## Middle Adulthood

Among the many stages of life people experience, middle adulthood is the stage where many signs of aging that signify a person is approaching their old age begin to appear. It is a time when human bodies undergo many changes physically, socially, and cognitively. Learning to handle these changes is challenging amidst all the other responsibilities that people in middle adulthood have to accomplish. Being included in the sandwich generation can be taxing mentally and physically for adults. Thus, it is important to understand the changes that occur throughout middle adulthood to develop measures that assist to convert them into positive experiences.

Middle adulthood is the time of a person’s lifespan ranging between the end of young adulthood and the beginning of old age which lasts from 40 to 65 years of age (Ref-J7X2BZ). By the beginning of this period a person would usually be settled with their lives. Most people would have a stable career and be with families during this period. However, this period also consists of challenging events such as rearing and supporting children, taking care of aging parents, and planning to face one’s own late adulthood (Ref-Q92K1N). Both men and women experience changes from several aspects in addition to other challenges.

Men and women both experience the onset of physical conditions such as presbyopia, presbycusis, otosclerosis, at differing intensities in middle adulthood. Men experience weight gain in the upper abdomen and back and women on their waist and upper arms. About sexual health, women are subjected to menopause during this stage and men experience andropause. During this period people face many occurrences that signify the weakening of the body due to aging (Ref-AB1CD2). Physical weaknesses would put additional strain on the sandwich generation since they would have to exert more effort to take care of other family members and get tired quickly.

The social life of people in middle adulthood tends to change since their lifestyles also change. They are mainly acting as caregivers during this period which makes maintaining social relationships with people outside of familial relations a difficult task. Especially those of the sandwich generation that is stuck between raising children, and caring for elderly parents without any time to focus on their selves will have a difficult time maintaining social relationships (Ref-AB12CD). Men will have more freedom to engage with others socially while women will be the ones to take on caregiving roles.

As for cognitive changes, memorizing skills, the information storing and processing abilities tend to weaken in both men and women in middle adulthood (Ref-A1B2C3). Therefore, aging individuals need assistance to remember important information during daily activities. However, those within the age range of 40 to 65 function better in solving problems by developing effective strategies than young people (Ref-D4E5F6). The experiences gathered over the years help them to maintain these cognitive abilities. The sandwich generation would face difficulties when attempting to maintain their cognitive skills because they would have limited time to allocate for such activities and they would be mentally exhausted from their responsibilities.

People in middle adulthood simultaneously experience Erikson’s 7th psychosocial stage of development in 2 ways. Some obtain a sense of generativity which means that individuals have a certain need to contribute to the development of new generations within the family or external to the family. Some people undergo stagnation which involves feelings of uselessness, lethargy, and discontent towards self and others (Ref-AB1CD2). The declining physical health of people undergoing middle adulthood would increase the effect of stagnation because they would despair over their weakening bodies. The inability to complete ordinary tasks will increase with time which will increase negative feelings. Those that have close relationships with family members and others during this period would easily be able to fulfill the needs of generativity. However, those who have difficulties in maintaining relationships will feel isolated which will contribute to stagnation. The experience garnered over years will allow people in middle adulthood to guide new generations to handle life which contributes to increasing their sense of generativity. On the other hand, the loss of memory skills and information processing skills will lead to a build-up of insecurities which will increase feelings of stagnation.

Changes that occurred in the past have increased the strain placed on people undergoing middle adulthood. In the past few decades, technological advancements occurred rapidly and youngsters became familiar with the use of social media apps for communication. These technological advancements were difficult for many older generations to grasp which distanced millennials and individuals of generation-X and older generations. In a world where nearly, everything is done on digital platforms life was made harder for older generations. Also, with more women joining the workforce in past years, people of older generations do not receive familial care as much as in the past.

For those that are included within the sandwich generation of middle adulthood, they need to allocate at least a few minutes a day to do something they enjoy. Engaging in physical exercises is also important since exercise stimulates the mind and helps to maintain a good mental state. They should remember not to take on all the work within the family and make sure to distribute chores to members who are capable of managing them. Overall, they should remember to avoid overworking themselves to the point of exhaustion. Middle adulthood is a challenging period for individuals entering the older stages of life. Those who are undergoing it need to carry out a healthy living style to reduce the negative effects of aging and live contently.