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Module 3

Basic foundations of well-being/ Monitor and support the elderly as they engage in well-being practices

SEMwell, Czech Republic

Authors: Jana Kyriakou

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Introduction

This module presents the overview of basic foundations of the well-being of older people as well as strategies and tips on how to monitor and support the elderly as they engage in age-appropriate practices to promote physical, emotional, psychological, and social well-being.

Objectives

1. Understand the key components of physical, emotional, psychological, and social well-being to help seniors flourish in various aspects of their lives.
2. Develop effective strategies to motivate seniors by setting meaningful goals, promoting social engagement, and tailoring activities to individual interests.
3. Monitor the progress and participation of seniors in physical and psychological well-being activities, utilising specific monitoring and diagnostic tools.
4. Support seniors in maintaining social connections and independence, ensuring they have access to activities that foster autonomy and personal identity.



1. Overview of basic foundations of the well-being of older people (from WP2)

Well-being is a positive condition experienced by individuals and societies. Like health, it is a key component of everyday life, and it is defined by social, economic and environmental conditions. According to Keyes' model, individual well-being is defined as the combination of:

- a) positive feelings about life (emotional well-being) and
- b) good functioning in life (psychological and social functioning).

Three levels of well-being are distinguished: a. languishing, b. moderate well-being, and c. flourishing. High levels of well-being correspond to the commonly accepted term of 'flourishing' (Keyes, 2002).

Well-being is a broad and multidimensional concept. The key components include: **physical, emotional, social and psychological well-being**

There are many factors that contribute to the well-being of older people, as follows (Abud et al, 2022):

Physical	Physical factors, such as genetic inheritance, physical activity and health, as well as proper nutrition and prevention of chronic diseases are linked with the well-being of older people.
Psychological	The mindset of older people, their optimism, self-confidence, and adaptability to new situations can make a positive contribution. The ability to adapt to changes, the belief that one can face challenges, and the recognition of oneself as important and valued contribute to their resilience and wellbeing.
Social	Friends, family relationships, participation in support groups, and community activities contribute to the resilience and well-being of older people. Also, environmental factors, such as the environment in which older people live, and whether they have access to health infrastructure, cultural centres, parks, and other recreational areas contribute to the well-being of older



people.

2. Factors contributing to the successful role of caregivers in increasing and sustaining motivation in the elderly as they engage in well-being practices

Motivating seniors to thrive is essential for their overall well-being and quality of life. By understanding the importance of motivation, caregivers, family members, and healthcare professionals can develop effective strategies to inspire and support seniors in their journey. Here are a few strategies to motivate seniors from Renaissance Home Health Care center in New York, USA:

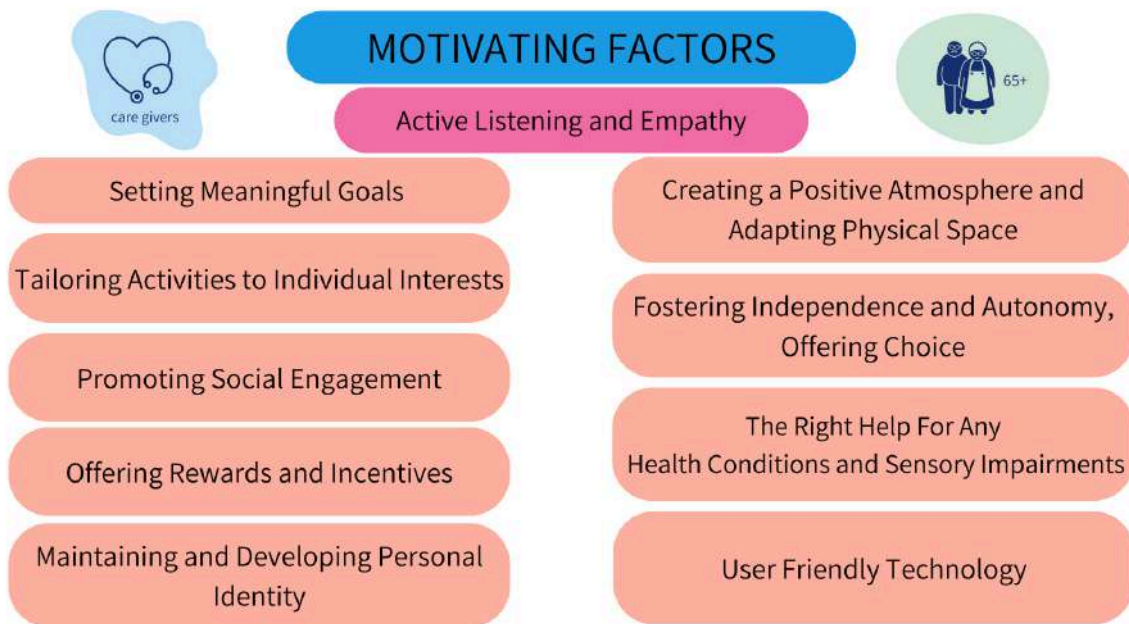
- Setting meaningful goals
- Providing support and encouragement
- Tailoring Activities to Individual Interests
- Promoting Social Engagement
- Offering Rewards and Incentives

It's also important to create a motivating environment including:

- Creating a Positive Atmosphere (ensure the environment is warm and inviting, celebrate even small accomplishments and achievements).
- Adapting the Physical Environment (create a safe and accessible space, incorporate plants and natural light).
- Fostering Independence and Autonomy (encourage elderly to make choices and be actively involved in decision-making processes).
- Incorporating Technology (user friendly technology can provide access to information, entertainment, and social connections).

By implementing effective communication strategies, practicing active listening and empathy, and building trust and rapport, you can create a nurturing environment that encourages seniors to stay motivated and engaged.

According to [NICE](#) (the British National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) taking part in meaningful activities, maintaining and developing personal identity, and getting the right help for any health conditions and sensory impairments have been identified as key to improving mental wellbeing of elderly.



3. Strategies and tips on how to monitor and support the elderly as they engage in age-appropriate emotional well-being practices – in connection with physical well-being practices (e.g., exercise, nutrition, etc.)

Physical Activity Scale for the Elderly (PASE)

The PASE is an instrument that measures the level of physical activity for individuals aged 65 and older. The PASE consists of self-reported occupational, household and leisure items over a one-week period and can be administered by telephone, mail or in-person. The PASE scoring was derived from movement counts from an electronic physical activity monitor, activity diaries and self-assessed activity levels in a general population of noninstitutionalized older persons. The PASE can be used to measure physical activity in surveys of older people and to assess the effectiveness of interventions.

Here are a few sample questions:



- Over the past 7 days, how often did you participate in sitting activities such as reading, watching TV, or doing handcrafts?
- On average, how many hours per day did you spend walking?
- Over the past 7 days, how often did you engage in light sport or recreational activities such as bowling, golf with a cart, shuffleboard, fishing from a boat or pier or other similar activities?

The full PACE questionnaire can be downloaded for free from [HERE](#).

The TUG test

The Timed Up and Go test, also known as the TUG test, is a simple evaluative test used to measure your functional mobility. The TUG test measures how long it takes you to stand up, walk a distance of 10 feet, turn, walk back, and sit down again. The TUG test is frequently used in older adults as it is easy to administer and can be completed by most people. Many healthy adults less than 80 years old can complete the TUG test in 10 seconds or less. People who complete the test in 13.5 seconds or longer may be at greater risk of falls. The TUG test can also be used on an ongoing basis to help a physical therapist understand how well your therapy is working.

[On this website](#) you can read the complete instructions on how to perform the TUG test.

Physio Network exercise assessments

Mariana Wingood PhD, a clinician and researcher at The Physio Network, Australia, suggests 5 assessments for exercise prescription in older adults. These assessments cover a few key areas: muscle power, strength and endurance, aerobic capacity, and balance.

Muscle power	1) 4-Stair climb power test
Muscle strength and endurance	2) Single leg heel rise test
Aerobic capacity (the maximum amount of oxygen your body can use at one time during an intense exercise)	3) 2-Minute step test



Balance	4) Brief-BESTest 5) Four square step test
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The description of each assessment can be found on the Physio Network website [HERE](#).

Wearable activity monitors and fitness trackers

Activity monitors and fitness trackers can be valuable for supporting seniors' physical activity. To be useful, the devices must be easy to handle. For example according to a Swedish study by He et al. (2018), the users perceived wearables as easy to handle, whereas tablets were perceived as difficult to maneuver.

A fitness tracker for seniors is specially designed with features that provide ease of use, clear visibility, and essential health monitoring capabilities. Wearable technology for older adults transcends the realm of physical well-being; it also plays a critical role in fostering social connections. Many fitness trackers allow seniors to share achievements with friends and family, fostering a sense of community and support. Moreover, these devices can alert caregivers or medical professionals in real-time, ensuring that seniors receive prompt care when necessary. When choosing a fitness tracker for seniors, consider the following attributes:

- safety
- ease of use
- comfort
- clear and easy-to-read displays
- fall detection function
- possibility of notifying caregivers or family members when there's a potential issue.



Monitoring the nutritional status of the elderly

The MNA®-SF provides a simple and quick method of identifying elderly persons who are at risk for malnutrition or who are already malnourished. It identifies the risk of malnutrition before severe changes in weight or serum protein levels occur. You can read the guide to administering the method [HERE](#).



4. Strategies and tips on how to monitor and support the elderly as they engage in age-appropriate psychological well-being practices

Diagnostic tools for psychological wellbeing

There are several diagnostic tools that can help caregivers and healthcare professionals systematically assess and monitor the emotional and psychological well-being of elderly individuals, ensuring they receive appropriate care and interventions.

A good start might be the Wellbeing self-assessment tool by Keyes' that you can find in the [Positive Ageing Toolkit, Module 1, page 9](#).

For further monitoring and diagnosis of mental health of older people, health-care professionals can use several tools. Examples are listed in the table below:

Name of the assessment tool	Short description	Further resources and downloads in English
Geriatric Depression Scale (GDS)	A screening tool specifically for identifying depression in older adults through a series of questions about their feelings over the past week.	https://geriatrictoolkit.missouri.edu/cog/GDS_SHORT_FORM.PDF
Cornell Scale for Depression in Dementia (CSDD)	Assesses depression in older adults with dementia, combining observations and caregiver interviews.	https://cgatoolkit.ca/Uploads/ContentDocuments/cornell_scale_depression.pdf



Quality of Life in Alzheimer's Disease (QoL-AD) Scale	Assesses quality of life in Alzheimer's patients, including emotional and psychological aspects.	https://www.cogsclub.org.uk/professionals/files/QoL-AD.pdf
Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE)	Primarily a cognitive assessment tool, evaluating memory, attention, language, and visuospatial skills.	https://cgatoolkit.ca/Uploads/ContentDocuments/MMSE.pdf
Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA)	A more comprehensive cognitive screening tool than the MMSE, covering various cognitive domains.	https://mocacognition.com/

More strategies for professional and family caregivers

Here are a few more strategies which can be used by both family members and professional caregivers to effectively support and monitor elderly as suggested by professional caregivers from [Home Instead, UK](#):

Regular Check-ins: Create a consistent schedule for communication to offer emotional support and keep track of their mental well-being.

Active Listening: Give them your full attention and show genuine care and attentiveness during conversations, making it clear that their feelings and experiences are valued and significant.

Encouraging Physical Activity: Engaging in gentle exercises such as walking or stretching can have a positive impact on someone's mood and overall well-being.



Engaging in Memory-Stimulating Activities: Engaging in activities such as puzzles, memory games, or reflecting on old photographs can have positive effects.

Maintaining Social Connections: Encourage visits or calls with friends and family to help them stay socially engaged.

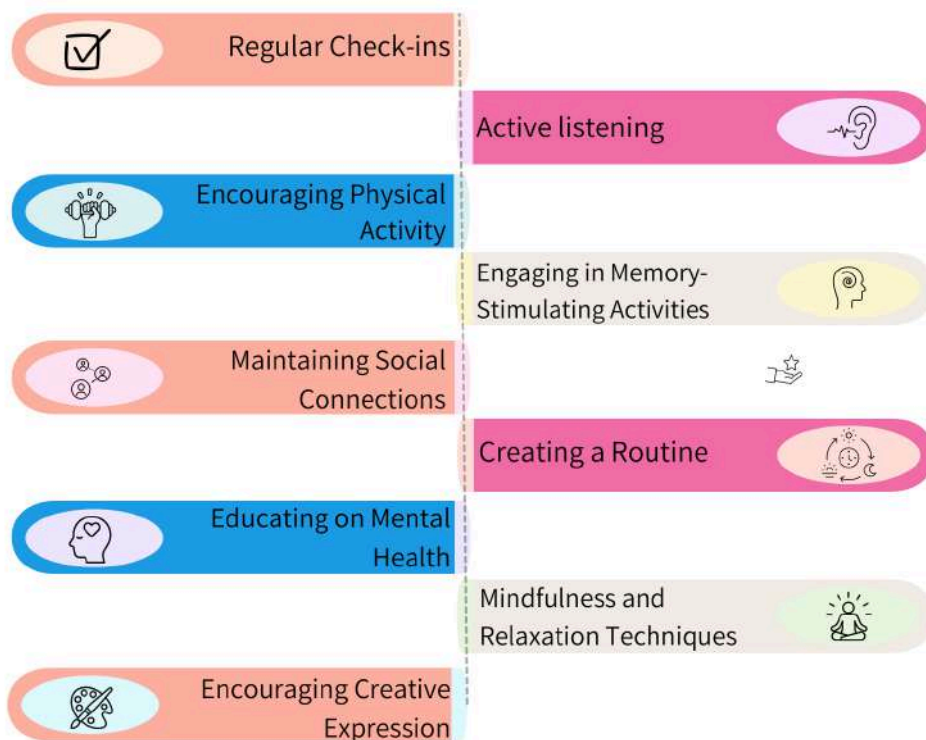
Creating a Routine: A consistent daily routine can offer a feeling of comfort and stability.

Educating on Mental Health: Offering knowledge on mental health helps clarify and destigmatise the subject.

Mindfulness and Relaxation Techniques: Simple meditation or breathing techniques can help someone manage stress and anxiety.

Encouraging Creative Expression: Engaging in activities such as painting, music, or writing can provide a soothing and healing space for emotions to be expressed.

STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING AND MONITORING ELDERLY





5. Strategies and tips on how to monitor and support the elderly as they engage in age-appropriate social well-being practices

Lubben Social Network Scale

Lubben Social Network Scale (LSNS) measures social engagement and support, which are critical for psychological well-being.

Studies showed that abbreviated scales such as the LSNS-6 should be considered for inclusion in practice protocols of gerontological practitioners. Screening older persons based on the LSNS-6 provides quantitative information on their family and friendship ties, and identifies persons at increased risk for social isolation who might benefit from in-depth assessment and targeted interventions.

Variations of the LSNS tool can be downloaded from Boston College School of Social Work here:

<https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/ssw/sites/lubben/description/permission-to-use-scales.html>

Engage in meaningful activities together

Social and overall wellbeing of elderly can be supported by motivating them to participate in activities they find meaningful — those that create a sense of purpose in your daily life. These can include hobbies, volunteer activities, or time with family and friends. As caregivers (professional or family), engage in activities together or help them find resources. Here are a few suggested activities:

- Play cards or other games in person or online.
- Travel with a group of older adults, such as a retiree group.
- Video chat or call friends and family members.
- Try different restaurants with your loved ones.
- Listen and share your favorite music with your family.



- Join a group interested in a hobby, such as knitting, hiking, birdwatching, painting, or wood carving.
- Reconnect with old friends through your high school or college alumni association.

Help older people to learn something new:

- Find classes for retirees - cooking, art, dance, language, or computer class, join a book or film club.
- Try yoga, tai chi, or another new physical activity.
- Learn (or relearn) how to play a musical instrument.

Support them to adopt healthy stress-relieving habits:

- Read a good book, magazine, or newspaper.
- Practice gratitude and mindfulness.
- Do tai chi or yoga.
- Cook your favourite healthy meal together.
- Enjoy the little things, such as a cup of coffee or a sunrise.

Source: US National Institute of Ageing



Picture: Canva



6. Case studies illustrating the successful application of monitoring and supporting techniques of the elderly's

DoSomething campaign to fight senior isolation (US):



DoSomething is the leading hub for youth-centered activism and service. They educate and equip young people to create the future they want to see – one built around equity & justice, climate & sustainability, and safety & wellbeing. With members in every U.S. area code and 189 countries, their diverse and intersectional community of young people is taking collective action to drive lasting change.

In one of their campaigns their members were reaching out to their older loved ones to combat isolation -- and they've collected almost 25,000 stories, memories and words of wisdom from elderly.

<https://dosomething.org/article/11-stories-from-seniors-that-will-inspire-you>

Success Story: 82 Years-Old Improves Strength, Balance and Endurance (Canada)

When Elizabeth started working with Angie, a personal trainer from Vintage Fitness she had clear goals in mind:

To improve strength in hands, balance, overall strength, endurance, ability to walk for very long periods of time especially while travelling, better posture, improved sleep, improved wellbeing and feeling of community.

These are the thoughts and feedback from her trainer, Angie:

“Elizabeth has been sleeping amazing. She has great energy. Her hand pain is completely gone. She has gained fantastic balance and posture. Her endurance continues to improve.” Angie works with Elizabeth 2 times a week at a gym with fun circuits that





include strength balance agility and cardio respiratory training as well as flexibility and mobility.

Elizabeth is currently travelling in Asia and feels great about all her accomplishments to date!

<https://www.vintagefitness.ca/blog/2023/06/23/success-story-82-years-old-improves-strength%2C-balance-and-endurance>

Playfulness is key - Bewegen is leven (Netherlands)

Joel Kruisselbrink is a Dutch movement educator with a mission: To get young and old moving again in a playful way! He works mainly with residents of senior houses. This is his story from his website: “During my work as a movement educator, I saw the same active residents every week. But when I brought these residents back to the department,



I saw the inactive residents sleeping through their day. This had to change, I thought: how can I inspire these residents to start moving? One day I saw my son playing with coffee cups, they flew through the room and across the floor. I got inspired and made an exercise around this to activate an inactive resident who loves coffee. I discovered the power of playing with everyday materials. I look very specifically at the interests, work or hobby of the resident and think of an exercise with this.”

Joel gives inspirational sessions at home and abroad and gives workshops at various organizations to put his playful working method on the map and inspire others. He uses cups, small plastic balls, beach balls, umbrellas, cartons and other everyday objects to activate seniors. Check the example video: **Epic Ball Toss Game** below and his website.

<https://youtu.be/6UfqFTgL5eQ>

<https://www.bewegenisleven.nl/over/>



7. Learning outcomes (in bullet points)

- Participants will be able to identify and explain the multidimensional aspects of well-being (physical, emotional, psychological, and social) and their importance for the overall health of seniors.
- Participants will demonstrate the ability to apply motivational strategies that encourage seniors to engage in age-appropriate wellbeing activities, tailored to their interests and capabilities.
- Participants will effectively use several assessment tools (such as the PASE and TUG test) to monitor seniors' physical and psychological well-being.
- Participants will foster and support social engagement by encouraging seniors to participate in meaningful activities that promote independence, personal identity, and community involvement.

Conclusion

By understanding the key aspects of physical, emotional, psychological, and social well-being, caregivers can create a nurturing environment that fosters independence, engagement, and a higher quality of life for older adults. Consistent monitoring and personalised support will empower seniors to thrive as they age. Prioritise open communication, empathy, and active listening to truly understand the needs and preferences of seniors. Your compassion and dedication can transform the lives of seniors, empowering them to not only live well but to thrive with dignity and joy in every moment.

8. Further educational material:

Article about choosing the best fitness tracker for seniors:

<https://agewellseniorfitness.com/best-wearable-fitness-trackers-for-seniors-essential-guide-for-older-adults/>

Caregiver Training: Helping an Older Adult with Range of Motion Exercises



<https://youtu.be/cnfRdPdGNdc?si=0rAFwiVobpcgju58>

Conducting and Scoring the Mini Mental State Examination:

<https://youtu.be/b0pVs-hLaWw?si=5ci-nv75nMDcO9dC>

Instagram account of Bewegen Is Leben for playful exercise and engagement tips

<https://www.instagram.com/bewegen.is.leven/>

More success stories:

Jeanne Is Managing Her Dementia, Feeling Motivated and Lost Weight

<https://www.vintagefitness.ca/blog/2023/03/17/jeanne-is-managing-her-dementia-feeling-motivated-and-lost-weight>

Ana Keeps Exercise FUN for Her Clients

<https://www.vintagefitness.ca/blog/2023/05/12/ana-keeps-exercise-fun-for-her-clients>



Pictures: Instagram, Bewegen Is Leben

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