

## **The Aging Population**

### **Widening Perspectives**

Dr. Don Melady:

I think a lot of gay, lesbian people as they age are very worried about what's going to happen to them and their identity. As a gay man who's always been out, as long as I can remember, the thought of being in a situation where I could no longer be the person that I am, and would have to pretend to be somebody that I'm not, is incredibly worrisome and painful to think about. And I think for the generation of gay and lesbian people just older than me, who experienced a lot of prejudice and discrimination while they were growing up - the fear associated with having to do that again if you were institutionalized, for example, and in a setting where your - the reality of your personhood was not respected or denied, is a very frightening thing to think about. So I think certainly over the next 30 years, that's probably going to be a major issue with caring for an aging population of lesbian, gay, transgendered adults.