

TALK OF AGES TEACHING BRIEF

Misconceptions of Aging and Strategies for American Society

Contributed by

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Activity Description: During one class period (75 minutes), I showed 4 TED talks from the Talk of Ages new media resource list: *How societies can grow old better*; *Life's third act*; *Older people are happier*; *Prepare for a good end of life*. These then served as the basis for group discussion.

Instructions: To begin, students take notes using the **TED Viewing Notes** below as they watch each talk. Afterwards, students break into groups of 3 or 4 and respond to the following prompts:

Drawing on the information you now know about late adulthood, answer these questions:

- 1) What were the misconceptions you had about aging before this class?
- 2) How have your views changed?
- 3) What do you think are important steps that we (American society) should take next regarding aging?

TED Viewing Notes

I. *How societies can grow old better*

Most older people in the US end up living separately from their children and from most of their friends from their earlier years. In traditional societies, old people live with _____.

Four ways that traditional societies get rid of older people:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

Filial piety is _____

Age-based allocation of healthcare resources states that if hospital resources are limited, preference is given to _____ over _____.

Reasons for low status of older adults in the US:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

What can we do to improve lives of older adults in the US?

1) Usefulness: _____

2) Value: _____

3) Increased abilities: _____

II. *Life's third act*

Longevity revolution: living ___ years longer than our great-grandparents.

Third act: last ___ decades of life.

The staircase represents the upward ascension of _____

Age as potential, not _____

When you're inside aging, _____ subsides

_____ of how well we do in the 3rd act is controllable (not genetic)

_____: can give new significance and clarity and meaning to life. Who were you?

Where are you going? You can change your relationship to your past.

Viktor Frankl stated that the one freedom that cannot be taken away is the freedom to

_____ on experiences makes us wise; not just having the experiences

The largest demographic in the world is _____

III. *Older people are happier*

More years were added to life expectancy in the ____ century than were added across all millennia combined

The pyramid of population is being reshaped into a _____

_____, _____, and _____ decrease with age

Older adults are more likely to experience _____ emotions and engage with

_____ more comfortably

Older people remember more _____ than _____ images.

As we age, we _____ life, we are more open to _____, and are _____.

We also have less tolerance for _____.

By 2015, there will be more people over ___ than under ___

IV. *Prepare for a good end of life*

_____ can remain high, even when independence and bodily functions decline

5 steps to prepare for a good end of life:

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)