

# Changing the way we age



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Presentation courtesy of  
International Council on Active Aging

## Today we are going to discuss...

- Why we need to change the way we age
- How will we create change?
- What this means to you now and into the future

Today we are going to discuss:

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## Why we need to change the way we age

Initiate short discussion: Ask participants why they think we need to change the way we age.

Increased life expectancy is one of the most significant **success** stories of our times



It is also considered one of the greatest global **challenges**

Why?

Thanks largely to modern medicine, people in developed countries have a greater life expectancy than ever before. But it is also considered one of the greatest global challenges. Why do you think this is?

## The accumulation effect

More years  
+  
More people  
+  
More disease  
+  
More costs  
=  
**More challenges**



The old model of care shows an “accumulation effect”—the longer people live, the more diseases they have, and the more expensive it becomes to care for them—especially in a medical system in which doctors are not trained to deal with multiple geriatric conditions.

## Two out of three older adults have multiple chronic conditions

- ▶ Treatment for these individuals accounts for **66% of the US health care budget.**



- ▶ Source: The Medical Panel Survey from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ). 2011

Two out of three older adults have multiple chronic conditions, and treatment for these individuals accounts for 66% of the US health care budget. For example, only 9.3% of adults with diabetes have only diabetes.

The rest of people with diabetes have other chronic illnesses, as well: 32% of Americans 65+ were obese in 2007-2008; depression was the second leading cause of premature death in 2002; other issues include cognitive decline, isolation, suicide, and drug interactions.

**The result: in the media,  
population aging equals  
apocalyptic times**



**Alarmist comments are generating attention,  
which at least gets the issue of aging out there.**

**The result: in the media, population aging equals apocalyptic times.** Alarmist comments are generating attention, which at least gets the issue of aging out there. But the purpose of ICAA's Campaign is to turn down the alarm.

# The challenge:

## Our response to aging

How are people responding to aging now? (Initiate brief discussion, if desired)



## Magic bullets filled with false hope

- ▶ Boomer-fueled consumer base "seeking to keep the signs of aging at bay" will push the U.S. market for anti-aging products from about \$80 billion now to more than \$114 billion by 2015.

- ▶ Source: Global Industry Analysts 2011



The so-called "anti-aging" industry is profiting from people's fears. Yet, aging is a natural process that happens to every living thing, not just people. No pills or potions have ever been proven to slow or reverse the aging process.

# GRAYWASHING

**“the act of misleading consumers regarding any purported age-associated benefits of a product or service”**

-- ICAA CEO Colin Milner, July 2011

International Council on Active Aging CEO Colin Milner has coined the word “graywashing” to refer to “the act of misleading consumers regarding any purported age-associated benefits of a product or service.”

## To avoid graywashing....

- ▶ Understand that no pill or procedure will stop you from aging, no matter what anyone claims to the contrary.
- ▶ Ask yourself if an expensive anti-wrinkle cream or cosmetic surgery will make you feel better about the way you look, or if lifestyle changes such as getting more rest and eating a balanced diet can make you feel better--and look better, as well.
- ▶ Before enrolling in a fitness or seniors center, ask for a tour. Do you see people like yourself engaged in activities that interest you? If not, look for a club or group geared to your interest, not your age.
- ▶ Does a product claim—whether it's for energy, brain boosting, weight loss, getting rid of "age" spots, or some other purpose--sound too good to be true? If so, it probably is—why throw away your money?

To avoid graywashing, ICAA advises consumers to:

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## How will we create change?

What can we do to change the perception that aging is something that needs to be fought or fixed?

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## The accumulation effect

More research  
+  
More human potential  
+  
More wealth  
+  
More cost reductions  
+  
More options/solutions  
=  
More opportunities

**NEW MODEL:  
Active  
Participant**



The first step is for individuals to take responsibility for their own health and wellness. No matter where you're starting from, you can start making better lifestyle choices today. You can start focusing on the opportunities you have now, not just the challenges.

# The 7 dimensions of wellness

Physical Intellectual Social Vocational Spiritual Emotional Environmental



**Each dimension is an opportunity for engagement**

Source: International Council on Active Aging; [www.icaa.cc](http://www.icaa.cc)

Think “wellness,” not disease and deterioration. Wellness is made up of seven dimensions, and each one is a door that leads to opportunities for engagement.

## Wellness dimensions

- ▶ **Physical wellness:** Stay active! As little as 10 minutes of physical activity 3x/day, 5 days a week can meet the guidelines
- ▶ **Intellectual wellness:** Keep your brain active! Learn a new activity, solve puzzles, play brain games online, etc.
- ▶ **Social wellness:** Stay connected! Volunteer in the community, take classes, visit with friends, join online social networks, etc.
- ▶ **Vocational wellness:** If you're not working, volunteer to help others, get involved in an avocation

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## Wellness dimensions continued...

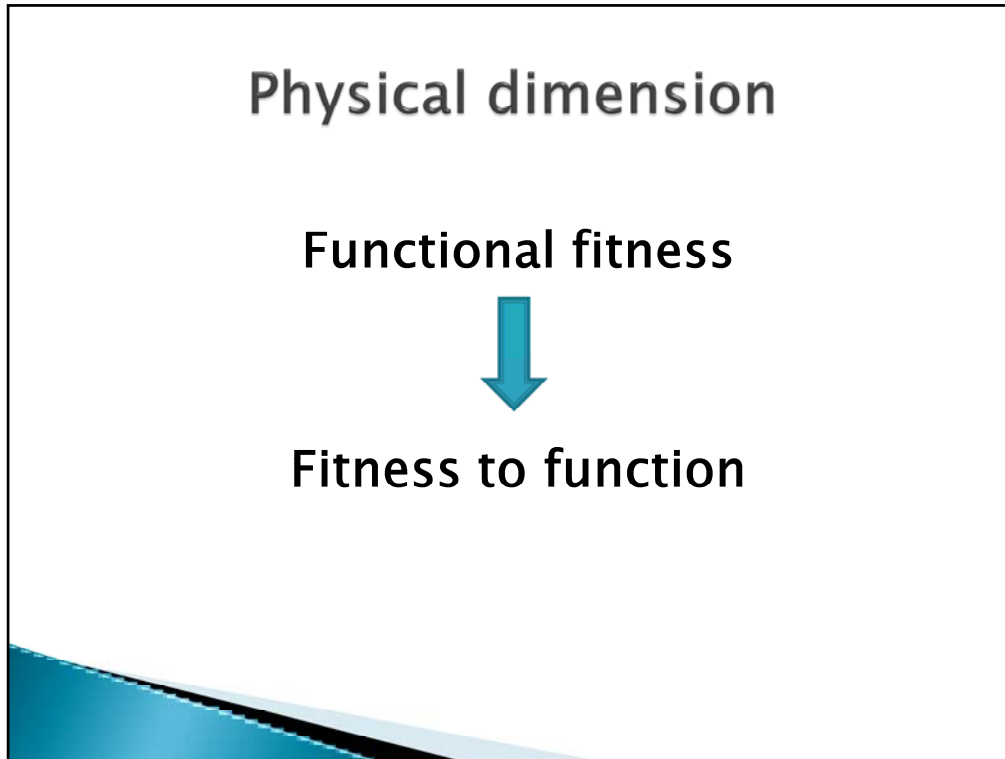
- ▶ **Spiritual wellness:** Connect to your spirit in ways that are meaningful to you
- ▶ **Emotional wellness:** Engage in mindfulness activities such as yoga and t'ai chi; talk with your doctor or a counselor if you're feeling low
- ▶ **Environmental wellness:** Go green! Include nature in your life with a garden, visits to local parks and walking trails

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**Emotional wellness:** Engage in mindfulness activities such as yoga and t'ai chi; talk with your doctor or a counselor if you're feeling low.

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Starting with the physical dimension, we have plenty of choices for creating change. Remember, “functional fitness”—walking, doing exercises such as getting up and down out of a chair, and balance exercises—makes us fit to function. The less activity you do, the less you will be able to do.

# Physical dimension

It's not about age  
It's about **FUNCTION**



So-called “super achievers” are simply individuals who have a high level of functional ability. Again, your ability to function, not your age, defines what you are capable of doing.

# Physical dimension

% with no functional limitations requiring assistance from another person:

- 96% 50 – 64
- 93% 65 – 74
- 80% 75+

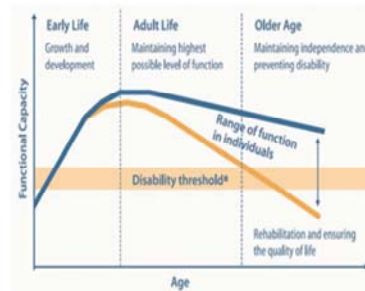


Fig. 8: Maintaining functional capacity over the life course

Source: WHO 2002

Kalache and Kickbusch, 1997

Most adults over age 50 have no functional limitations requiring assistance from another person.

## Physical dimension

Have difficulty lifting or carrying something that weighs **10 pounds**

- ▶ 22% 60 – 69
- ▶ 28% 70 – 79
- ▶ 46% 80 – 89

Source: CDC



True, we do lose muscle mass and strength with age. That's why many older people have difficulty lifting or carrying something that weighs 10 pounds, such as this bowling ball.

## Physical dimension

A basic strength training program will change this, improving your abilities to function and your quality of life.



Yet, research has shown over and over that a basic strength training program will change this, improving your abilities to function and your quality of life.

# Physical dimension

Training for the quarter mile...



## Physical dimension

Have difficulty walking for a quarter of a mile

21% 60 - 69

30% 70 - 79

49% 80 - 89



Research has shown that many adults over age 60 find it difficult to walk a quarter of a mile, which is about five city blocks.

## Physical dimension

People in their 70s who were in good health were challenged to walk a quarter mile. **Those who completed the course were more likely to survive the next six years without disability.**

Those who walked slower were at higher risk of death and disability than the faster walkers, but still ahead of those who could not finish.

Source: May 2, 2006 American Journal of Medicine

Yet, those who can walk a quarter or mile or more are more likely to survive the next six years without disability, according to a study published in 2006 in the American Journal of Medicine. Those who walked slower were at higher risk of death and disability than faster workers, but the risk was less than for those who couldn't finish the course.

The bottom line...[go to next slide]



## Physical dimension

**Stay active!**

As little as 10 minutes  
of physical activity  
3x/day, 5 days a week  
can meet the  
guidelines

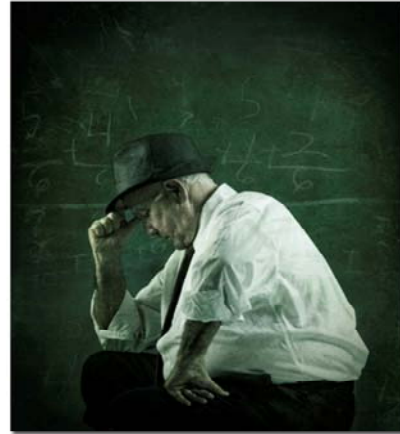


**Stay active!** As little as 10 minutes of physical activity 3x/day, 5 days a week can meet the guidelines.

## Emotional dimension

Depression will be the second greatest cause of premature death and disability worldwide by 2020.

SOURCE: World Health Organization



Depression is a major factor in premature death and disability. Being depressed also has an impact on your outlook on life, which can be harmful to your health [see next slide...]

## Emotional dimension

- Adults with positive self-perceptions of aging engage in more health-promotion strategies and take better care of themselves than those with negative perceptions.
- Those with negative self-perceptions of aging **live 7.6 years less** than those who have a positive outlook.



Negative self-perceptions among older adults can actually shorten lives. ICAA's Campaign is working to counteract stereotypes and foster a more realistic, positive view of aging.

## Environmental dimension

**“Green exercise”** is activity in the presence of nature

5 minutes of exercise in a park, working in a backyard garden, on a nature trail, or in another green space benefits mental health (i.e., self-esteem, mood).



Sources: American Chemical Society, May 1, 2010; Environmental Science and Technology, 44(10), 3947-3955, 2010

Much research has shown that your environment affects your mood and sense of well being, and that regular contact with nature can have beneficial effects.

## Emotional/spiritual dimensions

On your next walk...

- ▶ be in the moment
- ▶ listen to the sounds of nature
- ▶ smell the fragrance of the outdoors

Remind yourself that this time is yours  
and by taking part in **the experience**  
you are improving your health  
and well-being



On your next walk...

- be in the moment
- listen to the sounds of nature
- smell the fragrance of the outdoors

Remind yourself that this time is yours  
and by taking part in **the experience**  
you are improving your health  
and well-being

## Changing the way we age

What this means to you now  
and in the future

Think about what changing the way we age means to you now and in the future.

## Some of the many benefits

- **Greater confidence**
- **Better social connections**
- **Balanced lifestyle**
- **Fewer hospital visits**
- **Lower risk of falling**
- **Better quality of life**



Some of the many benefits of changing the way we age include the following:

- Greater confidence
- Better social connections
- Balanced lifestyle
- Fewer hospital visits
- Lower risk of falling
- Better quality of life

Can you think of more?

Changing the way we age

What's NEXT for you?

Lead discussion: Have participants learned anything from this presentation? Feel more motivated to change? Unsure of next steps? Etc.



## ICAA's ACTIVE AGING WEEK

Today we have discussed...

- ▶ Why we need to change the way we age
- ▶ What we can do to make change happen
- ▶ What this means to you now and into the future

Summarize or ask participants to discuss the main points of the presentation. Conduct a question-and-answer session if time permits.

Thank you!



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For more information, see

[WWW.ICAA.CC](http://WWW.ICAA.CC)

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