

Belleville Senior Housing

Belleville Senior Housing - Disengagement theory is the study of society and aging in gerontology. This is a controversial model which attempts to examine how individuals interact and change with society as they age. This theory was developed by social scientists Elaine Cumming and William Henry in the early 1960s. According to disengagement theory, individuals tend to draw away from society while they age. Although this theory has its supporters, it has been disputed by numerous scientists in the field.

This theory was really popular in the middle part of the 1900s. During that time, a lot of its followers believed that this theory was a very good model which explains the way people prepared themselves for the inevitable - death. Older adults slowly let go of society, supposedly getting ready to let go of life too. The researchers suggested that this was helpful to society in enabling younger individuals to grow into various life roles. Like for example, younger individuals are able to build up connections and networks while the older generation's networks get smaller. Furthermore, when an older adult retires from a job it enables a younger person to enter into the labor force.

In some cases, this apparent withdrawal occurs from both sides. Society may be less inclined to include and engage with older people, while at the same time, an older individual might be less likely to engage society. The scientists suggested that this was a general result of individuals realizing their limitations as they get older, hence making way for younger individuals to fill their societal roles. Within disengagement theory, older individuals become more fragile as they grow old and they become less enthusiastically involved in their social circles. Rather than being voluntary, critics have pointed out, a lot of the disengagement tends to be forced. For example, if someone has to transfer into an assisted living or nursing home facility, their social circle can lessen as their friends may not be able to visit them as often, or they might start to die, leaving the individual with less social connections.

Depending on the society in which a person lives, the attitude towards the elderly and the way they should be cared for varies significantly. When disengagement theory was in its early developmental stages, there was a monumental shift occurring in society in terms of where older individuals lived. For hundreds of years, older adults lived at home and were taken care of by their families. Then again, this was quickly shifting towards a tendency for older individuals to be placed into assisted living or nursing facilities which often separated them from their families and social networks.

Among the main criticisms of disengagement theory is that it offers a reason for society being less welcoming to the seniors. It could also be utilized as an excuse as to the reason why it is more difficult for older adults to participate in social activities, rather than society finding ways to overcome some of those barriers. Like for instance, individuals who have just had a joint replacement operation often become isolated. This isolation is usually not what the person actually wants, but rather, it becomes extremely difficult for them to engage in their usual activities. They may not be able to find the right transportation or it might be too expensive. Additionally, the individuals who they will usually socialize with might have health problems of their own which prevent them from being social. Adults could belong to social organizations that don't accommodate their needs while they grow older.

Due to the numerous flaws that gerontologists, sociologists, and elder rights activists have seen with this theory, it remains quite controversial. When deciding where an older individual must reside, their preferences and rights should be the priority.