

GETTING OLDER AIN'T FOR SISSIES

TERRI GAITSKILL

Getting Older is a health – related series aimed at older adults and those who love and care for them. Presented by Terri Gaitskill, a masters' prepared registered nurse with more than 50 years' experience in both the clinical area and as a nurse educator. The primary focus of her clinical experience was as a women's health specialist, OB/Gyn, and Gynecologic surgery. The experience as a nurse educator was teaching at the Great Oaks School of Practical Nursing, Mt. St. Joseph University College of Nursing, University of Cincinnati, and Xavier University College of Nursing.

Physiologic Changes covers changes that occur as we age, for example, why we sound like a bowl of cereal when we get up in the morning. A system-by-system explanation of how ageing affects the body, the impact of a healthy lifestyle, medication management, and safety.

Mental and Emotional Challenges cover the many changes that occur as we age and transition into retirement, face the many losses, and healthy management of these challenges.

Advance Care Planning covers the conversations that need to happen as we age; end of life discussions i.e. healthcare directives, funeral planning, practical suggestions for the family. Not a legal or financial discussion, but a guide for having those “difficult” discussions.

Caring for the Caregiver covers the importance of planning for future caregiving options, Actual Caregiver needs, and what challenges are faced when you need to be cared for. Resources that are available for in home and assisted living and nursing home care.

Scams – recognize and defend against scams of all kinds. Phone, on-line, mail. What to do when you have been a victim of scammers.

Nutritional Needs – the nutritional needs of an older person are very different from that of a twenty-year-old. This program covers not only dietary needs, but the challenges of eating alone, physical changes that affect taste, weight gain of aging, and dietary constraints due to medical conditions, i.e. Heart disease and diabetes.

Heart Attack and Stroke covers the physical changes that cause heart attacks and strokes as well as recognizing the signs and symptoms, medication, and procedures recommended by the doctor, cardiac rehabilitation, diet and lifestyle changes.

Ageism – Among all the “isms” and “phobias”, ageism is the only one that deals with everyone, not just a specific group of people. Ashton Applewhite’s book, “This Chair Rocks”, her TED talk, and web pages introduce the obvious and latent, insidious culture we inhabit in this Youth obsessed world. We discuss options, personal experiences, and learn surprising statistics regarding ageing. An easy, helpful introduction to this problem in a safe, nonjudgemental environment.

Living Arrangement Options – As we age, our physical, mental, and caregiving needs change. Is the house you currently live in meeting those changes, or do you need to think about other options? A brief discussion about the many options available.

Caring for a Person With Dementia – Information to help understand the disease process, help for dealing with a loved one with dementia, and resources available.

Elder Abuse – Recognize when an elder is experiencing abuse, resources and how to report.

Each topic is covered using humor and practical suggestions in an interactive manner.

