

Understanding Age-related Psychological Changes:

A Secondary Qualitative Data Analysis

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Background

Psychological health:

"a dynamic state of internal equilibrium which enables individuals to use their abilities in harmony with universal values of society." (Heinz et al, 2015)

1 in 4 older adults report anxiety or depression (Koma et al, 2020)



Poor psychological health in older adults is closely correlated with poor health overall. (Luo et al, 2020)

Significance

We need to further understand psychological age-related changes from the perspective of older adults.

Doris Carnevali's

Engaging with Aging framework

Person-centered
Maintaining independence
Daily living tasks



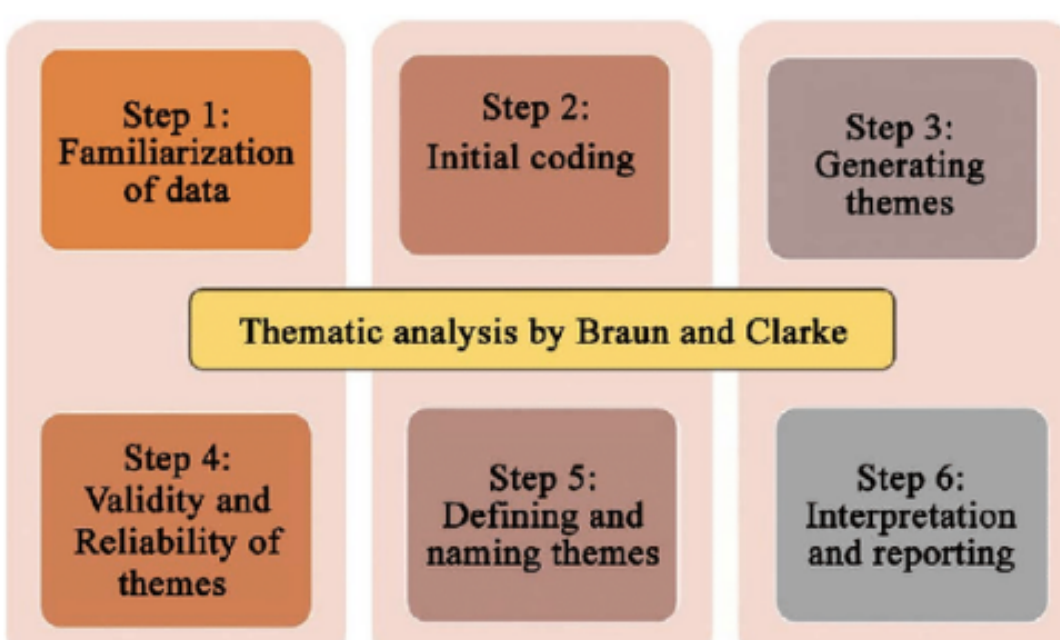
Managing age-related changes
Life satisfaction
Development of care strategies



Methods

Zoom interviews with 29 participants ages 64-98

- Using Braun and Clark's Six-phase Framework for Thematic Analysis



- Analyzed 900 pages of transcripts from 29 "Engaging with Aging" interviews
- Themes cross-checked with two people familiar with the data, and one person unfamiliar with the data
- Consulted with an older person to ensure relevancy of themes

Results



Changing worldview

"There has been a change in how I view the world... [it's] more teleological." (P 12, pg. 4)



Increased stress

"[I've developed] stress-related stomach problems." (P 14, pg. 19)

Less anger

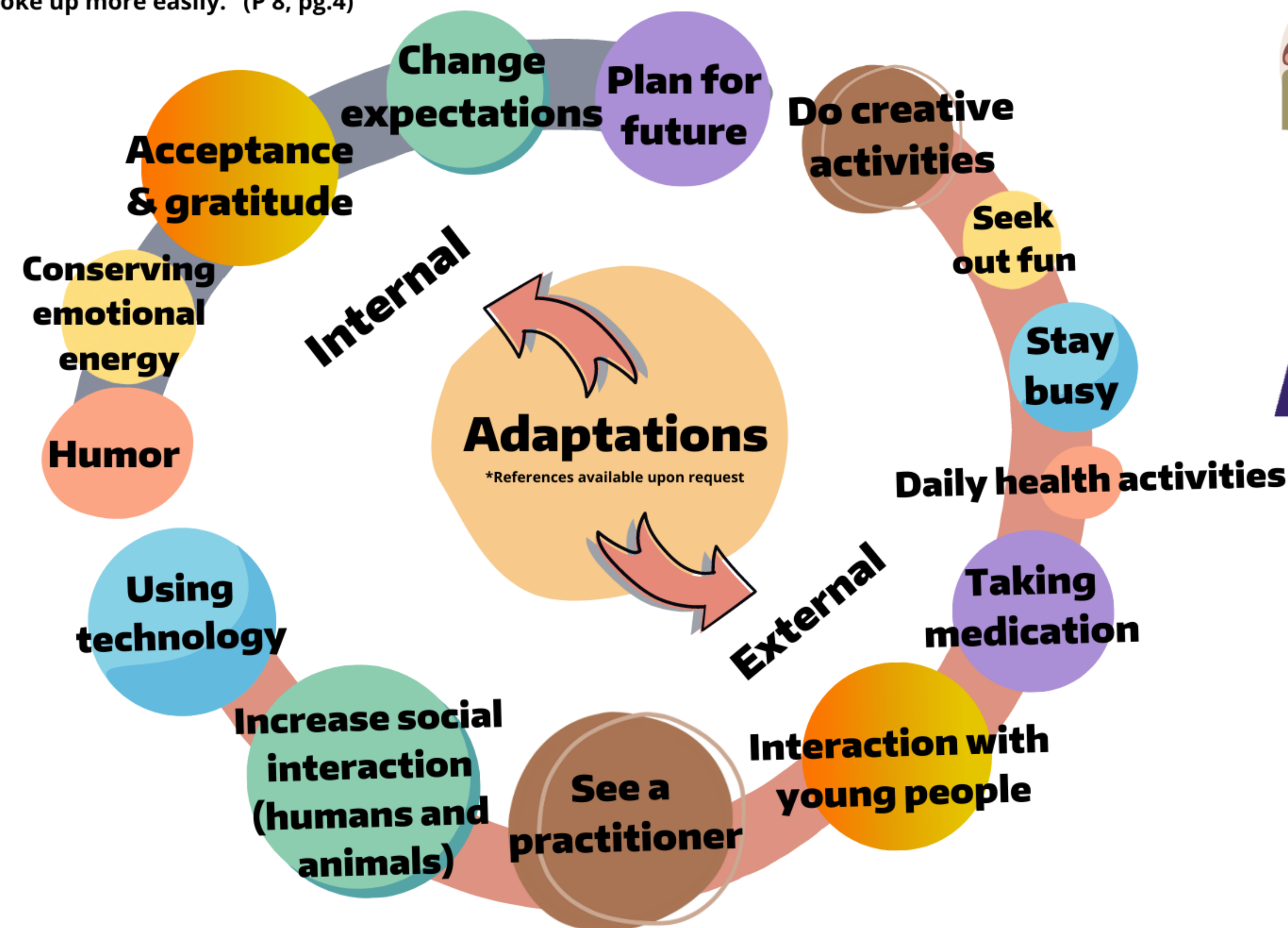
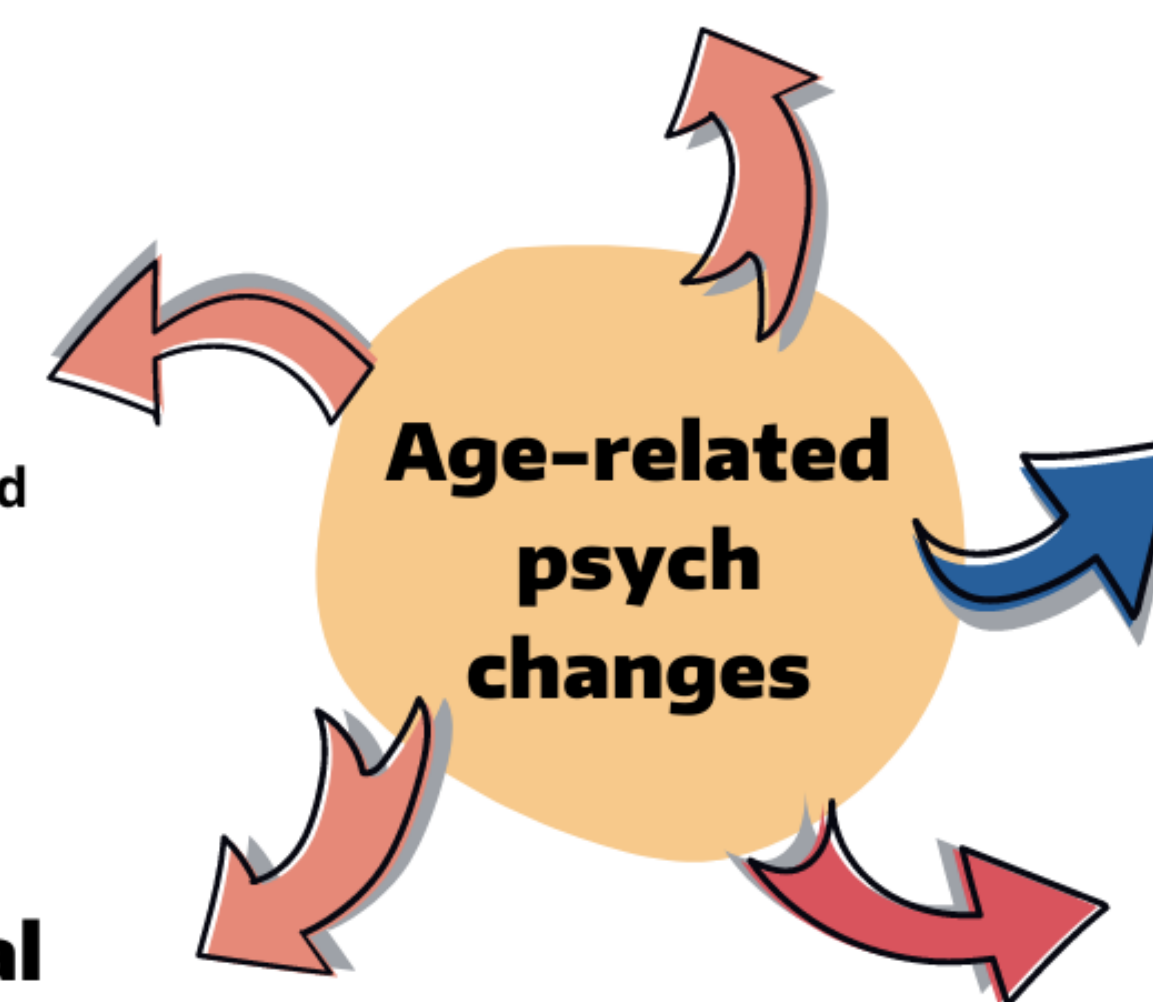
"I am less quick to get angry or annoyed than I used to be." (P 25, pg. 9)

More emotional

"I feel more emotionally fragile... like I choke up more easily." (P 8, pg.4)

Increased anger

"I have a quicker anger response, and people notice it." (P 27, pg. 24)



Conclusions

Older people's adaptations to age-related psychological changes are working.

Less distracted (P1, pg. 4; P10, pg.6)

Less anxiety (P10, pg. 6)

Increased memory (P5, pg. 34)

Decreased pain (P5, pg. 38)



More contentment (P1, pg. 11; P23, pg.40)

Increased confidence (P1, pg. 27)

More socially connected (P2, pg. 15)

Increased independence (P9, pg. 31)

Recommendations

Incorporate elder-generated adaptations into clinical care strategies to increase resilience.



More intergenerational activities.

Increased human and animal interaction.

Foster gratitude and acceptance.



For future studies:

- Ask more direct questions of psychological age-related changes.
- Get more older people's perspectives on psychological health.

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