Life in the Middle:
Understanding Development in Middle Adulthood
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You can’t help getting older, but you don’t have to get old.

George Burns
Family Life Cycle Development
Erikson believed that “each stage of life is associated with a specific psychological struggle, a struggle that contributes to a major aspect of personality.”

Generativity vs. Stagnation (middle adulthood)

* Develops an interest in giving back to the next generation, leading and guiding
* May include parenting to achieve this
States that the life course goes through a sequence of definable stages (seasons); none more important than another

* Change goes on in each season
* Each season is colored by the ones before
* Each shift requires a transition
Physical Changes in Middle Adulthood
Changes in physical development

* Sensory – vision, hearing, smell, taste and touch

* Muscle ability
Elements of Physical Development

* Wellness
  * Life expectancy change
  * Energy levels
  * Weight gain
  * Exercise
• Eat many different colors and types of vegetables and fruits.
• Make sure at least half of the grains are whole grains.
• Eat only small amounts of solid fats and foods with added sugars.
• Eat seafood twice a week.
Cognitive Development
Some types of intelligence decline, but others do not

Some individuals decline, but others do not

The type of decline that happens to everyone happens very late in life
**Crystalized Intelligence**

**Crystalized intelligence** demonstrates the cumulative effect of culture and learning of task performance and is measured by tests of verbal ability and cultural knowledge; a store of knowledge from the surrounding culture.
Fluid intelligence depends on the proper functioning of the nervous system. It is measured by tasks that show age-related declines (speeded tasks, tests of reaction time); on-the-spot reasoning ability.

Fluid Intelligence
(click on link)
Preventing Memory Loss

Preventing Memory Loss
(click on link)
Societal Changes
Societal Changes

* Abrupt shift in jobs (the buggy whip situation)
  * No longer staying in the same job until retirement
  * Advances in technology have created changes in employment status / retention
What it costs to live in today’s world; increasing financial demands of “normal living”

Technology – continued learning, finances and/or stress
Jobs Threatened by Technology
Escalation of drug use has nearly tripled among 50-59 year old adults since 2002.

A new survey finds that adults aged 45 and over are more than three times as likely to drink alcohol almost every day as those under 45.
Societal Cultural Shift

* Lessening impact of religion and “the church”
* Shift in schools from authoritarian entities
* Mobile society
Societal Cultural Shift

Technology Timeline; 1920s to Present
(click on link)

20’s  50’s  80’s  2000’s
Family and Social Relationships
Living with Integrity: The Sandwich Generation

The Sandwich Generation

(click on links)
Relationships

Grandparents as Parents
Adult children who move back home are often referred to as boomerang children.

Boomerangers and Kidults

(click on link)
Social media
Facebook
Twitter
MySpace
Pinterest
Instagram
Others?
It’s a new and changing world. Middle adulthood offers many challenges, including physical and cognitive changes as well as societal and cultural changes that must be coped with. Even relationships are different in middle adulthood.
Questions?
Resources

Journals:


Textbooks:


Websites:

* American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)
  Free Online Brain Games

* Colorado State University Extension Office
  Grandparents: As parents.
  http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/consumer/10241.html

* Harvard Health Publications
  Preventing memory loss: Seven preventative steps.
  www.health.harvard.edu/newsweek/Preventing_memory_loss.htm

* Huffington Post
  40 Signs You Are Middle Aged.
  www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/08/28/middle-age_n_3830194.html

* Middleage.org.
  Definition-When or What is Middle Age?
  www.middleage.org/definition.shtml

* Study Mode
Resources

Websites:
* The University of Alberta’s Cognitive Science Dictionary
  http://penta.ufgrs.br/edu/telelab/3/control.htm
* The University of Alberta’s Cognitive Science Dictionary
  http://penta.ufgrs.br/edu/telelab/3/fluid_in.htm

YouTube™:
* Progression
  Best Time-lapse video shows little girl growing into an old woman.
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mzskiJxcGT8
* Sandwich Generation
  Living with Integrity: The Sandwich Generation
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OoLgfRNW124
* Sandwich Generation: Caring For Aging Parents and Children
  The Boomer Report: Many Baby Boomers are sandwiched between caring for aging parents and
  children (often grown!) at the same time, they're called The Sandwich Generation. Tips on finding
  help in this report.
  http://youtu.be/Z7KfW-yC8ko
* Technology Timeline; 1920s to Present
  From The Invention of Television to the Advent of Advertising, From the First Computers to the
  Internet... the Convergence of Turning Television into Computers. This is a 20 minute video.
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXewcY6l_VA