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Ageing Well

WP3/ A1-Activity 2

Module E: How to Encourage the Elderly to Make Positive
Changes and Stay Active

E-Seniors

Lesson Plan 3: Motivational techniques for positive changes





Overview of the module

This module will provide an overview of effective motivational techniques to encourage physical and social activity among the elderly. It will also explore networking practices that engage the elderly with their families and communities to foster connections and improve overall well-being. The focus is on helping caregivers, family members, and community leaders support the elderly in maintaining a healthy, active lifestyle through social engagement and motivation.

Objective:

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

1. Identify motivational techniques that can encourage elderly individuals to stay active.
2. Understand the importance of social engagement and networking for the elderly.

Develop practical strategies to help elderly individuals stay connected with their families and communities.

Duration: 60 minutes in total (including all activities)

Activities:

1. Activity 1 : Icebreaker – "Life Story Connection"
2. Activity 2 : Group Discussion – "Motivational Techniques for Elderly"
3. Activity 3 : Role-Playing – "Family and Community Networking"



Materials needed:

Activity 1 :

- An open space for participants to talk.

Activity 2 :

- Flip chart
- Markers or a whiteboard for jotting down ideas

Activity 3 :

- Scenario cards
- Role-play props (optional)

Learning outcomes:

- o Participants will understand the power of personal stories in motivating others and how shared experiences can help build a connection.
- o Participants will gain insight into different approaches to motivating elderly individuals to stay physically and socially active.
- o Participants will improve their communication and problem-solving skills related to motivating elderly individuals to engage with their social network and community.



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

Smith, L. L. (Year). *Motivation and Aging: A Primer for Caregivers*. Oxford University Press.

Baltes, M. J. (Year). *Physical Activity and Aging: A Guide for Caregivers*. Sage Publications.

Author Unknown. (2022). The Importance of Social Connections in Elderly Health. *Journal of Aging and Social Policy*.

National Institute on Aging. (Year). *Community Involvement: A Key to Elderly Well-Being*. National Institutes of Health.

Elder Care Learning Systems. (Year). *A Guide to Role-Playing in Elderly Care Training*.



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Activity 1: Life Story Connection

Icebreaker



Activity 1 : Icebreaker – “Life Story Connection”

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

This activity taps into the power of storytelling as a motivational tool. Sharing personal or family stories of overcoming challenges can strengthen connections between participants. The act of storytelling helps to create a sense of shared experience, which is particularly important in motivating the elderly to remain engaged and active. This aligns with social support theory, which emphasizes the importance of social connections and shared narratives in boosting well-being.

Aims and objectives of the activity:

- To introduce participants to the power of motivational storytelling.
- To create an open, supportive environment for sharing experiences.
- To set the tone for the rest of the session by promoting reflection on the importance of staying active and engaged.

Materials Needed:

- Just a comfortable space for group interaction.

Duration of the activity: 15 minutes



Description of the process of the activity:

1. **Step 1 (2 minutes):** Begin by explaining that everyone will have an opportunity to share a motivating story from their own lives or from someone they know.
2. **Step 2 (10 minutes):** Give each participant 1-2 minutes to share their story. Encourage them to reflect on a time when they or someone they know found ways to stay active (either physically or socially) despite challenges.
3. **Step 3 (3 minutes):** Conclude with a group reflection. Ask participants what they learned from each other's stories and how personal experiences can be motivating for the elderly in real life.

Tips and recommendations:

- Encourage participants to focus on positivity and resilience in their stories.
- Remind everyone to be mindful of time so that everyone has a chance to share.
- This can be an emotional activity, so create a welcoming, non-judgmental space.

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

1. *"The Power of Storytelling in Motivational Techniques"* – Psychology Today, 2021.
2. *"Narrative and Well-Being in Older Adults"* – Journal of Aging & Social Policy, 2019.



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Activity 2: Motivational Techniques for Elderly



Activity 2 : Motivational Techniques for Elderly

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

This activity draws on theories of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation refers to engaging in an activity because it is inherently satisfying, while extrinsic motivation involves external rewards. For elderly individuals, a blend of these motivators can help them remain active. The activity also connects with the concept of person-centered care, which emphasizes tailoring approaches to individual needs and preferences.

Aims and objectives of the activity:

- To help participants identify and discuss effective motivational strategies for the elderly.
- To facilitate peer learning by sharing ideas and experiences about motivating elderly individuals to stay physically and socially active.
- To demonstrate how motivation is multi-dimensional (physical, social, and emotional) and requires a variety of techniques.

Materials Needed:

- Flip chart or whiteboard
- Markers for brainstorming ideas



Duration of the activity: 20 minutes

Description of the process of the activity:

1. **Step 1 (2 minutes):** Begin by introducing the concept of motivational techniques for the elderly. Discuss how motivation can take many forms (e.g., goal-setting, social reinforcement, personal interests and some strengths such as recognition of past achievements, lifelong skills, resilience and adaptability, social and emotional intelligence).
2. **Step 2 (3 minutes):** Divide participants into small groups (3-4 people each). Assign each group to brainstorm a list of motivational techniques that encourage elderly individuals to stay active (both physically and socially).

Here's the list of motivational techniques along with the instructions for Step 2. You can follow this script to guide the activity:

Instructions for Facilitator:

To break the group into groups of 3 to 4 people. Each group will come up with a list of motivational techniques that encourage elderly individuals to stay active, both physically and socially.

They will have 3 minutes to discuss, so let's keep it quick and focused. They should think about what kinds of activities, rewards, or methods can motivate seniors to be more engaged, whether it's through exercise, social interaction, or pursuing personal interests.



They will write down their ideas. After the 3 minutes are up, they will share their thoughts with the larger group.

Motivational Techniques for Seniors to Stay Active:

- **Setting small, achievable goals:** Encourage setting short-term goals (e.g., walk for 10 minutes a day) that are realistic and can be easily accomplished, creating a sense of achievement.
- **Celebrating milestones:** Reward progress, such as completing a set number of exercises or participating in a social event. Rewards can be small but meaningful, like a favorite treat or recognition in a group setting.
- **Group activities:** Participate in group activities like group walks, exercise classes, or cooking clubs. These promote both physical activity and social interaction, building camaraderie and accountability.
- **Incorporating interests and hobbies:** Connect physical activities to hobbies (e.g., gardening, dancing, or arts and crafts). This helps seniors stay active while also pursuing something they enjoy.
- **Positive reinforcement from family and friends:** Encourage family and friends to provide regular encouragement and praise. Knowing that loved ones support their efforts can motivate seniors to stay active.
- **Creating a routine:** Help seniors establish a daily routine that includes time for physical activity, such as morning stretching or walking after lunch. Consistency can turn these activities into habits.
- **Access to fun, low-impact activities:** Provide options for low-impact activities like swimming, yoga, tai chi, or seated exercises. These are gentle on the body while still keeping them physically engaged.



- **Using technology:** use apps or fitness trackers that help seniors monitor their progress. Some may find it motivating to see their steps or exercise times displayed visually.
- **Encouraging volunteerism:** Suggest volunteer opportunities that require social interaction and physical activity, like helping at a community garden or assisting in local charity events.

Once the group session ends, bring everyone back together and ask each group to share a few of their best ideas. This not only encourages group collaboration but also helps everyone gather new insights into how to motivate seniors effectively.

3. **Step 3 (10 minutes):** After brainstorming, have each group present their ideas to the rest of the participants. Write down the key points on a flip chart or whiteboard.
4. **Step 4 (5 minutes):** As a group, discuss the effectiveness of the techniques presented. Highlight any techniques that stand out or seem particularly relevant to the elderly population.

Here are some **discussion prompts** that can be used during **Step 4** to facilitate a group conversation about the effectiveness of the motivational techniques presented. These prompts will help participants analyze the methods and consider their relevance and impact on the elderly population:



Discussion Prompts:

1. Which techniques do you think would be most effective for seniors who may feel isolated or lack motivation to engage in physical activities?
2. How can we tailor motivational techniques to meet the different physical and cognitive abilities of the elderly?
3. Which techniques do you believe would help seniors build long-term habits rather than short-term motivation?
4. What role does family and social support play in motivating seniors to stay active?
5. Are there any techniques we discussed that you feel may be particularly helpful for seniors with chronic health conditions or limited physical strength?
6. What role do personal interests or passions play in motivating seniors to stay active?
7. Which techniques might be difficult for seniors to implement on their own, and how can we help support them in overcoming those challenges?
8. Can you think of any additional motivational strategies that we didn't cover today?

Tips and recommendations:

- Encourage creativity and think outside the box. Motivation can come in many forms (e.g., using rewards, setting small achievable goals).
- Be mindful of the elderly person's individual preferences and needs.
- Suggest ways to integrate these techniques into everyday life (e.g., family or community settings : involve family and community by creating shared goals, encouraging regular check-ins, and promoting social engagement through group activities or volunteering. Incorporate physical movement into routine tasks, join



hobby groups or classes, and explore local events or outings to maintain interest.)
Tailor activities to personal interests and ensure consistency to build long-term habits. This approach makes staying active enjoyable, social, and sustainable for seniors.

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

1. "*Motivational Techniques in Elderly Care*" – American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, 2022.
2. "*The Psychology of Motivation for Older Adults*" – National Institute on Aging, 2021.



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Activity 3: Family and Community Networking



Activity 3 : Family and Community Networking

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

Role-playing activities are based on experiential learning theories, which emphasize learning through doing and reflection. In this context, role-playing enables participants to practice real-world scenarios in a safe environment. It focuses on enhancing communication skills, empathy, and problem-solving abilities, all of which are critical for helping the elderly stay socially connected and engaged in their community.

Aims and objectives of the activity:

- To develop practical skills for encouraging elderly individuals to stay connected with their families and communities.
- To enhance communication and empathy skills in caregiving scenarios.
- To provide a safe space for participants to practice real-life social interactions with the elderly.

Materials Needed:

- Scenario cards (cards that outline different situations involving the elderly and their families or community).

How to create scenario cards :

1. **Create a situation:** Think of a real-life challenge a senior might face, like not wanting to go for a walk or feeling isolated.



2. **Describe the characters:** Identify who's involved, such as the senior and their family member or community volunteer.
3. **State the challenge:** Describe what's making the senior hesitate or struggle, like fear of falling or not knowing how to use technology.
4. **Include an action prompt:** Ask how the person would handle the situation, like how they could encourage the senior to stay active or socially engaged.

For example:

- Scenario: A senior feels too self-conscious to use a walker.
- Action Prompt: How would you encourage them to use the walker and stay active?
- Optional props to enhance role-playing (e.g., mobile phones, calendars, etc.).

Duration of the activity: 20 minutes

Description of the process of the activity:

1. **Step 1 (2 minutes):** Introduce the purpose of role-playing: to practice helping elderly individuals stay socially connected to family or community through various scenarios.
2. **Step 2 (2 minutes):** Briefly explain the scenarios. Some example scenarios could include planning a family visit for an elderly individual, organizing a virtual meeting, or suggesting a community event.



3. **Step 3 (10 minutes):** Divide participants into pairs or small groups and assign each group a scenario. Let them role-play the situation, with one participant acting as the elderly individual and the other as a family member, a friend, a caregiver..
4. **Step 4 (5 minutes):** After each role-play, ask the participants to provide feedback on what worked well, what could be improved, and any insights gained. Discuss how these scenarios can translate into real-life situations.

Tips and recommendations:

- Encourage participants to embody their roles fully for the most effective learning experience.
- Allow time for debriefing after each role-play to discuss lessons learned.
- Suggest participants use empathetic language and focus on creating a supportive atmosphere.

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

1. *"Role-Playing as a Tool in Elder Care Training"* – Journal of Geriatric Care and Education, 2020.
2. *"Social Connectivity in Elderly Populations"* – International Journal of Aging & Human Development, 2021.