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## Successful Aging: Twenty Years Later

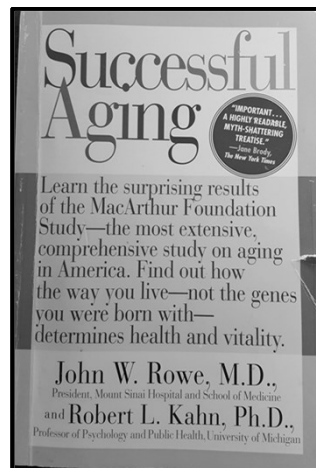


Image Source: Ron Carson

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## Learning Outcomes

- Discuss successful aging principles.
- Discuss flow principles.
- Apply successful aging and flow principles into occupational therapy treatment.

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continued

It is not by muscle, speed, or physical dexterity that great things are achieved, but by reflection, force of character, and judgement; in these qualities old age is usually not only not poorer, but is even richer.

Cicero (44 B.C.)

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continued

## Case Application

78 y/o woman being seen in home secondary to hip fx who fell while rock climbing. No additional injuries. Patient is depressed since her accident. Now, shows fear of falling during mobility-related ADL's. Reluctant to participate in OT.

Based on today's course, what successful aging and "flow" principles should be considered as part of an OT treatment plan?

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## Ways to Age...

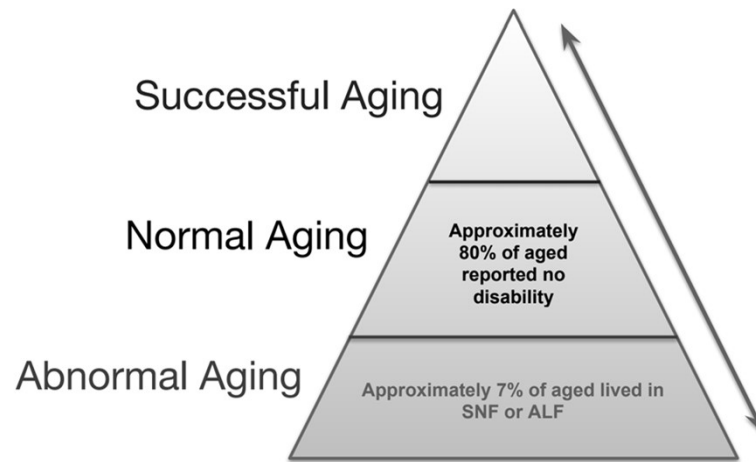


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## Definitions

- Successful Aging is the process of aging while avoiding disease, engaging in life, and staying active.
- Normal Aging is the process of normal age-related changes and the *probability* of disease-related changes.
- Abnormal Aging is the presence of age-related changes **and** abnormal diseases, conditions, and syndromes.

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continued

## “ Normal” Age-Related Changes

- Physical
  - Decreased cardiovascular-pulmonary function
  - Decreased muscle mass
  - Decreased flexibility
  - Increased body fat
  - Decreased visual acuity

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continued

## “ Normal” Age-Related Changes

- Cognitive
  - Decreased processing speed
  - Decreased new learning potential
- Socio-Cultural
  - Loss of role identity
  - Increasing isolation

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continued

## Successful Aging

Successful aging goes beyond potential; it involves activity.

(Rowe & Kahn, 1997)

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## Controversy

- Defining successful
  - No singular agreed upon definition
- Personal impact of not being successful
- Societal expectations versus personal expectations
  - Who determines successful and how?
  - One study shows certain ethnicities age less successfully (Wada, Mortenson, & Clarke, 2016).
- Stereotyping - is it ever good?
  - “Standards for successful aging reflect value judgments that are culturally and historically situated” (Angel et al., 2018).

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## History of Successful Aging

- 1960s - Life Satisfaction, (Neugarten, Havinghurst & Tobin, 1981)
  - Life Satisfaction Inventory Aging Scale
- 1997 - Successful Aging, (Rowe & Kahn, 1997)
- 2011 - Successful Aging Inventory (Troutman, Nies, Small, & Bates, 2011)

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## Jeanne Calment 1875 - 1997

“Loved sugar”

Smoked

Very active lifestyle

At 100 years old, broke her leg  
bicycling

Lived independently until 110

At 114, fell, breaking leg

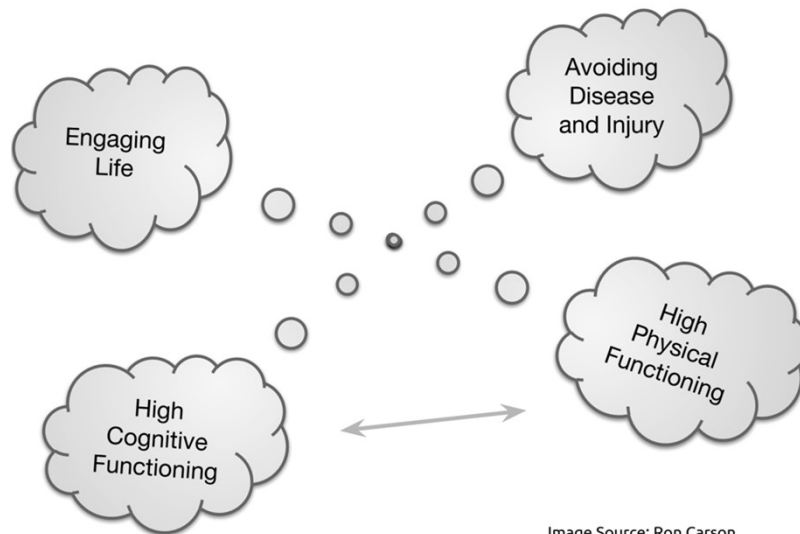


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## Successful Aging Theory



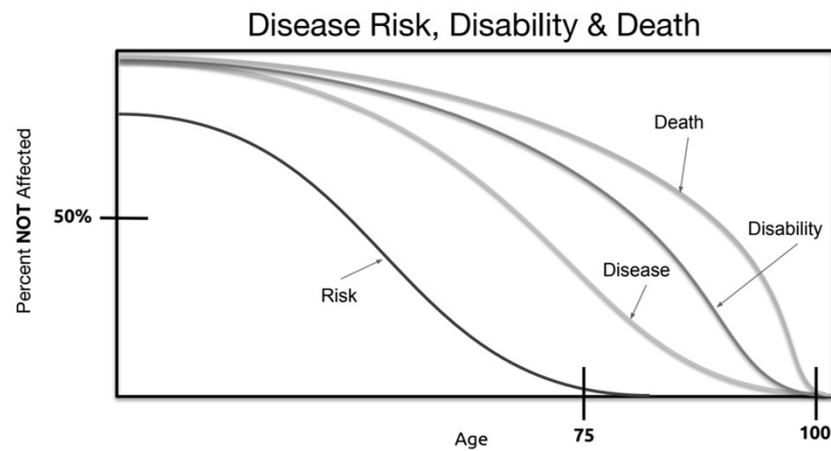
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## Avoiding Disease and Injury

- Eliminating or reducing disease risk factors
  - Diet
    - Sugars, fats, processed foods
  - Exercise
    - Moderate versus extreme
- Stress
- Genetics
- Lifestyle, including social integration
- Age-related vs. age-caused

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## Avoiding Disease and Disability



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## Engaging Life

- Interpersonal relationships
  - Protective mechanism
  - Especially for men, connectedness is good
- Productive activity
  - Creates social value
- Marriage

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## Relationships

- Socio-emotional
- Instrumental
  - Associated with lower physical performance
  - But, mixed results
- Isolation bad for health and life

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## Productive Activity

- Includes activities which create goods or services of economic value
- Most older people meet this “obligation” and need
- Positive relationship with high cognitive function

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## High Cognitive Function

- Four predictive variables (40%)
  - Education
  - Strenuous activity in and around the home,
  - Peak pulmonary flow rate
  - Self-efficacy
- Age-related changes may predict changes in cognitive function

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## Self-Efficacy

- Master of our domains
- Sense of control
- Awareness of both

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## Is Positive Change possible?

- Capacity remains
- Plasticity is possible
- Resilience
  - Grit, (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009)

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## What Does Successful Aging Mean for OT

- Importance of incorporating successful aging principles in OT therapy?
  - Evaluation
  - Treatment planning and goal setting
  - Treatment

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## Integration

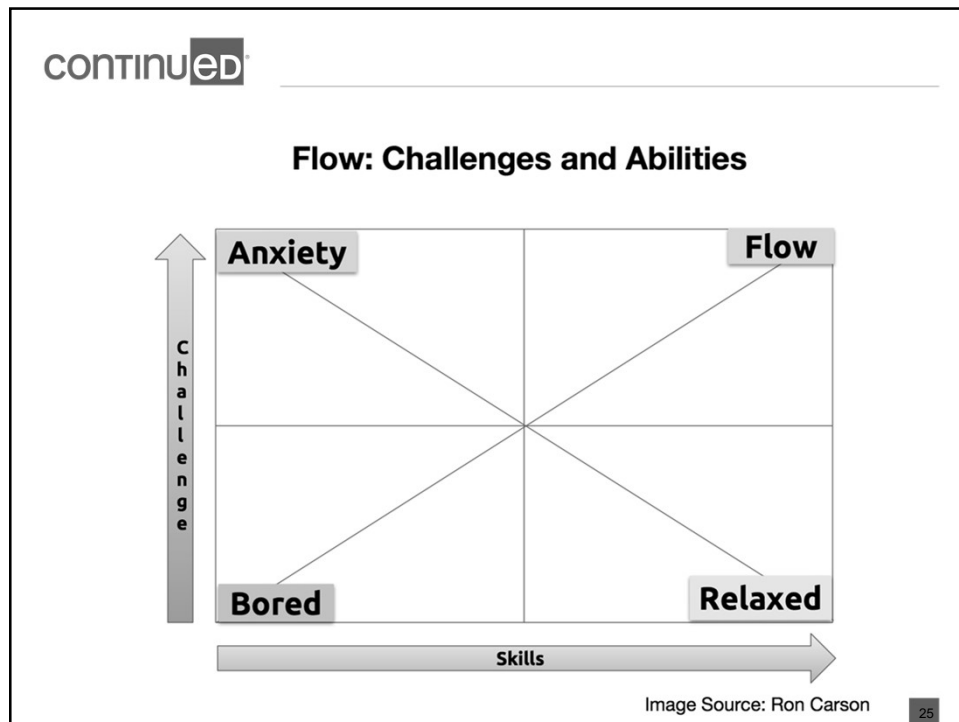
- Evaluation
  - How to identify a successful ager
  - Preconceived ideas of therapist vs. patient
  - Impact of successful ager now facing loss of control
- Treatment

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## A Secondary Contribution - Flow

- When what we want, what we are able to do, and what's available to do are in congruence.
- Occurs when the mind is focused on a task
- When what we think, feel, and wish are in harmony
- Occurs when skills are fully involved in overcoming a challenge
- More than happiness

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## What Does “Flow” Mean for OT

- Provide the just right challenge
- Opportunity for mastery
- Promote control
- Increase

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continued

## Case Application

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## Questions

### Contact Information

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