



GROWING AN OLDER ADULT MINISTRY

Planning Team Handouts

ABSTRACT

These handouts are designed for use by the planning team of the developing Older Adult Ministry of your faith community. Use these handouts in conjunction with reading the book GROWING AN OLDER ADULT MINISTRY.

Donald Koepke

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By

Donald Koepke

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Welcome

On behalf of your faith community, I wish to thank you for being willing to share your spiritual gifts in the exploration of the book, *Growing an Older Adult Ministry*. There are many within your community that feel as though there is no need for a specialized outreach to older adults. Perhaps, in your heart, you are one of those people. But here you are, invited, or should I be bold enough to say *called*, to be a part of this journey with others of your community. Each person on your Planning Team demonstrated some interest or passion for older adults. Some may be caregivers. Other are just raking in the Birthdays. No matter what the reason for your recruitment might just be that you one of the millions that reach 65 each year in our country. I too live on a somewhat fixed income and am enrolled in Social Security and Medicare. Perhaps you also are bewildered at the many gadgets of modern society for which we need our grandchildren's help. Perhaps you also are plagued by one or more chronic conditions for which aspirin will not take away. And, just maybe, you have experienced an attitude by younger people that you are not as capable as you feel, which, sometimes, leads to people doing more for us than we desire. These, and many others, are the "joys" of becoming older.

And yet, we do not feel older and less capable. We do not want to be marginalized and ignored, even if these experiences come from those whom we love the most and we are sure love us. In fact, in your faith community, you might be one of the leaders, and have held such a role for a long time. You know the history of your community and thus have deeply held beliefs as to where your faith community should place their energies now. You are one of the pillars upon which your church/synagogue/mosque has thrived in the past. Perhaps you have been a usher for more years than you wish to count. Perhaps you have sung in the choir or taught Sunday School for so long that you cannot picture having a life without that outlet for your faith

All of us are very aware that the number of persons over 65 is growing fast. I live in an active older adult community with a population of 9000, fully one third of the total number of persons in our city. And we see the growing number of older adults in our faith community as well as other communities of faith in our region. And so, we yearn for the days when young families flourished. Their skills and vitality gave us hope that our beloved church/synagogue/mosque would continue when your strength fails.

In addition, your faith community may be approaching the time when there are not enough people, much less, young people, to share the load. And now your faith community is, or becoming, geriatric, filled with older adults. You have tried to reach out to younger families but find that discouraging. You want your fellowship to survive, but you do not know how.

Well, have you even considered making older adults one of, if not the, focus of your communion? I believe that God always gives faith communities with the tools to complete what God wishes that community to do. If there are a lot of older people in your fellowship, maybe God wants your community to consider, even develop an Older Adult Ministry (OAM) that engages not only your membership, but the community at large.

And so, I welcome you to this adventure where we will explore the value of Older Adult Ministry. Older adults are not over the hill. In fact, they have climbed the hill called life and from that hard won perch, are able see the hand of God intertwining with their lives in the past and that enables them to trust the hand of God in their future. In this book we will discover the spiritual strength that can only have been gained by experience. We will survey the strengths of spirit that grows out of the very trials of aging, trials we wish would go away. We will come to realize that because we cannot ‘do’ as much as we used to do, we are filled with what we have always sought, a life where we are comfortable in our own skin and have something more valuable to share with all with whom we come in contact.

Exploring this book might challenge perspectives of some of your Planning Team. It might affirm the thoughts of others. But I hope that this journey will result in feeling hope for your faith community, the joy that can be found with the years, and a peace that only can come through a deep experience of and trust in God.

May God bless your journey with insight and peace,

Pastor Don Koepke

Growing an Older Adult Ministry
Participant Handout
Session One – The Introduction

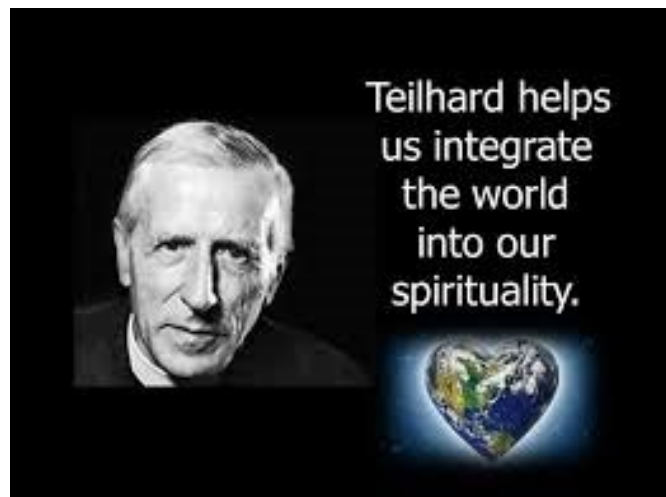
What do you Think?

Tielhard de Chardin was a Jesuit, philosopher, and paleontologist.
Among his many works he suggested:

We are not human beings having a spiritual experience.
We are spiritual beings having a human experience.

Is de Cardin's statement correct?

What do you believe?



Discussion Group 1

Abraham Genesis 17: 1-8, 15-19, 23-24

When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said to him, ‘I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. ²And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will make you exceedingly numerous.’ ³Then Abram fell on his face; and God said to him,

⁴ ‘As for me, this is my covenant with you: You shall be the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁵No longer shall your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you the ancestor of a multitude of nations. ⁶I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you.

¹⁵ ‘As for Sarah your wife, you shall not call her Sari, but Sarah shall be her name. ¹⁶I will bless her, and moreover I will give you a son by her. I will bless her, and she shall give rise to nations; kings of peoples shall come from her.’ ¹⁷Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said to himself, ‘Can a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Can Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?’ ¹⁸And Abraham said to God, ‘O that Ishmael might live in your sight!’ ¹⁹God said, ‘No, but your wife Sarah shall bear you a son, and you shall name him Isaac. I will establish my covenant with him as an everlasting covenant for his offspring after him

²³ Then Abraham took his son Ishmael and all the slaves born in his house or bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham’s house, and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins that very day, as God had said to him.

From the brief description above, in what ways did Abraham’s age play in his spiritual awareness and sensitivity.

Describe at least one example of an “Abraham” in your life.

Complete the sentence: “Abraham is a model of successful aging because....

Discussion Group 2

Anna Luke 2: 36-38

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna* the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸ At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child* to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

From the brief description above, in what ways did Anna's age play in her spiritual awareness and sensitivity.

Describe at least one example of an "Anna" in your life.

Complete the sentence: "Anna is a model of successful aging because...."

Discussion Group 3

Simeon Luke 2:25-35

25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon;* this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.* ²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon* came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon* took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹'Master, now you are dismissing your servant* in peace,
according to your word;

³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.'

33 And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴Then Simeon* blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

From the brief description above, in what ways did Simeon's age play in his spiritual awareness and sensitivity.

Describe at least one example of a "Simeon" in your life.

Complete the sentence: "Simeon is a model of successful aging because...."

Discussion Group 4

The Elders in the Crowd John 8:1-11

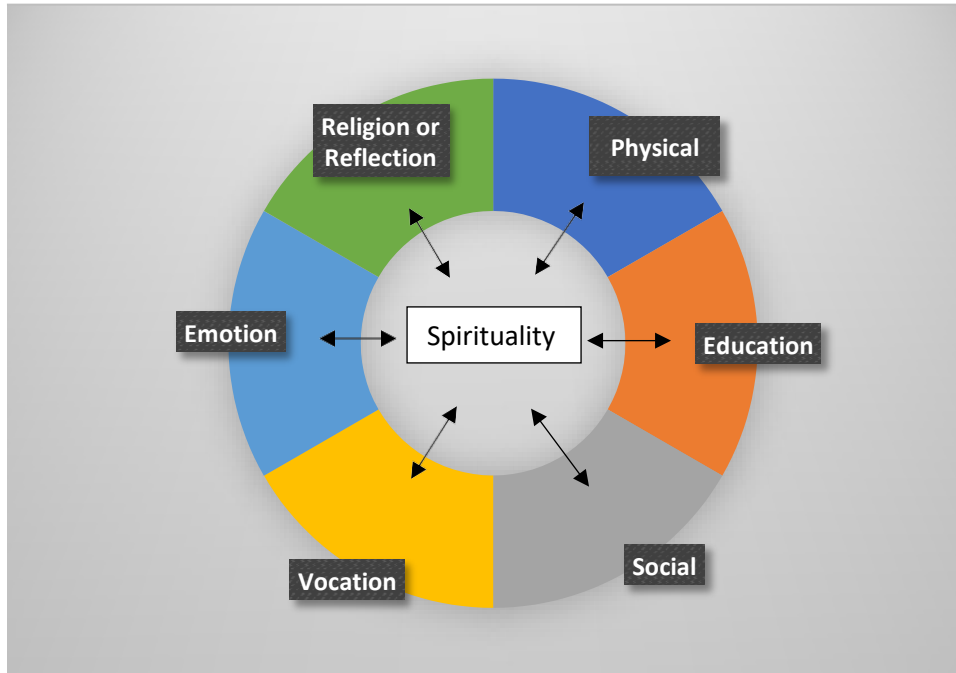
Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ²Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them. ³The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all of them, ⁴they said to him, ‘Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. ⁵Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?’ ⁶They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. ⁷When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, ‘Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.’ ⁸And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. ⁹When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. ¹⁰Jesus straightened up and said to her, ‘Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?’ ¹¹She said, ‘No one, sir.’* And Jesus said, ‘Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.’

From the brief description above, in what ways did the elder’s age play in their spiritual awareness and sensitivity.

Describe at least one example of an “Elder in John 8” in your life.

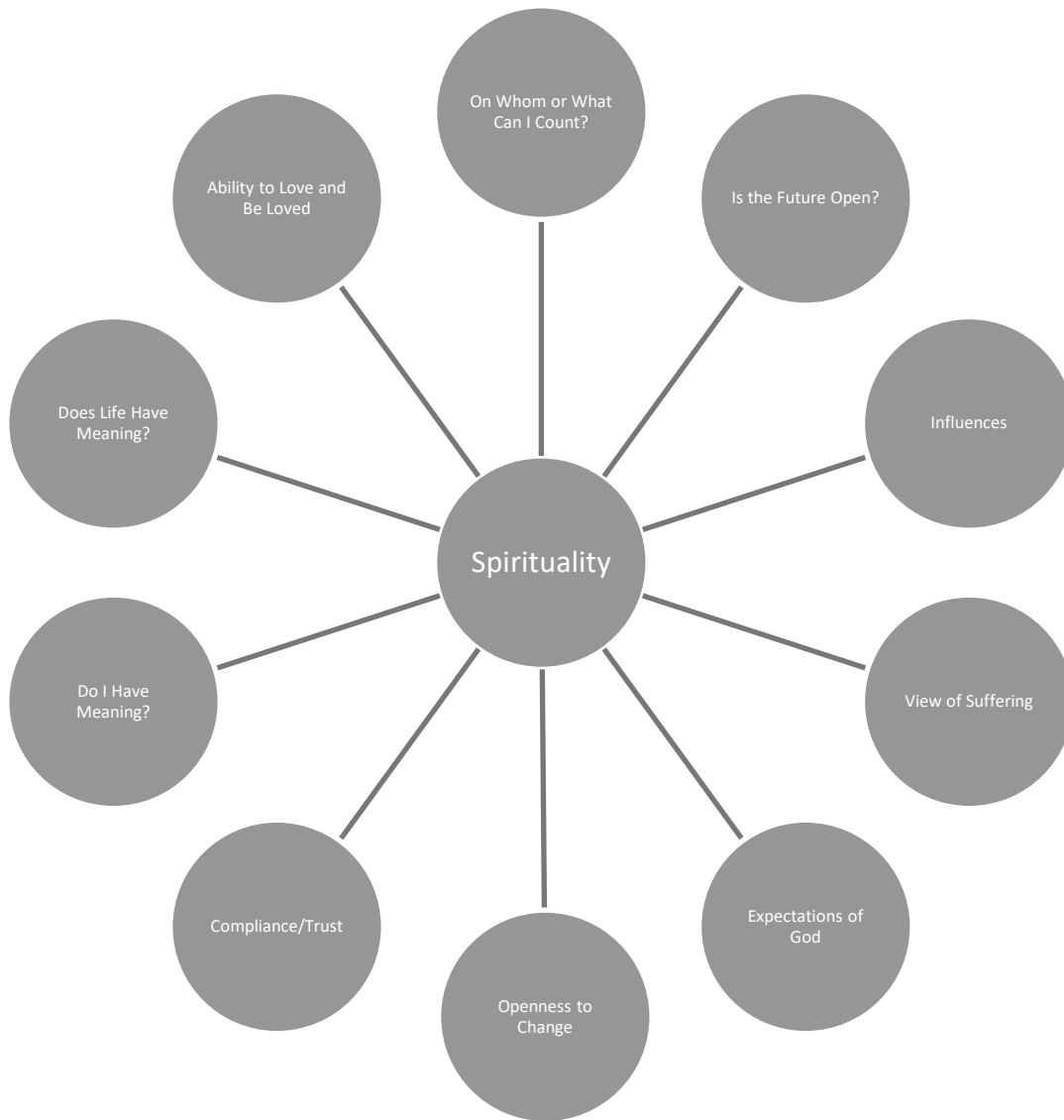
Complete the sentence: “The Elders in John 8 are a model of successful aging because....”

In what ways does the chart below describe the spiritual within you?



What does this chart suggest about the role that spirituality plays in your life?

What does this chart suggest for the basic goal for your OAM?



A Prayer for Older Adults

All Gracious God. You have given me all that I am and have, and now I give it back to You to stand under Your will alone.

In a special way I give You these later years of my life I am one of those called by you into old age, a call not given to all, not given to Jesus, not given to most of our world today. I humbly ask You, grace me deeply in each aspect of this new chapter in my life.

As my physical eyesight weakens, may the eyes of my faith strengthen, that I may see You and Your love in everything.

As my hearing fails, may the ears of my heart be more attentive to the whisper of Your gentle voice.

As my legs weaken and walking becomes more difficult, may I walk more truly in Your paths, knowing all the while that I am held in the embrace of Your love.

As my mind becomes less alert and memory fades may I remain peaceful with You, aware that with You there is no need for thought or word. You ask simply that I be there, with You.

And should sickness overtake me, and I be confined to bed, may I know myself as one with your Son as he offers his life for the salvation of the world.

Finally, as my heart slows a little after the work of the years, may it expand in love for you, and all people. May it rest secure and grateful in Your loving Heart until I am lost in You, completely and forever. Amen.

“A Prayer for Older Adults”
Sr. Moya Hanlen, fdnsc (Australia)
Adapted by Ministry of the Arts
Courtesy of www.MinistryOfTheArts.org

LaGrange Park, IL 60526-1721

Activities of Daily Living

- Bathing and Grooming.
- Dressing and Undressing.
- Meal Preparation and Feeding.
- Functional Transfers (such as ability to get up from a chair)
- Safe Restroom Use and Maintaining Continence.
- Ambulation (usually walking from one place to another)
- Memory Care and Stimulation (Alzheimer's and Dementia)

Characteristics of the Four Classes of Older Adults

Active

Frail

Transitional

Caregivers

Who are the older adults within your congregation?

Church Name _____

What is the total number of older adults within your congregation? _____

How many persons in your congregation are in the following groups?

Active _____

Frail _____

Transitional _____

Caregivers _____

How many persons within each category live in tht church's zip code?

Active _____

Frail _____

Transitional _____

Caregivers _____

If desired, expand your snapshot by searching www.factfinder.census.gov, entering the church's zip code and explore the characteristics of older adults in your community.

Prayer for Older Adults

All Gracious God, You have given me all that I am and have,
and now I give it back to You to stand under Your will alone.

In a special way I give You these later years of my life.

I am one of those called by you into old age,
a call not given to all,
not given to Jesus, not given to most of our world today.

I humbly ask You, grace me deeply in each aspect of
this new chapter in my life. As my physical eyesight weakens,
may the eyes of my faith strengthen, that I may see You
and Your love in everything. As my hearing fails,
may the ears of my heart be more attentive to the whisper
of Your gentle voice. As my legs weaken and walking
becomes more difficult, may I walk more truly in Your paths,
knowing all the while that I am held in the embrace of Your love.

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may I remain peaceful with You, aware that
with You there is no need for thought or word.

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may I know myself as one with your Son as he offers his life for
the salvation of the world. Finally, as my heart slows a little
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and all people. May it rest secure
and grateful in Your loving Heart
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**Growing an Older Adult Ministry
Handouts
Planning the Garden – Session 3**



"Burnout was our greatest challenge until we changed our mission statement."

1. What is the goal of developing a mission statement?

2. Write what you believe to be the characteristics of an effective a mission statement? (4 Minutes)

What is to be Accomplished

Hopes and Dreams as an Expression of Mission

1. What do we want to accomplish? What are our desired outcomes?
2. What is the standard by which we will evaluate present ministry and guide the development of future ministry?

Step One: List as many desired OAM outcomes that you can in five minutes.

-
-
-
-
-
-

Step Two: Rank the goals above in order of importance, 1, 2, 3, etc.

Step Three: Circle the essential words in each ministry goal

Step Four: Based on the above steps, write a simple, declarative sentence that describes your hopes and dreams for your older adult ministry.

Step Five: Share your Mission Statement with the entire group and through discussion seek consensus on an initial Mission Statement

Assessing Existing OAMs

What is the Total Membership of your Congregation?
_____ (See your Pastor or Secretary)

How many persons in your congregation are in the following groups? (See Appendix A)

Active

Frail

Transitional

Caregivers

Percentage of Total congregation _____

How many persons in your congregation need:

Transportation _____ Special Assistance _____

Extra Visitation _____ Home-centered ministry _____

Do you have a social group especially for older adults? Yes No

If yes, is it run by: Older Adults _____ Others _____

Do you have a group of volunteers to drive people to clinics,
dentists, shopping, etc? Yes No

If yes, what is the age group of most of the volunteers

Does your church have the following?

- a) Streaming or Zoom Worship? _____
- b) Recordings of church services for the home-centered?
- c) Access for the disabled to the Sanctuary? _____
- d) Access for the disabled to Social Hall? _____
- e) Access for the disabled to classrooms? _____
- f) Wheelchair accessible restrooms? _____
- g) Pull bars in restroom stalls? _____
- h) Access to altar by wheelchairs/walkers? _____
- i) Bright lighting in sanctuary/social hall? _____
- j) Blank wall in back of altar/pulpit? _____
- k) Hearing Assist equipment? _____
- l) Prominent place for wheelchairs in the sanctuary? _____
- m) Worship Materials in large print? _____
- n) Meals on Wheels? _____
- o) Home Repair services? _____
- p) Home Chore Services? _____
- q) Parish Nurse Program? _____
- r) Stephen's Ministry (or similar)? _____

- s) Exercise/Aerobics classes for older adults? _____
- t) Cooking and Nutrition Classes for older adults? _____
- u) Respite Care Relievers Program? _____
- v) Telephone Reassurance Program? _____
- w) Adult Day Care Center? _____
- x) Prayer/Concern Chains? _____
- y) Emergency Hot-Line? _____
- z) Support Groups? _____List: _____

Approximately how many older adults are doing volunteer work in your church? ___

Total hours per week_____per month_____per year_____

Do any of your organizations organize trips, movies, parties or other events for older adults? Name them and describe the event.

Does your church minister to the needs of persons in your community who are not church members or attenders?

Do you have volunteers who visit older persons who are:

In the hospital? _____

Home-centered? _____

In Nursing Home? _____

Are older adults represented on the governing board of your church or other committees of your church? _____

Does your church offer classes/seminars for older adults in any of the following?

a) Grief and loss _____

b) Spiritual Development _____

c) Death and Dying _____

d) Marriage Communication _____

e) Retirement Planning _____

f) Caregiving _____

g) How to choose a retirement community / nursing home

Do older adults participate in the following ministries?

Local church teaching ministries?

After school Latchkey Programs for Children _____

Preschool volunteer or employee _____

Telephone Reassurance Program _____

Lay Assistants (Liturgists) _____ Readers _____

Choir _____ Song Leader _____ Soloist _____

Church Office Assistance

Bulletins

Worship materials _____

Newsletters _____

Directories _____

Mailings _____

Receptionist _____

Volunteer (or paid) office assistant _____

Other existing Older Adult Ministries: _____

Adapted from: Local Church Program Assessment
“Designing A Ministry By, With and For Older Adults”
Richard H Genzler, Jr. Office of Adult Ministries
The United Methodist Church, Nashville, TN, 37202-0

A Prayer for Older Adults

All Gracious God, You have given me all that I am and have, and now I give it back to You to stand under Your will alone. In a special way I give You these later years of my life

I am one of those called by you into old age, a call not given to all, not given to Jesus, not given to most of our world today.

I humbly ask You to grace me deeply in each aspect of this new chapter in my life.

As my physical eyesight weakens, may the eyes of my faith strengthen, that I may see You and Your love in everything.

As my hearing fails, may the ears of my ear be more attentive to the whisper of Your gentle voice.

As my legs weaken and walking becomes more difficult, may I walk more truly in Your paths, knowing all the while that I am held in the embrace of Your love.

As my mind becomes less alert and memory fades may I remain peaceful with You, aware that with You there is no need for thought or word. You ask simply that I be there, with You.

And should sickness overtake me, and I be confined to bed, may I know myself as one with your Son and he offers his life for the salvation of the world.

Finally, as my heart slows a little after the work of the years, may it expand in love for you and all people.

May it rest secure and grateful in Your loving Heart until I am lost in You, completely and forever. Amen.

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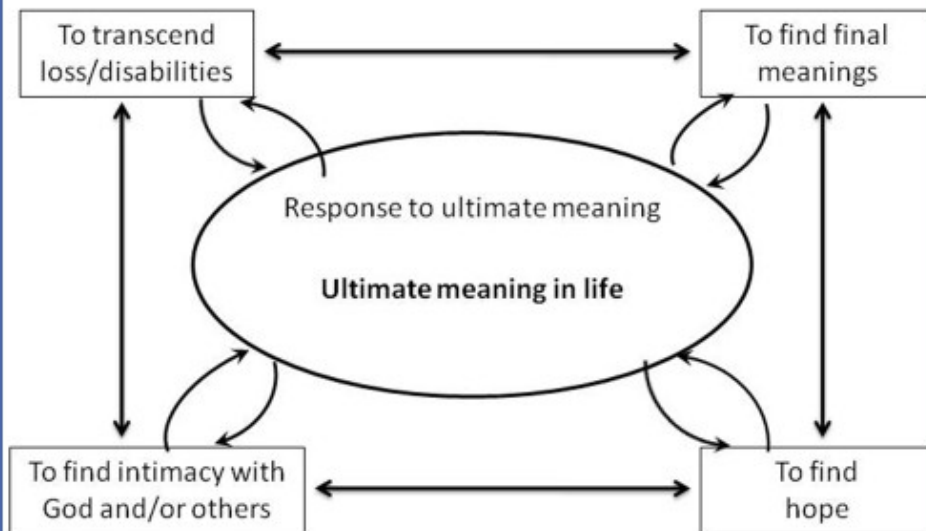
Growing an Older Adult Ministry Handouts Choosing the Seed – Session 5

To be successful, an Older Adult Ministry needs to be

- 1) focused,
- 2) intentional,
- 3) sustainable
- 4) effective

This chapter explores making our OAM **effective**.

Spiritual Tasks of Older Adulthood



MacKinlay, E. D. (2001). The spiritual dimension of caring: Applying a model for spiritual tasks of ageing. *Journal of Religious Gerontology*, 12, 157



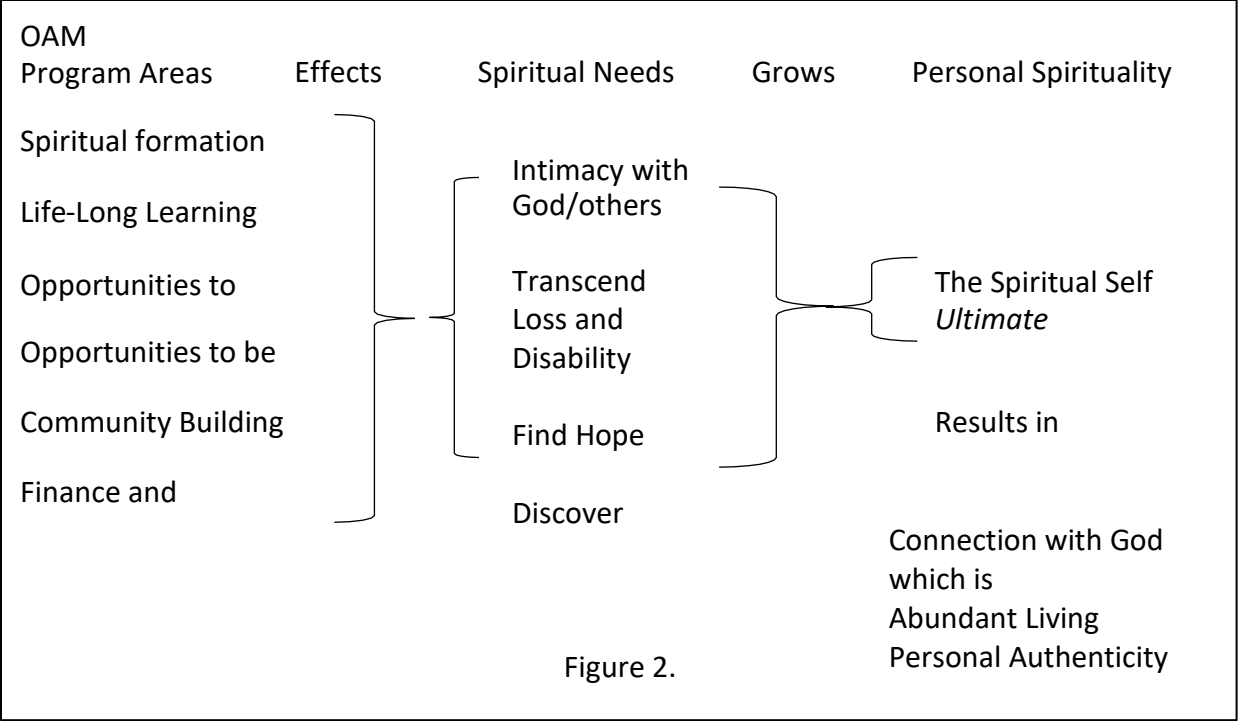


Figure 2.

A Prayer for Older Adults

All Gracious God, You have given me all that I am and have, and now I give it back to You to stand under Your will alone. In a special way I give You these later years of my life

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**Growing an Older Adult Ministry
Handout
Nurturing the Seed – Session 6**

OLDER ADULT MINISTRY PROGRAMS

Chapter Title and Number

Assigned _____

Read the chapter plus any item in the appendix that is related to the chapter. Answer the following questions and be ready to present your findings to the entire planning team at the next session.

What does this chapter seek to accomplish?

List the helpful insights found in the chapter that demonstrate its importance?

What insights are the most interesting/helpful to you personally?

How does this chapter affect the spirituality of participants?

Why should the insights found in this chapter be important to our OAM?

List the best strategies that are suggested both within the text of this chapter and in the related items that are found in the appendix?

A Prayer for Older Adults

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LaGrange Park, IL 60526-1721

**Growing an Older Adult Ministry
Handout
Nurturing the Seed 2 – Session 7**

Chapter Assigned

Read your assigned chapter plus any item in the appendix that is related to the chapter. Answer the following questions and be ready to present your findings to the entire planning team

What does this chapter seek to accomplish?

How important are these insights to our OAM?

List the helpful insights found in the chapter that demonstrate its importance?

How does this chapter affect the spirituality of participants?

List the best strategies that are suggested both within the text of this chapter and in the related items that are found in the appendix?

Time	Spirit Form	Learning	To Serve	To Be Served	Community	Finance	Covid 19

A Prayer for Older Adults

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**Growing an Older Adult Ministry
Handout
Session 8 – Putting it All Together**

Older Adult Program Planner

Event Name Date Time Location

Target Group:

Mission Statement:

Infrastructure Needed for Success:

Time	Spiritual Formation	Life-long Learning	Opp. To Serve	Opp. to be Served	Community Building	Stewardship and Finance	Covid 19 Event Y/N

OAM Event Participant Evaluation

(Planning Team inserts name and date of event here) _____

	Low				High
Did you have fun?	1	2	3	4	5
Was the event Interesting?	1	2	3	4	5

What part of the event touched your heart? _____

	Low			High	
Would you attend a similar event?	1	2	3	4	5
Next time, would you invite a friend?	1	2	3	4	5
How easy was it to meet someone new?	1	2	3	4	5
Did the event touch your inner life?	1	2	3	4	5

How would you improve an event like this one? _____

Suggestions for the Planning Committee? _____

I would like to help with: _____

A Prayer for Older Adults

All Gracious God, You have given me all that I am and have, and now I give it back to You to stand under Your will alone. In a special way I give You these later years of my life

I am one of those called by you into old age, a call not given to all, not given to Jesus, not given to most of our world today.

I humbly ask You to grace me deeply in each aspect of this new chapter in my life.

As my physical eyesight weakens, may the eyes of my faith strengthen, that I may see You and Your love in everything.

As my hearing fails, may the ears of my ear be more attentive to the whisper of Your gentle voice.

As my legs weaken and walking becomes more difficult, may I walk more truly in Your paths, knowing all the while that I am held in the embrace of Your love.

As my mind becomes less alert and memory fades may I remain peaceful with You, aware that with You there is no need for thought or word. You ask simply that I be there, with You.

And should sickness overtake me, and I be confined to bed, may I know myself as one with your Son and he offers his life for the salvation of the world.

Finally, as my heart slows a little after the work of the years, may it expand in love for you and all people.

May it rest secure and grateful in Your loving Heart until I am lost in You, completely and forever. Amen.

“A Prayer for Older Adults”
Sr. Moya Hanlen, fdnsc (Australia)
Adapted by Ministry of the Arts
Courtesy of www.MinistryOfTheArts.org
LaGrange Park, IL 60526-1721

**Growing an Older Adult Ministry
Handout
Session 9 – Evaluation: The Key to the Future of the Garden**

Planning Team Event Evaluation Form

Event Title: _____

Date and time of Event: _____

Location: _____ Number Attending _____

Target Older Adult Category: (circle one)
Active Transitional Frail Caregivers

Spiritual Need(s) addressed: (circle one)
Hope Meaning Transcendence Intimacy

Program area used to address the spiritual need: (circle one)
Spiritual Life-Long Opportunity Opportunity Community Finance,
Formation Learning to Serve to be Served Building Stewardship

Portion of the OAM Mission Statement that was addressed:
Intended accomplishment (goals):

How did the event address the spirituality of participants?

What happened that suggested that the intended accomplishment was achieved?

Would you like to continue the event as a series?

Plan another event like it?

How could the event be improved?

Strategy for the Future

Mission Statement

Target Group:	Spiritual Formation	Lifelong Learning	Opp. to Serve	Opp. be Served	Comm. Building	Stewardship
Spiritual Need:						
Target Group						
Spiritual Need:						
Target Group:						
Spiritual Need:						

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