Creating Navigation Strategies

Providing a More Engaging Aging Experience for Residents, Families and Staff

Engaging Aging

- Cultivate meaningful living
- Create value-added experiences
- Capture individualized interests
  - What older adults like to do
  - Where they like to do it
  - How to get it done

Engaging Aging Cont’d

Benefits
- Create community
- Reciprocal relationships
- Spontaneity
- Confidence
- Initiative
- Social interaction
- Mutual support
- Communication
- Interaction
THE DEMOGRAPHIC FACTS

- Between 2010 and 2050, the United States is projected to experience rapid growth in its older population.
- In 2050, the number of Americans aged 65 and older is projected to be 88.5 million, more than double its projected population of 40.2 million in 2010.
- By 2030, it is estimated that one in five U.S. residents will be 65 or older.


NEW YORK STATE AGING TRENDS

- It is projected that between 1990 and 2040, the 65+ New York State population will increase by 57%.
- By 2040, it is estimated that almost one in five New York State residents will be 65 or older.

THE NEW VISION OF AGING

CELEBRATING LIFE AND HAVING FUN!

Clark Retirement Community
Grand Rapids, Michigan

- First LipDub performed solely by older adults; more than 100 residents
- Brainchild of the Director of Marketing and Admissions
- Produced in Grand Rapids through the joint efforts of Clark Retirement Community and Grand Valley State University
- Associate Professor of film and video assembled a crew and guided the logistics
- Poking fun at stereotypical views of aging
- Michael Buble’s “Feelin’ Good”
EXPLORING MEANINGFUL AGING
What is Successful Aging?

[Center on Aging Without Walls, University of Missouri-Kansas City]

Older adults define successful aging as involving all aspects of their lives.

Older adults experience qualities that include:

- Physical health
- Financial security
- Productivity
- Independence
- Coping well and an optimistic outlook
- Staying involved in activities and with people who bring meaning and support

EXPLORING MEANINGFUL AGING (CONT’D)

According to the Lancy Group


Four components identified as domains of successful aging

- Feelings of satisfaction with life
- Adaptive physical and cognitive functioning
- Perceptions of adequate social support
- Active engagement in life
The Human Dynamics

The Four Children

The Human Characteristics

A wise child is not content with the cursory understanding of a topic or a strategy, but asks for more information.

The frustration and anger...of a child who scoffs at the rules and routines...a child who refuses to include himself or herself...is also one of the sadder experiences...
The Human Characteristics (cont’d)

This child requires more than a cursory explanation of what to do and how to do it.

"What is going on here, anyway?"

The quietness of this child is lauded as good behavior. He/she may be partly or completely lost, but scared or unable to verbalize this confusion. As a result he/she becomes practically invisible.

From Children We Grow and We Age

- We all exhibit some of each of these personality types but may have a prevalence for one in particular
- As we age, certain traits may become more dominant

The Four Elders

- Wise Elder
- Irritable Elder
- Physically, Cognitively, Emotionally Disabled Elder
- Elder Who Doesn’t Know What Questions to Ask
The Human Characteristics

The wise elder is in transition, continuing to seek opportunities to teach and learn as much as possible, fully engaging all that is available to him or her.

I know everything!

The irritable elder could have had negative experiences that have fostered a lifelong pessimistic attitude. Boredom, loneliness and isolation can also foster a negative outlook.

Everything is rotten!

The Human Characteristics (cont’d)

There can be a societal belief that a person with cognitive, emotional or physical disabilities doesn’t want to understand or “get better.” This creates an isolating experience for an elder with these life challenges.

Leave me alone!

The elder who experiences cognitive loss may have difficulty understanding what you are saying and may struggle with their ability to communicate information. The situation can be highly variable and each person will react to different stimuli in different ways.

Who are you?

The Engagement Strategies

Wise Elder

Irritable Elder

Physically, Cognitively, Emotionally Disabled Elder

Elder Who Doesn’t Know What Questions to Ask
Greet warmly and with respect
Listen to his/her ideas for the future
Ask questions that encourage creative thinking
Offer support to overcome any concerns and be sure that your support is driven by the Wise Elder's hand
Brainstorm next steps and solutions with him/her based on the plan that the Wise Elder has laid out

**Wise Elder**

Don't be put off or afraid to have a brief conversation within an established boundary
Expect the best of her/him
Begin any conversation with a positive statement about the Irritable Elder
Maintain a positive boundary
Behave in a kind but firm manner
Listen compassionately with an affirmative head shake so the Irritable Elder knows you are engaged
Come up with one positive thought or action based upon his/her interests
Don't buy into the negative energy
Set personal time limits for your conversation

**Irritable Elder**

Treat adults as adults
Listen attentively
Ask questions about his/her interests and give plenty of time for an answer...wait patiently (depending upon the disability, ask if she/he would like time to think about the answer or should a suggestion be offered)
Provide suggestions based upon his/her interests and positively support this Elder if she/he expresses concerns about abilities
Note: There are plenty of resources that will provide accommodations. Check it out online!

**Physically, Cognitively, Emotionally Disabled Elder**
Greet and listen, leaving plenty of time for an answer
Ask questions about his/her interests and again, give plenty of time for an answer...wait patiently (depending upon the disability, ask if she/he would like time to think about the answer or should a suggestion be offered)
Provide some pictures of things he/she likes to do if verbal communication is limited and encourage pointing to the picture that represents an interest
If she/he can read, have a small list of what the Elder might be able to do
Engage in as many interests as possible. Acknowledge if the Elder seems interested or not as a follow-up to the activity and indicate that a discussion can happen about the activity at a later time

Elder Who Doesn’t Know What Questions to Ask

Try it Out

BE CREATIVE!

EXPERIENCING LIFE

ON THEIR TERMS
Touching Where the Heart Is…

Art Insights

- Art Insights brings slide talks to senior centers, senior groups, senior residences, and nursing homes. This free program provides a historical and enlightening experience for Chicago-area seniors unable to visit the Art Institute.
- Participants in Art Insights programs receive a complimentary admission pass for one visit to the Art Institute for their families, who are also welcome to all Art Insights events.

A Sampling of Popular Topics

- **The Collectors:** Objects of Art from the Art Institute’s Collection and the People Who Contributed to Its First 100 Years
- **Meet Your Neighbors:** Images from the Art Institute and Connections to the Faces of Chicago’s Diverse Neighborhoods
- **19th Century European Art:** See a selection of works by Vincent van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, Auguste Renoir, Claude Monet, Georges Seurat, and other famous European masters.

Bird Tales

- An easy-to-implement therapeutic program that uses multisensory stimulation and the natural outdoor world of birds
- Helps people living with dementia interact with their environment and share a meaningful experience with others
- Observing birds through sight, sound, smell, and touch can encourage staff and family interactions even in elders with advanced dementia, and lift their mood for the rest of the day!

http://bentoftheriver.audubon.org/bird-tales

Supported by a conservation alliance of Audubon and Toyota, the TogetherGreen Fellowship
Residents in a German nursing home (Westfalen-Heute) participated in the creation of a 2014 calendar, having fun recreating scenes from cult movies!

Movie Stars

Movies included James Bond, Titanic, Dirty Dancing, Rocky, Mary Poppins and more...

An excellent initiative that is a bit out of the ordinary and creates great fun!
An uplifting story about a woman involved in civic engagement who broke through the barriers

- Claire was an 86 year old tutor living in a nursing home
- Through her life, as a reading tutor, Claire taught individuals and groups, worked with people with developmental disabilities, with youngsters who needed to improve their skills and, at the age of 86, with senior citizens
- Shortly after arriving at the nursing home, she contacted Literacy Volunteers and began tutoring
- Studies show that civic engagement benefits older adults and that opportunities for nursing home residents to give back are limited because of societal barriers related to ageism

“Once a tutor, always a tutor”

A Cup of Coffee Makes All of the Difference!

Creating Meaningful Activities for Older Adults with Dementia

- Consider their interests
  - Design activities that involve past interests fostering that passion
  - Adjust activities to fit abilities
  - He or she will simply enjoy the moment
  - Involvement contributes to general happiness
- Reestablish old routines
  - Design activities that can be done together
  - Fosters the feeling of being needed and useful
  - Creates a safe sense of purpose
Creating Meaningful Activities for Older Adults with Dementia (cont’d)

- Engage in physical exercise
  - Elders with dementia often wander because they are not getting enough exercise
  - Take daily walks if possible, which can reduce agitation
  - If the weather does not permit walking, use a stationary bike
  - Combat withdrawn behavior or resistant to participate in any activities by getting creative
    - Include different people in the engagement
    - Sometimes, a different face can be the solution

Things to Remember

Creativity involves breaking out of established patterns in order to look at things in a different way – Edward de Bono

Patience is waiting, not passively waiting. That is laziness. But to keep going when the going is hard and slow - that is patience. The two most powerful warriors are patience and time – Leo Tolstoy

So when you are Listening to somebody, completely, attentively, then you are listening not only to the words, but also to the feeling of what is being conveyed, to the whole of it, not part of it – Jiddu Krishnamurti

You are never too old to set another goal or to Dream a new dream – C. S. Lewis

Sparking Great Interactions
Keeping a sense of humor, at any age, is so important!

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INRoWbZeN0k

“How Old People Have Fun”

Q & A

Thank You!