Seniors spend more time volunteering and engaging in community activities, in part because retirement leaves them with more free time (Cornwell, 2009). Seniors perceive a high level of social support (Cornwell, 2009).

Seniors have smaller social network sizes (Cornwell, 2009). Seniors lose social roles because of life changes like retirement and bereavement (Cornwell, 2009). Degrading health contributes to social isolation among the elderly in part because it prevents participation in some social activities (Cornwell, 2009).

Relatedness is a basic psychological need (Ryan, 2000). The degree of isolation varies from person to person, but it is worth addressing because it is associated with increased rates of illness, depression, declining immunity, and mortality (Cornwell, 2009).

Seniors may perceive a high level of support, but this is often disconnected to the actual degree of social connectedness, which is a associated with poor physical health regardless of perception (Cornwell, 2009).

Some elderly users enjoy spending time with younger people. A participant in a study who played a video game with an eight-year-old said, “Children are an inspiration, they transmit us the game, because of their age they transport us to our youth” (Palacio, 2015).

Elderly adults reported higher life satisfaction after interacting with young adolescents, and, as added benefits, both groups’ negative stereotypes about each other were diminished after contact (Meshel, 2004). Video games that connect older and younger generations could combat ageism and improve older players’ life satisfaction.

The majority of video game players are under 35 years old (Entertainment Software Association, 2015). Most gamers are well below retirement age.

Age is the largest social homophily factor after race (McPherson, 2001). The elderly tend to associate with the elderly, and the young with the young.

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