The Reframing Aging Initiative:  
A Multi-pronged Approach to Creating Change
Today’s Objectives

• Increase awareness of reframing aging research and recommendations
• Describe how applying the principles can help funders and community leaders communicate more effectively on aging, ageism and issues important to older people
• Encourage audience members to think about where they can start; how to integrate this into their work and support their grantees
• Outline the new phase of the Sustaining the Reframing Aging Initiative as it supports reframing activities and goals
Faculty

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• Introductions
• Why is it important to reframe aging?
• How does the Reframing Aging Initiative support your work?
• Words Matter: local and regional leaders reframing aging
• FrameTalks: Two 20 minute breakout sessions to learn more about the different programs
• Q&A
A Generation’s Work: Reframing Aging Together

James C. Appleby, BSPharm, MPH, ScD (Hon)
Chief Executive Officer
The Gerontological Society of America
Ageism’s Impact on Health

• Exposure to unfavorable stereotypes adversely affects the attitudes, cognitions, and behavior of older adults.
• Negative stereotypes combined with discrimination make ageism a chronic stressor in the lives of older adults.
• Age discrimination is associated with lower self-perceptions of aging, impacting behavior & health.
• Negative age beliefs predict worse cognitive performance, predict the development of Alzheimer’s disease biomarkers (PLoS One, 2018)
• Impact on mental health of older veterans associated with negative attitudes toward aging
• 17.04 million cases of the 8 most expensive health conditions in one year attributable to ageism.
• Highest in cardiovascular disease due to heightened cardiovascular stress (The Gerontologist, 2018)
• One in 17 adults over age 50 experience frequent healthcare discrimination, and this is associated with new or worsened disability by 4 years (Journal of General Internal Medicine, 2015)
Ageism & Age Discrimination

• 17.04 million cases of the 8 most expensive health conditions in one year attributable to ageism.
• $63 billion spent on health care for the 8 most expensive conditions during 1 year
  • $1 in every $7 spent (The Gerontologist, 2015)
• About three in five older workers (61%) have either seen or experienced age discrimination in the workplace, despite 1967 Age Discrimination in Employment Act. (AARP, 2018)
• But the good news is:
  • Positive self-perception leads to 7.5 years longer, healthier lifespan (The Gerontologist, 2015)
  • Older person with positive age beliefs who carry one of the strongest factors for developing dementia were nearly 50% less likely to develop the disease than their peers who held negative beliefs. (PLOS ONE)
More Good News

**Reframing Aging: Effect of a Short-Term Framing Intervention on Implicit Measures of Age Bias** *(The Journals of Gerontology: Series B, 25 June 2018)*
- **re reframing** messages about aging can decrease implicit bias against older adults
- highlights ways for communicators to promote a positive understanding of the aging process, thereby mitigating sources of implicit prejudice.

**Interventions to Reduce Ageism against Older Adults: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis** *(American Journal of Public Health, Aug 2019, Vol. 109, No.8)*
- interventions are associated with substantial reduction in ageism
- should be part of an international strategy to improve perceptions of older people and the aging process
A Social Change Endeavor designed to improve the public’s understanding of aging

@ReframingAging

Original research conducted by the FrameWorks Institute and sponsored by the Leaders of Aging Organizations
Leaders of Aging Organizations (LAO)
Nonprofit think tank with the mission to advance the nonprofit sector’s capacity to reframe social issues

Conducts original, scholarly research on the communications aspects of social and scientific issues

Recognized in 2015 with the MacArthur Award for Creative and Effective Institutions

Concepts presented today w/ permission, courtesy of the Reframing Aging Initiative and the FrameWorks Institute
Why Reframe?

Changes in Communication lead to
Changes in Discourse lead to
Changes in Thinking lead to
Changes in Behavior lead to
Changes in Policy and Practice
Mapping the Gaps

Experts

- Embrace: How should we approach aging?
- Environments: What determines outcomes and who is responsible?
- Important concern: How big of a concern is ageism?
- Plenty: What can be done to ensure wellbeing in older age?
- Central: What is the role of public policy?

Public

- Battle
- Individuals
- Absent from thinking
- Nothing much
- Limited role
Sample Size: 12,185
**Effective Dissemination Route of a Narrative**

**Effectively Framed Core Story**

- Sticky
- Passable

**Aging**

**Demographic Change**

**Housing**

**Health**

**Transportation**

**Effective Framing**

**Changed Public Understanding; Demand for Better Policy**
What does it take to reframe an issue?

- Map the terrain
- Develop a strategy to navigate to higher ground
- Build a caravan, equip the travelers, and start moving
Framing Is about Choices

Frames are sets of choices about how information is presented:

- What to emphasize
- How to explain it
- What to leave unsaid
- What to leave unsaid
Understanding Is Frame-Dependent

“Crime is a beast” affecting our city
- Thibodeau & Boroditsky, 2011

29% support policy reform

“Crime is a virus” affecting our city
- Thibodeau & Boroditsky, 2011

46% support policy reform
When a Frame “Works,” It Shifts Thinking in Multiple Ways

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Public policy shapes how successfully people age.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td>We should increase funding for aging research and age-friendly public policy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Support</td>
<td>We need age-friendly employment policies that benefit older people and family members who might care for them.</td>
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Navigating “the Swamp” of Public Understanding

Laurie G. Lindberg
Project Manager, Reframing Aging Initiative
You Say... They Think

AAA

Expert/Advocate

BBB

Public
Cultural models are cognitive short cuts created through years of experience and expectation.

They are taken-for-granted and largely automatic assumptions.

People rely on cultural models to interpret, organize and make meaning out of all sorts of stimuli, including experiences, feelings, thoughts ... and your communications.
Cultural Models: The Basis of Strategic Communications

Multiple Models Available

Some Are More Productive than Others

Choose the Cues That Activate Productive Models
Aging

What is in the swamp of...

Ideal vs. Perceived “Real”
• Accumulated Wisdom
• Self-sufficiency
• Staying active
• Earned leisure
• Deterioration
• Loss of control
• Dependency
• Determinism

“Us” vs. “Them”
• Older as “other”
• Zero sum
• Digital incompetence

Individualism
• Lifestyle choices
• Financial planning

Solutions
• Fatalism/Crisis—nothing can be done
• Better individual choices and planning
• More education and information

Problems can be solved

What Surrounds Us Shapes Us

Collective Responsibility

Nostalgia and Threat of Modernity
• Family dispersal
• Economic challenges
• Social Security is doomed
Telling a New Story about Aging
An Effective Social Issue Narrative

Builds understanding, shifts opinions/perspective, generates support for solutions

Why does this matter?

How does this work? If it’s not working, why not?

What can we do about it?

Values

Metaphors
Examples
Explanatory Chains

Principles
Efficacy
Solutions
Narratives used to Reframe Aging

Confronting Injustice
- Value: Justice
- Define Ageism
- Explain Implicit Bias
- Solutions: systemic, workplace policies

Embracing the Dynamic
- Value: Ingenuity
- Explain Building Momentum
- Solutions: innovations, intergenerational programs
Avoid
• Individual actions drives aging outcomes
• Aging is the process of decline
• Older people as other
• Aging (population) is a crisis
• Fixed, finite resources
• Just another -ism

Advance
• Context shapes decisions and outcomes
• Future is a time for improvement
• We are all better off by being inclusive
• Interventions can change outcomes
• Solutions stories: systems, supports
• How ageism works
Reframing Elder Abuse

Resources:
Talking Elder Abuse Toolkit
FrameWorks Academy video series "Reframing the Conversation on Elder Abuse"

National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) at https://ncea.acl.gov/Resources/Reframing.aspx
Research and Resources

Compares the public’s perception of aging with that of aging experts and explains how the disconnect presents challenges for building support.

Identifies 6 narratives dominating conversation in the media and in advocacy organizations.

Access this free Video Series to hear the research findings and learn how to apply the reframing aging tools.

Brief, lively guide to the evidence-based approach to reframing aging.
What can I do?

Practice using the tips on the Quick Start Guide

Learn about the Swamp of Public Opinion on Aging and other research on the Reframing Aging Initiative webpage (www.reframingaging.org)

Take the Implicit Association Test to measure your implicit bias (https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/education.html)

Call out ageism when you see it or hear it

Request a workshop or presentation for your organization

www.reframingaging.org
Telling a New Story about Aging

Alrie McNiff Daniels
Tufts Health Plan Foundation
Why We Need a New Story

I’m having a senior moment.

You look good for your age.
Building a Collaborative Plan

- Understand
- Engage
- Act
We Are Changing the Conversation
Reframing Aging?

Where to Begin...

Start somewhere!
The SCAN Foundation (TSF)

Transforming care for older adults
Aging with dignity and independence means living life to its fullest regardless of age, health, or ability

Our Goals

- **TRANSFORMING CARE AND DELIVERY**
  - Establish person-centered, integrated models as the standard for older adults.

- **BUILDING RESILIENCE AND CAPACITY**
  - Improve the ecosystem shaping experiences for older adults, families, and communities.

- **DRIVING RESPONSIVE FINANCING POLICIES**
  - Create meaningful care choices for older adults of today and tomorrow.

myCare myChoice
My Care. My Choice is designed to help Californians better understand the care choices available in their communities. Try it today!

Get Started
Communications Planning

• In preparation for our new strategic framework, we knew we wanted...

  • Our communications to be a visible, poignant expression of our new strategic framework

  • To put a human face on every TSF initiative, and explain the “so what?” at each juncture

  • To learn what we were doing well and not so well...so our communications can become more impactful
FrameWorks Institute

• Worked with FrameWorks Institute to conduct a FrameCheck® of TSF communications

• A FrameCheck® maximizes the persuasive potential of highly visible communication assets such as websites, infographics, reports, presentations, films, etc.

• FrameWorks provided broad recommendations to align with their sophisticated research findings but still maintain our communications’ original intent
In My Breakout...

• What were the learnings that came out of our TSF FrameCheck®?

• How did we approach these learnings and incorporate them into our daily activities and communications planning?

• What are our communication strategies today and moving forward?
A Look at Our New Website!

EMPOWERING OLDER ADULTS

We believe in health systems that put people first

The Buzz
News on transforming care for older adults

My Care, My Choice is now available in Traditional and Simplified Chinese!

Compare choices for Californians with Medicare + Medi-Cal

Univision highlights Mi Salud, Mi Decision
Why a local | regional initiative?
Advances Aging Program Area Work

Funding priorities

- Direct home and community-based services
- Transportation
- Systemic change and emerging issues
Primes Innovative Thinking about Aging Issues

Funding priorities

• General funding to improve lives of those 50 and over
• Community response fund
• Collective impact challenge fund
2018 Workshop Results

- 42 workshops, reaching over 1,300 people
- 91% increased knowledge of ageism
- 93% increased understanding of effective messaging
- 92% intend to use new frames
- 97% will recommend workshop to others
2019: Engaging the Broader Community
Reframing older workers as a valuable resource through the Age-Friendly Workplace Initiative

- Created the “business case” for age-friendly and intergenerational workplaces
- Trained Change AGEnts to present
- To date, have delivered 18 presentations, reaching over 600 business and civic leaders
Challenging visual ageism with the REAL Photo Contest

https://www.next50initiative.org/photorep
Engaging diverse communities in talking about ageism

**On the same pAGE**
let's talk about AGEism

10 DAYS
100 CONVERSATIONS
OCTOBER 25 - NOVEMBER 3

- 10 days
- 100 conversations
- Inter-generational
- Community-sponsored

sign up to learn about how YOU can be a change AGEnt
Want to learn more about how to get started in your community?

@ tellery@rcfdenver.org
@ janine@encoreroadmap.com
https://changingthenarrativeco.org/
Frame Talks

Join us for a deeper dive into learning about our projects and how you can reframe aging
Frame Talks:
Choose two 20-minute breakouts among these four

The SCAN Foundation:
Applying Reframing Principles to Improve Communications  
Treasury Room

Rose Community Foundation:
Changing the Narrative Colorado: Ending Ageism. Together  
Capital Room

Tufts Health Plan Foundation:
Telling a New Story about Aging  
Traders Room

The Gerontological Society of America:
Sustaining the Reframing Aging Initiative  
Ballroom
One Step At a Time
Homework!

1. Write on your post card ONE THING you will do in the next 30 days to practice reframing aging

2. Take out your phone and send yourself a calendar invite dated one month from today with a reminder to do that one thing (Am I Reframing Aging Yet?)