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**Ageing Well at Different Standards of
Living:
Experiences of Older People**

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requirements for the degree of
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Abstract

Current approaches to ageing are concerned with promoting positive ageing, and messages around how best to age are prominent in contemporary society. However, there has been debate regarding whether these models foster a positive experience in later life or serve to discriminate and disempower those older people who are unable to meet the standards of positive ageing. One criticism is that promoting positive ageing ignores the many inequalities within society that impact on older people's ability to age in these socially acceptable ways. In addition, these models may fail to capture what is important to older people themselves, instead emphasising characteristics which are more concerned with the economic implications of an ageing population. The present study addressed these criticisms by examining what older people themselves value as important in order to age well, within the material conditions they are situated. Using an interpretative phenomenological approach, transcripts from eight participants over the age of 79 were analysed. The participants in this study valued continuity, having a sense of security, being able to engage in reciprocal relationships, and being able to live within their means. While some of these aspects of later life were valued by all the participants in similar ways, others were clearly impacted by the participant's standards of living. This finding highlights the need to take into account inequalities in society when focusing on older peoples experiences of later life. 6y

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Table of Contents

<i>Abstract</i>	ii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	iii
<i>Table of Contents</i>	iv
<i>Chapter One</i>	
INTRODUCTION	1
<i>Chapter Two</i>	
THEORIES OF AGEING	5
Disengagement Theory	5
Activity Theory	7
Continuity Theory	9
Conclusions	12
<i>Chapter Three</i>	
SUCCESSFUL AGEING	13
Successful Ageing	13
Conclusions	19
<i>Chapter Four</i>	
INEQUALITIES AND LIVING STANDARDS	21
Neo-Liberalism	21
Inequality	22
Structural Inequalities	22
Living Standards	23
Living Circumstances of Older New Zealanders	26
Conclusions	28

Chapter Five

AGEING WELL FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF OLDER PEOPLE	29
Qualitative Review	29
Conclusions	35
Research Question	36

Chapter Seven

METHODOLOGY & METHOD	38
Methodology	38
Theoretical underpinnings of IPA	39
Phenomenology	39
Hermeneutics & Hermeneutic Phenomenology	40
Ideography	42
Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis	42
Distinctive Features of IPA	45
IPA and the Experience of Ageing	46
Conclusions	47
Method	47
Procedure	47
Participants	48
Data Analysis	49

Chapter Eight

RESULTS	52
Continuity	56
Adjustment	57
Changing Environments	58
Ageing Bodies	61
Changing Expectations	64
Routine	66

Continuity of Identity	68
Just Like Everyone Else	69
Just Like Always	70
Disruptions to Continuity of Identity	71
Conclusions	72
Security	73
Personal Security	73
Financial Security	77
Conclusions	79
Reciprocity	80
Equal Value Relationships	81
Volunteering	84
Donations	87
Helping Others	89
Conclusions	91
Living within One's Means	92
Careful Consumption	92
Economising	96
Conclusions	100
Comparison of Living Standards	101

Chapter Nine

DISCUSSION	103
Continuity	103
Security	106
Reciprocity	107
Living within One's Mean	110
Intersecting Themes with Key Ideas	112
Ageing Well and Ontological Security	112
Ageing Well and Inequalities	112
Ageing Well and Positive/Successful Ageing	114

Intersecting Ageing Well with Theory	115
Limitations	117
Future Directions	118
Conclusions	119
Reference List	121
Appendix	137