



## Join the movement to stop ageism!

1. **“Ageism”** – term coined by Dr. Robert Butler in 1968.
  2. **Rooted in history:**  
Started when moved from agrarian to industrialized societies.
  3. **Rooted in deeply-held human concerns** and fears about our own potential vulnerability.
  4. **Four types of ageism** – International Longevity Center at Columbia University
    - A. Personal Ageism
    - B. Institutional Ageism
    - C. Intentional Ageism
    - D. Unintentional Ageism
  5. **It’s everywhere: Have you noticed?** Anti-aging creams, advertising, greeting cards, media, TV/films, Internet, social media
  6. **Costs of ageism:** Productivity, cultural sensibility, morality and ... HEALTH
  7. **Focus on Health** (Research: Ageism Becca Levy, professor at Yale School of Public Health)
    - A. Older persons with positive age stereotypes: 44% more likely to recover from severe disability than those with negative stereotypes.
    - B. Positive age stereotypes improve memory performance and memory self-efficacy
    - C. Negative stereotypes of aging decrease memory performance
    - D. Negative age stereotypes contribute to hearing decline.
    - E. Negative age stereotypes at a young age = earlier cardiovascular events.
      1. Make it more negative by one point = increases by 11%
      2. Increase in positivity by two standard deviations = 80% risk reduction
  5. F. Those who believe, “As I age, health problems are inevitable” engage in fewer preventive behaviors.
    1. Affects sense of personal control and will to live
    2. Less likely to see a physician regularly
    3. Less likely to seek preventive care, e.g., blood pressure screening or flu vaccines
    4. “Everything caused by my old age” = Higher levels of arthritis, hearing loss and heart disease
    5. Affects alcohol consumption, diet, exercise, medication compliance, seatbelt use, tobacco use, regular doctor visits
    6. Equal even controlling for age, functional health, gender, race and self-rated health
  - G. Positive self-perceptions of aging increase longevity by 7.5 years!
    1. Findings equally robust for men/women, over/under 60, over/under 70, better/worse functional health, high/low socioeconomic status, loneliness or not
    2. Greater survival factor than blood pressure and cholesterol, lower body mass index, history of smoking, tendency to exercise
  - H. We need new interventions that improve aging self-perceptions – and they must be directed at both younger and older people
8. **What can WE do?**
    - A. Look at our/your language? “He’s 85 but/still sharp/driving/working, etc.”
    - B. Let’s stop hiding or fibbing about our age, denigrating our age or apologizing for it.
    - C. Let’s look at our programs
    - D. Let’s call out ageism when we see it.
  9. **Let’s start an ANTI-AGEISM movement.**

## Selected Bibliography on Ageism

### Scholarly:

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- Levy, B. R. (2009). Stereotype Embodiment: A Psychosocial Approach to Aging. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 18, 332-336.

### Book

- Lachs, Mark, MD, *Treat Me, Not My Age: A Doctor's Guide to Getting the Best Care as you or a Loved One Gets Older*, Viking, 2010.

### Popular Media and Internet:

- Love, Robert, Editor-in-Chief, "Who's Afraid of a Touch of Gray," *AARP The Magazine*, June/July 2014, Page 6.
- "You're Old, I'm Not: How Americans Really Feel About Aging," *AARP The Magazine*, February/March 2014, pp. 40-43
- "Combating Ageism in Media and Marketing," Ageism Taskforce at the International Longevity Center
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- Brenoff, Ann, Facebook Encourages Age Discrimination, Negative Age Stereotypes, According to Yale Study, March 13, 2013, [www.huffingtonpost.com](http://www.huffingtonpost.com)
- Ageism in Healthcare: Time for a Change, by Richard Currey PA-C, *Aging Well*, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 16,
- Ageism: the Silent Killer, *OpenSalon*, November 12, 2013,

Visit the **Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging** website to find links to these and other resources on ageism — [www.wihealthyaging.org](http://www.wihealthyaging.org).



**AGEISM** is  
Everywhere.

And It's **BAD** for  
Everyone's Health

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