

Table of Contents

Introduction	7
Chapter 1	
Functioning in old age in the light of gerontological theories	13
1.1. Biological theories of aging	14
1.2. Psycho-social theories of aging	17
1.3. Functional theories of aging	34
Chapter 2	
Natural changes in physical and mental functions in old age	41
2.1. Age-related external changes	44
2.2. Age-related systemic changes	45
2.2.1. Nervous system	46
2.2.2. Sensory analyzers	48
2.2.3. Musculoskeletal system	57
2.2.4. Cardiovascular system	60
2.2.5. Respiratory system	61
2.2.6. Digestive system	62
2.2.7. Excretory system	64
2.2.8. Endocrine system	65
2.2.9. Reproductive system	66
2.3. Mental changes in old age	68
2.3.1. Intelligence	68
2.3.2. Memory	74
2.3.3. Personality	77
2.3.4. Emotionality	82
2.3.5. Spirituality	85
2.3.6. Wisdom	91
Chapter 3	
Pathological changes in physical and mental functions in old age	95
3.1. Mobility disorders	97
3.1.1. Changes in the gait pattern	97
3.1.2. Changes in the sense of balance	100
3.1.3. Falls and fractures	102
3.2. Depression	106
3.3. Dementia	111
3.4. Sight and hearing impairment	115

3.4.1. Loss of sight in old age	115
3.4.2. Hearing loss in old age	122
3.4.3. Simultaneous damage to sight and hearing	127
3.5. Cardiovascular diseases	129
3.6. Urinary incontinence	132
Chapter 4	
Social functioning in old age	139
4.1. Social relations of old-age people	140
4.1.1. Acquaintances and friendships	142
4.1.2. Marriage	144
4.1.3. Parenthood	146
4.1.4. Grandparents	148
4.1.5. Siblings	151
4.2. Work	153
4.3. Retirement	157
4.4. Free time	159
4.5. Social support	167
Chapter 5	
Functional efficiency and impairment of people at an advanced age	173
5.1. The concept of functional ability and disability	174
5.1.1. Functional state	175
5.1.2. Disability	178
5.2. Prevalence of old-age disability	181
5.3. Reasons for loss of ability in old age	183
5.4. Effects of functional impairment in old age	188
5.5. Improvement of functional disorders among older people	192
5.5.1. The concept of rehabilitation	193
5.5.2. Prevalence of rehabilitation in old age	194
5.5.3. The specificity of rehabilitation needs in old age	197
Chapter 6	
Anticipating old age	203
6.1. Adaptation to old age	203
6.2. Successful aging	211
6.3. Active aging	217