Aging Through the Ages

facilitator guidebook

*“Aging Through the Ages is a journey that our species has taken, and is still taking, through the many ages our ancestors have been on Earth.”* - Dr. Roger Landry

Dear **Aging Through the Ages**Program Facilitator,

**Aging Through the Ages** is a four-session program powered by Masterpiece that explores the history of aging and the evolving role of older adults through time. In this program, participants will take a brief look at the Hunter-Gatherer and Agrarian Ages, the Industrial Revolution, the Technology Age, as well as a glimpse into our future. Each session will illustrate what life was like during these various periods in time, what we – as a species – learned, how our older adults contributed to society and the overall view of aging.

To begin, we ask that you take a few minutes to review this Facilitator Guidebook from start to finish. In it, you will find helpful instructions to prepare for each session, such as what materials and equipment you will need, as well as suggestions for creatively enhancing this program based on the individual needs and interests. Please note that some of the activities will require pre-planning.

In many ways, facilitating **Aging Through the Ages** is simple in that the sessions are all pre-recorded, and facilitators can “plug and play” each session, adding the provided discussion questions and activities, or choosing your own.

Masterpiece recognizes that research is constantly evolving and is committed to providing up-to-date research-based guidelines and recommendations from credible sources.

At the end of the program, we would appreciate feedback from you as the facilitator, as well as from participants. Please complete the Facilitator Feedback Form <https://forms.office.com/r/G89S3JfNxx> and send a request to the participants. Note that the links for the facilitator and the participants are different. Below is an email draft you can use for the participants with the link included:

*“Thank you for participating in* ***Aging Through the Ages****,* a programthat explores the history of aging and the evolving role of older adults through time. *Masterpiece would greatly appreciate your feedback on the content and materials of the program to continue to improve the offerings they provide our community. Please click on this link:* <https://forms.office.com/r/r5PyXf6QHW> *to provide your feedback. It takes approximately four minutes to complete.”*

**On behalf of your Masterpiece Team, welcome to *Aging Through the Ages!***

# Preparing for Aging Through the Ages

**What You Will Need:**

* A strong Internet connection (if streaming)
* A projector and large screen or TV screen
* Audio hookup for computer (to viewing source)

**Before each session:**

* Review the appropriate section(s) of the Facilitator Guidebook with discussion questions, the participant handout packets and the recorded video.
  + For small groups, participants can answer the discussion questions provided (or create your own) out loud to the entire group. For groups of 10 or more, consider asking participants to discuss the questions in groups of two, then request a few examples to keep the sessions to 45 minutes.
* Set up audio/visual equipment and chairs in a way that invites discussion. Prepare the suggested materials and make them available ahead of time.
* Each session in this Facilitator Guidebook has a “Supportive Resources and Ideas” section. This section provides optional activities and videos that you can add to the session or schedule for a different day (between sessions or at the end of the program).

# 1st Session: Hunter-Gatherer and Agrarian Age

**Objectives/Overview:**

* Explore the characteristics of the Hunter-Gatherer and Agrarian Ages.
* Discuss the vital role of older adults during this age.

**Materials:**

* A copy of the following for each participant:
  + Pre-program questionnaire
  + 1st Session Handout Packet
* Recorded session (15 minutes): <https://youtu.be/3k4jQK3shwY>
* **Discussion Questions**:
  + What major changes did you notice between the Hunter-Gatherer Age and the Agrarian Age?
  + What resonated with you about the role of older adults during these times in history?
  + How is your role different today from the way it would have been hundreds of years ago?
  + Can you see yourself living and thriving during this time in history?
  + What did you discover about these Ages that surprised you?

**Supportive Resources and Ideas:**

* Storytelling was a big part of the Hunter-Gatherer Age to share history and educate the tribe. While sitting around a campfire may not be an option (but if it is, go for it!), encourage participants to bring an object of meaning (e.g., photo or curio) to show to the group and explain its significance. Alternatively, invite a volunteer to read a poem or short story to the group.
* Plan an outdoor BBQ to grill lean meats or fish and vegetables as a celebration of the Hunter-Gatherers discovering fire.
* Our ancestors moved a lot. Plan a trip to a local park. If possible, choose one that offers tours to discuss the flora and fauna, pointing out edible plants and their uses in cooking and medicine.
* Visit a farm that allows visitors to pick (gather) their own berries and vegetables. Use what you’ve gathered to prepare a meal to share with the group.
* If you have a community garden at your community or nearby, invite participants to volunteer to cultivate the garden.
* Invite a Master Gardener in your area to teach a gardening class at your community.

# 2nd Session: Industrial Revolution

**Objectives/Overview:**

* Review the characteristics of the Industrial Revolution.
* Discuss the role of older adults during this age.
* Explore the first introduction to ageism and ableism.

**Materials:**

* A copy of the 2nd Session Handout Packet for each participant
* Recorded session (9 minutes): <https://youtu.be/SOtvmvhMB5s>
* **Discussion Questions**:
  + What was the impact of the dramatic change in the role of older adults during the Industrial Revolution? How does this affect you?
  + As a society, what could we have done to make this time in history a more positive experience? In other words, if you could go back and change history, what would you do?
  + What did you discover about the Industrial Revolution that surprised you?

**Supportive Resources and Ideas:**

* Host a factory worker’s typical lunchbox snack during this session. Common foods carried in a lunch tin included: oat cakes/oat mush, bread, biscuits and jam, left-over meat and cabbage pies, potatoes, occasionally local fruit, meat or cheese. Drinks included milk, beer or coffee as water was often contaminated. Print or read the article about the [evolution of this midday meal](https://www.wpr.org/print/historian-industrial-revolution-gave-us-lunch-we-know-it) and ask four group members to each read out loud one of the short descriptions of factory meals by [documented sources](https://spartacus-educational.com/IRfood.htm).
* Enjoy three minutes of laughter viewing the infamous video clip of I Love Lucy (Episode: Job Switching) on the [production line at the candy factory](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NkQ58I53mjk).
* View the Reel Truth History Documentary: [Private Life of the Industrial Revolution: Social Change](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6As8AIbKK5Q) (46 minutes)
* Use the (five-minute) video [27+ Industrial Revolution Inventions that Changed the World](https://interestingengineering.com/27-industrial-revolution-inventions-that-changed-the-world) and attached article to highlight key inventions and explore and discuss what the downsides of some of these might have been.
* Take a trip to a local history museum or historic landmark that includes a section dedicated toward the Industrial Revolution and its inventions, discoveries, and medical advancements.
* Old School Anti-Aging Clearing House offers numerous vetted resources including podcasts, blogs, campaigns, organizations, talks, videos and more to educate people about ageism. [Old School Anti-Aging Resources](https://oldschool.info/).

# 3rd Session: Tech Age

**Objectives/Overview:**

* Explore the characteristics of the Technology Age.
* Discuss the evolving role of older adults during this present age, and what we have discovered about healthy longevity and wellbeing.
* Brainstorm vitality tips to share with all generations.

**Materials:**

* A copy of the 3rd Session Handout Packet for each participant
* Recorded session (15 minutes): <https://youtu.be/VdXsjMOwuLA>
* **Discussion Questions**:
* Technology has pros and cons. How can we get the most out of technology without sacrificing human connections?
* In this Technology Age, how would you describe your role as an older adult in society? What would you do to change or enhance this role?
* What did you discover about the Technology Age that you didn’t consider before?

**Supportive Resources and Ideas:**

* Plan an intergenerational technology day – Invite students from a local school or club to visit. Provide food and refreshments, and the opportunity for each participant to share or teach a technology tool they think is valuable or enjoyable. You can take this idea a step further by hosting a science or technology fair.
* Host a Blue Zones feast and invite participants to bring a Mediterranean-themed dish to share.
* Find intergenerational ideas and learn more about [Generations United.](https://www.gu.org/) Their *mission of Generations United is to improve the lives of children, youth, and older people through intergenerational collaboration, public policies, and programs for the enduring benefit of all.* They have programs and projects to strengthen intergenerational connections
* Documentaries:
  + **Steve Jobs: The Man in the Machine** documentary. View the [trailer.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jhWKxtsYrJE)
  + Review the [trailer](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zc1tZ8JsZvg) of **Lo and Behold, Reveries of the Connected World**.

# 4th Session: The Future

**Objectives/Overview:**

* Explore the characteristics of our potential future.
* Discuss how older adults can continue to actively contribute to society.

**Materials:**

* A copy of the following for each participant:
  + 4th Session Handout Packet
  + Post-program questionnaire
* Recorded session (12 minutes): <https://youtu.be/Sgj7F4zN8W8>
* **Discussion Questions:**
  + Mentoring can serve people of all ages, even our own. Think of how you might take the knowledge or skill you have and share it with a friend, a team member or another resident. Who can share their experience mentoring, or thoughts on what they might share? (This does not mean you have to commit to it right now.)
* In what ways do older adults contribute to and support society?
  + Sample responses
  + Shop and use services in the community (retail, hospitality and entertainment, travel, healthcare and pharmaceutical, etc.- supports employment and the economy).
  + Pay taxes and make healthy charitable donations (The Traditionalist generation donates the highest per person and the Baby Boomer generation contributes the largest percent providing 43% of all donations).
  + Volunteer services to families, friends and organizations (such as babysit and transport grandchildren, provide mentorship, help with housework, cooking, mending, yard maintenance and garden projects, run errands and visit those unable to go places, share expertise).
  + Support spouses/family members who need care – lessen burden on health systems.
  + Other ideas the group has…
* What organizations in our community are supported by older adults? Are there groups you would like more information on volunteering with? (Consider adding these to a Volunteer Fair or Volunteer information booklet organized by older adults in the community.)
* What skills are most needed for mentoring youth? (Big heart, willing to be present in their lives, willing to listen without judgement – Rasheda Williams explains why [Mentoring Makes a Difference](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hzsXBgII5Gw), in this 15-minute **TEDx Talk).**
* How can older adults mentor young students? Middle/high school students? Younger adults? What additional opportunities are there to create more mentorship experiences in our community?
* Who can share how they are using technology to support health and wellness?

**Supportive Resources and Ideas:**

* Invite speakers in to highlight new medical technologies available for common health issues older adults face, or to demonstrate home or fitness technologies.
* Older adults can have a vital role as city planners and advisors. Look for opportunities where participants can take part in council meetings that affect the development of your community.
* Invite residents to join [GetSetUp](https://www.getsetup.io/), a free online community of active older adults who connect to learn from and share knowledge with each other on a wide variety of topics. Examples of daily online classes include tech training, health and fitness, travel, genealogy, art, book clubs, photography, writing and more.
* [SCORE](https://www.score.org/) is one organization that mentors new business owners. Consider hosting a SCORE event or Chamber of Commerce breakfast and invite participants to attend.
* Older adults have a significant role as mentors to younger people. Assess current mentoring by members/community and, with an interested resident committee, determine if they wish to expand services or seek out additional opportunities.
* **TED Talk**: [Rethinking Aging: Mentoring a New Generation](https://www.ted.com/talks/deborah_heiser_rethinking_aging_mentoring_a_new_generation/details) (8 minutes)
  + **Discussion Questions:**
* What do you think is the reason we can expect to get happier as we grow older?
* What makes meaningful connections lead to better physical and emotional wellbeing? How can we focus on this in our second half of life?
* Who can share what they are doing to support their emotional growth through their lifespan?
* While the video notes the skills someone in science, technology or math (STEM) can offer as mentorship to students, what other skills can also be offered to youth?
* Watch this four-minute video on how residents in the Edgemere community in Dallas used their skills to support a variety of community needs. <https://vimeo.com/227274572/0059d1836d>