



AMAZING-EXPANSIVE-ESSENTIAL
VOCATIONAL WORLDS
OF
ELDERS

“Faith and Callings Among Seniors”

VOCATIONAL WORLDS OF ELDERS

- Three Social Changes Converging = A New Era for Seniors
 - Age Wave – Increased Quantity/Quality in Older Adulthood
 - A New Life Stage – “Elderhood” – Unique; Long; Generative
 - Information Age’s Culture(s): Communication; Connections, Relationships, Consciousness, and Influence

VOCATIONAL WORLDS OF ELDERS

- **The Age Wave** – Major Force Impacting Elders and Society
 - **Quantity** - Aging baby boomers – Everyday 6500 more people over 65
 - **Longevity**– Persons age 65 have 87% probability of living to 85
 - **Vitality** - Nutrition; exercise; medical care; replacements = Healthier
 - **Resiliency** – Expanded social and psychological supports = durability
 - **Quality of Life** – Enhanced body-mind-heart-soul = Greater satisfaction and happiness

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- **The Age Wave:** Major Force Impacting Society – Individual Elders (Continued)
 - **Senior Housing Boom** – many options yet waiting lists
 - **Home Care Services** – greater variety, more availability and better quality
 - **Financial Options**– 25% M-15% F work; Investments; Reverse mortgages
 - **Economic Impact**–33% of Income discretionary –25 Trillion to pass on
 - **Policies/Perspectives** – Social Security? Medical care? Dying Well?

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- ***Elderhood -A New Life Stage in Three Phases***

- Persons 65 and older – Beginning of Elderhood variously set
- Long and Complex Life Stage (20-30 years for most people)
- Three Distinct Phases: Early – Middle – Late Elderhood – Yet Age Differently
- Elderhood: Unique, Substantial, Essential, Purposeful and Powerful: Its Calling
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- Elderhood's Physical, Mental, Social, Financial and Spiritual Vulnerability: Its Peril

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- **Early Elderhood** – Ages 65-74? Characteristics of the “Go-Go” Years
 - *Active Lifestyle - Extension of Adulthood*
 - *Transition from Fulltime Public Employment and Responsibilities*
 - *Extensive Volunteering*
 - *Frequent Travel*
 - *Relocation – Be with Family; Less Maintenance; Warmer Climate*
 - *Early Physical and Mental Decline – Senescence Begins/Increases*
 - *For 25% of Elders It's a Period of Financial Down-sizing and Struggle*
 - *Frequency of Acquaintances Dying Increases*

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- **Middle Elderhood** – Ages 75-84? Characteristics of “Slow Go”
 - *Activity Decreases & Narrows - Less Physically Demanding*
 - *Physical and Cognitive Decline – Senescence Increases*
 - *Onset of One or More Chronic Diseases, Illnesses or Injuries*
 - *Multiple Family and Friendship Losses*
 - *Major Relational Changes – Marriages; Family; Friendships*

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- **Middle Elderhood** 75-84? (Continued) “Slow Go”
 - *Continued Volunteering...But Less Physically Demanding*
 - *Travel Continues But Diminishes*
 - *Relocation to Care Community or Easily Accessible Living Space*
 - *Mobility Transitions – Walking; Driving; “Steps a Challenge”*
 - *Financial Struggles Accelerate in Type and Scale*
 - *Death of Acquaintances Accelerates – Many and Frequent*

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- **Late Elderhood** – Ages 85? and Above Characteristics of “No Go”
 - Tending Basics of Life are Primary Daily Tasks
 - Significant Physical and Mental Decline - Senescence Accelerates
 - Chronic Diseases Increase in Number and Seriousness
 - Assistance in Living Often Necessary - At Home or Care Community
 - Volunteering Is Greatly Diminished or Ceases
 - Transitions in Mobility – Often Stop Driving; Need Assistance “Getting Around”
 - Financial Struggles Increase in Amounts and Severity
 - Death of Acquaintances Greatly Increases

VOCATIONAL WORLDS OF ELDERS

Capacities of Elders:

Presence

Relationships

Purpose

Power

Passion

Playfulness

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Presence

to be with,

to be readily and flexibly available,

and

accompany

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Relationships:

connections

that

sustain and build up

oneself

and

others



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Purpose:

contributing to what matters;

making a difference

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Power :

ability to influence

essential

Societal

functioning

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Passion:

*compelling interests
that
motivate commitment
and
caring*

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Playfulness:

leisure,

enjoyment,

humor and

fun

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Vocation – Faith-informed, contributing so that the world might thrive

- **Salvation/forgiveness is a Gift:** Fear, shame, hurt, mess-ups all “**Graced**” by God
- What then? Live so the **world God loves might thrive**
- Living shaped by **faith, “callings,” contexts, capacities and relationships**
- “**Callings:**” Self, family, church, friendship, neighborhood, community & world
- **Capacities & Context:** unique place, presence, actions and strengths

VOCATIONAL WORLD OF ELDERS

“Will **families** be able to survive the demands of work, earning a living, child-rearing, managing their domestic affairs, and addressing the disruptive challenges of illness, accident and financial set backs without the contributions of time, attention, and wisdom of elders?”

VOCATIONAL WORLDS OF ELDERS

“Will **society** be able to **educate** the young
academically, socially, ethically,
and
spiritually
without the financing, attention and wisdom of
elders?”

VOCATIONAL WORLD OF ELDERS

“Will **society** be able to **care for the old-old**,
those in late elderhood

or

those elders suffering from severe physical
and

mental impairment, without the
time, attention and wisdom of early and middle elders?”

VOCATIONAL WORLDS OF ELDERS

Will ***churches and other community organizations***
long survive if elders don't

fully join those younger in providing adaptive
leadership and financial

resources in bridging past, present and future
without the time, attention, monies

and wisdom of elders?

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Christian Centers for Vital and Resilient Aging

- ***Faith Practices*** – Formation – Celebration – Prayer - Music
- ***Spiritual Gifts and Strengths*** – Building the Body of Christ
- ***Identity Exploration*** - Discovery – Learning – “Elderhood”
- ***Wellness and Wholeness*** – Vitality and Resiliency
- ***Anchor Community*** – Belonging & Becoming
- ***Care and Caregiving*** – Tending and Sharing the Responsibility
- ***Elders in Action*** – Exercising Essential Capacities/Maintenance
- ***Elder Corps*** – Address the Difficult Community/Challenges