

HEALTHY AGING-IN RELATION TO THOUGHT PATTERN

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Abstract: Our mind is our own world. It brings heaven or hell. We have free will to opt for better one. Various factors including health care, hygiene, diet, nutrition, exercises and genetics determine the individual longevity. Since the time we started shifting our thought pattern and belief system we generate illness, scarcity, poverty, and all sufferings. The negative thoughts, feelings, beliefs, habits which we have inherited over thousands of years reduced our life expectancy to somewhere around 60 years. The real beauty of old age is that it is a boon to every human being as it is the indication of maturity, knowledge and wisdom. The vast experience and maturity bring respect from every corner.

An attempt has been made in this study to understand the thought patterns of older adults. The sample consists of 40 older adults (20 males and 20 females) of 60-75 years of age. The data was collected through case study method.

The findings indicated that there is strong connection between thought patterns and individual longevity and emphasized the need for positive attitude, realistic perspective and the ability to adapt to change. General physical health and wellness were frequently mentioned, with mixed opinions on their necessity for successful aging. Finally, a sense of engagement, feeling of purpose of life and being useful to others and to society was considered prominent aspect of successful aging. . Therefore if we change our thought pattern by reprogramming our subconscious mind, we can bring prosperity in our life.

KEY WORDS: elderly; old age; positive thoughts; healthy aging; thought pattern

INTRODUCTION

Aging is not only biological but also a psychological process which is responsible for major changes in the role and status of the aged person. Social status, good health, economic and personal independence are important goals for the aged.

Honoring the old is honoring ones tradition. In some primitive societies they are shown a great deal of respect and in others they are abandoned, neglected, harshly, treated. A society, which is too much religious minded, highest value is attached to the respect of their elders. The best place for the care of elderly is the family. The most important source of social support by the family for many older persons is through the conjugal relationship.

Healthy aging is associated with physical security, emotional security and social security. The physical health of aged becomes more a matter of concern when he is unable to have intake of nutritious diet and money for his prolonged treatment and nursing care.

The aged are affected by emptiness and loneliness, feeling of meaninglessness or general unhappiness, it becomes more pronounced when the aged is chronically ill. Social security denotes the whole set of compulsory measures instituted to protect the individual and his family. Along with various factors healthy aging is associated with thought pattern also.

As love, peace, happiness emanates from our mind, the old age and illness are also mushroom from our mind. Our mind, voice, hearing ability, vision, belief systems never get old unless affected by diseases or met with any accident. But down through ages, we added erroneous energies to our mind. After 50, one feels old and try to cover up the appearance are the indication of fear in our mind and brings reduction in activities and illness.

But the real beauty of old age is that it is a boon to every human being as it is the indication of maturity, knowledge, intelligence and wisdom. The vast experience and maturity bring respect from every corner.

It is the time for the society and state to think about the future of the healthy aging. Hence the present study is a humble effort to focus on thought patterns and association with healthy aging.

METHODOLOGY

A sample of 40 older adults (20 males and 20 females) age ranges from 60-75 years were considered for the study. Data was collected through case study method. Respondents have adequate time to give well thought out answers and thus conclusions were drawn from the case studies can be more reliable. To know their status on different areas, the investigator collected the information based the tool developed by Raja Sekar (1985). The great care was taken to include relevant items in specific area. The subjects were requested personally and then instructed to each status area in a more informal discussion. They were given sufficient time to discuss their opinions.

INTERPRETATIONS OF CASE STUDIES

- An individual behavior in a social situation is caused by a complex interaction of beliefs, opinions, values and role within a cultural setting.
- A person's age, gender and social economic status are therefore crucial ones for any considerations of the possible effects on behavior patterns.
- Increased urbanization and opportunity to move from one place to another along with socio economic factors affecting the integrity of the family.
- In the life span of the human development stage of elderly is unique. The thought patterns of elderly are changing from family to family and society to society. By observing the case studies the thought patterns of elderly is considered to be dependent on physical, emotional, financial and social status.
- The positive attitude towards their family members depends on their case taking behavior; wish to bear with them in spite of their own daily hustles. Because the physical phase of elderly is somewhat pathetic. There will be physical decline, as a result, elderly people mostly became dependants, often health hazards to arise in such state, thought pattern also changes.
- Type of family is also major reason to see changes in their thought pattern. In olden days, in joint family system where elderly were respected, children and grand children consider their experience which brings respect from every corner. Now a day due to nuclear family type, most of the elderly people are living alone or institutionalized.
- Thoughts won't be static, they do change situational. The emotional phase of development is very complex. There are positive and negative emotions as we know. As the individual is growing older it was predicted that emotions also changes towards negative direction like feeling of insecurity, dissatisfaction, feeling of loneliness, disgusted feelings are observed among the elderly- so called negative thought patterns.

- In some cases, individuals experiences more satisfaction, sense of attachment and sense of achievement and experiences more happiness which supports healthy aging. The family cohesion and support give relief from the emotional distress (Ramachandran and venkoba Rao(1981)
- The process of socialization is an important phenomenon in any individual life. The thought pattern readily depends on society. The elderly are looked down by the young people of society. They think that old people are menace and burden to the society because of their diminished abilities. The thought pattern of elderly certainly depends on the attitudes of the family members, neighbors and others in the society.
- On the other hand thoughts are depends on the religious activities with good customs and traditions.
- Most of the positive thought pattern depends on the financial position of the elderly. Determining factors such as nature of job, income of the person and good amount of pension always influences ones thought pattern in general. Inadequate financial sources during old ages have definite impact on positive thoughts, which leads to health problems, worries among elderly.

After observing the over view of the above findings, came to know that strong connection between healthy aging and thought patterns.

NEGATIVE THOUGHT PATTERNS ARE SEEN IN

- Elders who are abandoned by their family
- Elders who have no family assets or source of income
- Elders with chronic diseases
- Elders who are neglected physically, emotionally, psychologically and socially

POSITIVE THOUGHT PATTERNS ARE SEEN IN

- More educated elders are better able to understand the issues, more chance to develop positive attitude.
- Elders , who live in more interactive environment have positive thought pattern
- Elders who receive holistic care from their family members have good positive approach

Therefore if we change our thought pattern by reprogramming our subconscious mind, we can bring prosperity in our life and also can increase longevity with healthy life.

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