

Positive Ageing



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Introduction :- ‘Positive Ageing’ is basically adopting a positive view of ageing as a healthy , normal part of life. It is a well-known fact that no one can escape ageing as it is a natural, biological phenomenon and it is related to physical incapacity accompanied by a series of problems in day-to-day life. Our main concern is how aged people will maintain positive attitude towards life, feel good about themselves keeping fit and healthy and engage fully in life.

Main Problems of aged people: - Apart from Physical dependency one major concern of the aged population in our society is to lead life with dignity and financial independence. Not only socially but also economically the aged people are frail as there has been great many changes in the family structures and the intergenerational support of older persons as well, in our society.

But if it is seen with a broader perspective then it is quite clear that this frail section of the society has years of rich and varied experiences which has once a positive and substantial role in society. At the evening of their life there comes a major change with which they feel themselves unable to cope up. In the present age of youth-oriented society they don’t adapt themselves easily due to various reasons which lead them to the state of loneliness and low self esteem.

Remedy:- Although many studies have focused on the problems of aged population and many governmental agencies are working for their welfare but it is strongly believed that besides these efforts it is only the willingness of elderly people and the positive attitude of their caregivers to help them remain in the mainstream life. If they willingly accept and adapt themselves to the altered conditions of their life and society as well then it becomes easier to facilitate themselves for their healthy survival. In other words, coping is a very important skill needed in the ageing process to move forward with life. Dr. Ward has discussed about the coping strategy used by the elderly to deal with ageing and death but there are some healthy coping strategies and some unhealthy coping strategies.

Unhealthy coping strategies include anticipated mourning and the desire to die due to fear of dependency and of becoming a burden for relatives whereas seeking spiritual comfort, social support and acceptance, engaging in physical activity or exercise etc are healthy coping strategies adopted by aged people.

TIPS FOR POSITIVE AGEING:

Dr. Manfred Diehl, professor of human development and family studies at Colorado State University, has done extensive research on adult's perceptions and understanding of their own ageing process and created a list of ways to adopt a positive attitude towards it. It includes physical activity for at least 30 minutes, exercise of brain by engaging in mentally challenging activities, adopting healthy lifestyle by eating healthfully, getting enough sleep etc; positive emotion exercises, practice healthy coping techniques, stay connected to other people, have regular medical check-ups and so on.

CONCLUSION

Very few elderly people meaningfully use their spare time outside the family whereas there are large number of people, whose activities are confined to reading newspaper, watching television, walking etc. to fill their unoccupied time admirably. But there is still left a good amount of time when they are lonely which if utilized properly can develop a sense of worth and self-esteem.

There is great need to pay specialized attentions to their social and economic potentials and utilize their knowledge, experiences, skills etc for the benefit of the society and the whole nation so that this frail section of society will be no more considered as a burden on the society but will appear as a valuable resource which will ultimately lead them to the mainstream of life with a positive attitude towards life. After all "ageing should not only be the process of growing old but it should be a new stage of opportunity and strength".

Ageing is inevitable, but to grow old gracefully is a choice. "The goal of life should be to live a good one and while growing old one should concentrate on ageing well". Ultimately we are responsible for ourselves, so let us improve the chances of having better life as we age.

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