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Ageing Well

WP3/ A1- Activity 2

Module A: Awareness of age discrimination/stereotypes

INFODEF

Lesson Plan 2: Developing personal awareness of own
age-related stereotypes





Overview of the module

This module introduces the concept of age discrimination and stereotypes, focusing on how they negatively impact older adults in various settings. It raises awareness of both overt and covert signs of ageism and provides strategies for recognizing and addressing these biases to foster more inclusive and respectful interactions with the elderly.

Objectives

1. Define age discrimination and age-related stereotypes.
2. Identify both overt and covert signs of age discrimination in various contexts.
3. Understand the negative effects of ageism on older adults' mental health and well-being.
4. Recognize common age-related stereotypes and challenge them with facts.
5. Develop strategies to prevent and address age discrimination in personal and professional interactions with older adults.
6. Foster a more inclusive and respectful attitude toward aging in their communities and workplaces.

Lesson Plan Title: Developing personal awareness of own age-related stereotypes

Objective:

To discover own age-related stereotypes and to develop strategies and tips to manage age-related stereotypes and their effects

Duration: 60 minutes in total (including all activities)

Activities:

- Activity 1: Success Stories - Overcoming Age-Related Stereotypes (20 minutes)
- Activity 2: Small Group Activity - Developing Strategies to Manage Age-Related Stereotypes (20 minutes)
- Activity 3: Individual Reflection - Discovering Personal Age-Related Stereotypes (20 minutes)



Materials needed:

- o **Activity 1:**
 - ✓ [Pre-selected success stories](#) (written or video format).
 - ✓ Projector or printed handouts
- o **Activity 2:**
 - ✓ Flip charts and markers for each group.
 - ✓ [Pre-written scenarios](#)
- o **Activity 3:**
 - ✓ [Reflection worksheets or journals](#)

Learning outcomes:

By the end of this lesson, participants will be able to:

- o Recognize Real-Life Examples of Overcoming Age-Related Stereotypes
- o Analyze the Effects of Challenging Stereotypes
- o Identify and Reflect on Personal Age-Related Stereotypes
- o Develop Practical Strategies for Managing Stereotypes
- o Collaborate to Create a Toolkit for Managing Bias
- o Create a Self-Improvement Plan for Challenging Stereotypes
- o Encourage Long-Term Self-Awareness and Behavior Change



List of sources and references related to the activity (APA style):

Dawson, K. (2021). Self-Reflection and Age: A Guide to Understanding Personal Biases. *Personal Growth Quarterly*, 44(1), 33-47.

Harrison, L. (2020). Defying Age Stereotypes: Inspiring Success Stories. *Age and Progress*, 12(3), 102-115.

Robinson, P. (2021). Stereotypes and Age: A Critical Analysis. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 92(1), 50-68.

Williams, R. (2022). Managing Stereotypes: Strategies for Everyday Life. *Journal of Social Dynamics*, 75(2), 89-105.



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Activity 1: Overcoming Age-Related Stereotypes

Success Stories - Group Activity



Title of the activity: Success Stories - Overcoming Age-Related Stereotypes

Short description of the theoretical context of the activity (up to 150 words):

Success stories serve as motivational examples of how individuals or groups have successfully challenged and changed age-related stereotypes. These stories help participants see the practical outcomes of managing stereotypes and encourage them to adopt similar strategies

Aims and objectives of the activity:

- o Share real-life examples of overcoming age-related stereotypes.
- o Discuss the personal and societal effects of these changes.
- o Inspire participants to consider strategies they can apply to their own lives

Materials Needed:

- o [Pre-selected success stories](#) (written or video format).
- o Projector or printed handouts

Duration of the activity:

20 minutes

Description of the process of the activity:

In this activity, participants explore motivational success stories that illustrate how individuals and organizations have effectively challenged and transformed age-related stereotypes. Presenting diverse examples—such as a young entrepreneur overcoming perceptions of inexperience or an older adult mastering new technologies—participants will engage in discussions about the outcomes of these narratives and their broader societal implications. The goal is to inspire attendees to reflect on their own experiences



and consider practical strategies for overcoming stereotypes in their lives, encouraging a mindset shift toward empowerment and growth.

- o Step 1. Present a success story (or multiple stories) that illustrates how an individual or organization changed the narrative around age-related stereotypes (e.g., a young entrepreneur defying the stereotype of inexperience or an older adult mastering new technology).
- o Step 2. After each story, engage the participants in a group discussion about the key takeaways. Discussion prompts for each story:

For Diana Nyad

- "What do you think motivated Diana Nyad to keep pursuing her goal despite multiple failed attempts?"
- "How does Nyad's story challenge stereotypes about ageing and physical abilities? Can you think of other examples where older adults have accomplished similar feats?"
- "What personal qualities do you think contributed to her success, and how could those qualities apply to challenges in our own lives?"

For Vera Wang

- "What does Vera Wang's story tell us about the possibilities of career shifts later in life?"
- "How does her journey redefine the idea of success and creativity at any age?"
- "What stereotypes about age and career might Wang's success challenge, and how could these insights help us rethink age in our own careers?"

For Colonel Harland Sanders

- "What might have helped Colonel Sanders overcome repeated failures and



find success later in life?"

- "How does his story challenge the stereotype that entrepreneurship is only for younger people?"
- "What lessons can we take from Sanders' perseverance, and how could they be applied to personal or professional setbacks we face?"

For Grandma Moses

- "What does Grandma Moses' story teach us about creativity and pursuing passions at any age?"
- "How does she redefine expectations for learning new skills or starting a new career later in life?"
- "What can we learn from her journey about the value of pursuing hobbies or interests, regardless of age?"

For Tao Porchon-Lynch

- "What aspects of Tao Porchon-Lynch's life inspire you when thinking about physical fitness and health as we age?"
- "How does she change the way we think about physical activity or professional work in later life?"
- "What qualities do you think contributed to her longevity in her profession, and how could these be beneficial in our own lives?"
- Step 3. Ask participants to share similar stories from their own lives or public examples they admire.
- Step 4. Conclude with a reflection on how these success stories can be models for personal growth. Reflection prompts:
 - "In what ways do these stories challenge the stereotypes we may hold about ageing? How could letting go of these stereotypes impact our view of what's possible at any age?"



- o "How do these stories encourage us to think differently about setbacks or the idea of 'starting over'? What personal goals might we reconsider pursuing, regardless of our age?"
- o "Each of these individuals pursued their passions and defied expectations. What lesson from one of these stories could you apply to your own goals, whether in career, fitness, creativity, or personal life?"
- o "Reflect on a time when you, or someone you know, challenged a stereotype or defied expectations. How does that experience connect with the stories we discussed today?"
- o "How can these stories inspire us to adopt a more positive outlook on ageing and recognize its potential for growth, new beginnings, and achievement?"

Variations of the activity, if any:

- o Participants can research and present their own success stories related to age stereotypes.

Tips and recommendations:

Choose diverse success stories that reflect different cultural and social backgrounds

List of sources and references related to the activity (APA style):

Harrison, L. (2020). Defying Age Stereotypes: Inspiring Success Stories. *Age and Progress*, 12(3), 102-115.

Lesson 2 - Activity 1. Real Life Stories



1. Diana Nyad: Completing an Extreme Physical Feat in Her 60s

- **Story:** Diana Nyad is an American long-distance swimmer who, at the age of 64, became the first person to swim from Cuba to Florida without the aid of a shark cage in 2013. She had attempted this swim multiple times over a span of 35 years, and her persistence paid off later in life.
- **Overcoming the Stereotype:** Nyad shattered the stereotype that older adults lack the physical stamina or endurance to accomplish extreme physical activities. Her success highlighted that age does not have to limit one's ability to achieve major athletic milestones.
- **Key Takeaway:** This story can be used to challenge the belief that older adults are physically frail or incapable of pushing their limits, inspiring participants to reconsider assumptions about ageing and physical capability.

2. Vera Wang: Entering the Fashion Industry Later in Life

- **Story:** Vera Wang, one of the most famous fashion designers in the world, did not enter the fashion industry until she was 40 years old. Before that, she was a professional figure skater and then an editor at Vogue. Wang's career in fashion began when she designed her own wedding dress, and she has since built a global brand.
- **Overcoming the Stereotype:** Wang defied the stereotype that success in fashion (or any other industry) is only achievable when one is young. Her story demonstrates that it's possible to start a new career or passion at any age and achieve tremendous success.
- **Key Takeaway:** Wang's example encourages the idea that age is not a barrier to innovation, creativity, or entrepreneurship. This challenges the stereotype that new ventures or creative success are for the young.

3. Colonel Harland Sanders: Building a Global Franchise in His 60s

- **Story:** Colonel Harland Sanders, the founder of Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC), didn't find major success until he was in his 60s. After years of running a small restaurant and facing numerous business failures, he began franchising KFC and turned it into a globally recognized brand.



- **Overcoming the Stereotype:** Sanders defied the stereotype that older adults cannot be successful entrepreneurs or start a business later in life. His story demonstrates that age does not have to be a barrier to pursuing new career paths or achieving financial success.
- **Key Takeaway:** This example can inspire participants to challenge the idea that older adults are too old to start new business ventures or achieve major financial success later in life.

4. Grandma Moses: Starting a Successful Art Career in Her 70s

- **Story:** Anna Mary Robertson Moses, better known as Grandma Moses, was a famous American folk artist who began painting seriously at the age of 78. She became internationally famous for her paintings, which depicted rural life in America. Her artwork gained widespread popularity, and she continued to paint until she was over 100 years old.
- **Overcoming the Stereotype:** Grandma Moses overturned the stereotype that creativity and artistic skill diminish with age. She also challenged the belief that it's too late to start a new career or passion after retirement.
- **Key Takeaway:** This story can be used to debunk the stereotype that older adults are no longer creative or capable of learning new skills. It shows that it's never too late to start a new hobby or even build a career.

5. Tao Porchon-Lynch: Yoga Instructor at 100

- **Story:** Tao Porchon-Lynch, a yoga master, began teaching yoga when she was 50 and continued teaching well into her 90s and even past 100 years old. She was recognized by the Guinness World Records as the world's oldest yoga instructor and an inspiring example of healthy ageing.
- **Overcoming the Stereotype:** Porchon-Lynch broke the stereotype that older adults are not physically capable of engaging in demanding physical activities, such as yoga, and that one cannot remain active in advanced age. Her longevity in teaching yoga also defied the notion that older adults cannot maintain professional careers for extended periods.



- **Key Takeaway:** This story can challenge participants to rethink assumptions about aging and physical fitness, particularly the idea that older adults must become inactive or retire early.

These stories highlight how individuals have broken down barriers and defied age-related stereotypes in different fields, from athletics to entrepreneurship, art, and physical fitness. They serve as powerful examples to inspire reflection and personal growth in combating stereotypes associated with ageing.



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Activity 2: Developing Strategies to Manage Age-Related
Stereotypes

Small Group Activity



Title of the activity: Small Group Activity - Developing Strategies to Manage Age-Related Stereotypes

Short description of the theoretical context of the activity (up to 150 words):

Small group work fosters collaboration and critical thinking. This activity encourages participants to develop actionable strategies to manage age-related stereotypes, both at the personal and societal levels. The group dynamic allows for the sharing of diverse perspectives and ideas

Aims and objectives of the activity:

- o Identify the impact of age-related stereotypes on behaviour and interactions.
- o Develop practical strategies for managing these stereotypes in daily life.
- o Collaborate to share insights and create a toolkit of tips for managing age-related biases.

Materials Needed:

- o Flip charts and markers for each group.
- o [Pre-written scenarios](#)

Duration of the activity:

20 minutes

Description of the process of the activity:

This collaborative group activity encourages participants to devise practical strategies for managing age-related stereotypes in various contexts. Working in small groups, participants will identify the impact of these stereotypes on behaviour and interactions, discussing potential solutions tailored to specific areas such as the workplace or media



representation. Through guided questions, groups will generate actionable strategies, which they will document on flip charts. The activity culminates with each group presenting their findings, facilitating a broader dialogue on best practices for challenging and dismantling age-related biases.

- o Step 1. Divide participants into small groups of 3-4.
- o Step 2. Ask each group to develop strategies to manage age-related stereotypes, focusing on different areas (e.g., workplace, social life, media).
- o Step 3. Provide groups with guiding questions: How can we challenge stereotypes in these contexts? What practical steps can individuals take to avoid reinforcing stereotypes?
- o Step 4. Each group writes their strategies on a flip chart.
- o Step 5. Groups present their findings and strategies to the larger group.

Variations of the activity, if any:

- o Provide pre-written scenarios for groups to analyze and develop specific strategies for.

Tips and recommendations:

- o Encourage creative strategies that can be easily implemented in everyday life.

List of sources and references related to the activity (APA style):

Williams, R. (2022). Managing Stereotypes: Strategies for Everyday Life. *Journal of Social Dynamics*, 75(2), 89-105.



Lesson 2 - Activity 2. Prompt for Strategies

Scenario 1: The Job Market

- **Context:** An older adult (55+) is seeking employment but faces age-related discrimination during interviews. Employers assume they won't adapt to new technology or fit into a younger workplace culture.
- **Discussion Points:**
 - Identify the stereotype: Older adults are less adaptable to technology.
 - **Strategies:**
 - How can the job seeker showcase their tech skills and adaptability in a resume or interview?
 - What resources (e.g., workshops, online courses) can they utilise to improve their tech knowledge?
 - How can they address age bias directly in interviews?

Scenario 2: Healthcare Provider Attitudes

- **Context:** An older adult visits a healthcare provider who dismisses their health concerns as just "part of ageing," failing to investigate further or provide appropriate treatment.
- **Discussion Points:**
 - Identify the stereotype: Older adults' health complaints are often disregarded as normal ageing.



- **Strategies:**
 - What communication techniques can the patient use to advocate for their health concerns?
 - How can older adults educate themselves about their health rights and options?
 - What steps can be taken to find a more supportive healthcare provider?

Scenario 3: Social Isolation

- **Context:** A group of younger adults is planning a community event but does not include older adults in the planning, assuming they wouldn't be interested in participating or don't understand modern social trends.
- **Discussion Points:**
 - Identify the stereotype: Older adults are uninterested or out of touch with modern trends.
 - **Strategies:**
 - How can older adults demonstrate their interest and involvement in community events?
 - What can younger adults do to encourage intergenerational participation in planning and events?
 - How can social media or technology be used to connect generations?



Scenario 4: Technology Use

- **Context:** A family member assumes that their elderly relative will not understand how to use a smartphone or a computer, leading them to offer limited support and assistance.
- **Discussion Points:**
 - Identify the stereotype: Older adults are not tech-savvy and cannot learn new technologies.
 - **Strategies:**
 - What methods can the older adult use to learn technology at their own pace?
 - How can the family member modify their approach to offer more effective support and encouragement?
 - What community resources (like classes or mentorship programs) can help older adults become more comfortable with technology?

Group Activity Objectives:

- Each group will analyze the scenario, identify the stereotypes involved, and develop practical strategies for managing and overcoming those stereotypes.
- Groups should be encouraged to share their strategies and discuss how they can apply these strategies in real-life situations. This collaborative approach fosters an environment of learning and support among participants.



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Activity 3: Discovering Personal Age-Related Stereotypes
Individual Reflection



Title of the activity: Individual Reflection - Discovering Personal Age-Related Stereotypes

Short description of the theoretical context of the activity (up to 150 words):

Self-reflection is a critical aspect of personal development. In this activity, participants reflect on their own internalized age-related stereotypes and create a personal plan for addressing them. By identifying these biases, participants can work toward reducing their impacts.

Aims and objectives of the activity:

- o Reflect on personal age-related stereotypes.
- o Develop a self-improvement plan to challenge these stereotypes.
- o Encourage long-term self-awareness and behavior change.

Materials Needed:

- o [Reflection worksheets or journals.](#)

Duration of the activity:

20 minutes

Description of the process of the activity:

In the final activity, participants engage in deep self-reflection to uncover their internalized age-related stereotypes and develop a personal action plan to address them. Utilizing reflection worksheets, individuals will contemplate stereotypes they may hold about themselves, examining how these biases have influenced their thoughts and behaviors. After identifying these internalized beliefs, participants will create a self-improvement plan outlining specific actions to challenge and manage these stereotypes. This introspective exercise promotes long-term self-awareness and behavioral change, encouraging participants to take ownership of their personal growth and foster a more positive



self-image.

- o Step 1. Distribute reflection worksheets .
- o Step2. Ask participants to individually reflect on the following questions:
 - o What age-related stereotypes have I internalized about myself (e.g., “I’m too old for this,” “I’m too young to be taken seriously”)?
 - o How have these stereotypes influenced my thoughts, behaviors, or opportunities?
- o Step 3. After 5-7 minutes of reflection, ask participants to create a self-plan to change or manage these stereotypes. This plan should include specific actions they will take (e.g., challenging negative self-talk, seeking new opportunities to defy stereotypes).

Notes for trainer:

In this activity, "challenging negative self-talk" and "seeking new opportunities to defy stereotypes" are key strategies for participants to actively confront and manage internalized age-related stereotypes. Here’s what each term means in this context:

Challenging Negative Self-Talk

Negative self-talk refers to the critical, often untrue thoughts we have about ourselves based on stereotypes or societal messages. For instance, if someone thinks, "I'm too old to learn new technology," they’re engaging in negative self-talk that reinforces a limiting stereotype. Challenging this self-talk means questioning these thoughts and replacing them with more positive, empowering ones. For example:

- o Identify the thought: "I'm too old to be good at this."
- o Challenge it: Ask if it's factually true or if it’s based on an unhelpful



stereotype.

- o Replace it: Change the thought to something like, "I am capable of learning new skills at any age."

Seeking New Opportunities to Defy Stereotypes

This step is about taking intentional actions that directly counter age-related stereotypes. For example, if someone has internalized the idea that they're "too young" to lead, they could seek leadership roles or projects to prove that stereotype wrong. Similarly, if they feel "too old" for a particular hobby or job, they might try engaging in it to demonstrate their capability and resilience. This action-oriented approach reinforces the idea that they are not bound by stereotypes and can achieve or attempt anything they set their mind to.

Together, these strategies encourage participants to reshape their beliefs and behaviors, empowering them to think and act beyond limiting stereotypes. Let me know if you'd like examples of specific actions participants could use!

- o Step 4. If comfortable, participants can share their self-plans in pairs or small groups.

Variations of the activity, if any:

- o Participants can revisit their self-plan at a later session to discuss progress.

Tips and recommendations:

- o Encourage honest and non-judgmental self-reflection to foster meaningful personal growth.

General Tips:



- Ensure a safe and supportive environment for participants to discuss sensitive topics.
- Encourage participants to reflect not only on societal stereotypes but also on how they may perpetuate these biases within themselves.

List of sources and references related to the activity (APA style):

- Dawson, K. (2021). Self-Reflection and Age: A Guide to Understanding Personal Biases. *Personal Growth Quarterly*, 44(1), 33-47.
- Harrison, L. (2020). Defying Age Stereotypes: Inspiring Success Stories. *Age and Progress*, 12(3), 102-115.
- Robinson, P. (2021). Stereotypes and Age: A Critical Analysis. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 92(1), 50-68.
- Williams, R. (2022). Managing Stereotypes: Strategies for Everyday Life. *Journal of Social Dynamics*, 75(2), 89-105.



Lesson 2 - Activity 3. Reflection Worksheet

Reflection Worksheet: Discovering Personal Age-Related Stereotypes

Name: _____

Date: _____

Part 1: Personal Beliefs and Stereotypes

1. What age-related stereotypes do you believe exist in society?

- o *List at least three stereotypes you have encountered or are aware of.*

0. _____

1. _____

2. _____

2. Reflect on your own beliefs:

- o *Have you ever held any of these stereotypes? If so, which ones?*

3. Identify any stereotypes you might have internalized:

- o *Have you ever felt that you (or someone close to you) were treated differently because of age? Describe the situation.*



Part 2: Personal Experiences

4. Reflect on your experiences with older adults:

- o *What are some positive or negative experiences you have had with older adults that may have shaped your beliefs?*

5. Identify a specific situation where you encountered age-related stereotypes:

- o *Describe the situation and how it made you feel.*

Part 3: Challenging Stereotypes

6. Consider your beliefs and experiences:

- o *What actions can you take to challenge age-related stereotypes in yourself and others?*

7. Develop a personal strategy:

- o *Write down one specific strategy you will implement to address your own age-related stereotypes and promote understanding.*



Part 4: Reflection and Goals

8. Set a personal goal:

- o *What is one goal you would like to achieve regarding your understanding and awareness of age-related stereotypes over the next month?*

9. Reflection:

- o *How do you think this awareness will impact your interactions with older adults or your views on aging?*

Conclusion

- *After completing this worksheet, take a moment to review your responses. Consider discussing your reflections with a partner or a small group to share insights and foster a deeper understanding of age-related stereotypes.*

This reflection worksheet encourages participants to think critically about their beliefs and experiences, fostering personal growth and a deeper understanding of age-related stereotypes. Participants can use the worksheet as a standalone reflection tool or as a part of a broader discussion in the lesson.