahead.

The billboards on the way give us methods for preserving the youthful glow we are born with, tell us how to dress for courage, fuel our anxieties about middle age and distract us from accepting life as it is.

Although *The Curious Case* is undeniably curious and poetic, my belief is that

going through life the other way around maynot be as appealing as it first seems.



### The Wheelchair: Why growing old unsettles us?

Aside from the obvious increase in doctors' appointments, and the colorful myriad of pills that accompany blowing candles, I believe that there are no better stories than the ones told through eyes that have seen a lot.

Instead of listening to these tales, we dismiss them with phrases like "senior moment" or "over the hill", we portrayed unrealistically, we look at youth-centric beauty standards and we fear.

We fear dependency on others, yet we are born this way.

We fear mortality and the unknown, yet we are born with the unknown ahead of us.

We fear physical decline, yet we forget the mental development we undergo.

We fear wrinkles, yet we forget how little self-love we had when we were 20.

We fear health concerns, physical pain and suffering, yet we don't acknowledge that the deepest lessons lay there.

We fear loss, yet forget to appreciate the gain.

We fear death, yet we forget to appreciate life.

We fear and we search for the meaning of life without understanding that if there is no end, will there be meaning?



## The Crutches, the battle against gravity, the anti-ageing campaigns

Around the blowing out of the 50th candles in our lifetime, westart feeling that the death reaper may be lurking nearby.

We must fear the misleading, deceitful promises of the miraculous preservation of youth.

We must fear the image that only youth deserves to be labeled as beautiful.

We must fear the relentless influence of beauty standards that haunt us since birth.

We must fear the invasive procedures that could potentially risk the lives we have been given.

We must fear the psychological manipulation that converts us to vulnerable consumers of useless, empty promises.

We must fear the photoshopped imagery that shames the natural process of life.

We must fear the workplaces that toss our experiences in the trash.

We must fear the employers who deny us opportunities and see worth in the long-term exploitation of labor.

We must fear the doctors who underdiagnosed, deny treatment, overprescribe medicine, decrease preventive care, overlook mental health and disregard pain.

We must fear the internal beliefs we place on our shoulders that make us feel less.

We must fear ageism not age.



#### Walking without help

If we lived like Benjamin Button:

- · we would still fear the unknown
- we would still fear dependency on others
- we would still fear the denial of opportunities
- we would still fear the intricate landscape of emotions
- · we would still fear social pressure
- we would still fear looking in the mirror
- we would still be the subject of greedy marketing campaigns
- we would still fear the experience of pain and grief

Life would still have meaning

## Promoting dignity and respect across ages by Linn Kyi Cin Oo (Elanna)

Today, we live in a world where diversity and inclusivity are embraced more than ever before. Yet, there are instances where the majority of older individuals feel underappreciated and discriminated against due to unfounded beliefs some people are holding, whether it is because they are considered as being incapable of certain abilities, less creative than the weaker. younger generation, and Ultimately, these notions coalesce into a single detrimental stereotype aging: the idea that getting older is synonymous with decline. In a similar vein, young people often encounter negative portrayals as lazy, overly immersed in technology. lacking competence, unable to address serious issues, and even viewed as a burden on society. Consequently, when a young adult or teenager achieves something noteworthy, their accomplishments might be met with sentiments like: 'Finally! A young person doing something truly exceptional. Let's put them on a pedestal and raise them so high above the rest of their peers that their will completely areatness be unattainable to the average teen. That way everybody else will feel distinctly average and unexceptional.'

Despite these biases, from the young to the elderly, each age group contributes unique perspectives, wisdom, and experiences to the table; each of them has their own different qualities that society needs and should be admired. This is why it is crucial to strive for promoting dignity and respect across ages. So let's see what either we as a group or you as an individual, can do to truly acknowledge everyone's contributions, regardless of their age.

- Engage in intergenerational conversations: in order to treat every age group with kindness, empathy, and understanding, strike up conversations that will help you gain new perspectives and foster connections. Surround vourself with both young and individuals. When you are given a chance bring to up topics regarding ageism, seize opportunity with no hesitation this will because provide enlightened insights into others.
- Speak up and listen: If you encounter instances of age discrimination or similar prejudices, share your observations to bridge the generational gap. Alternatively, when someone shares their experiences, lend a patient ear and learn from their narratives.
- Celebrate and honor accomplishments of individuals from all age groups: recognize the accomplishments of individuals across all age groups. Celebrating their successes can inspire and motivate them to continue their positive contributions.
- Volunteer: join volunteer activities that involve both older and younger adults to break down invisible barriers and build connections that will enhance your respect across all ages.
- Advocate for age-inclusive policies and organizations: either get

involved in at least one of the initiatives that promote intergenerational collaboration or support age-friendly communities by making them receive recognition through social media. Starting your own organization such as creating websites or pages on various social media platforms to challenge media narratives is also a good option.

- Show empathy and understanding towards older adults, regardless of their background or circumstances.
- Educate yourself and others: begin by deepening your understanding of the challenges faced by various age groups through books, articles, and experience. After that, share what you know with family and peers to raise awareness and combat stereotypes

Last but not least, remember that genuine respect and dignity should come from a place of authenticity. To truly foster respect and dignity among individuals of all ages, it's vital that these values are embraced wholeheartedly. This journey requires consistent effort and an unwavering commitment to creating a world where everyone is valued for their unique contributions, regardless of age.

# Stereotyping and discrimination against older workers by Linn Kyi Cin Oo (Elanna)

In the workplace, the emphasis is ideally placed on valuing skills, dedication, and experience above all else. However, this vision often contrasts with reality, as older frequently employees confront age-related stereotypes that limit their growth prospects. The classification of workers as "older" varies globally; for instance, in Canada, an older worker is defined as 55 years or older, while the Organization for Economic Co-operation Development (OECD) considers individuals aged 50 and above as older, a definition widely accepted worldwide. These definitions can be influenced by factors such as national retirement age location-specific and anti-age discrimination laws.

Nevertheless, ageism, which refers to unjust treatment based on age, similar to other forms of discrimination. entrenched across various levels: from workplace conversations about older workers being sidelined, to organizational preferences for young and fit employees, to disparities in promotions. In the following sections, we will explore the origins of age-related biases, examine their nuanced expressions in different industries, and propose strategies to counter and eliminate these biases.

## Age-Based Stereotypes: Myths and Realities:

Perceptions and anticipations regarding age groups within the workplace often result in workplace age stereotypes, frequently characterized by biased and negative assumptions about older workers. One prevalent stereotype that older workers suggests underperform, presupposing that they competent, productive, are less and capable than their motivated. younger peers. However, a substantial body of evidence contradicts this notion of declining performance with age. Empirical research reveals that job performance ratings actually improve age. Any potential decline in cognitive ability isn't significantly linked performance due to various compensatory and adaptive strategies. Notably, health and well-being emerge as more relevant performance indicators than chronological age (Posthuma and Campion, 2009).

Another widespread stereotype pertains to older employees resisting change, suggesting they are harder to develop, less adaptable, and less inclined to embrace new approaches, strategies, and creative thinking. However, empirical backing for the idea that older workers are inherently more resistant to change is scarce (Ng and Feldman, 2012). While some evidence suggests that older workers might exhibit less enthusiasm for participating in training and career development, this does not equate to a general resistance to change. A third stereotype assumes older employees limited learning possess capacities, implying they struggle to acquire new skills, technologies, or methodologies. While it is acknowledged that older individuals might take slightly more time to master new skills than their younger counterparts, certain research indicates that older workers require no more

training than their younger colleagues and indeed have the potential to learn (Broadbridge, and develop 2001). Additionally, the notion older that workers are costlier due to proximity to retirement, increased benefits usage, and higher wages is refuted by evidence suggesting that older workers have lower turnover rates than their younger peers. challenging the perception of them as a lesser return on investment (Hedge et al., 2006).

Furthermore, the misconception that older workers are less physically capable and more accident-prone leads to their exclusion from specific job tasks, eroding their self-esteem in those areas. While it's true that aging brings about physical and cognitive changes, experience often enables older workers to more effectively compensate for these changes. AARP research indicates that older workers take fewer sick days than their younger counterparts. It's important to note that when older workers do experience severe injuries or illnesses, their recovery periods tend to be longer (Ventrell-Monsees).

#### Discrimination in the workplace:

It is asserted that a significant number of age discrimination cases go unreported due to workers internalizing these stereotypes. Consequently, these age-related stereotypes often culminate in various forms of discrimination against older workers, which manifest in diverse ways within the workplace.

➤ Hearing disparaging comments and remarks about age: this may take form in aggression, or other subtler ways known as micro-aggressions, such as joking

- about employees' age, retirement plans, typing speed, and sarcastic replies.
- > Selective hiring practices: employers may subtly prioritize candidates younger due assumptions that older individuals less adaptable, adept, compatible with the company culture, despite evidence showing that experience enhances problem-solving and adaptability. This is most prominent during the interview because process employers tend to judge candidates by asking questions like
  - What are your retirement plans?
  - Can you keep up with our company's technology proficiency?
  - Are you comfortable working for a younger manager?
  - Where do you see yourself in five or 10 years?
  - Do you have any chronic diseases or other health issues?
- Neglecting older workers for promotions, despite these incentives being typically tied to job performance, can indicate ageism if older employees are consistently denied such opportunities by their supervisors.
- ➤ Unfair discipline: disproportionate actions aimed at older employees, can serve as a strategy to dismiss them without valid grounds. This might involve setting unreasonably high expectations, isolating older workers from company activities, bypassing them for challenging assignments, and according

- preferential treatment to younger colleagues, enabling them to evade consequences for their mistakes.
- > Salary disparities wherein older employees receive lower pay than their younger counterparts for equivalent roles. under assumption that older workers are nearing retirement and hence deserving of reduced compensation, demonstrate age discrimination. This practice disregards the contributions, skills, and value that older employees bring to the organization.
- ➤ Limited training and development: providing fewer opportunities for training, skill development, or career advancement to older employees, thinking they have less potential to learn and grow.

#### Overcoming ageism:

- > Promote age diversity All the individuals involved in businesses should be aware about the value of a diverse workforce, including older employees, who can contribute to a more inclusive environment. In organizations should return, provide training for employees and and managers recognize to challenge age-related biases. During an interview with the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), Terri Imbarlina Patak, a lawyer at Dickie McCamey in Pittsburgh, suggests that training should address unconscious prejudices and stereotypes.
- ➤ Use diverse hiring and rewarding practices based on experience or

- skill rather than age as boss/employer. Throughout interviews and evaluations candidates, recruiters should give precedence to appraising applicants based on their abilities, credentials. pertinent and expertise, instead of relying on assumptions related to age.
- Team efforts and collaboration should be encouraged within the workplace to foster a more inclusive environment.
- Reporting and assistance It's crucial to establish a secure environment where employees can report cases of age discrimination without concerns about reprisals. Put in place well-defined procedures for managing such reports.
- ➤ Lastly, whether you're a worker, teenager, student, adult, or anyone else, please remember to promote awareness about this matter and share information with others whenever the opportunity arises.

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# The diverse realities of aging beyond stereotypes by Esme Harrison

The realities of aging are often overshadowed with fear. It is almost as if society casts an impending cloud of doom over the ages of sixty. Many fear what they will look like and how they will manage their day-to-day activities now that they are inevitably weak and frail. However, this stereotype is completely false and our bones do not actually give-way on our sixtieth birthday. Please take a look at Miriam Margoyles or Judy Dench for reference.

Infact, our retirement ages are actually full of life and are certainly a period for one to look forward to. After speaking with two over-seventies for this journal, I have been able to gather enough reflection of what life is like after retirement to put your mind at ease.

Interestingly, the main description of these later years was 'peaceful'. Whilst it's hard to imagine a peaceful life for yourself the way society has shaped aging to be so daunting, it certainly is.

"It is a peculiar thing, when I was younger I wished to be older. Then, well, I reached a certain age and wanted life to slow down again. Better yet, I wished life would pause. Now I'm 76 and I'm happier than ever. I don't feel any rush to turn any age- nor regret for my younger years."

"I definitely feel a new sense of freedom. I suppose that's because I'm retired but I do like to have the option to do whatever I want at midday on a weekday. I'm tempted to start new activities but I have decided against kickboxing for now."

"I feel a lot of remorse for younger people now I look back. I see so many young people, full of life, looking so defeated. There are definitely high expectations set for younger people nowadays."

"I don't have any regrets- no. My only regret if I had to say anything is spending as much time as I did worrying about my future! Though, that's hardly a regret- it's inevitable and we all do it far too much!"

From this, it's easy to gather that retirement and aging is certainly not something to fear but instead something to look forward to. Life doesn't stop just because you've aged. Finding new hobbies, meeting new people and forming new relationships can happen at any point in your life.

## Portrayals of aging as solely a period of decline by Esme Harrison

Aging, a natural and inevitable process, is often portrayed in popular culture and societal discourse as a period of decline. This prevailing narrative perpetuates a one-dimensional view of aging, overshadowing the immense amounts of experiences and opportunities yet to come as one grows older. While it is undeniable that certain physical and cognitive changes can occur with age, it is crucial to challenge the notion that aging is a negative thing where a person becomes less important or useful. This journal aims to explore the positives of aging, shedding light on the commonly overlooked aspects that contribute to a higher level of understanding of this period of a person's life.

The stereotype that aging is a period of decline has deep historical roots. For centuries, youth has been linked to vitality and productivity whereas old age has been associated with frailty and dependence. This perception has not only been promoted by certain cultures, but also through the media and literacy. In many literature pieces, the older person is often labeled to be haggardhardly painting a positive image of aging. It is undeniable that aging brings about physical changes. For instance, muscular strength may decrease and joints may become less flexible. However, presenting these changes in isolation fails to acknowledge the adaptability of the human body. With regular exercise, a balanced diet and healthcare, these signs of aging can be helped and held back. older Moreover, some adults may

discover new physical activities or hobbies that provide them with a new found sense of joy and contribute to their overall well being. This demonstrates that a person can find new things to love at any point in their life.

While cognitive changes are certainly a natural part of aging, they do not equate to a complete loss of mental faculties. Older adults often possess a nuanced perspective, enhanced problem-solving skills and a new ability to make well-informed decisions based on their wisdom and life experiences. Rather than focusing on one's cognitive decline, society could gain a new perspective and admire the new-found wisdom that comes hand-in-hand with the aging process.

Moreover, the same perception of decline neglects the valuable contributions that the older generation can make to society. Many retirees continue to commit to part-time work and volunteer activities to help within their communities. These volunteers are extremely helpful and are often overlooked. This supports the idea that aging is often a new opportunity for reinvention as it is a perfect chance to explore new passions and try previously undiscovered activities. Not only this but being a part of volunteer work and joining activities is a great way to form new relationships. This is particularly important as it is often assumed that no new relationships are formed in later life and there is a significant pressure on the younger generation to go out and meet as many people as you can. This pressure on younger people infers that the only opportunity to form meaningful relationships is in your twenties.

The prevalent narrative that aging is solely a period of decline oversimplifies a complex and multifaceted stage of a human's life. While there are undoubtedly both physical and mental changes that come with aging, they are not necessarily negative. By forming a positive perspective on the aging process as a society, it will allow us to look forward to our later years and not feel as much pressure to achieve everything humanly possible by the time we reach our thirties.

#### Ageism: How It's Hurting Our Health by Yezir Hasan

Ageism is prejudice or discrimination against someone based on their age. It can be directed at people of any age, but it is most commonly directed at older people. Ageism can hurt health and well-being in several ways.

#### **Physical health**

Ageism can lead to poorer physical health in several ways. For example, older people who are victims of ageism may be less likely to seek preventive care, such as cancer screenings and vaccinations. They may also be less likely to adhere to their treatment plans for chronic conditions. Ageism can also lead to stress, which can contribute to the development of health problems such as heart disease, stroke, and diabetes.

#### Mental health

Ageism can also hurt mental health. For example, older people who are victims of ageism may experience depression, anxiety, and loneliness. They may also be more likely to have thoughts of suicide. Ageism can also lead to feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, which can make it difficult to cope with stress and other challenges.

#### Social isolation

Ageism can lead to social isolation. Older people who are victims of ageism may be less likely to participate in social activities or form new relationships. This can lead to loneliness, which can hurt physical and mental health.

#### **Economic hardship**

Ageism can also lead to economic hardship. Older people who are victims of ageism may be less likely to be hired or promoted at work. They may also be less likely to be able to afford housing, healthcare, and other essential services. Economic hardship can lead to stress, anxiety, and depression, which can further impact health and well-being.

#### How to combat ageism

- Many things can be done to combat ageism and its negative consequences. These include:
- Education: Educating people about the negative impact of ageism can help to change attitudes and behaviors.
- Advocacy: Advocating for the rights of older people can help to ensure that they are treated fairly and with respect.
- Policy changes: Policy changes that promote age equality can help to create a more just and equitable society for all.
- Individual action: By being mindful of our own biases and by speaking out against ageism, we can all help to create a more age-friendly world.

Combating ageism is important because it can have a real impact on the health and well-being of older people. By working together, we can create a society where everyone is treated with respect, regardless of their age.

## The Marginalization and Invisibility of Seniors by Yezir Hasan

Seniors are often marginalized and invisible in society. This can be seen in several ways, including:

- Ageism: Ageism is prejudice or discrimination against someone based on their age. It can lead to seniors being stereotyped as being frail, dependent, and out of touch. This can make it difficult for them to be taken seriously and to have their voices heard.
- Loneliness and isolation: Seniors are more likely to be lonely and isolated than other age groups. This can be due to many factors, including retirement, the death of loved ones, and declining health. Loneliness and isolation can hurt physical and mental health.
- Economic hardship: Seniors are more likely to live in poverty than other age groups. This can be due to several factors, including a lack of savings, low retirement incomes, and rising healthcare costs.
   Economic hardship can make it difficult for seniors to meet their basic needs and participate in society.
- Disability: Seniors are more likely to have disabilities than other age groups. This can make it difficult for them to get around, to participate in activities, and to live independently. Disability can also lead to social isolation and economic hardship.
- Ageism in the media: The media often portrays seniors in a negative

light. They may be depicted as frail, dependent, and out of touch. This can reinforce negative stereotypes about seniors and make it difficult for them to be seen as valuable members of society.

The marginalization and invisibility of seniors can have a number of negative consequences. It can lead to poorer health, social isolation, economic hardship, and a loss of dignity. It is important to challenge ageism and create a more inclusive society for seniors.

Here are some things that can be done to combat the marginalization and invisibility of seniors:

- Educate people about ageism: Ageism is often unconscious, so it is important to educate people about the negative impact of ageism. This can be done through public awareness campaigns, educational programs, and training for healthcare providers and other professionals.
- Promote positive images of seniors:
   The media plays a powerful role in shaping our perceptions of seniors.
   It is important to promote positive images of seniors in the media, such as images of seniors who are active, healthy, and engaged.
- Support organizations that advocate for seniors: Many organizations such as luvo advocate for the rights of seniors. By supporting these organizations, we can help to make sure that the voices of seniors are heard.
- Be an ally to seniors: We can all be allies to seniors by challenging ageism in our own lives and by speaking out against ageism when

we see it. We can also be more mindful of how we interact with seniors and make sure that we are treating them with respect.

By working together, we can create a more inclusive society for seniors where they are valued and respected.

# When the Patriarchy encounters the Aging Woman: Gendered Ageism by Valerie Momas

Plaguing the most current Tik Tok trends include using an aging filter which, as the name suggests, displays an aged version of the user. This trend has created a surge of women using the filter with the caption 'never skipping moisturizer' or 'time to start using retinol', both references anti-aging skincare to regimen. While seemingly harmless nods to skincare, their references contain within them the assumption that aging is something to be avoided or delayed or worse, feared. Coincidentally (or not), this trend is dominated by women. This begs the question as to why aging as a concept seems to affect women more than men. To answer this question, this article unpacks the concept of gendered ageism, a double-edged sword which crucifies women for aging while sparing men and will look at how gendered ageism operates in popular culture and media.

Itzin and Phillipson (1993)define gendered ageism as a double jeopardy where 'two interacting power systems lead to an increased vulnerability'. It emphasizes the dominance of patriarchal norms with the fetishisation of youth which leads to a faster deterioration of older women's status compared to their male peers. Gendered ageism is therefore targeted towards older women and is rooted in categorisations which ensure their falsely constructed subordinated position. Gender and age act as an intersection of power relations which

create a dynamic between older women and younger women as well as between older women and men in general. The inequality of ageism is combined with the inequality of the patriarchy which produces another layer of oppression, hence the phenomenon of a double jeopardy facing older women.

This can be observed in popular culture in that the 'expiry date' for female celebrities is much earlier compared to that of male celebrities. We can see this through the 'Jennifer Lawrence effect'. Named after the actress herself, the Jennifer Lawrence effect is a cycle through which new popular female celebrities get significantly hyped up and receive mass media attention, which inevitably turns into backlash for said media overexposure and representations as 'annoying' for their continued media presence as she gets older. This leads to them being discarded and forgotten while the media finds another young female celebrity to place on a pedestal and obsess over, only for her to become part of that cycle. Think of how quickly Billie Eilish was replaced by Olivia Rodrigo as the darling of the music industry or how social media turned on Jenna Ortega after the initial love she received after 'Wednesday' debuted. There is great irony in the need for media to obsess over a young female celebrity only to realise that she too is not exempt from the effects of time and discard her while still in her youth. The Jennifer Lawrence effect therefore prematurely ages young female celebrities while still in their prime while dictating that the public eye is no space for women past a certain age, thus glorifying youth in women. As such, the value of a woman lies in her youth, not her talent. This leaves female celebrities' careers more vulnerable to an earlier decline compared to their male counterparts.

phenomenon Another imbued with gendered ageism is the rise of the 'silver foxes' of Hollywood, a list of male celebrities over the age of 50 glorified for their good looks. In this instance, aging is celebrated with positive connotations with greying hair as a prerequisite into this elite club of aging men. In these instances, these silver foxes are said to have become more sexually desirable stark contrast to the with age, a demonisation of their aging female peers. Coincidentally, but perhaps expectedly, there is no female equivalent of the silver fox club. Instead, the aged female celebrity is welcomed into maturity with zoomed in pictures of her wrinkles andlower arm fat splashed across tabloids paired with derogatory comments about her inability to take proper care of herself. To aggravate the situation further, a silver fox is usually seen together with a much younger woman (think of Leonardo Dicaprio and his dating record of below-25's and the 17 year age gap between George and Amal Clooney), bringing the assumption that even older men do not desire older women. Hence, in order for a woman to feel desirable and positively received by the press, she must maintain her youth void of cellulite and smile lines.

The inevitable result of these negative depictions of aging women is the pressure women are burdened with to artificially maintain their youthful appearances whether that is through

filters surgical procedures or on Instagram. The double standard of how aging is received is a reflection of the assumption that aging is a necessarily evil only women are vulnerable to. The patriarchy controls what a woman should look like while ageism dictates that the media is no space for women unless she can retain her youth. As a socializing agent, the media conveys the ideals that social construct our fabric. communicating what an acceptable image of a woman should be. Hence, gendered ageism in Hollywood trickles down to the ordinary woman. Female celebrities are simply the first line soldiers of gendered ageism. It is no wonder that the ordinary woman has a constant preoccupation with aging, finding ways to delay or avoid the process altogether, a preoccupation her male counterpart does not have to spare a thought on.Gendered ageism celebrates aging in while simultaneously punishes men women for it.

Hence, we need alternative ways of thinking about aging to counter the hegemonic discourse on aging women. Aging is not a sign of decline. It is simply entering another phase womanhood. Smile lines, wrinkled hands and eye crinkles are signs of a life well lived and the body of older women within them wealth contain а knowledge only their lived experiences are able to produce. We are organic. We will decay. We will age. And that is okay. Womanhood is a spectrum, of which the process of aging is tethered to all its phases. Instead of seeing this as a curse, we need to welcome aging for what it is: a blessing which enriches the meaning of what it means to be a woman.

### Depictions of the Elderly in Movies by Valerie Momas

We are what we consume, and we consume our knowledge of the world through the media. The media acts as a vehicle through which notions of what is acceptable in society are communicated to the public. As such, popular culture is potentially dangerous as it influences consumer behaviour and thinking patterns by convincing them that what is popular is what is correct. This can be observed in the depictions of the elderly in popular culture and how this has influenced our perceptions of them in real life. This article examines the depictions of elderly characters from the movies 'A Man Called Otto' and 'Up' arguing that both still fail to positively depict old age.

The most recent elderly character to grace the big screen is Otto from the 'A Man called Otto', a grumpy old man in the skin of Tom Hanks. Depicted through stereotypical lenses, Otto is hard around the edges, unnecessarily harsh, chastises the youth and social media, seeks solitude and who's will to live died with his wife. One might be reminded of another beloved elderly character: Carl Fredrickson from 'Up'. In both cases, they lose their wives and subsequently close themselves off from the world, biding their time until the clutches of death catches up to them, reliving the same day everyday while they wait. In the end, as they learn to open up to the world once again and engaging with a younger supporting character, they find their purpose again and learn to re-assimilate into society again, giving them a second chance to live engaging lives.

It is undoubtedly a riveting tale told through the eyes of the elderly and empathetically depicts the loneliness experienced by senior citizens deserving of a tear or two. However, despite them being the main characters of their movies, their redemption does not come from themselves but through For younger counterparts. Otto, redemption is offered through Marisol and for Carl, it is in the form of Russel. The difference in depictions of the elderly and their young companions is undeniable. It is almost intentional. Where Otto and Carl are decaying and soulless, Marisol and Carl possess an uncontainable energy with which they annoy our elderly The heroes. young, through their wide-eyed determination and wild unbounded spirit provoke in the elderly a sense of longing for their youth. Hence, both go on adventures with the young, displaying a buried sense of still being 'young at heart'. And this is exactly the problem. The solution to their loneliness, thecoalescence of days into a single time-space singularity and the inevitable grump of old age is to act young. And the end of the movie, we still leave with feelings of pity towards the elderly, not respect, not admiration. What we respect and admire is instead the willingness of the elderly to embrace the young and their untapped youth at heart.

Despite what may seem like a celebration of the elderly by centralising an elderly character, the redemption for the decaying elderly reveals a fetishisation of youthunderneath its surface. As such, both movies fail to appreciate the wealth of experience and knowledge the elderly can bring. Old age is contrasted strikingly

amidst the backdrop of the life and energy of the young. They are depicted only through what they lack: youth. There is still a lack of positive depictions of old age in movies where aging is appreciated in itself and not seen as pitiful or dreadful. Because of this preponderance negative portrayals of old age, our perception of the elderly is influenced in equal measure. We look at them with pitying glances and assume that they are all necessarily envious of the young. Never do we assume that they are actually content with old age, that they want to age or that they have gracefully accepted aging as a natural process and are thankful for having lived for as long as they have. These are the cartographies of aging that have not permeated the big screen, partially because we assume that life ends where old age starts. Nothing could be more untrue. Aging is natural and it is a blessing and it is deserving of being appreciated in its own right.

## Ageism's Toll on Health & Well-being by Raghad Hindawi

Aging is a natural part of life and being human; from the day we're born we start our journey into growing old. As the days and years go by, we learn and experience new things, which shape our memories perceptions the and of Unfortunately, aging can also bring prejudice and discrimination, known as ageism. Ageism is defined prejudice. "stereotypes, and discrimination towards others or oneself based on age" (WHO, 2021).

Many of us fear reaching the big 30, because "life goes downhill from there" and "we should have our lives figured out by then". Society has many expectations for us as we grow older, from marriage to job security, financial stability, and land ownership. While newer generations are more conscious and less influenced by this outdated myth, this notion is planted in many of our minds from a young age, which often takes a mental toll on us.

Picture this: You walk into a gift store to buy a birthday card for your mom. As you browse the cards for different age groups, you start noticing a repeated pattern, the older the age shown on the card gets, the more the age-related humor and jokes. This doesn't bother you initially, since it's just an innocent, harmless joke. But the deeper you dive into this sea of birthday cards, the implications of this pattern become clearer. It dawns on you that this is an indirect reflection of a more significant social issue – ageism.

As you continue your search, you wonder if there's a better way to celebrate This birthdays. prompts another thought-provoking question: Are we unintentionally perpetuating ageist stereotypes through these harmless The may iokes? humor be well-intentioned, but we should consider how it may contribute to age-related biases and how it reinforces the notion that aging is something to be ridiculed or discriminated against for and we should feel insecure about.

According the World Health to Organization, being subjected to ageism has been linked to earlier death (on average 7 years earlier), health problems (emotional & physical), and low quality of life leading to unhealthy eating habits & disorders, excessive drinking, smoking. It's reported that 82% of older adults go through at least one form of ageism daily.

Studies found that experiences of age discrimination usually resulted in a quicker decline in physical health, chronic illnesses (physical and psychological), and signs of anxiety and depression. This was particularly the case for people who on top of receiving discrimination, internalized these narratives themselves.

Julie Ober Allen, assistant professor in health promotion, claims that constant exposure to ageism wires the brain to expect such treatment, therefore inducing stress levels and anxiety as they mentally prepare to hear an ageist comment that will likely ruin their day. In Allen's words, "Anticipating what others might be thinking about them and why they're treated a certain way, acts like a

fight-or-flight response. Cortisol goes up, which damages biological systems and leads to accelerated aging, more chronic health conditions (including cardiovascular problems & weakened physical strength) and premature mortality."

Reports on ageism and its effects noted that people who went through external or internalized ageism were seemingly more prone to have or develop mental health issues like depression, anxiety, and in more severe cases: Alzheimer's among other cognitive illnesses. Dr. Bent Forester, assistant professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School suggests that though a drop in physical, practical, and mental competency is commonly an expected part of aging, there was not enough evidence to support this view.

An interesting exercise to test implicit bias was used by Dr. Becca Levy, where she asked her students to write down the first 5 words that came to mind when they heard "old person". Most times, the answers are words like "wise", "creative", "caring", and "grandmother". But there were also recurring negative words such "senility", "sick" and "decline". as illustrating these unconscious ageist biases most of us are conditioned to develop.

At the end of the day, age doesn't really determine a person's aptitude or standard of life, because every individual is different in their journey, lifestyle, and evolution among other factors. Thus, it's crucial to remember that not every person in the 50-100 age group has impaired vision or hearing, nor are they

all retired and grumpy, nor are they tech illiterate. Having an ageist mentality such as this is ridiculous as it completely ignores a person's value, experience, and the impact it has on people's mental health. Everyone has something to offer, and age should never be a barrier to opportunity.

How much implicit bias do you have? If you were to describe an old person in 5 words, what would be the first words that pop into your head?

This is the first step for us to collectively educate ourselves and become more aware of our own biases and unintentional ways we open the door for ageism.

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# Embedded Nostalgia: Tracing Ageism's Imprint Through Childhood by Raghad Hindawi

Our childhoods were filled with stories like Hansel and Gretel, The Chronicles of Narnia, Rapunzel, Cinderella, and Snow White, among many others. As we grow older, a common characteristic we notice in all these childhood favorites is our perception of the antagonist. They're often pictured in our minds as old, evil, and in most cases a woman. This could also explain why many people are apprehensive and fearful of having a stepmom for example. We always see stepmoms in a negative light, described and imagined as evil and filled with malice.

Fairy tales & adventure stories have always played a huge part in shaping and instilling certain ideas in our minds, the good, the bad, and the in-between. In many of these tales, including the ones mentioned above, old characters are illustrated in typical ageist stereotypes where they're grumpy, slow, forgetful, and fragile. This creates a barrier to understanding the potential of our elders and effectively communicating with them. Age becomes related to limitations and pity rather than recognizing wisdom, creativity, and respect.

When examining the function of language in these narratives, one may observe ageist terminology, with phrases like "old hag," "grumpy old man," "washed up," "the old witch," and "as ancient as the hills," unconsciously seeping into children's minds and enforcing ageist

stereotypes. This reinforces negative views of aging and can harm young people's views of the elderly. Such language can lead to a lack of respect and appreciation for older people. It's like pouring toxins into the water supply: although the damage is not immediately visible, with time the consequences become increasingly severe and widespread.

As caregivers, educators, and storytellers, it's very important we focus on creating and selecting narratives that celebrate intergenerational connections and break down such negative stereotypes. Seeking narratives that showcase older characters in multidimensional roles, promotes respect and empathy for people of all ages and brings a new perspective into the mix.

Children's literature holds enormous power in influencing how our future generations form their opinions of the world and shape their society. By being mindful of the narratives we expose these minds to, we can combat the last ism (ageism) and drive inclusivity, tolerance, and understanding in this area as well. We can also use children's literature to challenge existing societal norms and teach children to think critically. Books can be powerful tools to help children and inspire them to become agents of change.

As we continue to write, share, and select stories, let's prioritize storylines that celebrate the richness of diverse experiences throughout all stages of life, nurturing а more inclusive empathetic We have society. responsibility to ensure marginalized

voices and experiences are heard. We must commit to creating space for all stories and recognizing storytelling's power to shape our world.

#### **Burdens by Chase Martin**

A light knock on the door woke Charles. One of the nurses, Diane, peeked her head in and came all the way in upon seeing he was awake and decent.

"Good morning, Mr. Buhr," Diane chirped. She moved to the windows and opened the blinds, letting the sun's warm rays in. "How are you feeling today?"

"I'd feel a lot better if I'd slept well last night," Charles said. He sat up in bed and stretched his sore back muscles.

Diane nodded in sympathy before handing him two cups. "What are your plans for the day?"

Charles swallowed all the multi-colored pills from one cup with water from the other.

"I think I'm going to learn how to ride a skateboard today," Charles said. He laughed slightly at Diane's shocked face before he continued. "Kidding, of course. It's time somebody finished that damn puzzle in the lounge, and it looks like I'm the right man for the job."

"You almost had me there," she said, trying to hide her relief. "Would you like help with anything else this morning?"

Charles shook his head.

"In that case, Mr. Buhr, I'll leave so you can get changed."

The door clicked shut behind her.

Although Charles' room was small, it didn't bother him much. All he needed was a comfortable bed and a place to keep his clothes. He hadn't brought any furniture with him except for the painting his wife had created, which hung on the wall opposite his bed.

Charles got out of bed and approached the window, still amazed by the endless skyline of buildings towering in front of him.

Almeda Senior Living was a ten-story apartment complex for old people who couldn't live on their own anymore. Residents' autonomy ranged from total independence to fully assisted living, with every need taken care of by a team of nurses. Once someone entered Almeda, they could stay there until they kicked the bucket.

Charles had transferred from independent living to preferred living a few months ago. He was still mostly independent, but now the nurses handled his medication. They also did his laundry and checked his blood pressure.

He wondered what Anne, his wife, would think of Almeda. Unlike Charles, she'd loved the idea of a retirement home.

"What's not to love?" she'd always said. "They take care of all the hard stuff, so you can just relax. It's like royalty."

She passed away four and a half years ago, killed by lung cancer, and Charles was admitted to Almeda a year later.

He hadn't minded at first. At least here, he was surrounded by people. His old house had been filled with dust and memories. But, as time passed, he felt discontent growing in his chest.

Growing up in the country, Charles had never imagined there could be a place so filled with people and events, but now he only got to witness it from his window. Sure, he could take a shuttle to the mall down the street, but that made him feel even more like an outsider.

There were so many new inventions and innovations that Charles gave up trying to follow current trends and events. Instead, Charles chose to focus on all the riveting drama that happened inside Almeda, like that puzzle in the lounge.

Charles got changed, slipped on his loafers, grabbed his cane, and went to the elevator.

A group of residents sat around the television in the back right corner of the common area on the first floor, just like they did every morning. Most were either half asleep, fully asleep, or somewhere in between, but some were paying attention.

Charles knew most of them by name. That was probably the thing he liked most about Almeda; it was a community.

"Anti-aging makeup?" Angela mocked one of the ads, "What's wrong with aging?"

"The aging part," Charles said as he sat on one of the couches. It was the same spot he sat in every morning.

One of the other residents laughed, but Angela didn't seem to appreciate the joke.

"It's natural," she muttered, before turning her attention back to the television. The ads were over, and one of the old westerns was playing. *Texas Rangers Ride Again*.

It wasn't one of Charles' favorites, but he knew Angela liked it and didn't suggest changing the channel.

An older man pulled his wheelchair next to Charles. It took a minute for the man's name to come to Charles. Richard had thin, white hair that did little to cover the man's bald head. He wasn't very social. Charles had mainly seen him sleeping off in a corner or listening to the sound of traffic outside in the little park attached to Almeda.

"What's the point?" Richard mumbled, staring at the screen.

Charles started to explain the movie's plot, but Richard cut him off.

"I meant, what was the point of living here? What are we but a burden to a society trying to forget we exist?"

"We haven't been forgotten about," Charles said.

"Oh really? When was the last time someone other than a relative came to visit this place?"

Charles didn't answer.

"You're still new here, but you'll get it eventually. They bundle all of us old people in one spot so they don't have to deal with us anymore. And by 'they,' I don't just mean the general public. I mean our families, too."

"I'd rather be at Almeda than by myself," Charles said. "Why? Don't you feel like you're being stripped of your humanity one layer at a time?" Richard said. "Society forces you into a place like Almeda, claiming it's for your safety, but really, they're just kicking you to the curb. This building is just a glorified bus stop for the Grim Reaper. Doesn't that creep you out?"

There was a moment of silence.

"The worst part," he continued, quieter this time, "Is that you convince yourself it's for the best. You don't want to be a burden to your children. After all, they have their own life to live. They're far too busy to look after you. He swears that he'll visit as often as he can, and he does, for a little while, but now you're out of his sight, so you're out of his mind. he visits less and less, until one day he just stops. I haven't heard from my son since last Christmas, and I can't remember how long it's been since anyone else came to visit me. If it weren't for the photos on my nightstand, I don't know if I would recognize my great-grandchild if I ever saw her."

"I haven't seen my kids in months," Angela said. "They've become strangers to me."

Richard nodded, his sunken eyes sad.

Charles thought about his last conversation with his daughter, Juliet. She'd called to let him know that they wouldn't be coming visit to Thanksgiving because her husband had wanted to see his parents this year. That had been fine with Charles. In fact, he'd been happy about the decision. Her husband's parents lived all the way in Georgia and they didn't get to see their grandchildren that often.

Charles spent the holiday by the phone, waiting for a call that didn't come until the next day. They'd gone to the Aquarium and forgotten about him. He'd never considered that it could be the start of a trend.

No one was paying attention to the movie anymore.

"Mr. Smith, there you are!" said Diane from across the room.

Her sudden cheeriness made Charles jump. She made her way over with a big smile on her face.

"Look at you, up so early in the morning. I have your medication."

Richard looked at the two cups with contempt, but he put the pills in his mouth and drank the water. Then, he opened his mouth so Diane could be sure they were swallowed.

"Y'all have fun, now," she said before returning to find other patients to give medicine to.

Richard spit the medication hiding under his tongue back into a napkin and put it in his pocket.

"I wonder how many nurses here would still be here if they weren't paid," he said. "They don't even call us by our first names. I guess it's smart that they don't get too attached to us."

Ten minutes later, Richard was asleep in his wheelchair.

Charles didn't finish the puzzle in the common lounge that day, or the day after.

#

The way time worked here scared Charles. He had a hard time understanding that he'd been here for four years now. Most days were so similar that they blurred together and then suddenly it was Christmas.

Charles was in a bad mood, which made him even more upset. His family was visiting, and he wanted to be excited to see them, but Richard's speech a week ago had gotten in his head.

It hurt that his family needed a reason to come and visit these days. Oh, we can't make Thanksgiving, so we'll just have to wait until the next holiday.

All the usual residents once again gathered around the television in the back right corner of the lobby, waiting for their families to arrive. One by one, the people around Charles left to spend time with their relatives.

Angela was the first to leave. She smiled from ear to ear as her family laughed at her horrendously vibrant red Christmas sweater, neon-green pants, and light-up antler headband.

Once again, in a time that took forever yet came too fast, Charles recognized his daughter's fiery red hair through the ever-growing crowd.

"Well, gentlemen," he said to those still waiting by the television. "It's been a pleasure."

Everyone waved him off, except for Richard. His sad eyes remained glued to the screen.

Juliet reached Charles first and pulled him into a hug.

"It's great to see you," she said.

Charles hugged his two grandchildren, Lucas and Elena. Three five-second hugs to make up for the four months of phone calls. A small victory, but one he would gladly take.

Juliet's husband couldn't make it today, so the four of them found a table in the cafeteria. Juliet sat to his left, Lucas in front of him, and Elena sat to his right.

"It smells like old people here," Elena whispered to Lucas.

Charles pretended he hadn't heard that.

"When did this happen?" he asked lightheartedly, pointing to Elena's white-tipped hair. "Are frosted tips finally coming back into style?"

"I got it dyed a few months ago," she said.
"I'm just waiting for it to grow out before I
dye my hair again."

They were sitting so close, yet it was like... it was like she was a stranger.

"We got you a little something," Juliet said, breaking the awkward silence. She handed him a small, wrapped rectangle.

He struggled to get his thick fingers underneath the colored paper, but he managed. "It's a smartwatch," Juliet said, as if Charles couldn't make that out from the picture on the front of the box.

He glanced at the watch on his wrist. It was given to him by his father.

"One of the great features," she continued, "is that it can detect when you fall."

When you fall, Charles repeated in his head. Not if.

"Now, remember that you have to charge the watch every night and put it on every morning," said Lucas, taking control of the conversation. "Otherwise, the watch won't be able to help you."

Charles loved his grandson but had to fight the urge not to snap at him. He knew how technology worked. He wasn't senile – not yet, anyway.

That being said, he had trouble understanding the watch. There were so many things on the screen, and his fingers weren't as agile as they used to be. Lucas had to take the watch from him several times during the setup process.

In the end, Charles slapped his new toy next to his father's watch. It felt a little awkward, but he wasn't opposed to it.

After eating one of the nicer cafeteria meals – which Charles recognized was more for the guests than the residents – they went for a stroll through the small park attached to the side of Almeda.

Lucas and Elena immediately ran to the small pond with a waterfall to see the fish. Juliet walked alongside side Charles as they made their way over.

"I'm sorry again for not being able to make it for Thanksgiving," she said.

"It's quite alright. I know I can't get them for every holiday."

"I'd meant to come and visit afterward, but things just got so hectic at work and it's Elena's first year of high school and -"

"I don't need any excuses, dear," Charles said. He didn't want to be reminded where he ranked on his daughter's list of priorities.

Juliet stopped and looked Charles in the eye.

"What I'm trying to say is that I don't want you to feel like I'm abandoning you. You're my father, and I need to get better about making time to visit. I will do my best to visit more often and bring the kids along whenever I can."

Tears started to form in Charles' eyes, and he pulled his daughter into a hug.

"I'm sorry for not coming more often," she said.

"Don't be. I'm just glad you still want me to be a part of your life."

"You'll always be part of my life."

Charles couldn't wait to tell Richard about Juliet's refusal to forget about her old man. Maybe his family had come and made the same promise.

Richard wasn't at the television downstairs, so Charles went to the front desk and asked Diane for his room number. "It's on the fifth floor," she said. "I was just about to give him his medicine, so I'll come with you."

They chatted about how lively the place felt on the elevator ride up.

"It feels more like a town hall than a retirement home," Charles remarked.

Richard's door was locked, so Diane knocked.

"Mr. Smith?" She called. "Are you in there? It's time for your medication."

She knocked once more before taking out her keys and unlocking the door.

Richard was in his bed asleep, although something was wrong. His pillows were on the floor, and his arm was dangling off the bed. His mouth was slightly ajar, and his eyes were only half-closed.

"Richard!" Diane cried, "Oh my god."

She turned around, shoved Charles out the door, and locked it.

It was too late. Charles already knew what had happened.

### How Words Impact Our Thoughts by Chase Martin

"I think, therefore I am"

René Descartes

To be human is to have thoughts, and language is the most common way that humans communicate their thoughts to each other. The words we use, then, must influence our thoughts.

#### **How We Learn**

In psychology, reinforcement refers to anything that increases the likelihood that a response will occur (Cherry, 2023). Reinforcement plays a vital role in conditioning, which, in simple terms, is a method of learning. The two forms of conditioning are classical conditioning, which focuses on involuntary behaviors, and operant conditioning, which focuses on voluntary behaviors.

At its core, classical conditioning is the process in which a subject learns to unconsciously associate two unrelated events or behaviors. One of the most well-known examples of classical conditioning is Pavlov's dogs. While studying the digestive processes in dogs, the Russian physiologist noticed that they salivated whenever a coworker entered the room. He realized that the dogs associated white lab coats with food.

Pavlov conducted an experiment where he played a metronome before feeding the dogs. Eventually, the dogs' mouths salivated at the sound, even when no food was present. Repeated events condition the brain to react a certain way. This pattern of learning can be used to explain most forms of prejudice, but this article will focus on biases against older people.

#### **How Pavlov Applies to Ageism**

While driving, Person A once found themselves behind a car that was going much slower than the speed limit. Upon passing the car, the driver noticed that it was being driven by an older person. As this same scenario repeated itself over time, the driver began to associate slow driving with older individuals. Through repeated experiences, this individual became conditioned to believe that older people tend to drive slower than others.

Person A communicated their thoughts to Person B. Later, when Person B encountered a slow driver on the road, they looked to see who the driver was. If it was an older person, Person B's brain convinced itself it noticed a pattern. Person В internalized Person thoughts. Now, two people believed that older people drive slower and they told other people their ideas. Language propagated this misconception like a contagion, leading to widespread acceptance of the unfounded stereotype.

I cannot stress enough how important language is for keeping a stereotype alive. I have witnessed children giggle as they say, "Move over, grandma," even though they have never driven a vehicle. Once an idea is widespread enough, people do not need to witness it to believe it; they just need to hear it.

When a community adopts a stereotype, it tends to have a negative impact on the

people whom it refers to. For example, the phrase "you can't teach an old dog new tricks" suggests that individuals have a harder time learning things than their younger counterparts. This phrase commonly reinforces the misconception that all older people are technology illiterate, but it applies to learning any new skill. Once an older person hears this phrase repeatedly, they may internalize it and become less motivated to try new things.

There is a widespread belief that children learn languages faster than adults, and while this seems to be true with first languages, adults are much better at learning second languages (Hays, 2021; Hiskey, 2019). This article will not explain the reason for this misconception but will explore its impact on society. Many older people have told me they wanted to learn something new before sighing and saying, "But I am too old for that." They gave up before they even started because they believed it was hopeless. They have been conditioned into believing that they are not as mentally adept as when they were younger, and that is not true. In this way, language has conditioned an older person to believe a false stereotype.

Here are some more examples of commonly used phrases that can be considered ageist: "I'm having a senior moment," "You're a living dinosaur/fossil," "My grandmother is faster than you - and she's dead," "You look good for your age," and "It smells like old people in here."

Another example of how language can have a negative impact on older people is how some makeup is advertised as "antiaging." This word insinuates that there is something wrong with becoming older, even though it is something that every single person (who is alive) is doing. This form of advertising capitalizes on someone's doubts for profit. Most hair salons advertise products that will reduce or recolor gray hairs. Once again, the language reinforces a negative stereotype that there is something wrong with aging.

One might think that telling an older person they are "surprisingly energetic for their age" is a compliment, but it is not. That phrase implies that this person is an outlier. They are the exception that proves the rule. While said with good intentions, phrases like this backhanded compliments that serve as another source of psychological reinforcement.

Another example of benevolent prejudice would be calling a group of older women "young ladies." Once again, the person using the phrase probably has good intentions, but the phrase reinforces the idea that there is something wrong with being older.

#### Why should you care?

Discrimination, regardless of type, significantly impacts people's mental and physical health. As stated above, internalized ageism may prevent older people from learning new skills. Saying "I'm too old or fragile for exercise" will lead to a less active lifestyle and increase muscle deterioration.

#### What is the Solution?

Ageism is a serious issue that needs to be addressed. One way to combat it is by using language that promotes inclusivity. It is crucial to proactively correct those who use ageist language because this will help reinforce positive and inclusive thoughts in people's minds. The American Psychological Association released a set of Inclusive Language Guidelines in December 2021, which can serve as a helpful resource for promoting inclusive language.

To address harmful biases and stereotypes, we can reflect on our thought processes and identify any problematic assumptions we may have internalized.

Returning to the quote by Descartes, he sought to discover "perfect truth," which refers to things that cannot be doubted. To achieve this, Descartes advised readers to doubt everything that can be doubted, including our assumptions.

For instance, if we see a slow-moving vehicle on the highway and immediately assume that the driver is elderly, it's important to question why we jumped to that conclusion. By questioning our assumptions, we become more aware of how common sayings and beliefs have influenced us.

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# Ageist Rhetoric in Politics and the Media: Breaking Down Stereotypes and Promoting Inclusion by Asfandiyar

Ageist discourse is frequently used by politicians and media outlets, perpetuating prejudices and diminishing the contributions and skills of older people.

In worrying ways, ageist words and attitudes public have penetrated discourse. From insulting physical features to openly challenging mental faculties, older people encounter denigration on TV, in newspapers, and on social media platforms. Pundits defend this fair criticism of public personalities, while academics warn that it normalizes age prejudice.

Ageism is still a chronic issue in today's society, affecting many facets of our lives, including politics and the media. Ageist discourse, which is frequently used by politicians and other outlets, perpetuates prejudices and diminishes contributions and skills of older people. This type of discrimination not only stifles progress in society, but it also ignores the wealth of knowledge and experience that older people provide. According to studies, prejudices towards the elderly have been increasing globally in recent decades, with growing lifespans causing intergenerational harsher economic tensions. According to a 2018 Pew poll conducted in 26 nations. 53% respondents believe the elderly are given more respect than they deserve, while 63% believe youth are critical to growth. This has exacerbated political rhetoric that attacks opponents largely on the basis of their advanced age without substance.

The media has a significant impact on public opinion and debate. Ageist stereotypes are unfortunately common in news reporting, entertainment, and advertising. Older people are frequently portrayed as technologically unskilled, physically feeble, or psychologically prejudices unable. These not mislead elderly people but also cause them to be marginalised and excluded from numerous aspects of society. According to an Age UK survey, 78% of older respondents said that the media's portrayal of older people was bad, which contributed to ageism in society.

According to a 2022 analysis by the International Longevity Centre, insulting conversations on television increased by 33% during the past election cycle in Pakistan. Hosts frequently encourage guests to make snide remarks about their appearances and alleged illnesses. "Such provocations serve no purpose. "While sensationalism sells, it slowly erodes respect between generations on whom we all rely," says Marvi Memon, founder of the early childhood education nonprofit SAFWCO.

Another arena where ageist rhetoric commonly appears is political discourse. Politicians frequently use age-related insults or dismissive rhetoric to denigrate their opponents, claiming that their age disqualifies them from leadership or decision-making. Such comments not only devalue a person's skills and expertise but also encourage damaging

ageist ideas. According to an AARP survey, 64% of respondents say ageism exists in political campaigns, and 72% believe ageist comments are common. Some suggest that ageism comes from elders' unwillingness relinguish to despite declining political realms abilities. However, Dr. Sameen Aftab contends that most people simply want to be included rather than excluded based on superficial characteristics. "At different stages of life, each generation makes a unique contribution." Instead of accusations, we must address structural barriers denying skills. valuina and intergenerational experience, bonding critical for progress," she says.

It is critical to question preconceptions and encourage diversity in order to overcome ageist rhetoric in politics and the media. First and foremost, media outlets must accept responsibility for promoting truthful and portrayals of older people. Journalists and content providers should showcase older people's diversity, accomplishments, and contributions, breaking down negative stereotypes. Media sources can influence public perceptions and combat ageist myths by covering stories of older people who are actively involved in their communities, pursuing important occupations, making major contributions. In addition, media organisations should actively incorporate older people into decision-making processes. Media may quarantee older outlets that people's viewpoints and experiences are accurately portrayed by incorporating them into editorial boards, programming debates, and content creation. This not only improves reporting quality but also

promotes a more diverse media landscape.

Political leaders must also refrain from using ageist language and foster intergenerational collaboration. Politicians should focus on real policy and credentials rather than age-related insults or dismissive rhetoric. Leaders may set a positive example for their constituents and counter ageist stereotypes by engaging in courteous and inclusive political discourse.

"Ageist rhetoric in politics and the media not only perpetuates stereotypes but undermines the principles also equality and respect," says Dr. Sarah Harper, a noted gerontologist and head of the Oxford Institute of Population Ageing. We must recognise that a person's worth or ability is determined by their age. It is time to confront ageism and build a culture that values and empowers people of all ages."

Ageist speech has a negative influence on older people and society as a whole, according to surveys and studies. They emphasise the critical importance of taking collective action to oppose ageism and build a more inclusive atmosphere. We can combat ageist myths and develop a culture that values and respects individuals of all ages by supporting accurate and positive depictions of older people in the media, fostering polite political debate, and raising public awareness.

Ageist discourse in politics and the media perpetuates damaging preconceptions and degrades older people's contributions and talents. Societies risk losing precious wisdom banks unless ageism is reduced through sensitization and regulations that allow for varied roles. Speaking decently, like speaking respectfully about other prejudices, is inexpensive. And, as lifespans increase, today's youngsters will certainly become the verv generation experiencing marginalization if change is gradual. Communities can only progress in an inclusive manner if they promote dignity and potential at all ages. We can battle ageism and establish a culture that appreciates and empowers people of all ages by altering media depictions, promoting polite political dialogue, and raising public awareness. It is an opportunity to reject ageist stereotypes and celebrate the diversity and insight that older people provide to our society.

# Ageism undermines human rights and dignity by Asfandiyar

With its destructive preconceptions and discriminatory terminology, ageist discourse not only reinforces age-based prejudices but also breaches fundamental rights human and ieopardises human integrity. Ageist rhetoric degrades the dignity and worth of people of all ages, creating social disparities and impeding society's progress. It is critical to recognise the far-reaching repercussions of language and to speak out against it, supporting a society that supports human rights principles and recognises fundamental dignity of every individual, regardless of age.

Ageist discourse contradicts multiple human rights values, including equality, nondiscrimination, and dignity. According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, every individual is entitled to equal rights and freedoms, regardless of age. Ageist rhetoric and prejudices contradict this ideal by establishing an age-based value hierarchy and denying older people their intrinsic dignity.

Numerous studies polls and have revealed the negative consequences of speech on individuals and societies. According to a World Health Organisation (WHO) report, attitudes and language can contribute to marginalisation, decreased social well-being, and poor health outcomes in older persons. According to the survey, ageism not only harms older people but also contributes to intergenerational

tensions and destroys social cohesiveness. According to international treaties, ageist stereotyping denies older people their basic rights to justice and respect. Maintaining intergenerational justice and dignity is critical for social cohesiveness as global demographics alter with increased lifespans. However, prejudiced attitudes continue to violate established safeguards through insulting speech in a variety of places.

The United Nations Principles for Older Persons, adopted in 1991, assert the right to live free of age-based discrimination. This includes freedom from prejudices that impede participation and the ability to make autonomous choices. However, a survey conducted by HelpAge across 50 nations in 2022 discovered that about 75% of elders face biased mistreatment in healthcare. pensions. and civic participation, costing global economies more than \$131 billion in lost skills each year. According to Mogahed, well-intended jokes based on physical characteristics or mental capacity have severe psychosocial costs such as anxiety, isolation, and poor well-being. Loneliness has been related to an increased risk of Alzheimer's, depression, and heart problems, according to studies. With families gone all over the world, community rapport becomina is increasingly important for the quality of life of the elderly.

"Prejudices against the elderly are no less harmful than forms other discrimination, and they violate the spirit of human rights in many ways. "Dignity is a fundamental need at all stages of life," said former UN Special Rapporteur Rasheda Khan. Even ostensibly in

enlightened areas, casual ageism continues.

Furthermore, ageist language prejudices promote culture of а disrespect for older people's rights and dignity. According to a global poll done by the International Federation Ageing (IFA), 60% of respondents stated that ageism was the most tolerated kind of social discrimination. Acceptance of language contributes to the marginalisation and exclusion of older people, preventing them from fully participating in society and depriving them of their rights as equal citizens. However, according to an AGA poll, over 65% of senior adults who were active in civic activities and support organisations retirement said patronising attitudes discouraged them over time. This lack of purpose has an effect on mental health. According to Francesca Putnam, "Elders volunteering also boosts local economies and social capital, which ages positively for all."

Ageist speech breaches not only human rights but also undermines human integrity. Everyone, regardless of age, needs to be treated with dignity and respect. Ageist language caricatures people and rejects their worth based on false preconceptions. It erodes people's innate worth and integrity, promoting a culture of disdain and dehumanization.

Collective action is essential to resist ageist propaganda and defend human rights and integrity. Ageist attitudes can be challenged, and intergenerational understanding can be promoted through education and awareness efforts. These initiatives should focus on schools, workplaces, and media sources,

significance emphasizing the of language that respects and values people of all ages. "Ageist rhetoric is a barrier to creating а society that embraces longevity and values the contributions of all generations," says Dr. Alex Kalache, President of the International Longevity Centre-Brazil. lt is past time acknowledge that ageism breaches human rights values and jeopardises our collective integrity."

Legislation and policy actions are also important in combating ageism and advancing human rights. Governments and organisations should pass enforce anti-age discrimination legislation, as well as develop cultures that encourage inclusivity and respect for people of all ages. Efforts should be taken to ensure that older people have equitable access to jobs, healthcare, social services, and civic engagement.

Ageist discourse not only fosters negative stereotypes and prejudice, but it also basic human rights breaches jeopardizes human integrity. It is critical to combat ageism at all levels of society and to promote a culture that values and respects people of all ages. We can establish a society that embraces variety, fosters inclusion, and respects the intrinsic worth of every individual, regardless of age, by recognising the far-reaching implications of increasing rhetoric. awareness. enacting policies that safeguard human rights. Let us join forces to end the ageist discourse and create a more egalitarian and compassionate world. Equity means compassionately recognising hopes, problems, and possibilities across all ages. Respecting this fundamental fellowship today is critical to humanity's common future.

# Challenging Age Stereotypes: A Call for Action in the Fight for Social Justice by Lemanja Mears

Ageism: a quietly accepted form of prejudice that creeps into the corners of our society, causing immeasurable harm to individuals. Among its insidious effects, the stereotype that older people are inherently incompetent stands out. This damaging assumption not only obstructs their career paths but also chips away at their self-worth and dignity. As advocates for social justice, it's our responsibility to tackle this issue head-on, sparking a wave of change that empowers the marginalized.

### The Workplace Battleground: Impact of Age Stereotypes on Seniors

Nowhere are the wounds of ageism more than within the workforce. Astonishingly, research by the AARP shows that a staggering 64% of seasoned employees have encountered age discrimination in their workplaces. This mistreatment takes on various forms sidelining experienced workers from when promotions arise, to dishing out disrespect without a second thought.

The fallout from ageism leaves a trail of negative consequences for these individuals. Diminished job satisfaction, a drop in productivity, and a surge in stress levels are just a few of the outcomes. Such adversities also slam the door shut on new job prospects, perpetuating the cycle of discrimination.

#### Rallying for Change: A Multifaceted Approach Against Age Stereotypes

A battle this entrenched calls for a multi-pronged strategy. First and foremost, creating awareness about the pervasiveness and harm of age discrimination is imperative. It's time to acknowledge that ageism stands as a formidable roadblock to equality and social justice, eroding the well-being and self-respect of countless individuals.

Equally crucial is the act of confronting age stereotypes as we stumble upon them. Instead of turning a blind eye to derogatory comments, we must stand up and challenge them. This starts with eradicating ageist remarks from our own conversations, fostering an environment of respect and dignity.

A significant aspect of change lies in nurturing age-inclusive an work environment. Justice thrives when workplaces value individuals of all ages. This can be achieved by championing unbiased hiring and promotion procedures, offering continuous learning avenues to everyone, and nurturing a culture that embraces diversity in its truest sense.

### Seeding Transformation: Forging a Society of Equity

The cycle of age stereotypes perpetuated an injustice that affects lives on a profound level. It's up to us to alter this trajectory by igniting awareness, dismantling stereotypes, and constructing workplaces that embody age inclusivity. These efforts will coalesce to form a society that champions fairness and equality.

In addition to these steps, consider implementing the following measures to quell ageism:

- Educating Against Prejudice: Providing education and training to employees, including management, on the perils of age discrimination sensitizes them and equips them to challenge such behavior.
- 2. Institutionalizing Equality: Enforcing policies that explicitly condemn age discrimination sends a clear message that such attitudes are unwelcome and unacceptable.
- 3. Building Bridges Across Generations: Encouraging senior workers to share their wisdom and experiences with younger counterparts fosters mutual respect chips and away at stereotypes.
- 4. Celebrating Wisdom: Recognizing the accomplishments and contributions of seasoned workers serves as a powerful counter to narratives of incompetence.

Collectively, these actions pave the way for a society that treasures every individual, regardless of age, and cultivates an atmosphere where justice reigns supreme.

In the fight for social justice, dismantling ageism stands as a significant stride towards constructing an all-encompassing world. By acknowledging the detrimental impacts of age stereotypes, advocating for change, and proactively implementing measures, we lay the foundation for a

society that thrives on diversity, equality, and human dignity.

#### **SOCIAL**

Social justice refers to the fair and equitable distribution of resources, opportunities, and privileges within society. It is concerned with promoting equal access to basic human rights, such as education, healthcare, and housing, regardless of a person's race, gender, religion, or socioeconomic status.

#### **JUSTICE**

Social justice also seeks to challenge and address systemic inequalities and discrimination that contribute to the marginalization of certain groups within society. It is a fundamental principle of a just and democratic society, and is often pursued through advocacy efforts.

## THE CATALYST

fight for social justice