

# *Older Adults: Fact or Fiction?*

## *On Your Own*

Often we miss out on what older adults have to offer because of misconceptions we hold about aging. Test your knowledge about people over sixty-five using the quiz below.

*Check T for true or F for false next to each statement.*

	T	F		T	F
1. The majority of old people (past age sixty-five) are senile (i.e. defective memory, disoriented, or demented).	—	—	14. The reaction time of most old people tends to be slower than reaction time of younger people.	—	—
2. All five senses tend to decline in old age.	—	—	15. In general, most old people are pretty much alike.	—	—
3. Most old people have no interest in, or capacity for, sexual relations.	—	—	16. The majority of old people are seldom bored.	—	—
4. Lung capacity tends to decline in old age.	—	—	17. The majority of old people are socially isolated and lonely.	—	—
5. The majority of old people feel miserable most of the time.	—	—	18. Older workers have fewer accidents than younger workers.	—	—
6. Physical strength tends to decline in old age.	—	—	19. Over 15 percent of the U.S. population is now age sixty-five or over.	—	—
7. At least one-tenth of the aged are living in long-stay institutions (i.e. nursing homes, mental hospitals, homes for the aged, etc.).	—	—	20. Most medical practitioners tend to give low priority to the aged.	—	—
8. Aged drivers have fewer accidents per person than drivers under age sixty-five.	—	—	21. The majority of older people have incomes below the poverty level.	—	—
9. Most older workers cannot work as effectively as younger workers.	—	—	22. The majority of old people are working or would like to have some kind of work to do (including housework and volunteer work).	—	—
10. About 80 percent of the aged are healthy enough to carry out their normal activities.	—	—	23. Older people tend to become more religious as they age.	—	—
11. Most old people are set in their ways and unable to change.	—	—	24. The majority of old people are seldom irritated or angry.	—	—
12. Old people usually take longer to learn something new.	—	—	25. The health and socioeconomic status of older people (compared to younger people) in the year 2000 will probably be about the same as now.	—	—
13. It is almost impossible for most old people to learn new things.	—	—			

### **Answers**

1. F 2. T 3. F 4. T 5. F 6. T 7. F 8. T 9. F 10. T 11. F 12. T 13. F 14. T 15. F 16. T 17. F 18. T  
19. F 20. T 21. F 22. T 23. F 24. T 25. F

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*Aging is not a reason for despair but a basis for hope, not a slow decaying but a gradual maturing, not a fate to be undergone but a chance to be embraced.*

**Henri J.M. Nouwen**  
**Aging**