



The Mosaic

Masterpiece Living, LLC • 12600 W. Colfax Ave., Suite B-110 • Lakewood, CO 80215 • Phone 720.287.0534

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Lizards, VWs, and Buzzards: Excerpt from Lyceum 2014 Opening Keynote by Roger Landry, M.D., M.P.H., Author of Live Long, Die Short



What is it that gets us out of bed in the morning to navigate through this sometimes not-so-easy aging services world?

In the iconic movie *City Slickers*, Curly, the crusty old fountain of cowboy and life lessons, tells us about “that one thing” in life—the one thing that once we find it,

all else pales in meaning. Of course, as individuals we’re motivated by different values, but is there a unifying theme we share in the work we do?

Many of you had heard my medical internship story about trying to get into my snowbound **Volkswagon** with a frozen lock. I attempted several times to defrost the lock with a warm towel, and then with a Bunsen burner, to no avail. And then I attempted to defrost the lock with my readily accessible warm body fluids, only to have someone behind me ask what I was doing to THEIR car! The moral? Let’s not struggle with solutions before we know what the problem is. My writing journey gave me a look into the real problem, and from that, a sense of what our unifying theme—and an answer—is.

The Problem: A slowness to adapt to the new knowledge about the aging process

The Unifying Theme: RESILIENCE

What we collectively now do is rooted in the late Nineteenth Century when there was an absence in services for the destitute, and our professional ancestors filled that gap with a primitive system of caring. Caring was all we could do, for we knew little else about aging other than as a process of progressive decline. That care has evolved into the magnificent profession you practice today with unselfish skill. Over the last few decades, however, we’ve learned so much about the often untapped potential of older adults and the multiple dimensions of aging. That knowledge has developed quickly, but, I must say, our adaptation to it has not.

Despite spectacular and compelling research that speaks to possibilities significantly better than caring, large segments of our profession are slow to react to this knowledge. Many, I believe, are uncertain about how to proceed, or are consumed with the day-to-day challenges of delivering traditional services. That, dear colleagues, is a huge problem in world with an aging demographic, soaring health care costs, and blossoming widely known facts about better ways to age.

What are we bringing to the table of aging services? What is it that unites us? Yes, it is indeed successful aging, but that is more our ultimate goal. What is it we are doing to make successful aging more likely?

Ernest Hemingway wrote, “The world breaks

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Hot Health Topic: Bedazzle Your Successful Aging Lens*by Brittany Calvert, M.A.*

Edie, who lived at ABHOW's The Terraces of San Joaquin Gardens, stood in line with her peers waiting her turn to ride a horse. At a glance, one could see she was unsteady on her feet, feel the doubt creeping in about her safety upon a horse. Many would have, out of the goodness of their hearts, encouraged her to "sit this one out."

When her turn came, she confidently sat erect in the saddle, holding the reins in her left hand, while her right rested easily upon her thigh: the mark of a true cowgirl. Edie, despite her frail appearance while standing on her own two feet, knew her strengths and was in touch with her passions.



Indeed, she had just experienced a moment of triumph because Edie was still willing to take risks and grow. She knew that life without growth meant a life of decline. Through her completion of the Masterpiece Living review process and being a part of a culture of successful aging, Edie acknowledged her strengths and examined her new areas of growth, finding inspiration to continue on her successful aging journey.

This is but one example of the powerful impact of successful aging cultures. The goal is for every person

who is a part of that culture to experience moments as profound as this. Defining the successful aging culture and using that "lens" of **G**rowth, **E**mpowerment, **M**eaning, and **S**upport (GEMS) in every interaction creates an opportunity to put research into action daily.

Using these guiding principles in every single interaction with residents, members, peers and family members creates an opportunity to "gift" others with successful aging experiences, while truly fulfilling the important role of supporting successful aging of all individuals who are a part of the organization.

To quote David Gobble, PhD, "'No person is an island,' and almost no one succeeds in reshaping their lifestyle alone. Declaring intentions, and seeking support for new behaviors is critical for successful behavior change." Research demonstrates when a person speaks his or her goals out loud to a supportive group of people, one's chances of success increase from 33% to 66%. This is why, beyond daily interactions, follow-up sessions are so critical to a successful aging lifestyle.

Using the guiding principles of GEMS during a follow-up session offers participants an even greater gift, because coaching-style conversations are not common in our culture. *How often do you mindfully consider the areas in which you would like to grow, without simply taking in the "should" from other sources?* Through properly facilitated follow-up sessions, participants will have the opportunity to reflect on their own strengths and opportunities for growth, rediscover a sense of purpose in life, and "get back on the horse with the confidence of a true cowgirl." With this in mind, Masterpiece Living challenges the Network: **Bedazzle your successful aging lens and fill their buckets with GEMS!**

Why Not? How Can We?: Creating Inclusive Cultures

by Danielle Palli

“What if residents were in charge?” Debra Larkin, Executive Director of Presbyterian Village at Hollidaysburg, asked Lyceum attendees. Inspired by Martin Bayne, a national advocate for people in higher levels of living, she challenged her team: “Well, *Why not? What if residents were in charge? How can we make that happen?*”

Bayne shared in his blog, *The Voice of Aging Boomers*, some ways to achieve this: 1) focusing on passion, 2) establishing a community welcoming committee, 3) providing opportunities for residents to volunteer, 4) holding weekly peer group meetings and 5) inclusiveness in activities for all levels of living.

This “Why not? How can we?” approach has also been successful for ABHOW’s Rosewood Retirement Community and Four Pointes Center for Successful Aging. These three organizations are leading the network with best practices for creating inclusive communities. *Why not* replace the word “diversity” with “inclusivity?” *How can we* make inclusivity a guiding principle?

At Hollidaysburg, this was accomplished by becoming one of the first MPL communities to launch across all levels of living at once. Shortly thereafter, residents were involved in team meetings and created a routine and schedule for team leaders. They also initiated learning circles where team members and residents could discuss new offerings that would reinforce their resident-led approach.

At Rosewood, Executive Director Ellen Renner witnessed what she described as “an extreme separation between different levels of care,” when she first arrived on the scene several years ago. Her first order of business was leadership training, and bringing team leaders together and developing a strategic plan for the year. They initiated a Champion Committee to amend the MPL Lifestyle Review for use in the Village

(ABHOW’s term for Health Centers) and taught residents how to log in and access their information electronically at any time.

She challenged residents with the questions, “What do you think you’d like to accomplish here?” and “What’s important to you, and what gives you purpose in life?” In a short period of time, residents across all levels of living were determining their own aging journey, and team leaders were there to support them.

The new motto of these communities became “One Culture. One Community.” And the word “inclusivity” became part of the culture and the language.

However, the success of such an initiative depends on our beliefs and attitudes, which are often unconscious and influence culture both positively and negatively. Therefore, Brigit Hassig, Executive Director of Four Pointes Center for Successful Aging, challenged Lyceum attendees to examine personal beliefs in her presentation “Exposing the Saboteur Within: Your Hidden Biases About Aging.” Through a discussion of language, beliefs, and behaviors, she challenged participants to take a hard look at their unconscious biases and see how those biases hinder inclusivity.

Brigit offered the audience two resources for self-analysis and personal growth: Project Implicit allows individuals to test themselves on biases they may unconsciously hold in several areas – ageism being one of them. Additionally, Life Reimagined is an online tool that guides individuals toward finding their purpose.

Hollidaysburg, Rosewood, and Four Pointes are three shining examples of what is possible in a successful aging culture in which every person is consciously contributing to an inclusive and empowering culture.

Direct From Residents: Shifting From “Do For” to “Can Do!”

by Danielle Palli

Masterpiece Living’s Annual Lyceum has always been known for introducing thought-provoking speakers offering innovative, actionable ideas. It is a once-a-year opportunity to network with hundreds of people who are united in furthering the “Successful Aging Movement” while enriching personal and professional journeys. This was never more evident than at the 2014 Lyceum in Ft. Worth, Texas, where Residents across the Masterpiece Living (MPL) Network joined together to present the inaugural question and answer panel, “Direct From Residents”. The resounding theme from the resident panel was clear: *We can create our own aging experience and find meaning and purpose in our everyday lives. Additionally, we can help others do the same through daily practice and positive reinforcement of successful aging lifestyle choices.*

Members of the resident panel included Jan Van Sant (The Buckingham), Donna Baird (Acacia Creek), Jack Hull (Holly Creek), Kathryn Bryan (The Stayton), and Harold Onwiler (Mirador). Donna Baird shared one of the biggest benefits MPL provides is a positive shift from “do for” and “provide for” attitudes to a “do it” mindset for “dynamic communities willing to” evolve toward a culture of empowerment. This, Jan Van Sant claimed, works because “Masterpiece Living is a partner that provides resources and data,” allowing successful aging to become “something we think about and [engage in] every day.”

“Masterpiece Living guides us to continually grow as communities,” Donna Baird added. “It empowers us to use the talents we have and implement them.” One way she encourages team leaders and resident champions

to empower others is by identifying a new resident’s skills and inviting them to engage in the community and use their special talents, whether by participating in existing social events or by creating a class or program that allows them to share their talent with others. Sharing our skills with others not only gives us purpose, but it provides a way for us to see how truly valuable we all are.

“Our value is essential in understanding purpose,” Dr. Harold Onwiler added. “People [I’ve met] living outside of the community seemed to have lost their [sense of] value. They need to know that they are



people who are worthy. Of all the things I see that Masterpiece Living does for us, it reminds us that we are people of worth, regardless of age or ability. It challenges us to see our value in new ways.” In

addition to Donna’s suggestion, Harold added that people need to stay engaged with life, and one of the ways to do that is through volunteerism (e.g. churches, libraries, hospitals). “We can be the catalyst to change the culture around us,” he told us.

Kathryn Bryan agreed with that sentiment and added that positive reinforcement is key and creates an environment of respect. Her recommendation is that we don’t limit what that “can do” attitude looks like. It’s okay for someone to say, “I don’t think I can do this, but I know I can do that.” Accept what they are offering and be supportive of their efforts.

Initiating this kind of culture change requires full

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Healthy Eats Recipe:**Wild Rocket Arugula and Fennel Salad with Honey Mustard Dressing***by Stephen Love, Executive Chef at Plymouth Village*

This is a great summer salad that can be served by itself or add some grilled chicken to make this dish an entrée. I have served this to our residents and they love it. Arugula is high in vitamins A, K and folic acid. It is also a good source of zinc, potassium, calcium, and iron. Pommery mustard is a wonderful mustard from France. One can also substitute whole grain mustard if Pommery is unavailable.

Salad

- 1 lb. washed wild rocket arugula
- 1 bulb fennel, washed, cored and shaved thin
- 2 oranges, peeled and segmented
- 8 oz. shaved Pecorino Romano or Parmesan cheese

Pommery Honey Mustard Dressing

- 1 Tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 Tbsp. Pommery or whole grain mustard
- 1 Tbsp. honey
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- ¾ cup olive oil
- Black pepper to taste



To make the dressing, mix the first 5 ingredients into a mixing bowl. Slowly whisk in the oil until it emulsifies. Season with pepper if needed. Toss the arugula, fennel, oranges, ½ the cheese, and ¼ to ½ cup of dressing in a bowl. Serve with some dressing on the side and garnish with the remainder of the cheese.

*Serves 4-6***Do you have a favorite healthy recipe you would like to share with our network?**

Please submit recipes to cbitner@mymasterpieceliving.com or mail to:

Christa Bitner, Masterpiece Living, 12600 W Colfax Ave, Suite B-110, Lakewood, CO 80215

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commitment from team leaders and committee leaders. They need to understand the four components of successful aging enough to, as Donna stated during the discussion, “walk that walk, and talk the talk.”

The impact of MPL, as shared with Lyceum attendees directly from residents, was summarized

as: We can create our own aging experience. We can find meaning and purpose in our lives. We are valued and treasured in our communities. And we can help others on their successful aging journey through positive reinforcement. Because, as Jack Hull so wisely stated, “We have only time for living to the fullest.”

Lizards, VWs, and Buzzards: Excerpt from Lyceum 2014 Opening Keynote Continued from Page 1

everyone and afterward, some are strong in the broken places.” That, my friends, is a literary expression of resilience. Building resilience in those we serve... I believe that’s what truly unites us.

The definition of resilience from physics is “the power or ability to return to the original form, position, etc. after being bent, compressed, or stretched.” I believe that for humans (and by the way, also for organizations), it’s not so much about returning to the original form, like **lizards** who grow a new tail after losing it, but about adapting and continuing to prevail, even flourish, despite significant and never ending challenges and losses.



I’m fond of using the analogy of **buzzards** overhead to help explain resilience. Those of us with a pulse maneuver through our lives with the buzzards of sickness, disease and impairment circling above us. Resilience helps us to resist and keep them at bay, and when one or more of those buzzards actually swoops down and takes a bite of us, to adapt and prevail. And the buzzards get lower and lower as we age.

What we have learned about lifestyle as the determinant of successful aging from the MacArthur Study on Aging and from growing subsequent research compels us, as true advocates for older adults, to do all we can to facilitate these lifestyle characteristics and to provide environments that support the lifestyle traits necessary to survive and to be resilient.—by facilitating movement as a way of life, advocating mindfulness, building strong social networks with a higher purpose, and getting in touch with the music and dance and arts that make us human. We are, and must continue to be,

resilience builders. That, I believe, is what unites us in this Masterpiece Living Network and in our quest for successful aging.

As communities, organizations and as aging services, we are compelled to further acknowledge that we must evolve beyond our very noble but now constraining foundations of caring. Yes, we will also provide care, but if indeed we truly care for older adults, don’t we now have the imperative to build resilience instead of merely responding to challenges? Now that we know how to improve the quality of life not just by providing comfort and

security, but by empowerment to accommodate life’s curve balls and continue growing...are we not bound to do that? As Larry Minnix challenged us. “Are we doing all we can to help keep older as adults independent as possible?” I read this as building resilience.

In fact, I also believe that the resilience of our communities, and aging services in general, is now hinging on making this shift from providing care only, or providing entertaining programming, or even providing wellness programs as they are currently designed, to a more enlightened theme.

Ladies and gentlemen, I believe the one thing, our unifying theme, is resilience. It unites us because we are all progressing in this movement under the banner of successful aging. It unites us because it’s the right thing to do—a moral imperative. Older adults, our communities, and our very society require nothing less.



2014 Lyceum Spotlight

Thank you to our hosts at the Stayton at Museum Way!



A young cowgirl serenaded the crowd



Line dancing at the Stayton



Dr. Roger Landry with Betsy Price, Mayor of Ft. Worth



Performance by Kids Who Care



John Ahlenius, Clermont Park resident, as Casey at the Bat

Masterpiece Living News

Congratulations to our Living It! winners:

1. Clark-Lindsey Village
2. Grandview Terrace
3. Somerby of Mobile



Congratulations to the following partner organizations that are celebrating May/June anniversaries with Masterpiece Living:



Monte Cedro
Westminster Woods Huntingdon
Las Ventanas
The Long Community at Highland
Kirkland Village
St. Andrews Village
Westminster Village of Allentown

New Great Courses Available to check out now!

Memory and the Human Lifespan

In *Memory and the Human Lifespan*, Professor Steve Joordens of the University of Toronto Scarborough leads you on a startling voyage into the human mind, explaining not only how the various aspects of your memory operate, but the impact memory has on your daily experience of life.

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