

Creative Aging: A Tool for Undoing Ageism in Your Organization

Reflection Guides & Conversation Prompts

Reflect: Ashton Applewhite's Ted Talk

Watch the full Ted Talk: [Let's End ageism | Ashton Applewhite](#) and reflect further on these questions. You may write in a notebook if that is helpful:

- What is something new from Ashton's video that you hadn't thought of before?
- Where have you seen ageism in your life?

If you are comfortable, share your reflections with your colleagues.

Observe: Ageism in your work

Spend a week observing your work at your organization. Where does ageism come up?

- A reminder that ageism cuts both ways - it's any time you or others make a determination that someone is "too young" or "too old" for something, or you or others make assumptions about their capabilities based on their perceived age.
- You might notice ageism comes up in internal moments, such as thoughts you have, or it might show up in something you observe at the organization.
- No need to take action, just observe and write down your thoughts. This is a personal reflective practice.

Some possible questions to guide your observations:

- Do you notice ways that your age (or perceived age) impacts your colleagues' perception of you? Do you notice ways your age (or perceived age) impacts your patrons' perception of you?

- Do you see a variety of ages represented in the teams at your organization? Do you see a variety of ages of people visiting/patroning your organization?
- How does your organization's marketing represent older adults? Do you recognize any assumptions that might be made about older or younger people in how the marketing is designed?
- What kinds of programs are offered for older adults? Are there differences in the kinds of programs offered for older adults versus other populations?

Personal reflection based on observations:

- Where can I make change personally?
- Where might I need to speak to a manager or leadership about changes needed in the organization?

With your colleagues, you might start a conversation using the prompts below. Share only what you feel comfortable sharing (keeping details anonymous when needed):

- How did it feel to notice and write about ageism?
- What surprised you?
- What did you learn about your own implicit bias?
- Are there aspects of your organization that could be made more inclusive or inviting for older adults? How?
- How can older adults' ideas, voices, and perspectives be included in the planning of creative aging work, and other engagements with older patrons?
- What are some actions that staff might take to ensure that the organization is actively taking steps to implement anti-ageist initiatives and policies?

Additional Facilitator Tools for Further Discussion:

- [On The Same Page: Let's Talk About Ageism](#)
- [World Health Organization: Initiating a conversation about ageism](#)

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Supporting Research & Resources

Ageism Awareness

- **Old School - Anti-Ageism Clearinghouse:** <https://oldschool.info/>
 - **Video:** [Let's Dismantle Ageism Self-Paced Workshop](#) (31:03)
 - **Old School Office Hours:** Every Wednesday from 1:30–2:30 ET. Ask one or all three of the co-founders of Old School any ageism-related question—in private, or include the group.
- [Reframing Aging](#)
- **Video:** [World Health Organization: Age Doesn't Define You](#) (2:00)

Ageism Impacts on Health & Society

- **World Health Organization**
 - [WHO Health Topic: Ageism](#)
 - [WHO: Global report on ageism](#)
- [Dr. Becca Levy - Breaking the Age Code](#)
- [Exploring the Health Effects of Ageism](#) [paywall] Article by Paula Span, NYTimes
- [CDC Loneliness and Social Isolation Linked to Serious Health Conditions](#)
- [The impact of ageism on health and health care: A research roundup and explainer](#)
- [As We Live Longer, How Should Life Change? There Is a Blueprint](#) [paywall] (Article by Corinne Purtill, NYTimes)

Aging Population Trends

- [US Census Bureau's 2020 report: Living Longer: Historical and Projected Life Expectancy in the United States, 1960 to 2060](#) (By Lauren Medina, Shannon Sabo, and Jonathan Vespa)
- [National Institute on Aging: Longevity Research Roundup](#)

Ageism & Intersectionality

- [Intersectionality Matters! With Kimberlé Crenshaw – Age Against the Machine: The Fatal Intersection of Racism & Ageism In the Time of Coronavirus](#)
 - [Full transcript](#)
- [Meeting the needs of elders of color and LGBT elders](#)

- [*Navigating the Perfect Storm of Ageism, Mentalism, and Ableism: A Prevention Model*](#) (By Kiran Rabheru and Margaret Gilli)
- [*Old School - Ageism & Ableism Workshop*](#) (Facilitator Guide)
- [*Old School - Identity and Intersectionality: More Than the Sum of Our Parts*](#) (Online Course)

Arts & Aging

- [Lifetime Arts](#)
- [The Creative Aging Resource](#)
- [Untapped Opportunity: Older Americans & the Arts](#) (Report by Culture Track)

Design for Age Equity

- [Institute for Human-Centered Design](#)
- AARP:
 - [Disrupt Aging](#)
 - [Equity by Design](#)
- [Getty Images: The Disrupting Aging Collection](#)
- [Older Adults Technology Services - Design Against Ageism](#)
- [Changing the Narrative: Guidelines for Age-Inclusive Communication](#)