

Getting Used to Being Alone: Compatibility with Singleness

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In recent decades, the phenomenon of globalization has caused significant changes in social and cultural norms throughout the world. Specifically, this phenomenon appeared to cause the increase of never-married women in the world as well as in Iran. The aim of the present study was to investigate how never-married Iranian women tried to cope with singleness. The present study was a qualitative study. Purposeful sampling was performed on 18 never-married women aged 35 years and older in Iran (13 face-to-face interviews and 5 focus group discussions). Conventional content analysis approach and inductive reasoning method were used for data analysis. 137 codes, 8 subcategories, 3 categories and were extracted. The three categories were: 1. Responding to sexual needs, sub-categories included: having sex; masturbation; sexual abstinence); 2. Getting used to being alone, sub-categories included: accepting God's destiny; living with family; closer relationship with friends); 3. Lifestyle changes, subcategories included: striving of beauty and health; getting lost in work and education). Results showed that never-married women aged 35 years and older tried to adapt to their life in various ways. It appears that such women applied several strategies to cope with the lack of spouse, children, and family life, which are typical developmental tasks of early adulthood.

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