



## Middle Adulthood: A Lifespan Perspective

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Middle adulthood is a critical period of the life course. How we develop in middle age—the central period of our lives—can influence how well we cope in our later years. **Middle Adulthood: A Lifespan Perspective** explores these issues by bringing together a distinguished group of international contributors associated with a range of prestigious longitudinal studies.

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## **Editorial Review**

### Review

*"This edited book is a very interesting and welcome addition to the series of publications recently devoted to the long neglected issue of development during middle adulthood. It adopts a truly lifespan approach, by considering not only development between 40 and 65 years of age, but also the impact that adolescence and young adulthood can exert on midlife, and the continuity from middle age into old age. Through its 10 chapters, it covers a broad range of topics, from the development of the self to cognitive changes to genetic influences. All chapters provide empirical data, based on major longitudinal studies on adult development, with an international coverage. The book also provides a unified perspective, in that midlife is not to be considered a period of mere stability as has often been proposed, but evinces large variability both across individuals and across psychological functions; all chapters demonstrate nicely the necessity of adopting a multidimensional view on development. It represents a well informed synthesis of the current work on midlife development from leading researchers in the field and will prove useful both for advanced students and for other developmental scholars."* (Anik de Ribaupierre)

*In the early 21st century, with increased longevity and quality of life a real prospect for many in the Western world, Sherry Willis and Mike Martin have succeeded in bringing together contributions from some of foremost researchers in the field of mid-life developmental research.*

*Adults currently reaching the middle of their lives are in a unique position, experiencing the rewards and the challenges of the dramatic social, political and technological changes of the 20th century. The strength of this book lies in its' ability to consider aspects of ageing from both American and European perspectives against a unique temporal context. The challenges for researchers are clearly identified, raising questions regarding the cultural validity of contemporary life-span research in an increasingly shrinking world as individuals both acknowledge common experiences and strive to maintain their uniqueness and diversity.*

This volume underpins the need for a biopsychosocial research perspective into the challenges of mid-life and makes a valuable contribution to the on-going debate considering the affect of the pluralisation of life styles on life-span development.

(Dr. Kathryn Bullen)

*A very strong volume. The combination of a longitudinal studies research base and an international collection of studies makes this a unique and unprecedented entry in this field....This book will clearly be a 'must-have' for scholars interested in midlife.*

(Michael Marsiske)

*Midlife is no longer an 'uncharted territory' in human development. A group of outstanding researchers from different countries focuses on this peak period in the life span, when people are at the height of social power and have access to a rich supply of resources. Various views, including historical, cultural, and socio-structural perspectives, are adopted; reflections on the peculiarities of midlife and how it is intertwined with earlier and later periods of the life span are presented;*

*finally, comprehensive reviews of studies on almost all relevant domains of human development (cognition and metacognition, personality, self and identity, physical and mental health and psychological well-being) are given and provide a colorful picture of what midlife in these days may be all about.*

(Sigrun-Heide Filipp)

The book is unique because of the focus on longitudinal studies and international perspectives. There is no other book like it; existing volumes on mid-life development are either outdated or more narrowly focused. The author list is an impressive set of scholars....The chapters in this volume bring into clear focus the promise of the life span developmental perspective.... this book will be useful both as an advanced undergraduate or graduate course text and as a resource for scholars.

(Rosemary Blieszner)

#### About the Author

Sherry L. Willis is Professor of Human Development at The Pennsylvania State University. She received her Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from the University of Texas at Austin. Her research interests include: adult cognitive development with a focus on middle age, cognitive training in later adulthood, and everyday problem solving in adulthood. She is a co-director of the Seattle Longitudinal Study with K. Warner Schaie, and has co-authored the textbook *Adult Development and Aging, Fifth Edition*. She is co-editor of two other books on midlife: *Life in the Middle* (with J. Reid) and *The Baby Boomers* (with S. Whitbourne). She is a Fellow of the Gerontological Society of America, the American Psychological Society, and Divisions 15 and 20 of the American Psychological Association, and a past-president of APA Division 20, Adult Development and Aging (1993-1994). In 1992, she received the Pattishall Distinguished Research Award and in 1999 the Pennsylvania State University Faculty Scholar Medal for Outstanding Achievement.

Mike Martin is Professor for Gerontopsychology and Director of the Center of Gerontology at The University of Zurich, Switzerland. He received a Master's Degree at the University of Georgia, his Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology at The University of Mainz, Germany, and his habilitation at The German Center for Research on Ageing at The University of Heidelberg. His research focuses on longitudinal and experimental studies of cognitive and social development across the lifespan, including studies examining predictors of development in childhood, middle adulthood, old, and extreme old age. Recent publications include an encyclopedia of gerontology and a textbook on the psychological aspects of aging.

#### **Users Review**

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