

Ageing Issues and Solutions

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Ageing is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon subject to continual redefining of the physical, social, psychological, and cultural self. Continuing participation in social, economic, cultural, spiritual, and civic affairs aims to extend healthy life expectancy and the quality of life for people as they age. In the past century, there have been drastic changes in life expectancy. The number of people aged 65 and above in the U.S. should double from the beginning of this century to the year 2030. This represents growth that is twice as fast as the rest of the population.

Studies show that regular physical activity in childhood and adolescence reduces stress and improves self-esteem. The large population of seniors who are participating in physical activities have competition as the focal point of their lives. Since they fail to separate the psychological risks and rewards from the physical risk and rewards associated with such behaviors, it is not easy for them to find safe outlets for their intense competitive drive.

A combination of water-fitness with mood-lifting activities will increase the body's supply of endorphins. Exercise increases the body's supply of endorphins, which are released by the hypothalamus and are the body's own morphine-like substance, healing and uplifting with a natural pain-relieving and sleep-deepening effect. Exercise also increases the level of serotonin and growth hormone. Serotonin and growth hormone are the exact pain-reducing and muscle repair hormones. Water also provides an environment where one is pointed to aging adults' abilities, not disabilities.

Water exercises should be practiced at slow, medium, and fast speeds. Each speed level can be different for each person and each has a different purpose:

- Slow speed – makes it possible to pay attention to the movement process, to concentrate on relaxation while in motion and to understand the kinesthetic aspect of motion.
- Medium speed – one can combine an internal awareness of balance, relaxation, and coordination with a sense of flow. Movement requires less thoughts and begin to become more integrated.
- Fast speed – pushes the limits of neurological and muscular response time to challenge. Any defects in coordination or perception are clearly indicated when one is trying to move as quickly as possible. Moving fast is an excellent teaching tool for body mind integration.

This can restore self-confidence. Optimism can benefit both mind and body by improving a mental health, helping to reduce stress, and promote a winner attitude!

AUTHOR

Dr. Maria Pritz, EdD, is an exercise physiologist, implementing a unique integration of traditional exercise science and clinical exercise physiology, with 35 years of experience. Maria combines academic knowledge with hands on experience in functional fitness and pain management via land-based and aquatic fitness. Her unique training method (SykorovaSynchro MethodSM) involves integration of multidisciplinary techniques to achieve overall health and optimized performance. Maria was awarded the 2020 AEA Global Lifetime Achievement Award for years of leadership, dedication, and contribution in aquatic fitness. She also received the 2021 ATRI The Tsunami Spirit Award.