Webinar on Reframing Aging

Viewers Guide  
Developed for Age-Friendly North Jersey

The Rutgers School of Social Work designed this guide to help age-friendly community leaders to engage with an hour-long webinar on reframing aging, as described below.

V01.11.2022

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| Webinar Title | Reframing Aging: What You Need to Know to Communicate More Effectively |
| Link | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dr3J1RXCw-4> |
| Date of Broadcast | August, 2019 |
| Original Audience | Over 300 leaders in aging in New England |
| Speakers | Certified “Master Trainers” on Reframing Aging   * Alrie McNiff Daniels, Senior Communications Officer, Tufts Health Plan Foundation * Janine Vanderburg, Director and Chief Catalyst of Changing the Narrative in Colorado |

1.

The content of the webinar begins at the 5-minute mark. The speaker lays out four key reasons to reframe aging and combat ageism. (Ageism is stereotypes, prejudices, and discrimination based on a person’s age.)

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| Reasons | |
| 1 | Misperceptions of aging harm people. |
| 2 | Holding positive beliefs about aging can improve health. |
| 3 | Our systems, policies, and practices in aging are outdated as the U.S. population continues to grow older. |
| 4 | There is a mismatch between the public’s understanding of aging and experts’ understanding. This gap stifles opportunities for both individuals as they age, as well as for society. |

To what extent do these reasons relate to your own motivation to learn more about reframing aging and to grow as a leader in the field of aging?

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2.

At the 15-minute mark, the speaker explains the concept of cultural models. She describes these models as “a shortcut to help our brains process too much information.” She uses two metaphors to illustrate how cultural models work: the image of the beach and the swamp, bog or ecocystem. Select one of these metaphors to explain below.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Metaphor** | | **Explanation** |
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3.

At approximately the 17-minute mark, the speaker talks through five predominant cultural models on aging. Use the space below to reflect on how you have experienced or observed any of them in your own professional or personal experiences.

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| **Cultural Model** | | **Your Reflections Based on Professional or Personal Experiences** |
| 1 | Ideal versus perceived reality |  |
| 2 | Us versus them |  |
| 3 | Individualism |  |
| 4 | Nostalgia and threat of modernity |  |
| 5 | Solutions and fatalism |  |

4.

A the 26-minute mark, the speaker presents a theory of change for the reframing aging movement. Write “first,” “second,” “third,” or “fourth” next to each step to review the sequence of changes, according to this model.

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| **Intended Change** | **First, Second, Third, or Fourth?** |
| Policy on aging changes |  |
| Different messaging about aging within the media |  |
| Professionals change the way they communicate about aging |  |
| The pubic changes the way they think about aging |  |

5.

What does the speaker offer as an example of a value, metaphor, and solution that follows from the frame of “embracing the dynamic”?

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|  | **Speaker’s Example** |
| Value |  |
| Metaphor |  |
| Solution |  |

7.

At the 50-minute marker, the speakers presents terms to use in communications concerning aging.

***Use:*** *Older Adult, Older Persons*

***Say:*** *“As we live longer and healthier lives…”*

***Define:*** *“Ageism is the stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination against people on the basis of their age.”*

***Say:*** *“Let’s use our spirit of innovation to envision what’s possible.”*

***Provide****: Concrete examples of inventive solutions.*

Reflect on these tips using the questions below.

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| **Question** | | **Response** |
| 1 | Which “tip” was something you already knew? How did you come to know this “tip” already? |  |
| 2 | Which “tip” was something new? How might you use it in your practice? |  |

8.

At the beginning of the “Questions” segment of the webinar, the presenters discuss how metaphors, like the idea of “building momentum” as we age, might not resonate with particular cultural groups. How does this discussion relate to the idea that there is no singular experience of aging and that part of the work of age-friendly leaders is to deliberately engage diverse communities of older adults within municipalities?

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9.

After viewing this webinar, what are you motivated to do next? Consider, for example, [other online resources and toolkits on reframing aging](https://www.reframingaging.org/Resources/Useful-Tools), how you might apply what you learned to your own communications on aging, or ways you might incorporate something you learned in your planning for May’s Older Americans Month.

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