AGING WITH ATTITUDE!
MENTAL HEALTH CONCEPTS
Our Brain

- Involved in everything you do
- Often overlooked
- Capable of change and growth
- Constantly changing
The brain and aging..... what we know

- Takes longer to remember facts
- Increase in **selective memory**
- Motivation to remember things decreases
- Aging does not equal dementia
- Aging does not equal “slowing down”
- There is no evidence that we can ever stop learning new information

- 10-year study conducted by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. The study found that only 30% of physical aging can be attributed to genetics. The other 70% is influenced by a combination of lifestyle decisions that people make throughout their lives.
SENIORS
I'M SPEEDING BECAUSE I HAVE TO GET TO WHERE I'M GOING BEFORE I FORGET WHERE I'M GOING
Aging and Life after Retirement

- Important to continue to pursue purposeful activities.
- The life-changes you are experiencing as a result of your advancing years are not a cause for retirement from productive life, but the opportunity to discover new and more meaningful ways to develop yourself and your surroundings.- Rabbi Lubaritcher
- Maintain a daily routine
What Does Not Work

- Too much ........
  - Time alone
  - Sitting
  - Food
  - Over use or misuse of alcohol or pain medications
  - Worry and Guilt
  - Anger
  - Boredom
I don't iron. If I'm not wrinkle-free, why should my clothes be?
Common Mental Health Problems with Aging

The 3 D’s:
- Dementia or “Alzheimer’s”
- Delirium
- Depression

- Anxiety Disorders
- Substance Abuse Problems

It is estimated 20% of people age 55 and older experience a mental illness. American Association of Geriatric Psychiatry.
Signs and Symptoms of Illnesses To Watch

- Depression: Isolation, sadness, feelings of worthlessness, thoughts of suicide. Can so bad a person may hallucinate or have beliefs not based in fact.
- Anxiety: Uncontrollable worry, frequent panic attacks, fear of crowds.
- Delirium: Rapid change in behaviors/thought content. Medical conditions can cause delirium such as infections or head trauma.
- Dementia: Gradual decline in memory/functioning over a period of years.
Depression is not a normal part of aging.
Warning Signs

- Constant sadness
- Unexplained tearfulness
- Isolation & Withdrawal (Social)
- Decline in Personal Appearance
- Change in Normal routine/behavior
- Low motivation
- Weight Loss
- flattened Affect
- Too much or not enough sleep
- Increased irritability
- Unexplained Physical Complaints
- Physical Health Problems ex COPD
- Increase in Prescription Drug/Substance Usage
- Financial Stress
- Hopelessness or feelings of worthlessness
- Life is not worth living belief
Which older adults have a higher risk?

Depression is more common in people who also have other illnesses:

- 80% of older adults have at least one chronic health condition.
- 50% of older adults have two or more chronic health conditions.
- When functioning becomes limited, risk goes up. People in the community rates are 1-5%, hospitalization 11.5% and with home health care 13.5%.

Resource:
www.cdc.gov/aging/mentalhealth/depression.htm
Risk Factors for Untreated Mental Health Issues in Older Adults

- Suicide
- Premature Nursing Home Placement
- Increased physical health problems
- Lower Quality of Life
Why is treatment important

- Treatment helps prevent:
  - Premature nursing home placement
  - Unnecessary medical costs
  - Suicide
  - Lower quality of life

Please contact the physician if you know someone in need.
SENIOR CITIZEN TEXTING CODE....

ATD~At The Doctors
BFF~Best Friend Fell
BTW~Bring the Wheelchair
BYOT~Bring Your Own Teeth
FWIW~Forgot Where I Was
GGPBL~Gotta Go Pacemaker Battery Low
GHA~Got Heartburn Again
IMHO~Is My Hearing-Aid On
LMDO~Laughing My Dentures Out
OMMR~On My Massage Recliner
OMSG ~Oh My! Sorry, Gas
ROFLACGU~Rolling On Floor Laughing And Can’t Get Up
TTYL..Talk To You Louder
What are the Positives of Getting Older?
Changes

- Your body is changing which means diet and exercise need to change with you.
- KSU- People who make an effort to move more throughout the day can lower their risk of chronic disease after studying a sample of 194,515 men and women ages 45-106. [www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2456/13/1071](http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2456/13/1071)
- Age does not protect you from Love, But Love, to some extent, Protects you from Age- Jeanne Moreau
Modifications in Exercise

Myths:
- I am too old to start.
- I might break a bone.
- It might cause a heart attack.

Do’s:
- Start considering your current lifestyle and work up.
- Weather conditions may determine indoor vs. outdoor activities.
- Use an accountability partner for safety reasons.
- Preplan bathroom issues.
- Strength training strongly recommended.
- How can this be fun or new to you?
- Consult with your PCP on how to get started.
I started playing tennis and skiing in my forties. On a skiing trip, I broke a rib. The doctor said my spine was so bad he did not know how I did anything. I tried to stay active as long as possible. As the years passed, I developed bad back pain. The doctor said he could not help me, that I was too old. Also, I was diagnosed with emphysema. I could not breathe well and was wheezing. The doctor said I would never improve. I thought I would never climb stairs again. I tired easily. I tried an exercise program at a local medical center. For six weeks, I worked out three times a week, two to three hours a day. I did weight training, treadmill, bicycle and breathing exercises. Even when I felt bad, I kept at it. I never let anyone discourage me. Eventually, the wheezing stopped, my breathing improved and the back pain disappeared. I was able to walk with energy to spare! I exercise regularly. My doctor says he has never seen anyone "get better!" I attribute my improvement to exercise.
When I learned, 'You are what you eat', I realized I was nuts.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE DIETARY CHANGES YOU HAVE ALREADY LEARNED?
Let’s Talk about Sex

- No more birth control.
- No more worries about waking the children up.
- For the retired, no more concerns about being late to work.
- Sex can be a gentle form of exercise.
- Sex can improve sleep.
Purpose

- Important to feel like we are contributing
- Volunteer
- Church/Spiritual activities
- Helping family
- Helping other older adults do things they are no longer able to do.
- Passing down wisdom or strengths to someone younger.
- Listening to others
Why Volunteer?

- Helps combat loneliness
- Provides a sense of purpose (nice to be needed)
- Can introduce you to new friends.
- Allows you to explore your interest.

www.seniorcorps.org
Social Life.....Get out of the house

- People in our lives can give emotional, informational and functional support.
- Family activities
- Church
- Organizations
- Lunch/Dinners
- Movies
- Anything positive that involves other people
- Pets are often good companions and are shown to improve mood.
Why Lifelong Learning?

- Keeping the mind active can ward off memory loss and sharpness.
- Helps keep you connected to the world (local or beyond).
- There is less time for boredom and worries.

www.positiveaging.org/consumer/sc_learning1.html
THE BEST MENTAL EXERCISE IS ACQUIRING NEW KNOWLEDGE AND DOING THINGS YOU HAVEN’T DONE BEFORE
With frequency, plan something to look forward to. You are responsible for creating this.
Have fun! Try something new!

“No cookie jar is too high.” - Johnny Holiday
Online Resources

- Administration on Aging [http://www.aoa.gov](http://www.aoa.gov)
- Alliance for Aging Research [http://www.agingresearch.org](http://www.agingresearch.org)
- American Society on Aging [http://www.asaging.org](http://www.asaging.org)
- Department of Veteran's Affairs [http://www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)
- National Association of Area Agencies on Aging [http://www.n4a.org](http://www.n4a.org)