



Adapt with Purpose

#Activities Strong
March 2025

Our Goals

- **Define the role of purpose in the aging process** and understand its impact on mental, emotional, and physical well-being.
- **Explore how purpose can serve as an adaptive tool** to help older adults navigate life transitions, including changes in health, environment, and social roles.
- **Utilize a purpose-identification tool** to pinpoint and activate a meaningful aspect of purpose that supports resilience and social engagement.

LIFE = + 7 Years



Allen



health

Support Brain Health

Improve Sleep

Boost Immune System

Maintain Mobility

Reduce Loneliness

Less Chronic Pain

Less Depression

Feel Happier

Recovery Faster from Illness + Injury

Increase Grit + Hope

Reduce Risk of Stroke

Reduce Risk of Loneliness

cognitive

mental

social

spiritual

emotional

physical



Purpose is not a
role or a goal



PURPOSE

DEFINED

Unique Innate Ability to

Give & Get

MEANING + JOY

Every. Single. Day

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The Purpose Question

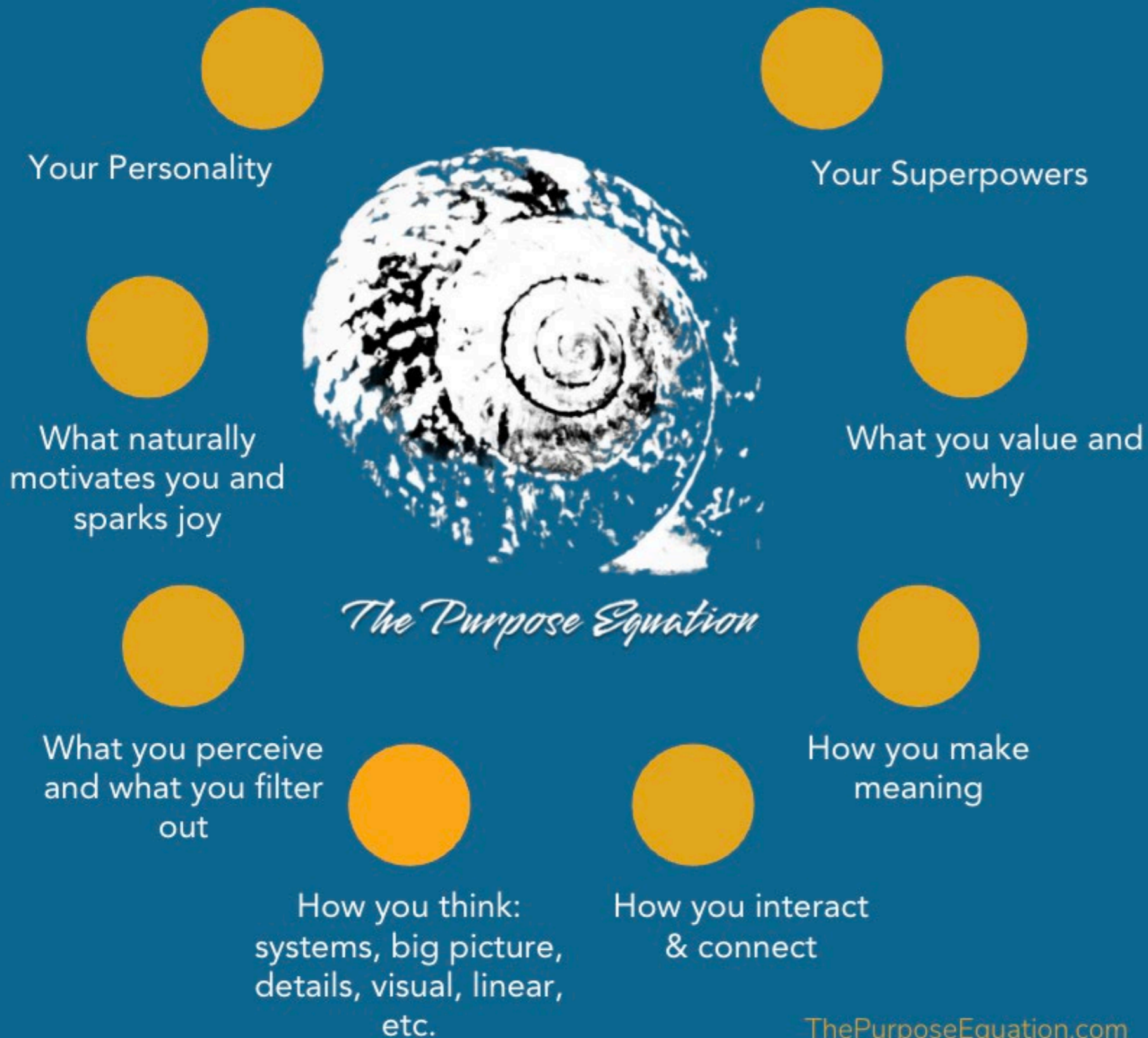


I used to...

Retirement Cliff



Your Unique Operating System



ThePurposeEquation.com

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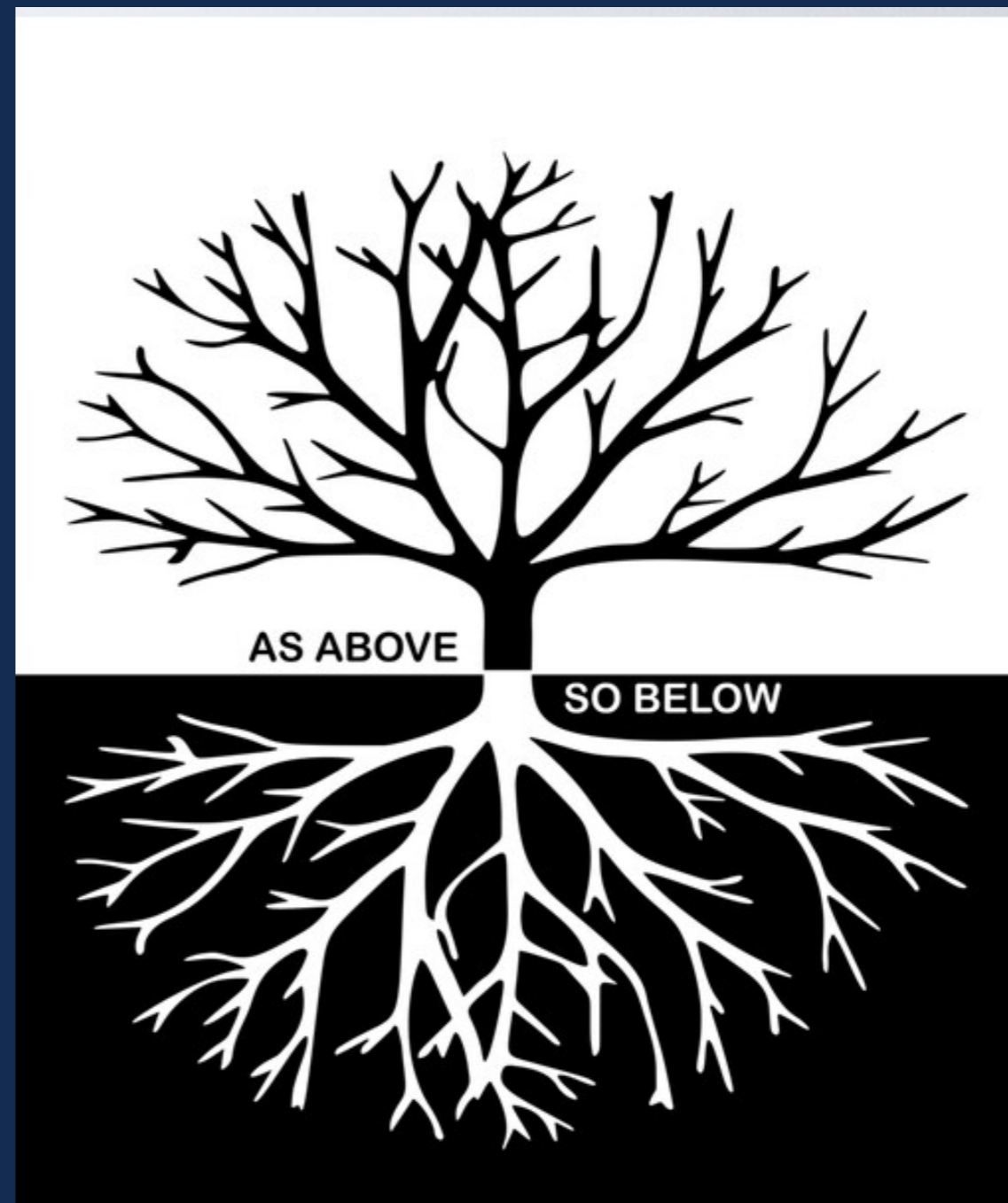
Adjust in Winds of Change

What We are DOing

Roles
Goals
Interests
Hobbies
Abilities

Who we are BEing

Meaning
Joy
Strengths
(PURPOSE) Our Root System



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ARCS (Age-related changes)

Hearing

Vision

Mobility

Cognitive

Psychological

Strength

Stamina

Sexual

Sleep

Smell

Pain

Taste

Balance

Appearance

Grief



Carnevali DL, Primomo J, Belza B. Engaging With Aging: A Framework for Managing Daily Living. *J Gerontol Nurs.* 2019 Dec 1;45(12):13-20. doi: 10.3928/00989134-20191105-02. PMID: 31755538.

Ge S, Wu KC, Frey H, Saudagaran M, Welsh D, Primomo J, Belza B. Engaging With Aging: A Qualitative Study of Age-Related Changes and Adaptations. *Innov Aging.* 2022 Oct 11;6(6):igac054. doi: 10.1093/geroni/igac054. PMID: 36452050; PMCID: PMC9701056.

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Stages of Change Model

INTENTIONAL BEHAVIORAL CHANGE

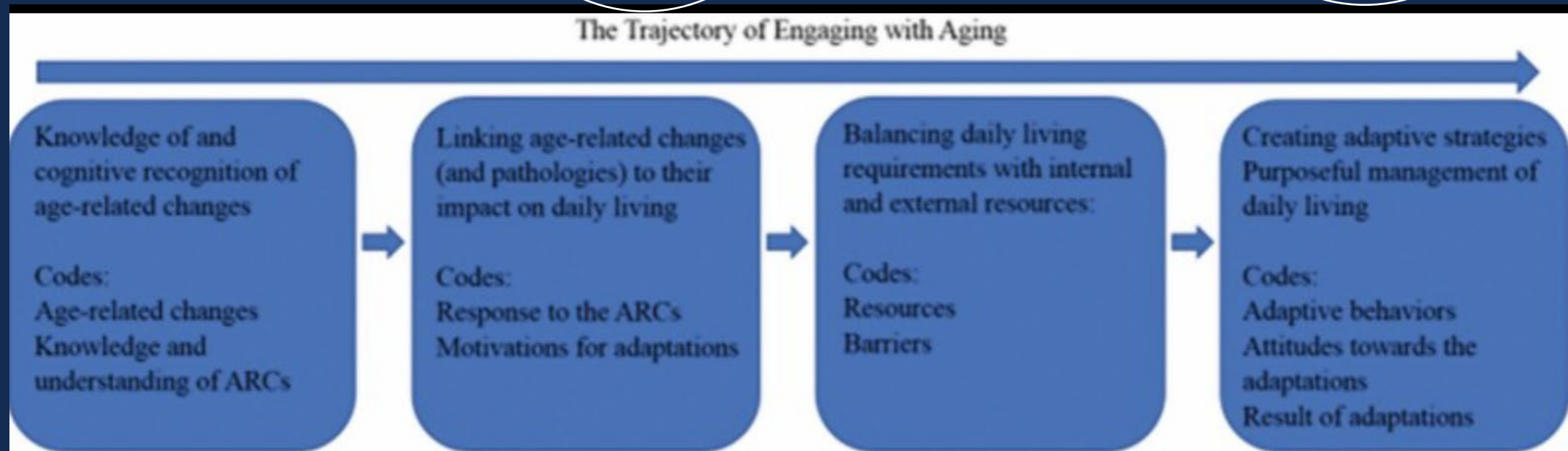
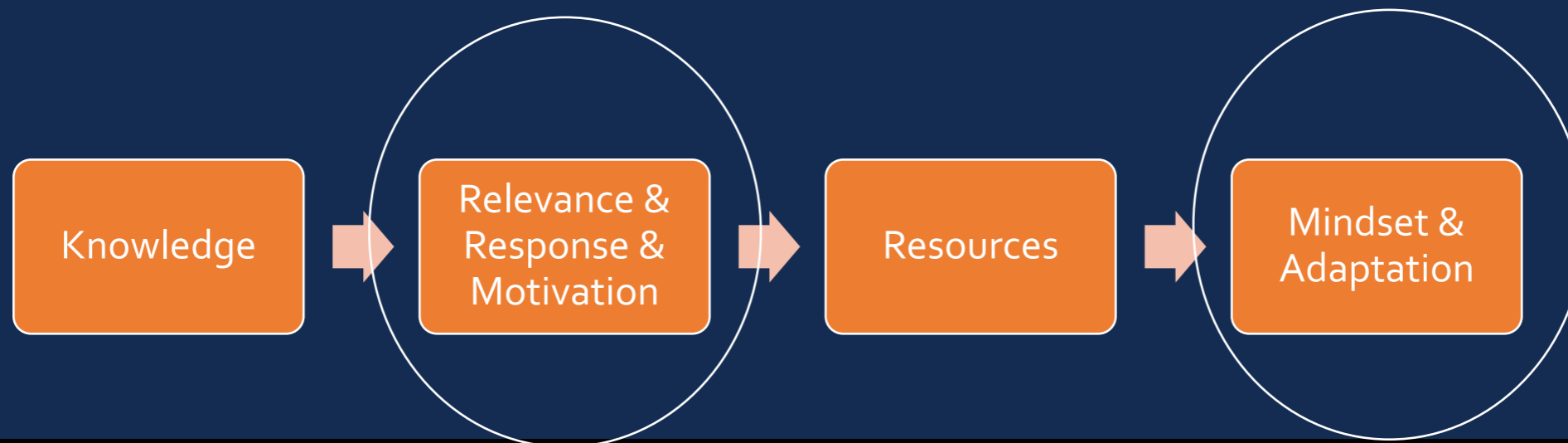


Purpose -> Sustained Motivation

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Engaging with Aging (EWS) –

Change Model – “A perspective, framework, process to proactively manage age-related changes.”



Engaging With Aging Framework

TABLE 2

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS IN THE ENGAGING WITH AGING (EWA) FRAMEWORK

Key Term	Definition
EWA	A perspective, an attitude, a framework, and set of processes that older adults may proactively use to manage their daily living in the face of emerging and progressing maturational developments and the incidence of pathology.
Age-related changes	Normal, progressive maturational developments and bodily changes associated with aging.
Impact areas	Specific capacities and areas of daily living that are affected by an identified age-related change and the changes, difficulties, risks, and discomfort (i.e., a feeling of unease or embarrassment) being generated in each area.
Adaptive strategies	Personal management planning using data gathered about the age-related change and impact areas that: (a) make use of functional capacities and resources; (b) seek to minimize unwanted outcomes; and (c) create a balance between demands and resources.
Internal resources	Include all physical, cognitive, and emotional capacities the older adult has available at any point in time.
External resources	Encompass available assets of people, housing, finances, community, environments, services, equipment, etc.

- Adaptive strategies

Internalized Ageism – “I’m too old to...”

“Prejudice against our feared future self”

Todd D. Nelson



IMPACT

- Lower Self-Esteem
- Reduced Participation in Activities
- Negative Health Outcomes



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Internalized Ageism –

Purpose Mindset = I am, I can, I get to, I will



- A [study](#) by Becca Levy has shown that people with a more **positive self-perception of aging** live **7.5 years longer** than people who perceive aging as a negative experience.



Selective Optimization with Compensation

SELECTIVE OPTIMIZATION WITH COMPENSATION (SOC) MODEL

- **Selection**
 - A person chooses resources that are needed the most, as **not every** choice can be pursued:
 - Elective selection – one specifies their most important goal(s)
 - Loss-based selection – the focus is on the most important goal in response to decline or loss of goals.
- **Optimization**
 - Allocates or refines resources in order to achieve a higher level of functioning in selected domains.
- **Compensation**
 - Uses of substitute processes to maintain a given level of functioning in a targeted domain.

Fruend & Baltes, 1998

fM



“

**You cannot play the piano
unless you are singing
within you.**

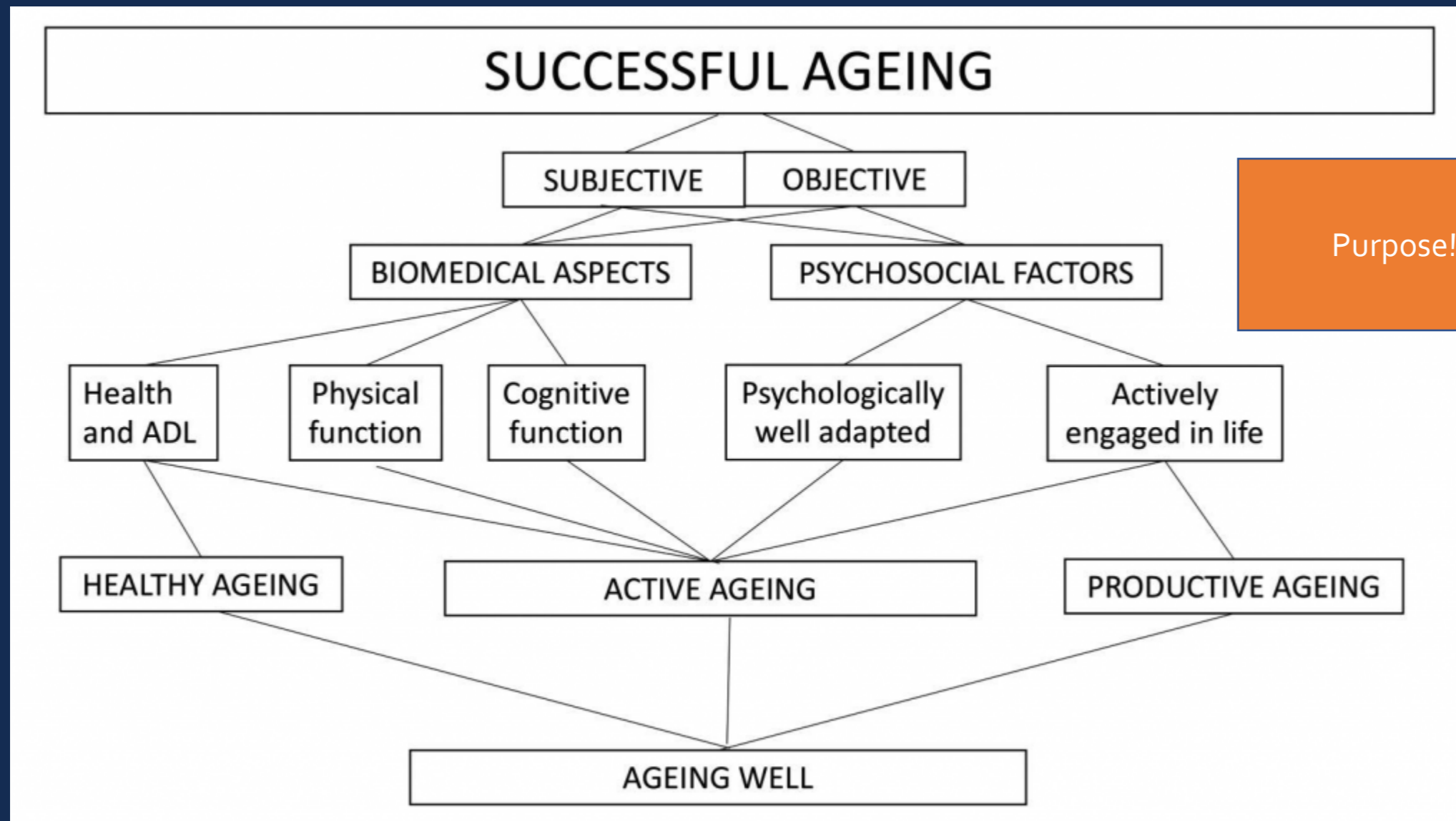
Arthur Schnitzler

Selective
Optimization
with
Compensation

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Successful Aging (mindset)



Physical Development in Late Adulthood
Diana Lang; Nick Cone; Sonja Ann Miller; Daniel Dickman; Urtano Annele; K. Jyvakorpi Satu; and E. Strandberg Timo



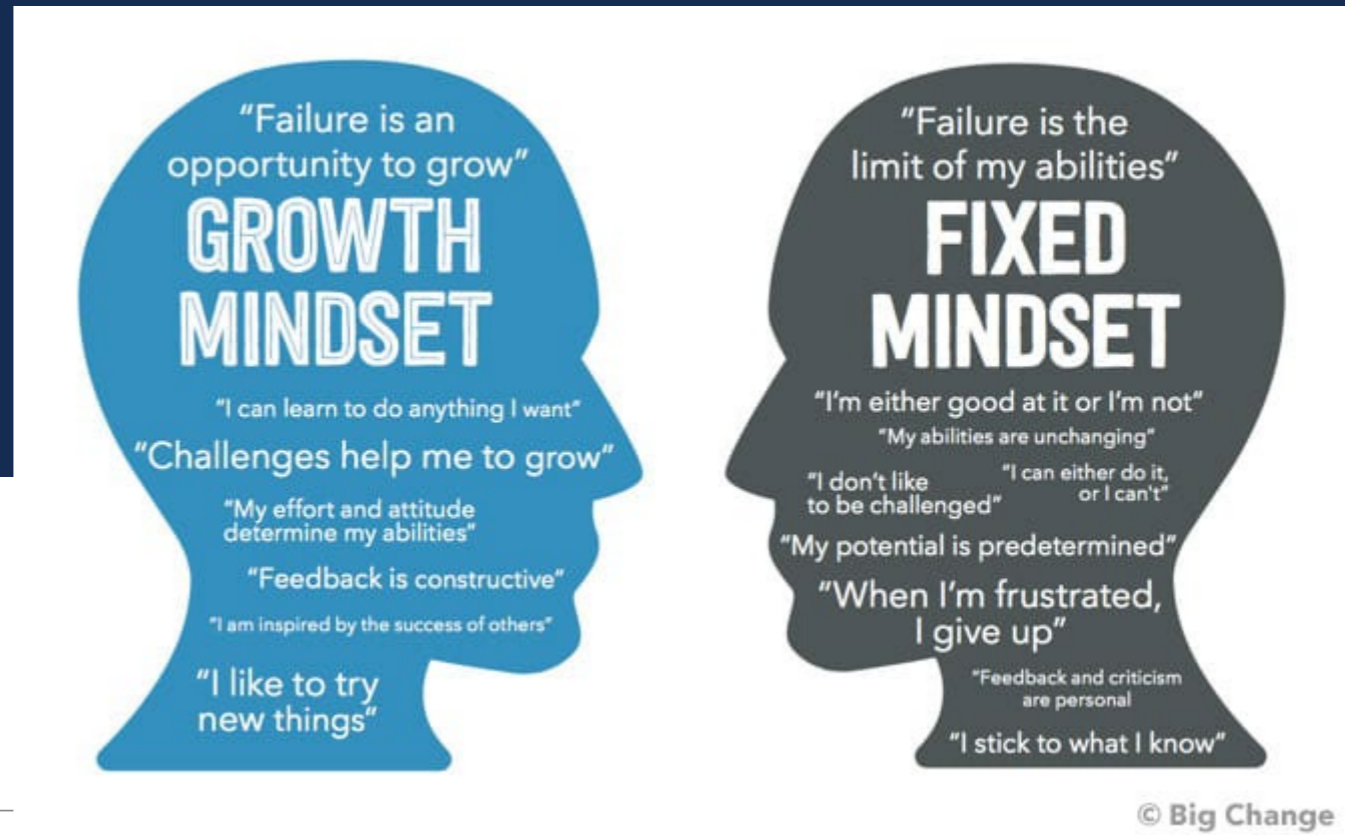
Blue Zones



Growth Mindset - Neuroplasticity



Fueled
by
Purpose



Int J Aging Hum Dev. 2022 Jun 20;96(4):501–526. doi: [10.1177/00914150221106095](https://doi.org/10.1177/00914150221106095)

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Table 2.

Growth Mindset Items From the Broad Learning Adult Questionnaire (BLAQ).

Scale

- Long form BLAQ
1. Lifelong learning will keep my mind sharper than my peers who do not continue learning.
 2. I can't expect to be good at learning new things at my age. (r)^a
 3. Regardless of whether I am of high or low intelligence, I can still learn new skills.
 4. When learning a new difficult skill, such as speaking a new language, I know that although I may not be good at that task now, I can eventually become better at it through practice and dedication.

- Short form BLAQ
1. Through practice and dedication, I can be proficient in anything that is difficult.
 2. Even if I don't have the talent to do something, I can still learn to do it well.

^a Item 2 (reverse-coded) removed from final composite.

Note. All items from the BLAQ (Leanos et al., 2019). Items rated on a 6-point Likert-type scale, 1 = Strongly disagree to 6 = Strongly agree.

Int J Aging Hum Dev. 2022 Jun 20;96(4):501–526. doi: [10.1177/00914150221106095](https://doi.org/10.1177/00914150221106095)

Growth Mindset Predicts Cognitive Gains in an Older Adult Multi-Skill Learning Intervention

Pamela Sheffler^{1,2}, Esra Kürüm², Angelica M Sheen³, Annie S Ditta¹, Leah Ferguson¹, Diamond Bravo¹, George W Rebok⁴, Carla M Strickland-Hughes⁵, Rachel Wu¹

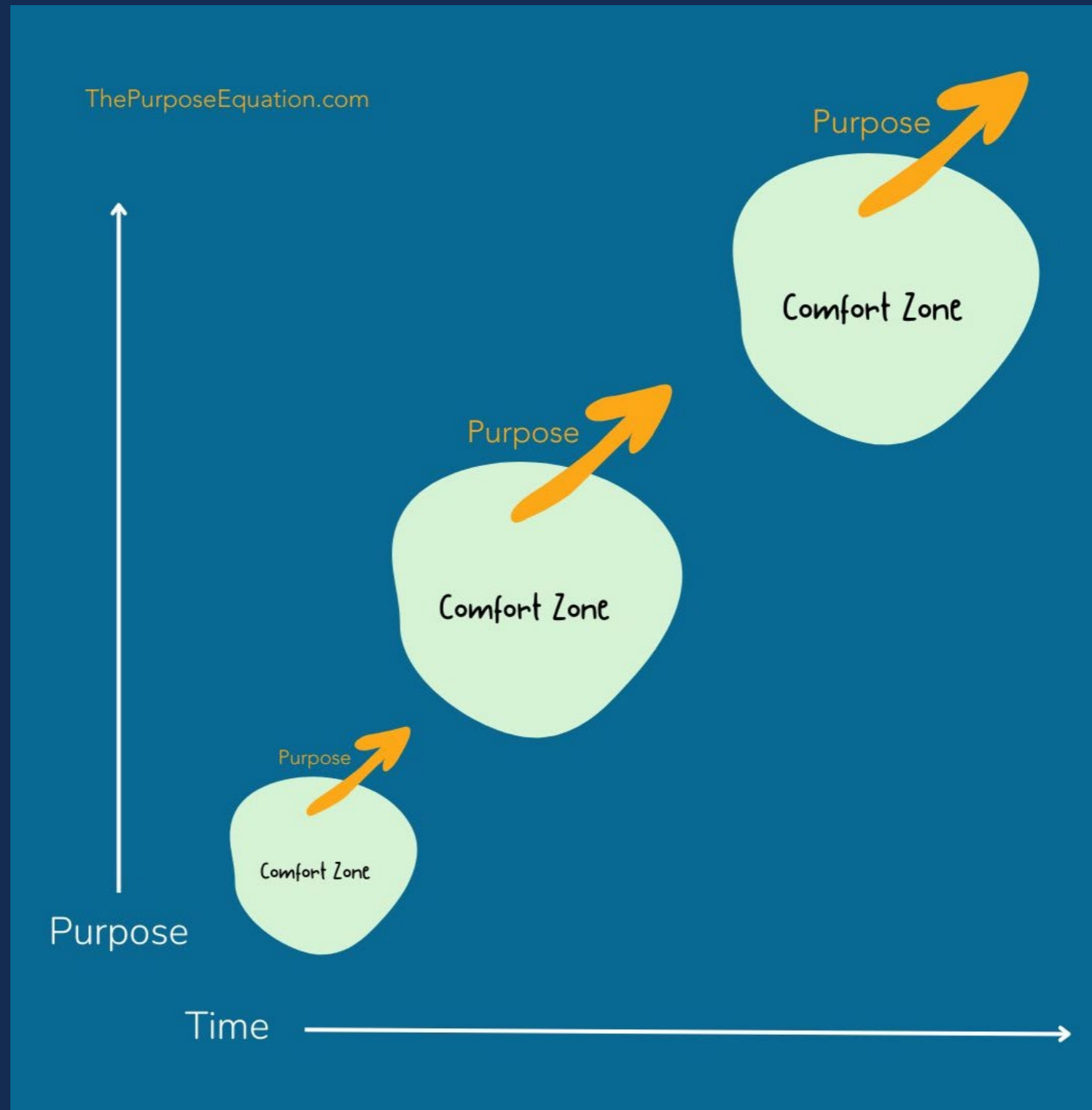
Author information Article notes Copyright and License information

PMCID: PMC10052424 PMID: [35726166](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35726166/)

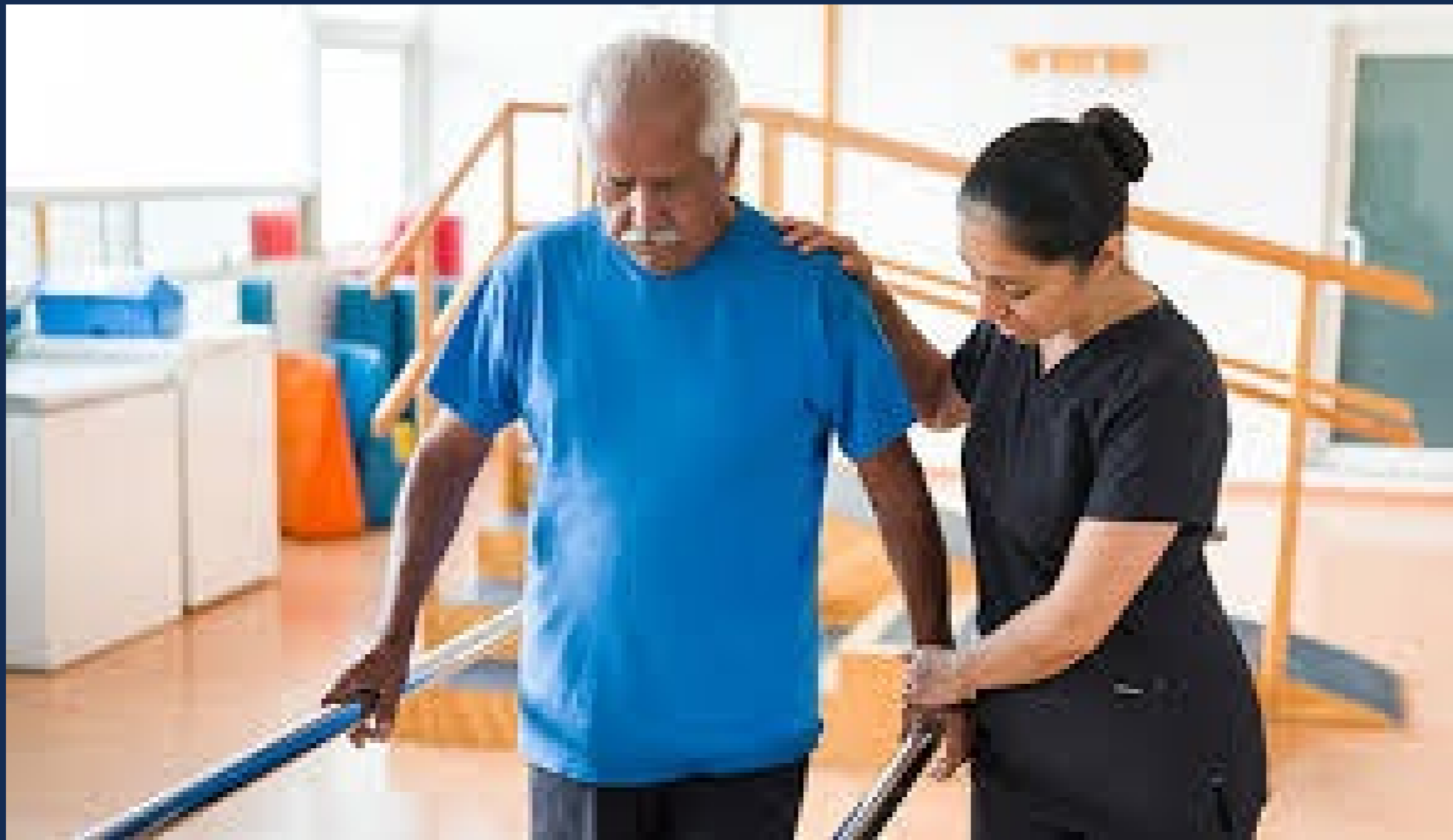
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Growth Mindset – Power of Purpose



Rehabilitation – what does it mean?



Habilitation Therapy

- Designed to bring about positive emotions in people with dementia and to maintain those emotions over the course of the day.
- The amygdala portion of the brain (the emotion center) is the last area to be affected by Alzheimer's disease (AD) and provides a window of opportunity to communicate with the individual until the later stages of disease. ¹
- By recognizing the underlying meaning of an individual's emotions and knowing how to use that knowledge to care for and communicate with the person with dementia, caregivers can effectively manage most ~~problematic behaviors~~.— UNMET NEEDS
- Developed by Paul Raia, PhD, from the Alzheimer's Association of Massachusetts and New Hampshire

Socioemotional Selectivity Theory

Socioemotional selectivity theory (SST) is a theory of life-span development grounded in the uniquely human ability to monitor time. SST maintains that the approach of endings—whether due to aging or other endings such as geographic relocations and severe illness—elicits motivational changes in which emotionally meaningful goals are prioritized over exploration.





“Learn to know yourself...

to search realistically and regularly the processes of your own mind and feelings.”

Nelson Mandela

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*“I’m not funny.
I am brave.”*

~Lucille Ball



Describe Each Word As a Way of 'BEing'

Teacher

Creator

Innovator

Partner

Connector

Learner

Leader

Builder

Explorer

Who are you BEing...
Think about who a resident is BEing who is
experiencing change...

Teacher

Creator

Innovator

Partner

Connector

Learner

Leader

Builder

Explorer

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BEing



doing

doing

doing

doing

doing

doing

doing

doing

doing

doing

doing

doing

doing

doing

doing

doing

doing

doing

doing

doing

doing

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doing



humans are
Meaning-Making
machines

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“When a man finds that it is his destiny to suffer... his unique opportunity lies in the way he bears his burden.” Viktor Frankl



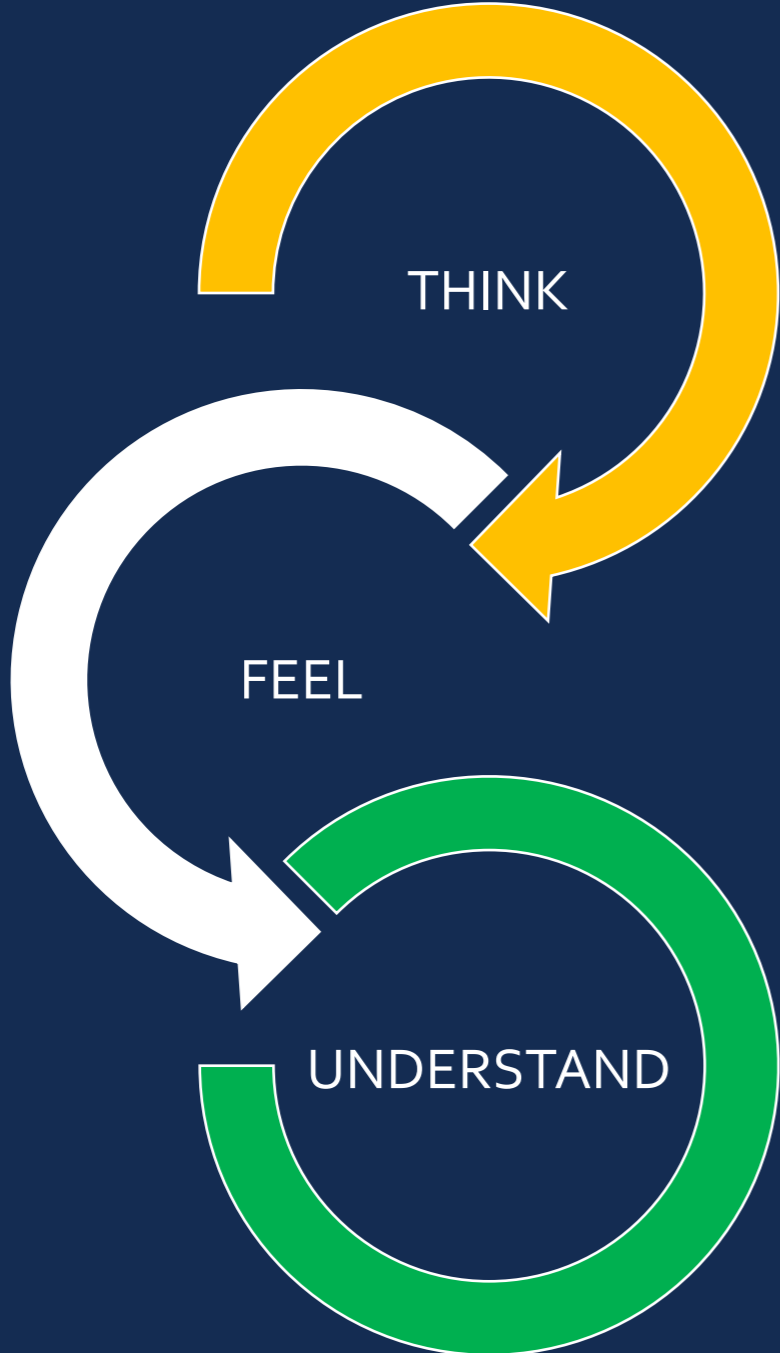
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The Purpose Garden

Meaning-making



Psychological
Mindset

Make Sense of
Situations



Grief

Changes...



Purpose Detective

What is the most meaningful part of your day?

Tell me more about your interests...what do you love about pickleball / knitting / nature walks...

What brings you joy?

Listen for who the person is BEing in the Doing conversation. Connect!



Connect Interests with BEing to adapt to changing abilities.



Pickleball

- Social
- Movement
- Adventure



Knitting

- Creative
- Helping Others
- Beauty



Reading the Newspaper

- Learning
- Teaching
- Connection with World & Ideas

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**It's one thing to know
that each of us is
special in some way.**

**My Purpose Equation
gave me the tools to
start behaving like
someone special!**

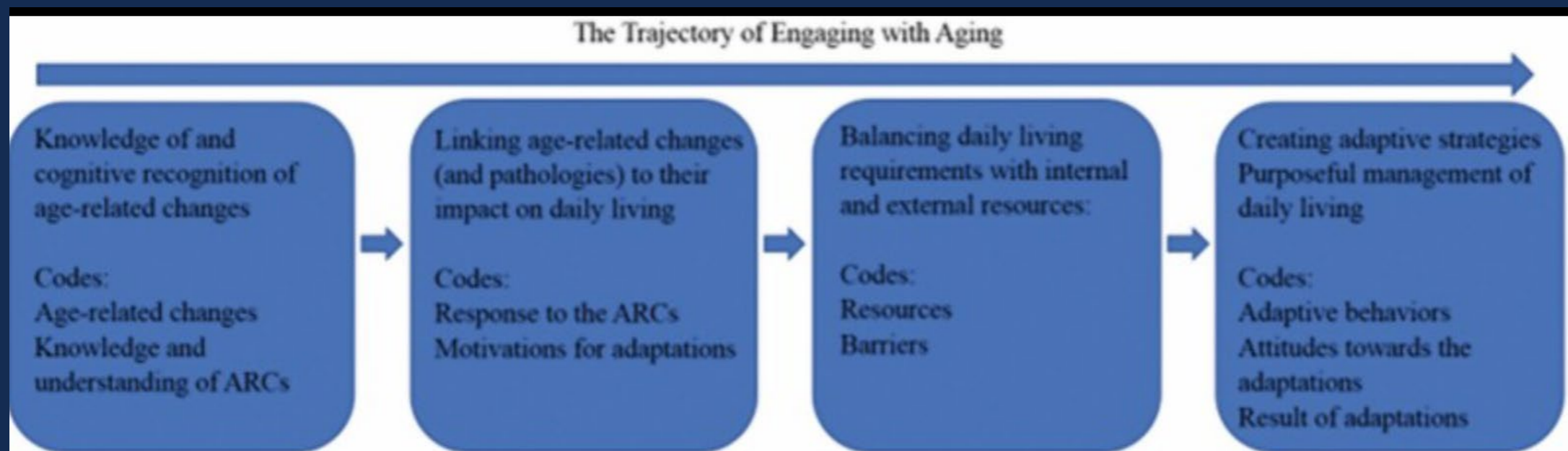
Julie, 78



Stages of Change Model



Engaging with Aging (EWS)



Why Purpose Works

Motivates

'get to'

Makes-
Meaning

understand
why

Adaptive

supports
transition

Amplifies
Joy

resilience

“Life is a question and how we live it is our answer.”

~Gary Keller



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Purpose

Is OUR Reason to Rise

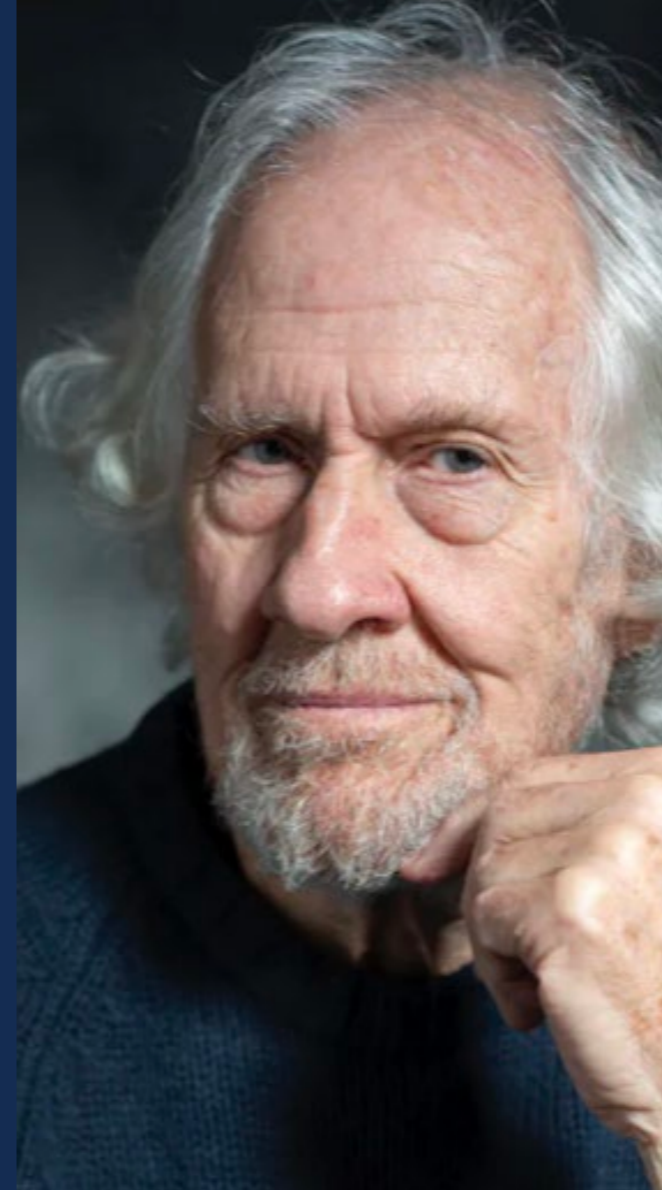


The Purpose Equation

Belonging.

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Purpose
Outcomes

Alfred

From Confused to Focused

Kate

From Hopeless to Hopeful

James

From Role to Soul

Judith

Through Grief to Engagement



What Holds You Back From "Allowing" Your Purpose



"I'm Not Enough"

Lack of JoyFuel - Your Energy Isn't Calibrated

Your Story About Yourself Doesn't Serve You

Unaware of Your Superpowers

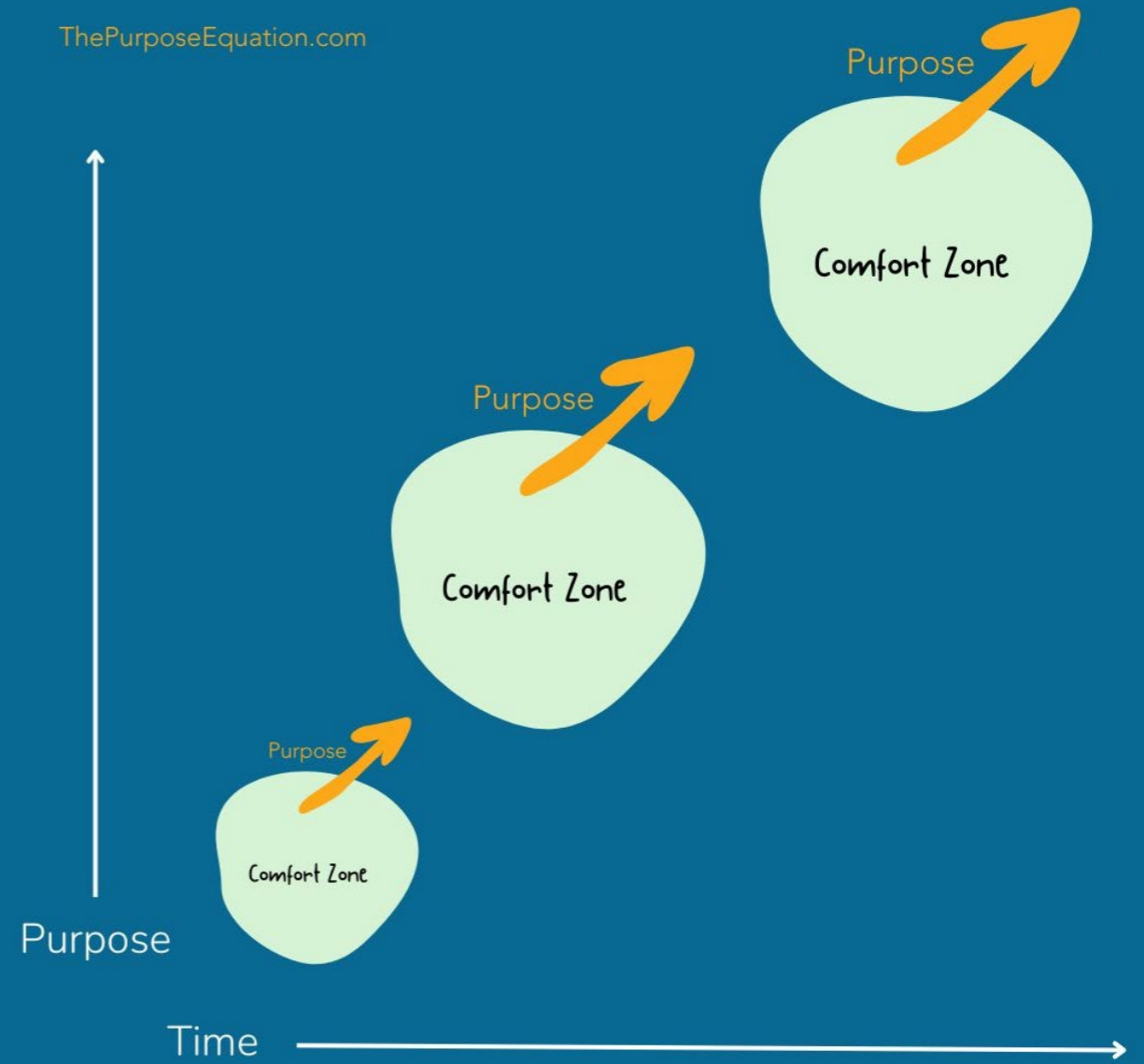
Misaligned Workplace Culture

You Don't Accept Your Innate Personality

Time Prioritization & Values Don't Match

Living in the Mindset of 'Should'

ThePurposeEquation.com



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RESEARCH

DATA DRIVEN

**Subjective
Well-being**

**Self Determination
Theory**

Positive Psychology

**Selective Optimization
and Compensation**

**Socioemotional
Selectivity Theory**

Personality Theory

Narrative Identity

FEEL + THINK + JUDGE
Life is Good

BELONG
To Yourself

KNOW
Your WHY

ADAPT
to Change

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The Purpose Question