

Psychology and aging

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Abstrak

ABSTRAK

This investigation explored 2 hypotheses derived from socioemotional selectivity theory: (a) Selective reductions in social interaction begin in early adulthood and (b) emotional closeness to significant others increases rather than decreases in adulthood even when rate reductions occur. Transcribed interviews with 28 women and 22 men from the Child Guidance Study, conducted over 34 years, were reviewed and rated for frequency of interaction, satisfaction with the relationship, and degree of emotional closeness in 6 types of relationships. Interaction frequency with acquaintances and close friends declined from early adulthood on. Interaction frequency with spouses and siblings increased across the same time period and emotional closeness increased throughout adulthood in relationships with relatives and close friends. Findings suggest that individuals begin narrowing their range of social partners long before old age.