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

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts  
in  
Psychology  
at Massey University, Auckland, New  
Zealand.

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2015



## **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

## **Acknowledgments**

Firstly, I would like to take the time to thank my supervisor Dr Mary Breheny for your patience, commitment, and insight. Your knowledge and skills have been instrumental in completing this work and I am so very grateful to have had you as my supervisor.

Secondly, I would like to thank my wonderful partner Fraser who, without whom, this thesis would not have been possible. Thank you for all your support, love, and patience when things were not going as well as I had hoped. You kept me on track and motivated to finish, and enabled me to focus on my studies without feeling distracted or overwhelmed.

I would also like to thank mum and dad for all your support in helping me get where I am today and always believing in me even when I did not.

To my brilliant friend Megan, who has been on this journey with me from the beginning, and who has spent many, many, hours feeling stressed alongside me. I could not have done it without you.

Lastly, I must thank the participants of this study, who shared their stories and who brought this piece of work to life. I am so very fortunate to have been able to communicate your experiences with the world and will be forever grateful.

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