

MINUTES
New Hampshire State Commission on Aging
Monday, April 20, 2020 10:00 a.m.-noon
Held via Video Teleconference

Present: Rep. Polly Campion, Chair; Ken Berlin, Vice Chair; Roberta Berner, Clerk; Sen. Ruth Ward; Wendi Aultman, DHHS; Patrick Herlihy, DOT; Susan Buxton, Long-Term Care Ombudsman; Sunny Mulligan Shea, DOJ; Lynn Lippitt, NH Housing Finance Authority; Appointed by the Governor: Carol Stamatakis, Kristi St. Laurent, Mark Frank, Rev. Susan Nolan, Suzanne Demers, Susan Abrami, Susan Ruka, and Kathy Baldrige; Rebecca Sky, Executive Director.

Absent: Rep. Jim MacKay; Richard Lavers, DES; Ken Merrifield, DOL; Perry Plummer, DOS; Harry Viens; Susan Emerson; Daniel Marcek; Pamela Jolivette; John Kennedy.

Presenters: Jennifer Rabalais, Co-Director, UNH Center on Aging and Community Living; Kelly Laflamme, Program Director, Endowment for Health.

Guests: 13 members of the public (Nancy Dorner, Darlene Crary, Martha McLeod, Carol Currier, Pat Harthy, Chris Dugan, Bonnie Hamm, Heidi Turcotte, Heather Carroll, Laura Davie, Lew Henry, Lee Hammond, Cheryl Steinberg, Tereze Stokes).

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Polly Campion called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. provided an overview of the agenda, welcomed the Commission and guests and read “A Checklist To Ensure Meetings Are Compliant With The Right-to-Know Law During The State Of Emergency.” The State of Emergency has been declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A requirement of such compliance is to take a roll call attendance. When each member answers, he or she also must state whether there is anyone else in the room during the meeting. Secretary Roberta Berner called the roll, also asking that the 13 members of the public and the two presenters attending the teleconference identify themselves. Three members of the Commission stated that members of their family were occasionally present with them during the meeting (Sen. Ruth Ward, Wendi Aultman, Susan Abrami).

II. Web-Ex Tips

Executive Director Rebecca Sky provided a brief overview of the video teleconference format, including instructions for adding notes or questions in the chatbox.

III. Educational Session

Chair Polly Campion introduced Kelly Laflamme, Endowment for Health, and Jennifer Rabalais, UNH Center on Aging and Community Living, presenters of the session entitled, “Telling a New Story about Aging: During COVID-19 and Beyond.” Chair Campion expressed the importance of looking at ageism in

context of the COVID-19 pandemic. She said that a PDF of the slide deck would be e-mailed after the meeting.

The purpose of the educational session was to learn how to use the Reframing Aging communication strategy to shape productive public thinking about issues related to aging. The session was intended to:

- Prime our thinking in preparation for our upcoming strategic planning and the development of our vision and mission;
- Better equip all of us to manage our roles in response to COVID-19 and beyond.

Jennifer Rabalais was the first presenter, explaining that Reframing Aging is a long-term social change endeavor designed to improve the public's understanding of aging. The evidence-based initiative comes from the FrameWorks Institute. It is intended to shape knowledge, attitudes, and policy by supporting communication leading to discourse, changes in thinking, and ultimately, policy.

Jennifer's presentation then focused on, "We say...They think." "We say" aging is normative, to be embraced and includes all of us, is driven by social factors. There is a great deal we can do to effect aging. "They think" aging is bad, represents decline, is something to fight, is "them, not me," driven by individual choices, and that we are doomed. "They think" of aging in idealized versus real terms—extremes that seesaw between nostalgia and the threats of modernity. "We say" that issues revolving around aging are our collective responsibility and that problems can be solved.

Kelly Laflamme's portion of the presentation focused on "Telling a New Story about Aging." The Endowment for Health has made aging in New Hampshire one of its focus areas, starting in 2014.

Kelly explained that context shapes decisions and outcomes. Inclusivity and interventions can change outcomes. Polly Champion noted that she was concerned that older adults have moved from being seen as vulnerable to being seen as a risk to others. Kelly said that good framing is key during the pandemic, especially with some of the worst cultural assumptions being reinforced. The message needs to be, "We're in this together." It's not an "us vs. them" proposition, and we must focus on our shared values and principles, affirming our interdependence and the positives of interconnectedness. We should avoid focusing on just vulnerable groups (not on saviors and victims) and instead focus on justice for all. Rather than refuting negative messages, it is most helpful to stay the course with affirmative and positive messages.

The presentation also included links to additional resources from the FrameWorks Institute and Reframing Aging, including resources specific to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Questions and input from attendees included:

- How is ageism measured? Are there national metrics that define the issue? Jennifer responded that there are clear definitions of ageism, but that she was unsure of the metrics.
- Vulnerable people say they're having a terrible time communicating with millennials. Any suggestions? Kelly responded that it isn't helpful to make blanket statements about any age group.
- Is there a way to counter or not reinforce the idea that families are truly spread apart, families are smaller, and fewer children are there to support aging family members (relating to the "They think" regarding threats of modernity)? Kelly explained that the way to respond is to start with values, then go to metaphors, examples, and potential solutions.
- Heidi Turcotte noted that the NH Health Care Association has relevant information on cultural change on its website.

IV. Adjournment

Chair Campion thanked the Jennifer and Kelly for their presentation. The next meeting of the Commission will take place on Monday, May 15, 2020, 10 a.m.-noon, most likely via video teleconference again. She asked that Commission members come to the meeting with their observations and thoughts about what challenges and gaps in aging services have been revealed during the pandemic crisis. Rebecca Sky asked that if the presentation led members to thoughts about the Commission's vision, mission, and values, that they send them along to her as part of the preparation for the planning process.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:36 a.m.



Telling a New Story about Aging: During COVID 19 and Beyond

**A Presentation to the NH
Commission on Aging
April 20, 2020**



Today's Presentation by



Jennifer Rabalais
Co-Director
UNH Center on Aging and Community Living



Kelly Laflamme
Program Director
Endowment for Health



Reframing Aging

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A Social Change Endeavor
designed to improve the
public's understanding of aging

 @ReframingAging

*Original research conducted by the
FrameWorks Institute and sponsored by the
Leaders of Aging Organizations*



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Facilitator Disclosure

We have been trained as Reframing Aging Facilitators by National Reframing Aging Initiative and FrameWorks Institute.

We are not employees of the FrameWorks Institute or the Reframing Aging Initiative.

For more information on the Initiative, visit www.reframingaging.org.

Funding Provided by:



The John A. Hartford
Foundation



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With Additional Support From:

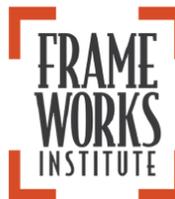


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Leaders of Aging Organizations (LAO)



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Nonprofit think tank with the mission to advance the nonprofit sector's capacity to reframe social issues

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

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

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

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Framing Fundamentals

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Framing Is about Choices

Frames are sets of choices about how information is presented:



What to emphasize



How to explain it



What to leave unsaid

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What to emphasize



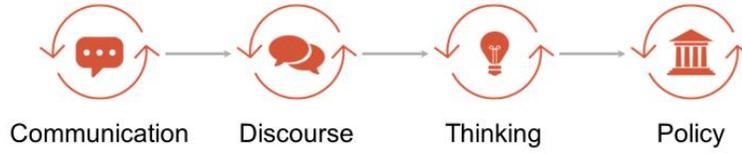
How to explain it



What to leave unsaid

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Frames can drive broad social change



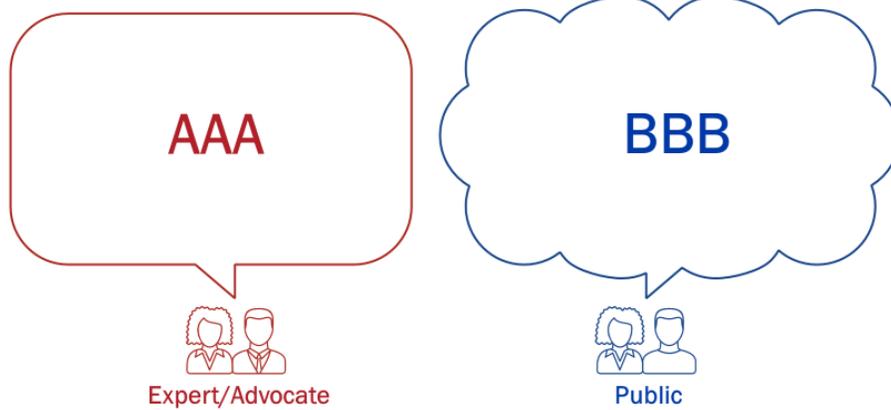
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What the public thinks about aging and why...

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We Say...They Think



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We Say...They Think

- Aging is normative.
- We should embrace aging!
- Aging is all of us.
- How we age is driven by social factors.
- There is so much we can do!



Expert/Advocate

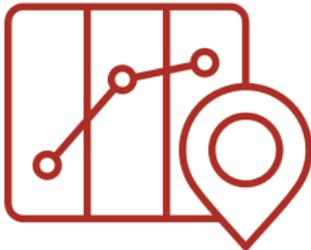
- Aging is bad, about decline.
- We must fight aging!
- Aging is them – not me.
- How we age is driven by individual choices.
- We are doomed!



General Public

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Cultural Models Drive People's Thinking

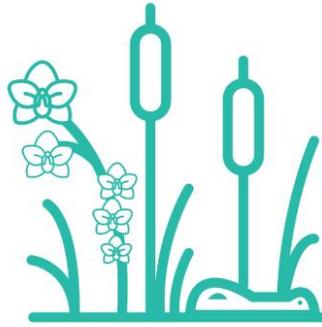


- Cultural models are cognitive short cuts created through years of experience and expectation. They are taken-for-granted and largely automatic assumptions.
- People rely on cultural models to interpret, organize and make meaning out of all sorts of stimuli, including experiences, feelings, thoughts ... and your communications.

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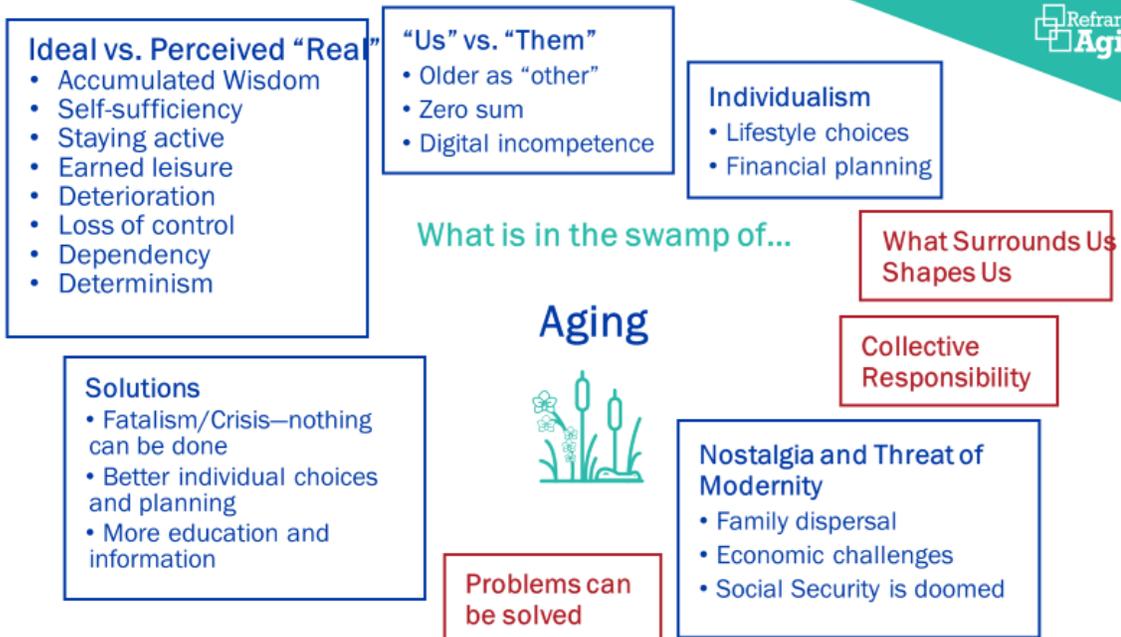
The Swamp of Aging

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A Peek into the Swamp of Aging

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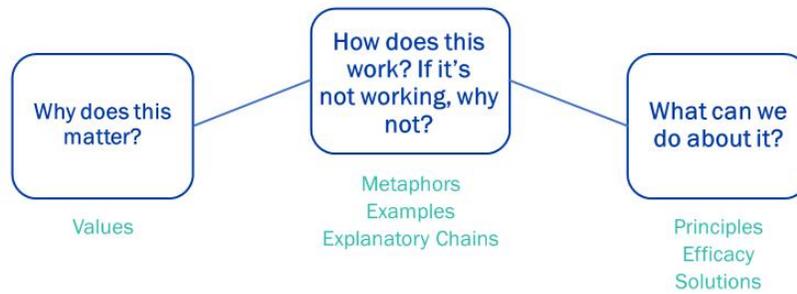


Telling a New Story about Aging

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An Effective Social Issue Narrative

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



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An Old Story

Feelings of loneliness and isolation can lead to serious consequences for senior health. The effects of social isolation are as real as hunger, thirst or pain. Understanding the causes and risk factors for senior isolation can help us prevent it. There are many factors that contribute to senior isolation. Many of today's seniors have lost a spouse, have a lack of transportation, or have retired. Regardless of what causes senior isolation, the consequences can be harmful. Social isolation and loneliness are associated with a higher risk of mortality in adults aged 52 and older.



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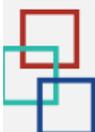
A New Story

All Americans have a right to participate fully in our democracy, our economy, and our community life. But our society starts to exclude us as we age. Americans are living longer, but our systems and structures haven't been updated to match that reality. Instead, workplace policies, transportation systems, and other features of daily life can isolate and marginalize older adults – with consequences ranging from increased health risks to less vibrant and diverse communities. To build a more just society, we need to take steps to prevent social isolation of any group. Including older people.

23

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Avoid

- Individualism drives aging outcomes
- Aging = declining
- Older people as *other*
- Aging (population) is a crisis
- Fixed, finite resources
- Just another -ism

Advance

- Context shapes decisions and outcomes
- The future is a time for improvement
- We are all better off by being inclusive
- Interventions can change outcomes
- Solutions stories: systems, supports
- How ageism works

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What can I do?

Practice using the tips on the Quick Start Guide

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

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

Call out ageism when you see it or hear it

Request a workshop or presentation for your organization



www.reframingaging.org

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Reframing Aging Research and Resources



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



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



Identifies six narratives dominating conversation in the media and in advocacy organizations



Finding the Frame:
An Empirical Approach to Reframing Aging and Ageism

Brief, lively guide to the evidence-based approach to reframing aging

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Good Framing is Key During COVID 19

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Framing C19: We're in this Together

Use Common Good Framing

1. Connect individual actions to the common good by using a broad sense of “we” and “us”
2. Use language to activate our shared values and principles
3. Lean into language that affirms our interdependence and positives of interconnection.

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Avoid

- *Individualism*
- You should protect yourself by...
- People in specific groups are most at risk
- This virus reminds us how much our actions can harm others...

Advance

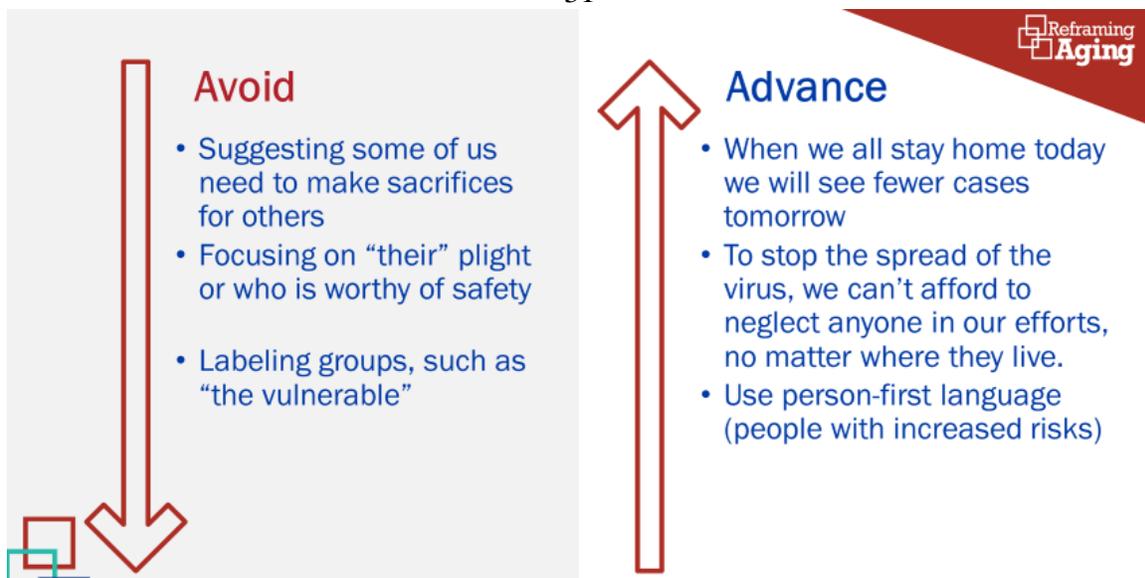
- *Common Good*
- When we all...we protect everyone
- This is a time for us to live up to justice for all, especially
- In this moment we are reminded just how connected we all are and how much we need each other.

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Framing C19: Widen the Circle of “We” to Advance People in Need

1. Emphasize the connections that exist between each and every one of us
2. Avoid framing that highlights “saviors” or “victims”
3. Avoid highlighting the “weak” or “vulnerable” groups

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Avoid

- Suggesting some of us need to make sacrifices for others
- Focusing on “their” plight or who is worthy of safety
- Labeling groups, such as “the vulnerable”

Advance

- When we all stay home today we will see fewer cases tomorrow
- To stop the spread of the virus, we can’t afford to neglect anyone in our efforts, no matter where they live.
- Use person-first language (people with increased risks)

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Framing COVID 19

The FrameWorks Institute is gleaning guidance from twenty years of framing research and practice to help advocates and experts be heard and understood in this time of global crisis. They are sharing tips that can help us all amplify the values of justice, inclusion, and interdependence.

So far, they have developed the following:

- Topic #1: Deploying a common good frame
- Topic #2: Making a powerful case for the role of government
- Topic #3: Widening the circle of “we”
- Topic #4: The power of how during the pandemic
- Topic #5: Nonprofits are essential



For details or to sign up for email updates go to:
<http://frameworksinstitute.org/framing-covid-19.html>

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Contact Us!



www.nhaha.info



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