

Do our spiritual processes age along with biological brain aging?

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Introduction

Aging is a biological process by which living beings become old, which involves a series of structural and functional changes that appear over time and are not the result of diseases or accidents.¹⁻⁴ Aging is a gradual process of degradation of the human organism. According to Ezpeleta,⁶⁻⁷ this is a deleterious, progressive, intrinsic and universal process that occurs in every living being over time, as an expression of the interaction between the genetic program of the individual and his environment. According to chronological age, aging is said to begin between the ages of 60 and 65.

In brain aging, a decrease in cognitive functions has been observed, especially those related to executive abilities, attention processes and the learning and storage of new information. Dementia and major memory loss are not a normal part of aging. They can be caused by brain diseases such as Alzheimer's disease.⁸⁻¹⁰

Spirituality can be understood as a set of feelings, beliefs and actions that involve a search for the transcendent, sacred, or divine.¹¹ As representations of an ultimate final power, they contribute to giving meaning and purpose in life, and guide people's behavior, their interpersonal relationships, and their way of feeling and thinking, both to reality and to themselves. Since both in the aging process and in the evaluation of life that usually occurs as they approach death, conflicts, confusion and suffering can arise, the conception that people have about what is beyond death, or the answers that have been given to the questions of why and why of life, they are determinants in the psychic well-being of older adults. If we also consider that life expectancy has increased considerably, and the way we age, what is aging, and the advantages and disadvantages or problems of this process in its different contexts, is changing, it is necessary to rethink old age, both as a stage of life, and in the policies that affect the quality and conditions of life of this sector of the population. Therefore, it can be argued that every professional who works with older adults, and in particular mental health professionals, should be able to consider the spiritual references of the individual himself to help him in a good way with the problems that may arise in the aging process.¹¹

Spirituality can influence both the psychic well-being of older adults and their process of adaptation to aging.¹² Spirituality exists both outside and within religious contexts and takes its form according to the culture in which it manifests itself. Both religiosity and spirituality can be expressed socially and individually, and both can promote or impede well-being. In this sense, spirituality can be used both constructively and destructively, so it is not inherently good or bad, and its value depends on the specific way people seek the sacred.¹²

Therefore, we will be asking if our spiritual processes age together with biological brain aging since several studies and approaches have been made throughout the history of humanity with diversity of

opinions. As a result of the growing number of older people, it will be impossible to ignore and dismiss them. Society will be obliged to give the elderly their rightful place. And the elders themselves will be challenged to enter that place. The elders will no longer have to hide but allow their light to radiate. Older adults will bring peace, wisdom, and tranquility to society. Humanity has lost its way and is in dire need of connection with the timeless reality of the soul. A society that takes seriously the natural blessings and gifts of aging will be a society that focuses on harmony between human beings and harmony with Mother Earth, rather than pursuing the success and exploitation of our planet. We have to accept that our brain despite biological aging can carry out a connection and communication with God healthily.¹³⁻¹⁵

Bible verses in reference to aging and God

Exodus 20:12

Honor your father and mother, so that your days may be prolonged in the land that the LORD your God gives you.

Interpretation: Our Father Jehovah already lengthens our years of life if we follow His first commandment.

Genesis 25:7-8

These {were} the years of Abraham's life: one hundred and seventy-five years. Abraham expired, and died in good old age, old and full {of days} and was gathered into his people.

Interpretation: Abraham is best known for the depth of his faith and God granted him many years of life. No matter his chronological age, his faith never wavered.

2 Samuel 5:4-5

Thirty years {had} David when he became king, {and} reigned forty years. In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months, and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty-three years over all Israel and Judah. Interpretation: David, a central figure of the Old Testament, was one of the kings of Israel and honored Jehovah by serving for many years of his life regardless of his chronological age.

Conclusion

Our brain ages biologically as we have initially expressed according to our chronological age, but spirituality not necessarily because it

depends on multiple social, psychological variables, but largely on the Christian faith and the degree of happiness of the individual.

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Conflicts of interest

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