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## PROMOTING THE WELL-BEING OF THE ELDERLY: IMPLICATIONS FOR GERAGOGY FROM MARTIN E.P. SELIGMAN'S CONCEPT OF WELL-BEING AND OTHER SELECTED THEORIES

### WSPIERANIE DOBROSTANU OSÓB STARSZYCH. IMPLIKACJE DLA GERAGOGIKI WYNIKAJĄCE Z KONCEPCJI DOBROSTANU MARTINA E.P. SELIGMANA ORAZ INNYCH WYBRANYCH TEORII

**Streszczenie:** W artykule przedmiotem analizy jest zagadnienie wspierania dobrostanu ludzi starszych (tj. osób mających 60 i więcej lat) rozpatrywane z punktu widzenia geragogiki jako subdyscypliny pedagogicznej analizującej edukacyjne aspekty starości i starzenia się człowieka. Celem artykułu jest ukazanie możliwości wspierania dobrostanu osób starszych w ramach oddziaływań geragogów. Teoretyczną ramę interpretacyjną stanowi tu koncepcja dobrostanu sformułowana przez Martina E.P. Seligmana, która opiera się na pięciu elementach, tj. pozytywnych emocjach i związkach, pochłonięciu oraz poczuciu sensu i osiągnięcia. Aby sformułować wskazania pod adresem praktyki skoncentrowanej na wspieraniu dobrostanu osób starszych posłużono się też koncepcją pozytywnego starzenia się. Obie koncepcje bowiem mają swoje źródła w psychologii pozytywnej i wzajemnie się dopełniają, stanowiąc niezwykle ważne inspiracje dla geragogiki. W tekście nawiązano również do innych teorii z zakresu nauk społecznych, m.in. teorii socjoemocjonalnej selektywności, teorii psychospołecznego rozwoju, teorii wychowania do starości oraz teorii wsparcia społecznego.

**Słowa kluczowe:** dobrostan, geragogika, osoby starsze, pozytywne starzenie się, wspieranie dobrostanu.

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**Abstract:** The subject of this article is the issue of supporting the well-being of the elderly (i.e., individuals 60 and older) considered from the point of view of geragogy as a pedagogical sub-discipline that analyzes the educational aspects of old age and human aging. The purpose of the article is to show the possibilities of promoting the well-being of the elderly within the framework of the interactions of geragogues. The theoretical interpretative framework here is the concept of well-being formulated by Martin E.P. Seligman, which is based on five elements: i.e. positive emotions, positive relationships, absorption, a sense of meaning, and a sense of achievement. The concept of positive aging was also used to formulate indications for practice focused on supporting the well-being of the elderly. This is because both concepts have their origins in positive psychology and complement each other, providing extremely important inspiration for geragogy. Other social science theories are also referred to in the text, such as the theory of socio-emotional selectivity, the theory of psychosocial development, the theory of education for old age, and the theory of social support.

**Keywords:** well-being, geragogy, elderly, positive aging, promoting well-being.

## Introduction

Gerontological issues are of interest to many sciences, including pedagogical sciences. This is because the duty of pedagogues is to promote the development of people belonging to all age categories. Issues related to pedagogical aspects of life in the phase of old age and human aging are primarily dealt with by andragogy, since the elderly are adults. However, older people are in the phase of so-called late adulthood, or old age. A pedagogical sub-discipline focused *strictly* on late adulthood is geragogy, interchangeably referred to as pedagogy of old age or pedagogy of aging and graying (Zych 2017). One of the primary goals of geragogy is to create conditions for successful old age, including educational support for the elderly and preparation for old age for younger generations. In geragogy, it is important to foster active, successful, and positive aging of the human individual. The practical interactions of geragogues are aimed at supporting the comprehensive development of the elderly (i.e. physical, mental, social, cultural, spiritual development). Within the framework of these activities, it is also important to provide the elderly person with conditions conducive to experiencing well-being.

Well-being is an important issue in the social sciences, especially in positive psychology. The term “well-being” is variously interpreted. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has defined well-being as health and as „a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (WHO 1948, p. 1). Well-being is also sometimes equated with related terms such as *happiness* and *quality of life* (Karaś 2019).

In the psychological literature, one can find many concepts of well-being, such as the onion theory of happiness, the theory of objective happiness, the concept of subjective well-being, the three-dimensional concept of well-being, the theory of psychological well-being, and the theory of eudaimonistic well-being (Karas

2019). Of the existing theories of well-being, the text uses the concept of well-being as fullness of life, developed by American psychologist Martin E.P. Seligman, a representative of positive psychology. Indeed, its creator uses mental constructs conducive to the development of the elderly, including pointing to the need to live life to the fullest (*flourishing*) (Seligman 2011). Seligman's statements are important from the point of view of geragogy, for which the educational promotion of the comprehensive development of older people is a primary goal.

The article undertakes to consider the issue of supporting the well-being of older people (i.e., people aged 60 and older) in terms of geragogy. The purpose of the article is to identify ways to promote the well-being of older people within the framework of pedagogical interventions. The theoretical interpretative framework is the concept of well-being formulated by M.E. P. Seligman based on five elements: positive emotions (including life satisfaction and happiness), absorption, positive relationships with others, a sense of meaning, and a sense of achievement. The concept of positive aging has also been used to formulate guidelines for practice focused on supporting the well-being of the elderly. Indeed, both concepts have their origins in positive psychology and complement each other, providing valuable inspiration for geragogy. Other selected theories from the social sciences are also referred to, i.e. Laura L. Carstensen's theory of socio-emotional selectivity, Erik Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, Aleksander Kaminski's theory of education for old age, and the social support theory.

### **Geragogy as a Theoretical and Practical Science**

The scope of geragogy's interests is viewed differently in Polish, German, and English-language literature, which is determined by the beginning of the formulation of this science in each country. In Poland (as in Germany) the pedagogical pedigree of geragogy prevails (it is most often referred to interchangeably as pedagogy of old age) and the subject of its interest is perceived broadly, indicating that it is education (including upbringing and education) of the elderly and preparation for old age. In the English-language literature, this science is referred to as "educational gerontology" and narrows its object of interest to the learning of the elderly and the preparation of personnel to work with seniors (Leszczyńska-Rejchert 2021).

Polish geragogy has its sources in the theoretical context of Polish social pedagogy. Both sciences assume that a person is a biopsychosocial being who grows in a given culture (Kamiński, 1982); that upbringing is the support of an individual's development (Kawula 1997); and that educational interactions can and should take place in every phase of a person's life (Halicki 2003; Kawula 2002). Geragogy is seen as a science that "analyzes old age as a phase of life from the perspective of pedagogical science, that is, in the context of educational support for the development of people who are in late adulthood" (Leszczyńska-Rejchert 2021, p. 33).

Geragogy is the theory and practice of supporting the development of the elderly. The prevailing assumption in geragogy is that the quality of life in old age is determined by physical, mental, social, and spiritual functioning not only in old age, but also in previous phases of life. In geragogy, activities of education to old age, for old age, in old age, and through old age are important.

Geragogy aims to provide conditions for active, successful, and positive aging. All this is to support the individual in achieving a successful old age. From the perspective of geragogy, a successful old age is an old age that provides the opportunity for full personal development (Uzar 2011). Terms such as “active aging,” “successful aging,” and “positive aging” have entered the canon of gerontological literature and are variously interpreted. Gerontologists agree with the WHO, that *active aging* is “the process of optimizing opportunities related to health, participation and safety, aiming to improve the quality of life of older people” (WHO 2002, p. 12). On the other hand, “thoughtful aging” has multiple meanings, as concepts of successful aging—initially formulated mainly by psychologists (Baltes, Smith 2003)—are determined by analyzing the socio-cultural conditions in which individuals live (Halicki 2010). One of the first interpretations of the term sounded like this: “a person’s ability to adapt optimally to old age” (Hill 2009, p. 38). Polish geragogues have also taken to defining the term. For example, Jerzy Halicki equates successful aging with acceptance of one’s own aging process and quality of life in old age—physically, mentally, and in relation to the external world (Halicki 2010). Anna Leszczyńska-Rejchert views successful aging as aging with an awareness of the possibility of continuous development (i.e., the possibilities inherent in the potential of the individual and his or her living environment), as well as the possibility of receiving assistance in development from individuals and institutions (Leszczyńska-Rejchert 2021). In turn, the term “positive aging” has its origins in positive psychology, and its essence is most clearly expressed in the following words of Robert D. Hill: “Among the many features of positive psychology that may be relevant to the construction of a term describing human aging, the focus on a person’s ability to act, overcome and achieve, rather than on passive avoidance of life’s problems and on fear of pain, disability and limitation of opportunities, deserves emphasis. Positive psychology therefore enables a new approach to old problems and stereotypes of aging. This period in a person’s life is undoubtedly a time of visible psycho-physical deterioration, which becomes an important aspect of existence, and at the same time forces one to cope with problems of cognitive regression in order to maintain quality of life. It is the way of conceptualizing aging in health and in illness, while experiencing happiness and well-being, that is the decisive hallmark of positive aging” (Hill 2009, p. 15). From the perspective of geragogy, the most important premise of the concept of positive aging is that “a person can influence the course of the aging process” (Hill 2009, p. 43). In this sentence is expressed both the subjectivity of the individual and his responsibility for the quality of his own life, including the quality of life in old age.

Positive aging obliges a person to live a life of discipline, concerning the mental sphere (taking care to experience positive emotions, controlling one's own thoughts, performing mind-enhancing exercises) the nutritional sphere, as well as taking up various forms of activity (Hill 2009).

### **Martin E.P. Seligman's Concept of Well-Being: Seligman's General Approach**

Martin E.P. Seligman believes that "the subject of positive psychology is well-being, the best measure of well-being is personal flourishing (living life to the fullest), and the goal of positive psychology is to intensify personal flourishing" (Seligman 2011, p. 28). As Seligman points out, "the theory of well-being is essentially a theory of unforced choices, and its five components are those things that free people choose as ends in themselves" (Seligman 2011, p. 33). In his view, well-being is "a construct made up of several measurable elements—each of these elements is something real and is part of well-being, but none of them individually defines well-being by itself. They are elements or components of well-being, and each individually is measurable" (Seligman 2011, p. 31–32).

Well-being, as conceptualized by Martin E.P. Seligman, is a construct (as opposed to happiness, which is "something real") that consists of the following elements:

1. Positive emotion—also known as the "pleasant life," which includes such subjective measures as satisfaction with life and happiness, which is recognized by the fact that the individual feels, for example, pleasure, ecstasy, elation, comfort, convenience, warmth.
2. Absorption (*engagement*)—the "engaged life," expressed in such subjective and retrospective evaluations as the feeling that time has stopped; total absorption in the activities performed; perception of performing certain activities as a wonderful time.
3. Positive relationships—related to feeling the ability to be loved and to do good deeds for other people.
4. Sense of meaning—the "life for ideas," i.e., "a sense of belonging to something we recognize as greater than ourselves, and a willingness to serve it."
5. Sense of accomplishment—this is "life as the pursuit of achievement" (Seligman 2011, pp. 34–37).

At the same time, Seligman stresses that each element of well-being must have three characteristics: 1) it must contribute to well-being; 2) individuals must seek it for its own sake (not to get some other element); 3) it must be definable and measurable independently of the other elements (Seligman 2011).

## Creating Conditions of Well-Being for the Elderly—Implications for Geragogy from Seligman's Concept of Well-Being

This part of the article will consider—from the point of view of geragogy—the factors that, in light of Seligman's concept, contribute to the well-being of an elderly person. In particular, we will discuss practical actions that can be recommended and/or implemented by a person in the role of a geragogue (i.e., a person professionally engaged in supporting the development of an elderly person, such as a psychologist, psychotherapist, formal caregiver, social worker) so that the elements of well-being indicated by Seligman appear in the life of an elderly person.

Seligman singled out positive emotions first in his concept of well-being, including feelings of satisfaction with life and happiness. He stressed that positive emotions should be savored, meaning that they intensify and prolong the duration of these emotions. In this aspect he recommended, among other things, making a plan for activities that give us pleasure, performing them according to the plan, and focusing on savoring them.

How, then, to support an elderly person in shaping conditions for experiencing positive emotions? Based on an analysis of Seligman's concept, as well as the concept of positive aging, it can be concluded that life satisfaction and happiness are fostered by, among other things, optimism, discipline, showing gratitude, altruism and spreading goodness, the ability to forgive, striving for a sense of satisfaction, and self-improvement. These determinants of positive emotions can be “worked out” using the concept of positive aging, according to which it is never too late for anything and everything can be learned (Hill 2009).

Optimism is extremely important in human life. Scientific research confirms that optimism prevents disease, prolongs life, and is also a determinant of a successful old age (Hill 2009; Leszczyńska-Rejchert 2021; Seligman 2011). In order for the perception of the world to have an optimistic dimension, it is recommended in the concept of positive aging to have control over one's own thoughts. For instance, when an elderly person tends to worry, he or she should be encouraged to focus thoughts on things that are sources of satisfaction. Conversely, those with a negative attitude toward the world should observe those who are optimistic and focus on the benefits of optimism (Hill 2009). Seniors should look at the positive sides of life rather than focusing on problems, which involves, for example, showing gratitude for care and concern, and enjoying positive experiences (Hill 2009). Seligman, on the other hand, proposes viewing bad events as temporary, changeable, and isolated from other events. According to him, an exercise in this area involves, for example, thinking back to a door that has closed in one's life and remembering what other door opened at that time. According to Seligman, optimism is also fostered by focusing one's thought processes on questions like: What went well on a given day and why did it happen? What advantages and strengths do I see in myself? What can I do to take advantage of them? Seligman conducted a scientific study with

participants of various ages and showed that the exercises he suggested help to look at daily life in a positive way and reduce the level of depression (Seligman 2011).

In the old age phase, as the concept of positive aging emphasizes, discipline is needed “in transforming perceptions and cultivating positive emotions to deal with the real problems of old age” (Hill 2009, p. 16). This includes taking care of one’s health, i.e., eating a sensible diet, engaging in physical activity, and avoiding stimulants (Hill 2009).

Showing gratitude—Seligman emphasizes that: “Gratitude can make your life happier and more satisfaction appears in it. Feeling gratitude is beneficial because it brings with it a pleasant memory of a good event. On top of that, by expressing gratitude, we strengthen our relationship with the person” (Seligman 2011, p. 51). He encourages showing gratitude in a thoughtful and purposeful way, which can contribute to increased levels of well-being (including feeling happier) and reduced depression. Here he suggests as an exercise writing a letter to a specific person expressing gratitude (Seligman 2011).

The ability to forgive—The importance of the ability to forgive is demonstrated by Seligman’s following statements: “When we harbor anger and bitterness, these feelings contribute to the maintenance of depression and undermine well-being... Forgiveness is a powerful tool that can transform feelings of anger and bitterness into neutral and in some cases even positive emotions” (Seligman 2011, p. 66). Among the exercises to facilitate forgiveness, he recommends writing a letter to the person who let us down and describing his or her feelings along with words of forgiveness (Seligman 2011). The concept of positive aging also draws attention to the value of forgiveness, which is seen here as a facilitator of establishing and maintaining relationships, but also as a component of *positive spirituality*, which “focuses on the intrinsic motivation for self-improvement (or enhancing the well-being of others) as a way of increasing one’s own value in the present and future as part of personal and social processes aimed at spreading good in the world” (Hill 2009, p. 227). Positive spirituality is also based on altruism and gratitude. The concept of positive aging treats these traits as life skills that can be learned (Hill 2009).

The pursuit of self-improvement versus a sense of satisfaction—Seligman stresses that maintaining well-being, as well as increasing well-being, is fostered by an attitude toward life reflected in the words “this satisfies me” or “it can be as it is.” That’s why he suggests thinking in these terms more often. He believes that a “it must be perfect” attitude can contribute to lower levels of well-being (Seligman 2011).

With regard to this element of well-being, it is worth mentioning that, in the light of Laura L. Carstensen’s theory of socio-emotional selectivity, the emotional dimension of life becomes the most important in old age, due to the perception of a shorter lifespan, and there is a natural tendency to focus on positive emotions (Kilian 2020). Therefore, older people need to be supported in this area in their

geragogical interventions. For example, it is advisable to create space for seniors to reflect on their lives in terms of their achievements in different spheres (personal, family, professional), rather than encouraging them to focus on negative emotions, e.g. by analyzing what they have failed to achieve in life.

Absorption—the second element in Seligman’s concept of well-being—is related to the “engaged life.” Older people who have interests and passions and/or those who enjoy being involved in a particular sphere of life (such as family, religious, or professional life) often experience a sense that time has stopped, are completely absorbed in the activities they are performing, and perceive performing certain activities as a wonderful time. How can a geragogue assist the individual in this area? Neither Seligman’s concept nor the concept of positive aging provide specific guidance in this aspect. They can be found in Alexander Kamiński’s theory of education for old age. In this regard it is necessary to create conditions for the elderly to seek new interests and assist them in developing the passions they already have (Kamiński 1982). It is worth doing this using existing institutions and organizations for the support of the elderly, such as care homes, other support centers, twenty-four-hour social welfare homes, senior clubs, and universities and academies for adults. In addition, seniors can develop their interests and passions within the activities of generally accessible to adults (Aleksander 2013), such as community centers, neighborhood clubs, open universities, and intergenerational universities. Activities in this area are undertaken in Poland by non-governmental organizations, which, among other things, implement projects addressed to senior citizens and participants in intergenerational groups.

Absorption in the context of participation is also addressed in the concept of active ageing promoted by the WHO, which encourages international communities to create optimal conditions for healthy and active living for older people, including their involvement (participation) in social life (WHO 2002).

Positive relationships with others comprise the third element of the concept discussed. Seligman recommends ensuring good interpersonal communication that provides mutual understanding. Among the exercises in this area, he suggests recognizing the character strengths of family members and partner(s), and establishing a day to celebrate one’s own and loved ones’ strengths (Seligman 2011). In the concept of positive aging, the basis for good relationships is openness to others, understanding, respect, kindness, tolerance of differences, support, and love (Hill 2009). At the same time, both self-love and love for others is important. Loving relationships prolong life, so it is advisable to constantly take care of them.

The concept of positive aging further exposes the need to nurture so-called flexibility, i.e., to shape one’s ability to implement new strategies of thinking or behaving, such as adjusting goals and priorities to changed circumstances, seeking



support and care. Flexibility is also associated with the ability to forgive oneself and others, to reformulate personal goals, as well as the ability to engage with others (Hill 2009).

From the point of view of geragogy, the most relevant are the relationships of the elderly with family members, friends, colleagues/colleagues, neighbors, co-workers, acquaintances. This is because, in light of the theory of social support (derived from psychological sciences and transferred to pedagogy by Stanisław Kawula), the aforementioned relationships are the basis of the social support network—extremely important for the elderly. Therefore, the geragogue should take special care to ensure that the elderly person has a good relationship with those closest to him or her.

L.L. Carstensen's theory of socio-emotional selectivity suggests that seniors seek to maintain social relationships primarily with people who contribute to their emotional well-being, and therefore they select their social relationships and choose only those that are both proven to be rewarding and fulfilling (Kilian 2020). Geragents should keep this in mind in their practical activities and encourage older people to maintain relationships based on positive emotions, while supporting them in withdrawing from relationships involving negative emotions. Therefore, an important task of a geragogue is to diagnose the social network of a given older person and to determine with which people he/she maintains relationships with that trigger emotions of a positive nature, and with which ones he/she maintains emotions of a negative nature (Leszczyńska-Rejchert 2021).

Sense of meaning—the fourth element of Seligman's concept—is related to what might be termed “living for ideas,” a sense of belonging to something and a desire to serve it, as well as the feeling that what we do in life is valuable (Seligman 2011). In Poland the elderly usually find a sense of meaning in family life. This is because family is one of the most important values in life for them. They are ready to make a great commitment to family members. Health is another important value for older people and in old age, health-promoting activities are one of the most important forms of activity. Other important areas of self-realization for Polish seniors include religious activity, social activity (e.g. self-help and self-government activities undertaken within the framework of UTWs, care centers, and 24-hour institutions), and cultural activity (Leszczyńska-Rejchert 2019). In view of the above, the geragogue should create optimal conditions for the elderly person to be able to pursue activities that give him or her a sense of meaning to their lives. If the older person wishes to maintain contact with his or her family, but this has been broken, the geragogue should seek to reactivate family relationships.

A sense of achievement is the fifth component of well-being according to Seligman. In order to be successful, he recommends focusing on one's own skills and making an appropriate effort, i.e., devoting a certain amount of time to a given task, including exercise (Seligman 2011). The concept of positive aging, on the other hand, recommends using one's resources to cope with changes (including

those resulting from declining health), such as using an assimilation strategy, which involves finding other ways to achieve a goal, and/or an accommodative strategy, implemented when a goal cannot be achieved, which is based on changing preferences or attitudes. It is also recommended to focus on personal development through various forms of lifelong learning, if necessary to seek and/or create new ways of learning that are tailored to one's personal learning style and opportunities for self-development (Hill 1990).

Those involved in supporting seniors in their development should create the conditions for the senior to have the opportunity to have a sense of achievement. These opportunities may include: writing memoirs, stories, poems, artwork, acquiring specialised knowledge and/or skills etc.

In the old age phase, many people ask themselves: what have I achieved in life? Have I been successful, and in what spheres? The balance of life can be positive or negative. A positive life balance contributes to feelings of well-being (Hill 2009) and motivates people to take on life's challenges. Unfortunately, some older people experience a negative life balance and must cope with this negative balance sheet. It is important to remember that a negative balance sheet carries the risk of depression and even suicide attempts, and in such situations the support of a psychiatrist and psychologist is essential.

In this respect, it is also worth referring to Erik H. Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, according to which it is in old age (i.e. the eighth and final stage of personality development) that one can reach full maturity. As the author of the theory points out, the human being in old age tends to be integrated or despairing. Integration manifests itself in the experience of harmony and coherence and contentment with one's present life, as well as in the acceptance that death is the natural order of things (Erikson 1998). Despair, manifested by grief over missed opportunities, fear of loss of fitness, often accompanies a person in the ninth stage of personality development (i.e. over the age of 80), added to E.H. Erikson's theory by his wife Joan M. Erikson (Erikson, Erikson 2012). Despair at this stage is the result of a significant impairment or loss of certain bodily functions, resulting in lower self-esteem, lower self-confidence, loss of independence and loss of control over one's life. The antidotes to despair include approaching life with humility, maintaining faith, accepting one's present and past, and integrating the past with the present and future, which is associated with transcendence, i.e. transcending the limits of time and the universe (Erikson, Erikson 2012; Kilian 2020). Beata Bugajska complemented the theory developed by E. Erikson and J. Erikson, emphasising the necessity of courage („the courage to live life in one's own unique way”), especially in the ninth phase: „when, complemented by wisdom, it will enable a person to face illness, suffering and death itself, but also to face his or her own past and the so called ‚transcendental future” ( Bugajska 2015 , p. 32).

It is therefore advisable for geragogy to motivate older people to see the positive aspects of their own existence. They should pay special attention to older people

experiencing despair and support them appropriately, e.g. by helping them to develop spiritually, by helping them to satisfy their transcendental interests, by encouraging them to be courageous in taking up the challenges of the eighth or ninth phase of personal development.

### **Summary, Conclusions, and Propositions**

Geragogics adopts a developmental model of old age, according to which old age is a time of improvement of a person aiming at fullness of life (Dubas 2004). Therefore, Seligman's concept of well-being is important from the point of view of geragogy. The well-being of an elderly person is the result of various factors. However, given the theoretical assumptions of positive psychology, reflected in Seligman's concept of well-being discussed above and in the concept of positive aging, the elderly person himself or herself should play a huge role in this regard. Seligman's concept of well-being and the concept of positive aging provide many clues as to how we can take care of the feeling of well-being, including in the late adulthood (old age) phase.

Seligman stresses that five elements are necessary for a person to fully flourish, i.e., positive emotions and relationships with others, absorption, and a sense of meaning and achievement. Individuals in the role of geragogue are in a position, within the framework of their interactions, to facilitate the senior's achievement of these five dimensions. It is therefore essential to educate professionals who support the elderly in this regard. It would be good for them to be familiar with Seligman's concept and to encourage older people to engage in well-being activities. Supporting the well-being of the elderly, according to Seligman, should also entail requiring professionals involved in supporting seniors in their development to show them warmth, empathy, inspire trust, be authentic, and have a good rapport with them (Seligman 2011).

In addition, it is worth adding that the mental well-being of seniors is co-dependent on their physical well-being as reflected in the maxim, "a sound mind in a sound body." Great importance is therefore attached to health education activities in the lives of the elderly. It is advisable for professionals acting as geragogues to motivate seniors to take part in such education. The main goals of an individual striving to experience well-being in late adulthood should be to undertake various types of activities aimed at maintaining good physical, mental and social health, as well as good mental and physical fitness for as long as possible. The primary task of gerogists is to support older people in their all-round development so that, in line with Seligman's concept of well-being, they can reach and enjoy 'fullness of life' until the end of their days.

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