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Ageing Well

WP3/ A1- Activity 2

Module A: Awareness of age discrimination/stereotypes

INFODEF

Lesson Plan 3: Strategies to handle ageism





## 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: Strategies to handle ageism

### Objective:

To develop positive psychology strategies to handle ageism

**Duration:** 60 minutes in total (including all activities)

### Activities:

- o Activity 1: Video Case Study - Positive Psychology Strategies for Ageism (20 minutes)
- o Activity 2: Role-Playing - Developing Positive Psychology Strategies (20 minutes)



- o Activity 3: Small Group Discussion - Sharing Strategies for Handling Ageism  
(20 minutes)

Materials needed:

- o **Activity 1:**

- ✓ A short video highlighting positive psychology strategies (pre-selected).

<https://youtu.be/YS3qoaYhVqg?si=-9vGa0kZ4cCnzh8y>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l0vva5l8coA>

[https://youtu.be/\\_Yba2j78fJl?si=gTJj0Edr65Ebyg7P](https://youtu.be/_Yba2j78fJl?si=gTJj0Edr65Ebyg7P)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=itxI9aNW3UU>

- ✓ Projector or screen to show the video.

- o **Activity 2:**

- ✓ [Pre-written role-play scenarios.](#)

- ✓ Space for participants to move around.

- o **Activity 3:**

- ✓ Flip charts or whiteboards for each group.

- ✓ Markers for note-taking.

Learning outcomes:

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

- o Understand Positive Psychology in the Context of Ageism
- o Identify and Evaluate Strategies for Overcoming Ageism
- o Apply Positive Psychology Techniques in Practical Scenarios
- o Demonstrate Resilience, Empathy, and Assertiveness
- o Develop Strengths-Based Strategies for Age-Related Challenges



- o Reflect on Personal Experiences with Ageism
- o Collaborate to Develop Collective Strategies Against Ageism
- o Explore the Role of Optimism, Resilience, and Self-Awareness

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

Garcia, M. (2021). Role-Playing as a Tool for Positive Psychology in Ageism Education. *Social Behavior Review*, 28(4), 220-232.

Johnson, L. (2019). The Role of Positive Psychology in Combating Ageism. *Psychological Review*, 56(1), 88-97.

Ryan, E. (2020). Positive Psychology and Aging: Strategies for Overcoming Ageism. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 34(2), 145-156.



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Activity 1: Positive Psychology Strategies for Ageism

Video Case Study – Group Activity



**Title of the activity:** Video Case Study - Positive Psychology Strategies for Ageism

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

This activity uses a video case study to demonstrate how positive psychology can be an effective tool in managing and overcoming ageism. Positive psychology focuses on strengths, well-being, and resilience, which can help individuals counter negative stereotypes about aging. By watching a real-world example, participants can connect theory to practice and learn practical strategies.

**Aims and objectives of the activity:**

- o Introduce the concept of positive psychology in relation to ageism.
- o Provide real-world examples of strategies for overcoming ageism.
- o Facilitate discussion and reflection on the effectiveness of these strategies.

**Materials Needed:**

- o A short video highlighting positive psychology strategies (pre-selected).  
<https://youtu.be/YS3qoaYhVqg?si=-9vGa0kZ4cCnzh8y>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l0vva5l8coA>  
[https://youtu.be/\\_Yba2j78fJI?si=gTJj0Edr65Ebyg7P](https://youtu.be/_Yba2j78fJI?si=gTJj0Edr65Ebyg7P)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=itxI9aNW3UU>
- o Projector or screen to show the video.

**Duration of the activity:** 20 minutes

**Description of the process of the activity:**

In this activity, participants engage with a short video case study that illustrates the application of positive psychology in overcoming ageism. The video, lasting 5-7 minutes,



showcases real-world examples where individuals use strengths-based strategies—such as embracing aging as a natural process and promoting intergenerational understanding—to confront age-related biases. Following the video, participants are invited to share their reactions and engage in a reflective discussion guided by key questions about the strategies presented. This collaborative dialogue not only highlights the effectiveness of positive psychology principles but also encourages participants to consider practical applications of these strategies in their own lives.

- o Step 1. Present a 5-7 minute video that demonstrates how individuals use positive psychology strategies to confront and handle ageism (e.g., focusing on strengths, embracing aging as a natural process, promoting intergenerational understanding).
- o Step 2. After the video, ask participants to share their initial reactions and thoughts. Below are some possible prompts to be used at

### **Initial Impressions**

- "What was your first reaction to the video? Did any specific moment resonate with you?"
- "How did the stories shared in the video make you feel about ageism and the experiences of the individuals featured?"

### **Emotional Responses**

- "What emotions did the video evoke for you? Were you inspired, surprised, or perhaps challenged in any way?"
- "Did you find any part of the video particularly uplifting or disheartening? Why?"

### **Personal Connections**

- "Can you relate to any of the experiences depicted in the video? Have you faced similar challenges or witnessed ageism in your own life?"



- "How do the examples of strength-based strategies in the video connect with your own experiences or observations about aging?"

### **Awareness and Reflection**

- "What new insights or perspectives did you gain from watching the video regarding ageism?"
- "Did the video change or reinforce your views on aging? If so, how?"

### **Application of Concepts**

- "What aspects of positive psychology showcased in the video do you think are most applicable in your life or community?"
  - "Are there any specific strategies highlighted in the video that you would like to explore further or try in your own interactions?"
- o Step 3. Facilitate a discussion using guiding questions:
    - o What strategies were used in the video to handle ageism?
    - o How did positive psychology contribute to managing the situation?
    - o What key lessons can we take away from this case study?
  - o Step 4. Summarize the main points and link them to positive psychology principles.

### **Variations of the activity, if any:**

- o Participants can create their own video or skit based on the case study and present it to the group.

### **Tips and recommendations:**

- o Choose a video that features diverse age groups and experiences with ageism.
- o Keep the discussion focused on practical takeaways that participants can use in their own lives.

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

Ryan, E. (2020). Positive Psychology and Aging: Strategies for Overcoming Ageism. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 34(2), 145-156.



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Activity 2: Developing Positive Psychology Strategies

Role-Playing – Group Activity



**Title of the activity:** Role-Playing - Developing Positive Psychology Strategies

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

Role-playing allows participants to practice handling ageism in a safe environment. Through experiential learning, participants can apply positive psychology techniques to manage real-life situations where ageism may occur. This activity fosters empathy, resilience, and problem-solving skills, central to positive psychology.

**Aims and objectives of the activity:**

- o Apply positive psychology techniques in practical scenarios involving ageism.
- o Practice resilience, empathy, and assertiveness in the face of ageism.
- o Develop strategies for handling age-related challenges using a strengths-based approach.

**Materials Needed:**

- o Pre-written role-play scenarios.
- o Space for participants to move around.

**Duration of the activity:**

20 minutes

**Description of the process of the activity:**

This interactive role-playing activity allows participants to apply positive psychology techniques in simulated scenarios that involve ageism. Working in pairs or small groups, participants receive pre-written scenarios depicting ageism, such as an older worker facing workplace discrimination or a younger person being overlooked due to perceived inexperience. Participants are encouraged to act out these scenarios while employing



positive psychology strategies, such as focusing on their strengths and practicing gratitude. After each role-play, a group discussion facilitates the exchange of insights on the effectiveness of the strategies used. By rotating roles, participants gain diverse perspectives on managing age-related challenges, fostering empathy and resilience in the process.

- o Step 1. Divide participants into pairs or small groups.
- o Step 2. Provide each group with a role-play scenario where ageism is present (e.g., an older worker facing discrimination at work, a young person being dismissed as inexperienced).
- o Step 3. Ask participants to act out the scenario in pairs, using positive psychology strategies to handle the situation (e.g., focusing on their strengths, practicing gratitude, building intergenerational understanding).
- o Step 4. After each role-play, ask the group to discuss what strategies were used and how effective they were. Some prompts for each scenario:

*Scenario 1: Workplace Discrimination*

- “What specific strategies did the older employee use to advocate for themselves? How effective were these strategies in addressing their concerns?”
- “How did the manager respond? Were their responses supportive? What alternative approaches could have been taken to foster a better conversation?”
- “What positive psychology strategies stood out in this role-play, and how did they impact the dynamics of the conversation?”

*Scenario 2: Family Gathering*

- “How did the older family member express their feelings? What strategies were effective in communicating their desire for respect?”



- “How did the younger relatives respond? Were they able to engage constructively? What could they have done differently to create a more inclusive atmosphere?”
- “What role did 'I' statements play in this scenario, and how did they influence the dialogue?”

*Scenario 3: Community Event Planning*

- “In what ways did the older adult advocate for their inclusion? How effective were their strategies in conveying their desire to contribute?”
- “How did the community members respond to the older adult’s contributions? Were their strategies open and welcoming?”
- “What did you notice about the use of open-ended questions in this scenario? How did they facilitate a more inclusive discussion?”

*Scenario 4: Healthcare Interaction*

- “What strategies did the older patient use to advocate for their health needs? How effective were these in prompting a deeper exploration of their concerns?”
- “How did the doctor respond to the patient’s concerns? Were their listening and questioning strategies effective in addressing the patient's feelings?”
- “How did assertive communication play a role in this interaction? What could have been improved?”

*Scenario 5: Social Media Discussion*

- “How did the older adult respond to the dismissive comments? What strategies were effective in maintaining their confidence and respect?”
- “How did the younger participants engage with the older adult? Were their strategies effective in fostering a constructive dialogue?”
- “What role did empathy and open dialogue play in this scenario? How did



they influence the conversation's outcome?”

*General Reflection Prompts*

- o “Overall, which strategies do you think were most effective across the different scenarios? Why?”
- o “What common themes emerged regarding effective communication and respect in these role-plays?”
- o “How can we apply the strategies discussed today to our own interactions with individuals of different ages?”
- o Step 5. Rotate roles so participants can practice in different scenarios.

*Variations of the activity, if any:*

- o Scenarios can be customized to reflect the cultural or professional backgrounds of the participants.

*Tips and recommendations:*

- o Encourage participants to focus on resilience and strengths rather than confrontation.
- o Debrief after each role-play to reinforce the connection between positive psychology and managing ageism. Some prompts for each scenario:

*Scenario 1: Workplace Discrimination*

- o “How did the positive psychology strategies used by the older employee and manager help to challenge ageist assumptions in the workplace?”
- o “What aspects of assertive communication contributed to a healthier dialogue about age and capability?”
- o “In what ways did focusing on strengths and contributions help reshape perceptions about older employees?”



*Scenario 2: Family Gathering*

- o “How did the use of 'I' statements by the older family member promote positive communication and help reduce age-related stereotypes?”
- o “What role did empathy play in the younger relatives' responses, and how can it foster better understanding across generations?”
- o “How can we apply the concepts of respect and inclusivity to combat ageism in family dynamics?”

*Scenario 3: Community Event Planning*

- o “How did the older adult's advocacy help to challenge stereotypes about participation and engagement of older individuals in community activities?”
- o “What impact did open-ended questions have on encouraging contributions from older adults? How does this relate to positive psychology?”
- o “In what ways can recognizing the unique perspectives of older adults enhance community initiatives and combat ageism?”

*Scenario 4: Healthcare Interaction*

- o “How did assertive communication empower the older patient to advocate for their health needs? What does this teach us about managing ageism in healthcare?”
- o “How did the doctor's active listening reflect positive psychology principles? How can these principles improve patient outcomes?”
- o “What strategies can healthcare professionals implement to ensure that ageism does not hinder quality care for older patients?”

*Scenario 5: Social Media Discussion*

- o “How did the older adult's calm and confident response to negative comments challenge ageist stereotypes in online interactions?”
- o “What role did empathy and understanding play in helping younger participants appreciate the older adult's perspective?”
- o “How can constructive engagement and respectful dialogue help dismantle ageism in social media and broader communication?”

*General Reflection Prompts*

- o “Reflecting on the scenarios, how did positive psychology strategies help create a more respectful and understanding environment regarding age?”



- o “What connections can you draw between positive psychology and the need for respectful interactions across generations?”
- o “How can the lessons learned from these role-plays influence your approach to addressing ageism in your personal and professional life?”

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

Garcia, M. (2021). Role-Playing as a Tool for Positive Psychology in Ageism Education. *Social Behavior Review*, 28(4), 220-232.



### Lesson 3 - Activity 2. Role-Play Scenarios

#### Scenario 1: Workplace Discrimination

- **Context:** An older employee (50+) feels overlooked for a promotion in favor of a younger colleague. The manager makes comments suggesting that younger employees are more innovative and adaptable.

- **Roles:**

1. Older Employee: Expresses frustration and seeks to advocate for themselves.

Prompts:

- o “I’ve put in years of dedication here and feel I’ve demonstrated my ability to contribute. Can we discuss how my experience could be valuable in this role?”
- o “I’d like to understand how I can continue to grow within the team. What qualities are most valued for this position?”

2. Manager: Must respond to the concerns while acknowledging the older employee’s experience.

Prompts:

- o “I appreciate your perspective and experience. Could you share more about the specific contributions you envision in this new role?”
- o “What are some ideas or recent successes you’re proud of that you feel demonstrate your value to the team?”

- **Positive Psychology Strategies:**

Such as, Assertive Communication and Focusing on Strengths and Contributions

- o The older employee can use assertive communication to express their value.



“I believe my experience with [specific project or task] has prepared me for this new role. Here’s how I can contribute effectively.”

- o The manager can focus on strengths and contributions rather than age.

“Let’s highlight the strengths that you bring to our team. I want to ensure your contributions are recognized.”



## Scenario 2: Family Gathering

- **Context:** At a family gathering, younger relatives make jokes about their older family member's inability to keep up with technology. The older family member feels hurt and marginalized.

- **Roles:**

1. Older Family Member: Shares feelings of exclusion and seeks respect.

Prompts:

- “When jokes are made about my skills with technology, I feel like my other skills and experiences are overlooked. Could we find a way to connect that feels inclusive?”
- “I’d love to learn more about technology—maybe you could teach me! But it’s also nice to share in conversations that respect everyone’s strengths.”

2. Younger Relatives: Must learn to respond sensitively and positively.

Prompts:

- “I didn’t realize those jokes might come across as hurtful. Can you share what would make these conversations feel more inclusive for you?”
- “We appreciate everything you bring to the family. How can we support you better, especially with technology or anything else?”

- **Positive Psychology Strategies:**

Such as, Expressing Feelings Using "I" Statements and Engaging in Dialogue

- The older family member can practice expressing their feelings using "I" statements.

“I think sharing our experiences can help bridge the generational gap. Can we talk about how technology can benefit everyone?”

- The younger relatives can engage in a dialogue to understand the older family member's experiences and offer support.



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“What interests you most about technology? We’d love to help you feel more included!”



### Scenario 3: Community Event Planning

- **Context:** A community group is organizing an event but assumes that older adults will not want to participate or contribute ideas. An older adult tries to join the planning committee but feels dismissed.

- **Roles:**

1. Older Adult: Advocates for their inclusion and shares ideas for the event.

Prompts:

- “I have some ideas for the event that draw on my experiences from past community gatherings. Could I share a few?”
- “I’d love to contribute to the planning process. What areas could use more support or fresh perspectives?”

2. Community Members: Must listen and reconsider their assumptions about age.

Prompts:

- “Thank you for joining us! What ideas or suggestions do you have to make the event a success?”
- “What do you think would appeal to a wider age group in the community for this event?”

- **Positive Psychology Strategies:**

Such as, Advocating for Inclusion and Using Open-Ended Questions

- The older adult can highlight their unique perspectives and experiences.

“What are some ideas you’ve considered for the event? I have a few thoughts I’d love to share.”

- The community members can use open-ended questions to invite contributions from older adults.



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“How do you envision the older generation contributing to this event? Your input is valuable.”



#### Scenario 4: Healthcare Interaction

- **Context:** An older patient visits a doctor who assumes their health issues are just part of ageing and doesn't explore further. The patient feels frustrated and believes they are not being heard.

- **Roles:**

1. Older Patient: Advocates for their health needs and questions the doctor's assumptions.

Prompts:

- o "I know some of my symptoms might be common at my age, but I feel that there might be more to it. Could we explore additional treatment options?"
- o "I want to ensure I'm staying proactive with my health. Could we discuss ways to investigate this further?"

2. Doctor: Responds to the patient's concerns and explores further options.

Prompts:

- o "Thank you for sharing your concerns. Could you tell me more about how these symptoms impact your daily life?"
- o "I understand your concerns. Let's take a closer look at all possible causes and discuss any further tests that might help us get a clearer picture."

- **Positive Psychology Strategies:**

Such as, Assertive Communication and Active Listening and Validation

- o The older patient can use assertive communication to express their health concerns.

"It's important for me to feel heard, and I appreciate your willingness to explore my concerns."

- o The doctor can practice active listening and validate the patient's feelings.



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“Your health is a priority. I’m here to help you navigate these challenges.”



### Scenario 5: Social Media Discussion

- **Context:** During an online discussion about a social issue, an older adult shares their viewpoint but is met with dismissive comments from younger participants who stereotype them as out of touch.
- **Roles:**
- Older Adult: Responds to the negative comments with confidence and respect.

Prompts:

- “I understand that my perspective might differ, but I believe it’s worth considering. Could we discuss the topic respectfully, considering all views?”
  - “I’d love to share my experiences and why I feel this way. I think there’s value in a range of perspectives on this issue.”
- Younger Participants: Must learn to engage constructively and appreciate diverse perspectives.

Prompts:

- “I apologize if my initial response came off as dismissive. Could you tell me more about your viewpoint?”
  - “I’d be interested to hear about your experiences related to this topic. How do you see the issue from your perspective?”
- **Positive Psychology Strategies:**

Such as, Responding with Calm Confidence and Practicing Empathy

- The older adult can use a calm tone to assert their viewpoint and share personal experiences.

“I value your input, and I’m here to share my perspective. Let’s have an open discussion.”

- The younger participants can practice empathy and ask questions to understand the older adult’s perspective better.



“I appreciate you sharing your viewpoint. How has your experience shaped your perspective on this issue?”

**Group Activity Objectives:**

- Each group will perform the role-play scenario, then analyze how the characters handled age-related challenges.
- Afterward, participants should discuss the positive psychology strategies that could be applied in each situation, fostering an understanding of how to promote respect and understanding across generations



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Activity 3: Sharing Strategies for Handling Ageism

Small Group Activity



**Title of the activity:** Small Group Discussion - Sharing Strategies for Handling Ageism

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

Group discussions provide an opportunity for participants to share personal experiences and strategies for dealing with ageism. By integrating positive psychology practices, participants can learn how to use tools like resilience, optimism, and strengths-based thinking to reduce the effects of ageism in their lives and communities.

**Aims and objectives of the activity:**

- o Share personal experiences with ageism and how positive psychology could help.
- o Develop collective strategies to reduce ageism.
- o Explore the role of optimism, resilience, and self-awareness in handling age-based biases.

**Materials Needed:**

- o Flip charts or whiteboards for each group.
- o Markers for note-taking.

**Duration of the activity:**

20 minutes

**Description of the process of the activity:**

In this small group discussion, participants come together to share personal experiences with ageism and explore the role of positive psychology in mitigating its effects. Divided into groups of 3-4, participants discuss their observations of ageism in various contexts, such as workplaces and media. They will delve into how practices like gratitude, self-compassion, and recognizing personal strengths can empower individuals to combat age-based biases. After a fruitful discussion, each group presents their findings and



collective strategies to the larger audience. This sharing fosters a supportive environment where participants can reflect on how to integrate these strategies into their daily lives, promoting resilience and optimism within their communities.

- o Step 1. Divide participants into small groups of 3-4 people.
- o Step 2. Ask each group to discuss personal or observed experiences with ageism, either in the workplace, social interactions, or media.
- o Step 3. In their discussion, each group should explore how positive psychology (e.g., focusing on gratitude, self-compassion, or recognizing strengths) can help reduce the impact of ageism.

#### ***Gratitude Group***

**Prompt:** Discuss how focusing on gratitude might help individuals counteract ageism. What are specific moments or people you feel grateful for who support a positive outlook on ageing?

**Key Points:** Consider ways to express gratitude for wisdom, experience, and support networks that contribute to resilience. How can gratitude practices, like journaling or verbal appreciation, reduce the effects of age-related biases?

#### ***Self-Compassion Group***

**Prompt:** Explore how self-compassion can be a tool for managing ageism. How might being kind to oneself in the face of age-related bias improve one's resilience?

**Key Points:** Discuss moments when being self-compassionate helps combat negative thoughts about ageing. How can self-affirmations and forgiveness towards oneself foster a strong, positive self-image?

#### ***Strengths Recognition Group***

**Prompt:** Reflect on the role of recognizing and utilizing personal strengths in addressing ageism. How can focusing on one's abilities and achievements



counterbalance societal age-based biases?

**Key Points:** Identify specific strengths—such as problem-solving skills, empathy, or experience—that can be emphasized in various contexts. How can sharing these strengths with others challenge stereotypes about age?

- o Step 4. After 10 minutes of discussion, ask each group to present a summary of their strategies and experiences to the larger group.
- o Step 5. Encourage participants to think about how they can apply these strategies in their personal and professional lives.

***Personal Life - Prompts:***

“How could you use these strategies (gratitude, self-compassion, strengths) to improve your outlook on ageing?”

“Consider specific daily habits or thought processes that could foster resilience against age-based stereotypes.”

***Professional Life - Prompts:***

“In what ways might you implement these strategies to foster an age-inclusive environment in your workplace or community?”

“Consider how you could model or advocate for practices that highlight appreciation, understanding, and respect for people of all ages.”

**Variations of the activity, if any:**

- o Groups can focus on specific sectors where ageism is prevalent (e.g., healthcare, media, education) and develop sector-specific strategies.

**Tips and recommendations:**

- o Ensure a safe space for sharing personal experiences.



- o Encourage participants to be specific in how positive psychology practices can be used in everyday situations.

#### General Tips:

- Use diverse examples of ageism to ensure inclusivity in the discussion.
- Reinforce the importance of strengths-based thinking as a key element in positive psychology.
- Encourage empathy and mutual understanding across generations.

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

- Garcia, M. (2021). Role-Playing as a Tool for Positive Psychology in Ageism Education. *Social Behavior Review*, 28(4), 220-232.
- Johnson, L. (2019). The Role of Positive Psychology in Combating Ageism. *Psychological Review*, 56(1), 88-97.
- Ryan, E. (2020). Positive Psychology and Aging: Strategies for Overcoming Ageism. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 34(2), 145-156.