

# Know your seniors

Supporting elderly



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# Course content



01 Introduction & definition of ageing

02 Challenges of ageing

03 Social & Physical changes

04 The ABC of ageing well



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# Unit 02

**Upon completing this unit, you will be able to:**

- Understand the challenges of ageing
- Understand the challenges of being a caregiver
  - Learn about care coordination
  - Learn about brain health
- Understand the fear of getting old and dying (thanatophobia)
- Use techniques to help elders overcome thanatophobia



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# Challenges of ageing

Engagement and Purpose

Mobility and Movement

Financial Wellness

Daily Living and Lifestyle



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# Challenges of caregiving

*Care for older adults is provided by informal (unpaid) and formal (paid) caregivers. Both groups are increasingly caring for people with higher levels of acuity and complex conditions.*



**Family caregivers** are often juggling other family and work responsibilities and living remote from the care recipient — need better support, training, resources and tools to help them take care of their loved ones and themselves.

**On the professional side,** staff shortages and quality concerns loom large, so new solutions are needed to help attract, train, develop and leverage scarce human capital.



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# Caregivers

- *The more challenging the patients' needs, the more complex, demanding, and stressful the caregiver's role might be.*
- *Stress and decreased time for personal needs are two major challenges that caregivers face.*
- *Caregiving can often be undervalued by those who have never served in that role.*
- *Caregivers need to have good communication skills and interpersonal skills; a lot of patience and stamina; and knowledge of health-care terms, medical conditions, and medications, because they often need to work through family situations, crises, and life-threatening events related to their client's care, which may also involve law enforcement officers and attorneys.*
- *Often caregivers find themselves working hard, receiving low pay, no vacation days, holidays, or sick days, and no health or dental insurance, with little ability to afford it.*
- *Psychologically, whether paid caregivers or family caregivers, the challenges they face can easily result in burnout.*

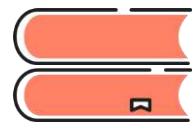


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# Brain health

***Brain health refers to how well a person's brain functions across several areas. Aspects of brain health include:***



## Cognitive health

- how well you think, learn and remember



## Motor function

- how well you make and control movements, including balance



## Emotional function

- how well you interpret and respond to emotions (both pleasant and unpleasant)

## Tactile function

- how well you feel and respond to sensations of touch — including pressure, pain, and temperature.



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# Brain health

***Brain health can be affected by age-related changes in the brain, injuries such as stroke or traumatic brain injury, mood disorders such as depression, substance use disorder or addiction, and diseases such as Alzheimer's disease.***



**Some changes in thinking are common as people get older. For example, older adults may:**

- **Be slower to find words and recall names**
- **Find they have more problems with multitasking**
- **Experience mild decreases in the ability to pay attention.**



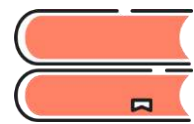
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# Fear of going old

***Getting old is something that happens to all of us and like death and taxes is sadly inevitable:***



## Get to the route of the problem

- recognize the source of your phobia and to track it back to what is really causing the problem;
- facing a painful memory or idea can greatly help to lessen the impact of a phobia through



## Focus on the good

- focus on not only the negative aspects of getting old but also the positive;
- It's a chance to slow down and enjoy life.



## Look at the right examples

- many people reach old age gracefully and with a lot of their faculties;
- look to some of them for inspiration whether they be in the media or members of your own family.



## Plan

- plan for the future and old age
- preparing a good pension, and making some plans for how you will spend your time help to actually look forward to at least elements of your old age

# Fear of dying

*Thanatophobia is a form of anxiety characterized by a fear of one's own death or the process of dying. It is commonly referred to as death anxiety.*

Death anxiety is not defined as a distinct disorder, but it may be linked to other depression or anxiety disorders. These include:

- Post-traumatic stress disorder or PTSD
- Panic disorders and panic attack
- Illness anxiety disorders previously called hypochondriasis.

A person may feel extreme anxiety and fear when they consider that death is inevitable. They may also experience:

- Fear of separation
- Fear of dealing with a loss
- Worry about leaving loved ones behind.



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# Fear of dying

## *Symptoms and diagnosis*



The fear of death is considered a phobia if the fear:

- Arises almost every time a person thinks about dying
- Persists for more than 6 months
- Gets in the way of everyday life or relationships.

Key symptoms that a person may have a phobia of dying include:

- Immediate fear or anxiety when thinking about dying or the process of dying
- Panic attacks that can cause dizziness, hot flushes, sweating, and a raised or irregular heart rate
- Avoidance of situations where thinking about death or dying may be necessary
- Feeling sick or getting stomach pains when thinking about death or dying
- General feelings of depression or anxiety.

Phobias can lead to a person feeling isolated and avoiding contact with friends and family for extended periods.

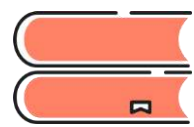


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# Fear of dying

*Thanatophobia may be linked to:*



## Specific phobias

- the most common objects of phobias are things that can cause harm or death, including snakes, spiders, planes, and heights



## Panic disorders

- during a panic attack, people may feel a loss of control and an intense fear of dying or impending doom;



## Illness anxiety disorders

- death anxiety may be linked to illness anxiety disorders, previously known as hypochondriasis;

**The experience of death anxiety may differ, depending on individual factors. These include:**

- **Age.** A 2017 study suggests that older adults fear the dying process, while younger people more commonly fear death itself
- **Sex.** According to a 2012 study, women were more likely than men to fear the death of loved ones and the consequences of their death.



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# Fear of dying

## *Overcoming thanatophobia*

**A doctor may recommend that a person with thanatophobia receive treatment for an anxiety disorder, phobia, or for a specific underlying cause of their fear.**



- Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)
- Psychotherapy
- Exposure therapy
- Medication
- Relaxation techniques



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# Summary

## Challenges of ageing

Most common challengers of aging are related to: engagement and purpose, financial wellness, mobility and movement, daily living and lifestyle.

## Challenges of caregiving

Psychologically, whether paid caregivers or family caregivers, the challenges they face can easily result in burnout. Caregivers need to plan time for self-care so they do not slip into a state of mind where they feel discouraged, trapped, stuck, hopeless, or depressed.



## Brain health

Brain health can be affected by age-related changes in the brain, injuries such as stroke or traumatic brain injury, mood disorders such as depression, substance use disorder or addiction, and diseases such as Alzheimer's disease.

## Fear of getting old

To overcome the fear of getting old it is needed to: get to the route of the problem, focus on the good, look at the right emplacements and plan the future.

## Fear of dying

Thanatophobia is a form of anxiety characterized by a fear of one's own death or the process of dying. Thanatophobia may be linked to other phobias and disorders and it may be overcome with CBT, psychotherapy, exposure therapy, medication, relaxation techniques.



# Thank You!



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