

Chapter 7:  
Intimacy and Sexuality

Research has shown that friendships or social bonds are important to a person's life satisfaction.

What factors can reduce the number of friendships an older person has? Or, perhaps the opportunity for friendships?

- Disability and illness limit visiting
- Lack of transportation, inability to drive
- Death of friends

What factors or conditions can assist older persons in the development of friendships?

- ▶ Living in continuing care communities or senior housing, senior apartments
- ▶ Clubs, volunteer organizations
- ▶ Sharing hobbies with others
- ▶ Having one's own transportation
- ▶ Moving near family

Name five different marital situations an older person might be in.

- ▶ Married
- ▶ Divorced
- ▶ Never married
- ▶ Widow/widower
- ▶ Remarried

Are there any differences between men and women regarding issues surrounding marital status and, if yes, what would some be?

- Older men are more likely to be married
- Women are more likely to divorce if they are financially independent
- Women are more likely to be widowed (3 times as likely)
- Men are more likely to remarry women younger than themselves

How does marriage affect an older person's mental and physical health? Are there differences between men and women?

- Older married couples:
  - have higher levels of well-being,
  - are happier,
  - financially more stable and
  - in better health than non-married older persons
- Men appear to gain greater health benefits (why might this be?)

### How do social relationships affect a person's well-being?

#### Positively:

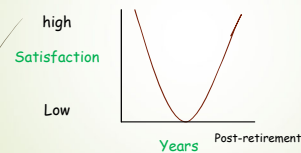
- Positive ties contribute to high socioemotional quality
- Caregiving for one another
- Emotional support during major changes such as retirement or a disability

#### Negatively:

- A poor/negative relationship can cause emotional stress
- Physical and mental strain of caring for someone needing help with ADL's and IADL's

### Does marital satisfaction tend to increase, decrease or stay the same over time?

Satisfaction seems to follow an inverted bell shaped curve, dropping after the initial years, leveling off, and then increasing post-retirement.



Why might this be?

Early years, pre-children: have time to grow closer

Mid-life: time devoted to careers and parenting seems to take away from marital attention

Retirement: time again for shared activities, greater involvement

Near end of life: may see a drop as health problems develop

### What would you guess are the "stages" of widowhood?

1. Official recognition of the event (e.g., funeral)
2. Temporary disengagement or withdrawal (grief)
3. Limbo (constructing new self-identify)
4. Reengagement (importance of family, significant others support helps reduce depression)

What are some of the factors that affect a woman's adjustment to widowhood?

- ▶ Being near family and friends:
- ▶ Interdependence: providing help as well as receiving help
- ▶ Closeness of the relationship when they were married

- ▶ Widowhood after a traditional marriage (male is breadwinner) is harder to recover from
- ▶ Low socioeconomic status promotes isolation and loneliness
- ▶ Social and community participation helps adjustment including activities for older persons (e.g., senior center activities)

Do these same factors apply to widowers?

- ▶ Being near family and friends:
- ▶ Interdependence: providing help as well as receiving help
- ▶ Closeness of the relationship when they were married
- ▶ Traditional marriage
- ▶ Income level
- ▶ Participation in social activities

Are divorced older persons treated differently than widowed older persons? Do they feel differently?

- ▶ Divorced more likely to feel shame
- ▶ Divorced women have been found to be envious of widowed women
- ▶ Widows more likely to be accepted and supported by family and friends
- ▶ Widows more economically stable
- ▶ May be more difficult to adjust mentally for the divorced person if the divorce was "nasty"

Is remarriage more common today?

Do families support the older persons getting remarried?

- ▶ Yes, adult children want to see their parent happy and supported
- ▶ Yes, helps reduce burden of children to care for older person
- ▶ No, adult children feel it is disrespectful of the dead parent
- ▶ No, adult children are concerned about inheritance

Hillier and Barrow (your book's authors) provide tips for internet dating.

Why would an older person turn to the internet to find a date?

- Difficulty finding single persons interested in dating
- Identifying persons with similar interests and values
- Identifying persons of a similar age

Do you believe internet dating can work for older people?

If you were going to provide tips to an older person planning to try internet dating, what would they be?

Hillier and Barrow (your book's authors) suggest:

1. Share personal interests
2. Don't take rejection personally
3. Don't share too much too soon
4. Be prepared for deception or dishonesty by some
5. It doesn't happen over night

Living Without the One You Cannot Live Without - Research on Aging (start at 3 mins to 13) (13 min - 50min: shock, numbness (mourning), disbelief, reality (guilt, what if..., pain)(20 min), alienation (a "should", alone), re-invention (become whole), new normal (really living again)(30 min) post-grief (remembering) (40 min) 10min of questions

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VIxYj8FEZ34>

My First Year as a Widower... (first 3:51 mins)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wLOyHhBZLIY>

The 4 phases of retirement (13 min): (1) vacation, (2) loss and lost (loss of purpose, fear, depression), (3) trial and error (how can I contribute) (4) reinvent/rewire

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DMHMOQ\\_054U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DMHMOQ_054U)

Epigenetic transformation -- you are what your grandparents ate: Pamela Peeke at TEDxLowerEastSide  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Udlz7CMLuLQ>

Kids Try Their Grandparent's Childhood Favorite Food | Kids Try | HiHo Kids  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xk8PdL\\_PdSo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xk8PdL_PdSo)

Why Families in Europe Are Sending Elderly Relatives To Care Homes in Thailand (show at least 11 mins.)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P5WaZTPJtGY>

Aged care workers reveal what it's really like inside nursing homes | Four Corners (hidden camera showing the problem)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQZqpLo\\_cHo&t=906s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQZqpLo_cHo&t=906s)

Living Without the One You Cannot Live Without - Research on Aging  
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Thank You.