

CREATE A VISION FOR “NEW WAVE” ACTIVE ADULT PROGRAMMING:

PART 1: INTRODUCTION: THE NEW WAVE IS:

1. WHO I AM? Diane Hernden - Dynamic Ager, retired teacher, personal trainer/fitness consultant, Mindset Specialist/Coach who has no intention of retiring. I work in the area of Older Adult Fitness in both private practice and for our local association.
2. WHY AM I SPEAKING TODAY? I live a Dynamic Lifestyle and teach about it with much success. My concern is that there are unconscious barriers that limit Older Adults' Lifestyles. The way older adults are spoken to, treated etc.
 - Ageism is alive and well.
 - Encounter ageism in my own life - tone, language used.
 - My friends - “Getting Old sucks” - getting ready to downsize, pre-pay or funerals - they have set an expiry date on their lives.
 - Studies show that people who have a positive outlook on aging, look after themselves better as they age. They perform better on memory tests and motor control tests. Walk faster, recover faster from a disability. And live an average of 7.5 year's longer.
 - There is a new wave of older adults reaching retirement age who will need a new style of programming.

THINK ABOUT AGING MORE POSITIVELY AND THERE WILL BE MAJOR INCREASES IN ACTIVE LIVING BEHAVIOURS.

3. ACTIVITY: Word Association - Senior, Active Adult - what words immediately come to mind when I say those words. You will use what you write later in the presentation.
4. DYNAMIC AGING CHARACTERISTICS:
 - Continue to be strong, vital, alert.
 - Live a healthy active lifestyle.
 - Do everything you need and want to do for as long as you want to do it.
 - Continue living in your own home with stairs, yard work, housework, snow shovelling etc.
 - Continue doing your activities - skiing, cycling, swimming, running for as long as you want to. 101 years old in Stratford.
 - Continue to work or start a new career.
 - Just saw an ad for TD Ameritrade - client talking to financial advisor - doesn't want to stop working - set up financial future based on that.
5. ACTIVE AGING INDUSTRY TRENDS: Visions for the Future. Fitness Business Winter 2019:
 - Forecast changes needed in Wellness Related and Fitness Activities in the next 5 years:

2 - need to increase fields of education - including lifelong learning, instructor led physical exercise and fitness.

As leaders, you need to have the right mindset to make these changes in your programmes.

PART 2: LANGUAGE IS EVERYTHING:

Dynamic Aging will only be possible if:

1. Providers' language both internal (what you think) and external (how you talk and act) is congruent with a Dynamic Aging Mindset.
2. Older Adults language both internal (what they think) and external (how they act and talk) is congruent with a Dynamic Aging Mindset.

The Blink Experiment: Malcolm Gladwell.

Given a list of 5 word groups and asked to make 4 word sentences out of them in 2 minutes:

him was **worried** she always

are from **Florida** oranges temperature

ball the throw toss **silently**

shoes give replace **old** the

he observes occasionally people **watches**

be will sweat **lonely** they

sky the seamless **gray** is

should not **withdraw forgetful** we

us bingo sing play let

sunlight makes temperature **wrinkle** raisins

This study was done with a group of university students who were instructed to get up and leave the room when finished. They exited the room with a slow, shuffling gait, heads down.

They acted like old people because each of the word groups contained a word that is associated with getting old. (see the words in bold type). Neural Priming had taken place. They had been unconsciously primed to think in a specific way.

LANGUAGE IN ALL CASES LEADS TO PERCEPTIONS THAT LEAD TO BEHAVIOURS OR ACTIONS.

As leaders, we need to get away from the unconscious brain's tendency to be primed and decide what aging means based on what we know (from facts) and not what we are primed to think.

PART 3: BARRIERS AND LIMITATIONS: Staff can unknowingly produce barriers toward active adult participation and become a limiting factor in the way active adults are perceived and engage in programs:

b. AGE HAS A SERIOUS IMAGE PROBLEM.

- Rethink the "Old Script" of learning in early life, working in the middle years and pursuing pleasure at the end.
- Should be no stigma to aging.
- What you see in movies, on TV, in ads, shapes how you feel about your place in the world.

Common misconceptions:

- Aging means decline – being frail, slow.
- Aging means that I need to downsize because I can't climb stairs anymore.
- Aging means that I cannot live alone as I might fall – loss of independence.
- Aging means that I cannot carry out my activities of daily living anymore and need to move into a retirement home where I don't have to do anything. e.g. filling your grocery bags only half full.
- Aging means that I forget things and get confused easily. Sudoku, card games, etc. SENIOR MOMENTS!
- Aging means that I am lonely.

CONCLUSION: There is a **cramping effect** on older people. They view themselves as having a smaller, more invisible place in the world. The constant caricature becomes a **self fulfilling prophecy**. People begin to walk, talk and move more slowly.

Example: York University Study: Older people asked to walk a flight of stairs. Then read a fake article about how aging erodes the ability to walk stairs. Repeat the test. All measures like speed, accuracy and balance declined.

- Buzzfeed - 64 year old Fashionista - Lyn Slater - 64 year old professor who loves fashion. Started a new career in fashion at 64 when she was mistaken as a fashionista at fashion week. Dresses for what she wants to portray as a 64 year old not what society thinks she should be doing. Her message = "Don't be afraid of Aging" Most important factor.

As leaders, we need to look at the words we wrote earlier in the presentation - senior and active adult - and see how many of them are echoed in these misconceptions.

PART 4: WHAT CAN YOU DO?

1. LANGUAGE: As providers you need to be aware of your internal and external language and be sure that it is congruent with a Dynamic Aging Mindset. You need to constantly be using the correct language to get rid of the limits placed on Active Adults.

UNCONSCIOUS MIND VS CONSCIOUS MIND:

1. Unconscious mind - so powerful. It sends you messages in 6 seconds.
2. Quicker than you can actually process so you think and act in ways without being conscious of your thoughts and behaviours.
3. You live on autopilot where you keep running the old ways of thinking through your mind over and over again.
4. This limits your ability to meet the needs of your clients.
5. You need to stay in your conscious mind - thinking in ways based on what you know to be true not what past experiences have made you believe. This is where it all begins.

Use the **4 PILLARS OF CHANGE** to stay in your conscious mind.

ACCEPTANCE: Your thoughts about older adults are simply perceptions driven by what you have heard, seen, experienced. Think of all of the ads about slowing down, downsizing etc. You need to accept the need to change these limiting thoughts.

AWARENESS: Every time you make limiting statements, you need to be aware that your thinking reinforces the OLD SCRIPT. Use a Kill Switch "No" to get rid of those thoughts. Replace the thoughts with new thoughts gained from knowing the true reality.

ACCOUNTABILITY: Take responsibility for the perception. You change the perception of aging by repeatedly voicing the new reality. When you start to be accountable, dynamic aging scenarios will just happen.

You are using NEUROPLASTICITY which means the brain has an enormous ability to be flexible and to change patterns of thinking.

ADAPTATION: passive change to the perception. The more you think with a Dynamic Aging Mindset, the more it becomes the permanent reality.

As leaders, you can use this to change your thinking as well as using it with your clients to change their thinking.

2. **GROWTH MINDSET:** Once you uncover your perceptions, you need to consciously educate yourself to find out why Dynamic Aging is possible: Education is key to a Growth Mindset.

QUESTIONS/STATEMENTS;

i. **The older people get, the slower and frailer they become:**

“How old would you be if you didn’t know how old you are? Said by Sachel Paige - at 60 years of age, the oldest pitcher in MLB to pitch complete games. Aging is not a function of the candles on your birthday cake but of lifestyle habits. You can to add life to your years instead of just adding years to your life.

ii. **It is possible to have a healthy active dynamic life to 120 years.** My friend Mae - doesn’t want to live that long because she watched her 90 year old Mom get frail - ended up in a nursing home. She doesn’t want to have that happen to her. Thinks it will happen if she lives that long.

The role of Genetics. Only 10-25 % of any chronic disease has a genetic connection.

- Genetic outlook can also be modified: Stanford University: Summarize this:

- 200 healthy men and women.
- Divided into 2 groups.
- One group completes a treadmill test. Second group focuses on diet and eating. Measurements done to track achievement.
- Some exercise participants later told they had a gene variant for low exercise endurance and some dieters told that they carried a gene that could make them want to eat.
- Groups then repeated the tests and measures. The results were reversed. Exercisers were more tired and had lower endurance; dieters produced a hormone to make them eat more.
- Outcome of study: If you tell people that they have a genetic predisposition to certain health characteristics, their bodies start to respond accordingly.

iii. **Muscle wasting, Pain, Balance problems, senior moments, increase in chronic illness are all inevitable as you age:**

- Why does this happen? The decline in lean muscle, increase in body fat, aching and painful joints, loss of balance, memory problems seen as part of aging are all a function of a sedentary life. Dynamic Agers need to add

lean muscle to take pressure off joints, decrease body fat, improve balance, decrease the risk of chronic disease and keep the mind sharp.

iv. I am too old to start.

- You begin to lose lean muscle in our 30s but whenever you decide to take control, you can get it back no matter how old you are when you start. In fact, people in their 60's who start a resistance training program, make very quick gains.

v. It is too difficult to move.

- The more you move, the more you will be able to move. Start slowly and gradually do more. Aim for 150 minutes per week – spread out over each day.
- Especially good for memory. Of all the things you can do to foster good brain health as you age, physical activity offers the greatest benefit. Cardiovascular exercise that increases your heart rate is particularly helpful. Studies show walking – starting with just 10 minutes, three times a week and building up to walking one hour per day – provides big benefits.

As leaders, look again at the what you wrote for SENIOR AND ACTIVE ADULT from the Intro: bring awareness to your first thoughts, create new ones from the facts.

3. SPREAD THE DYNAMIC AGING WORD:

Once you begin to think with a Dynamic Aging Mindset, you can help superiors, staff and active adults rethink their perceptions of what's mentally and physically possible for your clients. Use the 4 Pillars of Change and the Aging Facts to instill the Growth mindset that you have learned into your centre to encourage active adults in pursuit of a Dynamic Aging Lifestyle:

- Train superiors/staff to use language congruent with Dynamic Aging. Example: Our centre voted a number of years ago to change the name from Stratford Seniors Association to Stratford Lakeside Active Adults Association.
- Ban thoughts of decline/disability in your centres. Use the facts to address that language used by staff and your clients.
- What statements will you get from other staff, supervisors clients that are in an old mindset? Examples: "This won't work." "I can't do this." "I'm too old." "We have no money for this."

The Tripod Exercise can help create new thinking for staff and your clients.

How does the Tripod exercise work? Think of a camera sitting on top of the tripod. The camera represents your thoughts. The "camera" is fixed and only allows 1 view (or 1 way of thinking).

The legs are the reasons that will be given for thinking a certain way.

Your role is to give other ways of thinking based on what you know to be true.

Each time you give a new perspective, it will weaken the "legs" of the tripod, creating reasonable doubt about the original thought. This opens up the mind to a new way of thinking.

Here is an example from our lives:

the 'camera' thought - I have stopped skiing

The "legs" of that thought - 1. I am not strong enough, 2. I can't keep up with my son, 3. I am too old.

The new thoughts that weaken the "legs":

Leg #1: 1. A weight training program could restore your strength.

Leg # 2. Why do you have to keep up with your son? Can you meet him at the

base of the mountain?

Leg # 3. There are Legend groups of skiers 75 years old and up who regularly ski places like Sun Peaks out west.

This creates reasonable doubt that their perceptions are permanent. The legs have been collapsed and the “camera” now has a 360 degree panorama of thinking.

Here is study that can create reasonable doubt. Did you know that cardiovascular exercise decreases the risk of dementia?

- You can think yourself into aging better: Yale University - studies people with a gene variant for dementia. Those with a favourable view of aging, were 50% less likely to develop the disease over those with a gloomy outlook.

Use Tripod technique in these situations:

- Informal day to day conversations
- Seminars: We started educating our active adults in 2015 about aging - the myths, the reality and how to move to a dynamic aging lifestyle - move more, lift more than you usually do, be consistent in your movement, work on Strength, Balance and Flexibility.
- Lunch and Learn: to keep the correct message in front of the group. e.g. Men only on men’s health.

Dynamic Aging Programming: Offer programs that encourage a growth mindset and lifelong learning.

- Our association offers pickleball which has over 200 members including those over 80, those with hip and knee replacements.
 - Our association offers yoga - not chair yoga, regular progressive yoga. The chair or the wall is only your friend at the beginning of a new program.
 - We started a fitness program with free weights, stability balls and exercise tubing. We started with about 8 people now we are at 30 and growing.
 - Include Functional Aging strategies in fitness programs: These are exercises/activities that allow clients to do the Activities of Daily Living easier - Stand up from a chair and sit repeatedly, walk heel to toe, on the toes, on the heels, long strides etc.
 - No equipment - Do body weight exercise like squats, pushups (against the wall to start?) etc. Just change the speed up, change them to unilateral at times where appropriate. Never let the body know what you are doing - it will get lazy and won’t work as hard.
 - Lobby for more equipment - need free weights, Stability Balls, exercise bands etc. Your association or sponsors?
- SUMMARY: “At a time when the world wants me to slow down and step aside, I am going to politely decline. Age is power, Knowledge and experience have no bounds, Creativity is limitless. **Jann Arden, age 57.**

As leaders, you need to believe that these words are true. Once you do the work to make that happen you can have your clients believing the same way. Dynamic Aging is possible for everyone.

