



Leading the Conversation: A New Narrative for Aging and Human Services



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ILLINOIS PARTNERS

for

HUMAN SERVICE

Who is Illinois Partners for Human Service?

- A coalition of 850+ organizational partners serving every legislative district in Illinois;
- The largest collective voice for human services in the state;
- An advocate for high quality, evidence-based, sustainable approaches to human services provision;
- A leader in collaborative advocacy to protect funding and promote fair policies for our sector;
- A trusted resource for information regarding the issues most impacting health and human services.

Reframing Human Services and Aging



Has anyone
heard of
Reframing?

If so, in what
context?



What is FrameWorks Institute?

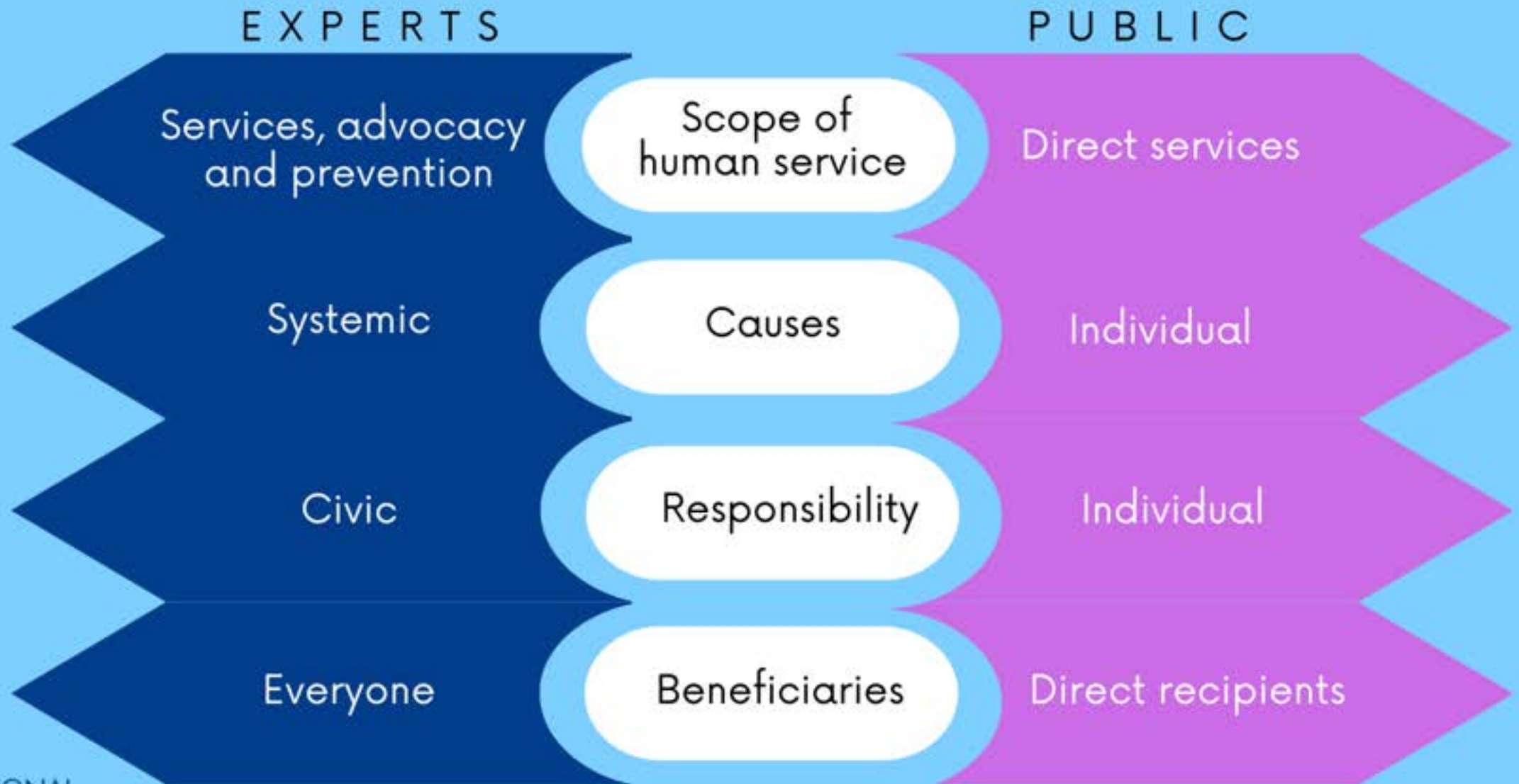


- A communications think tank.
- A Strategic Frame Analysis® that promotes:
 - Evidence-based, multi-disciplinary communications research;
 - Empirical identification of the most effective ways to reframe social issues;
 - A grounded understanding of cultural models and neuroscience.

What are Human Services?



Mapping the Gap



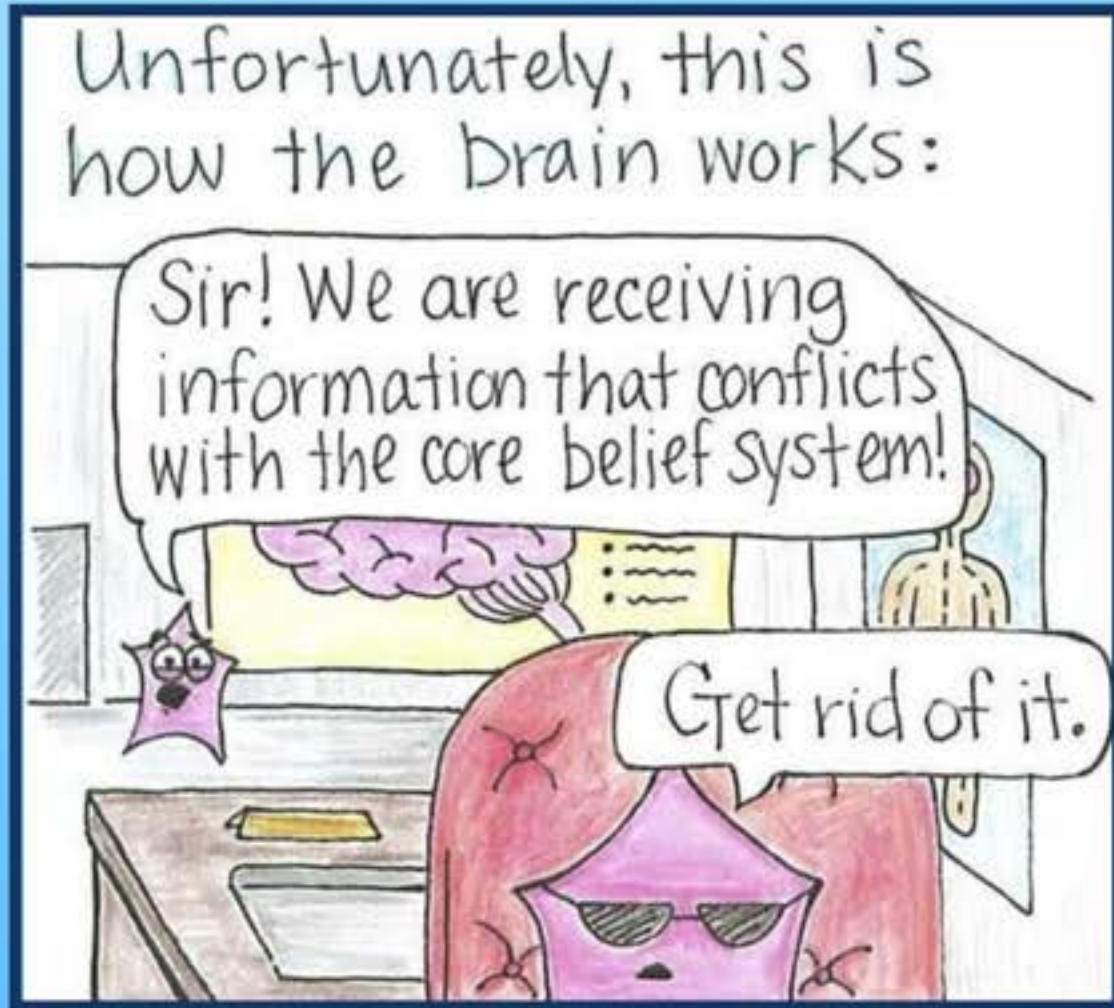
Experts say... ...Public Thinks

In these tough times people need more support, not less! This is no time to cut funding to human service issues.

In tough economic times, people who get those programs have a better quality of life than the rest of us! Must be nice to have someone else pick up the tab...

Mental Shortcuts

Brain Rejects Conflicting Info



Unknowns are a "Cognitive Hole"



Frameworks Research: Human Services are a Cognitive Hole

People think human services are:

Only direct services

"Charity"

Provided by nice volunteers

Only emergency services (food/shelter)

Needed on a temporary or one-time basis





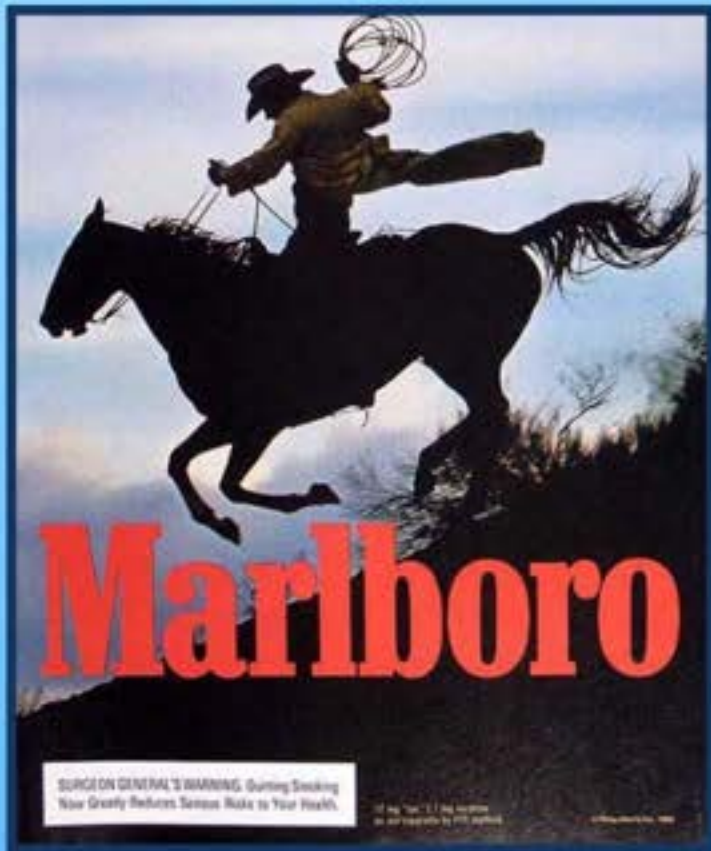
This thinking is rooted in mental shortcuts, such as:



... and cueing up this thinking can get us stuck in a mental “swamp,” which undermines our efforts.

Cultural Models

Rugged Individualism



Corrupt Government



Fatalism



What is well-being?

- Financial Self-Sufficiency
- Physical Health



What threatens well-being?

- Lack of Willpower
- Bad Parents
- Dangerous Communities



Human Services SWAMP

How do we improve well-being?

- Individuals are Responsible
- Government is Inept and Corrupt
- Informal Networks



What are human services and how do they work?

- Cognitive Hole
- Direct Services
- Kindness and Charity
- Only the Basics and Temporary



The Solution:

FRAMING



A Well-Framed Story Arc

LEADS WITH VALUES

What's this about?
How does this work?

If it's not working,
why not?

Why does
this matter?

What can we
do about it?



LEAD WITH
VALUES



METAPHORS
EXAMPLES
EXPLANATIONS



PRINCIPLES
EFFICACY
SOLUTIONS



A Well-Framed Story Arc

PUTS IT ALL TOGETHER

What's this about?
How does this work?

If it's not working,
why not?

Why does
this matter?

Construction:
Well-being is built,
by a team, over time.

Construction:
Shaky foundations,
missing materials, life's
storms can all negatively
impact well-being.

What can we
do about it?

Construction:
Well-being is about
planning and maintenance

Human Potential:
Human services help everyone
to reach our potential, so we
can all contribute to our
communities.

Life Cycle Examples:
Demonstrate how programs support
well-being throughout life, show the
scope of human services, and
highlight prevention.

Construction Metaphor: Regional / Sector-Wide Application



Building A Greater Community

Community well-being is the set of values, principles, policies and programs which enable everyone to reach their potential and fully contribute to a community.

The mission of the Human Services Collaborative is to build a greater Peoria area by recognizing the impact of—and leveraging support for—everyone's well-being.

Well-being is built just like a home

A home is not a collection of boards and nails and shingles. It contains all those pieces and more, but it doesn't become a great place to live until everything is correctly fastened together.

Similarly, a community provides well-being when everyone can access economic stability as well as educational, cultural and social opportunities; everyone has medical care; and everyone feels cared for and safe. Only then can individuals reach their full potential.

BEFORE:



AFTER:



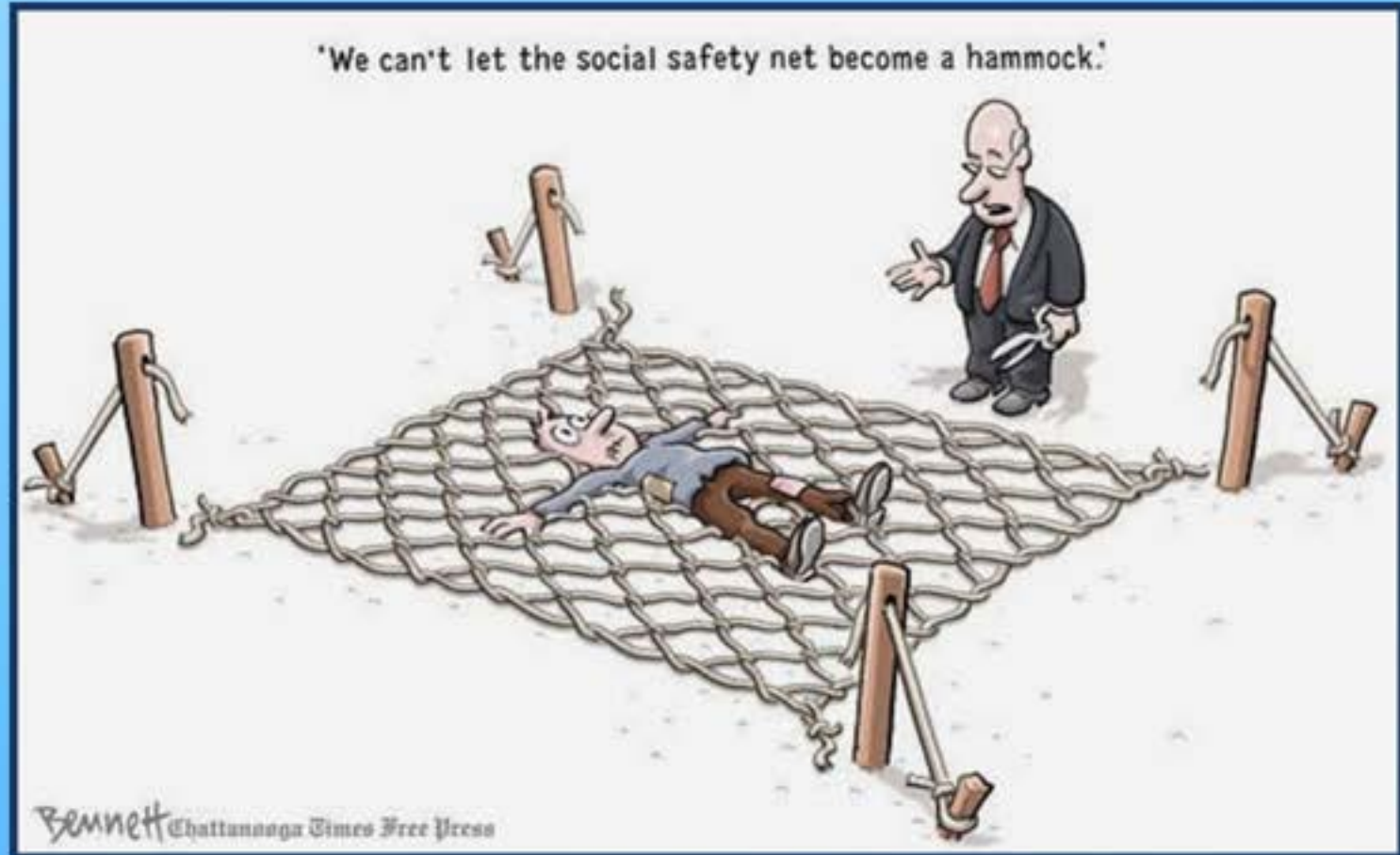
How we Cue the Swamp: VALUES

- "Vulnerable"
- "Needy"
- "At-Risk"
- "Worthy"
- "Empower"
- "Charity"
- "Cycle of Poverty"
- Individual Stories
- Argue, Snark, Shame
- Repeating the Myth



How we Cue the Swamp: UNHELPFUL METAPHORS

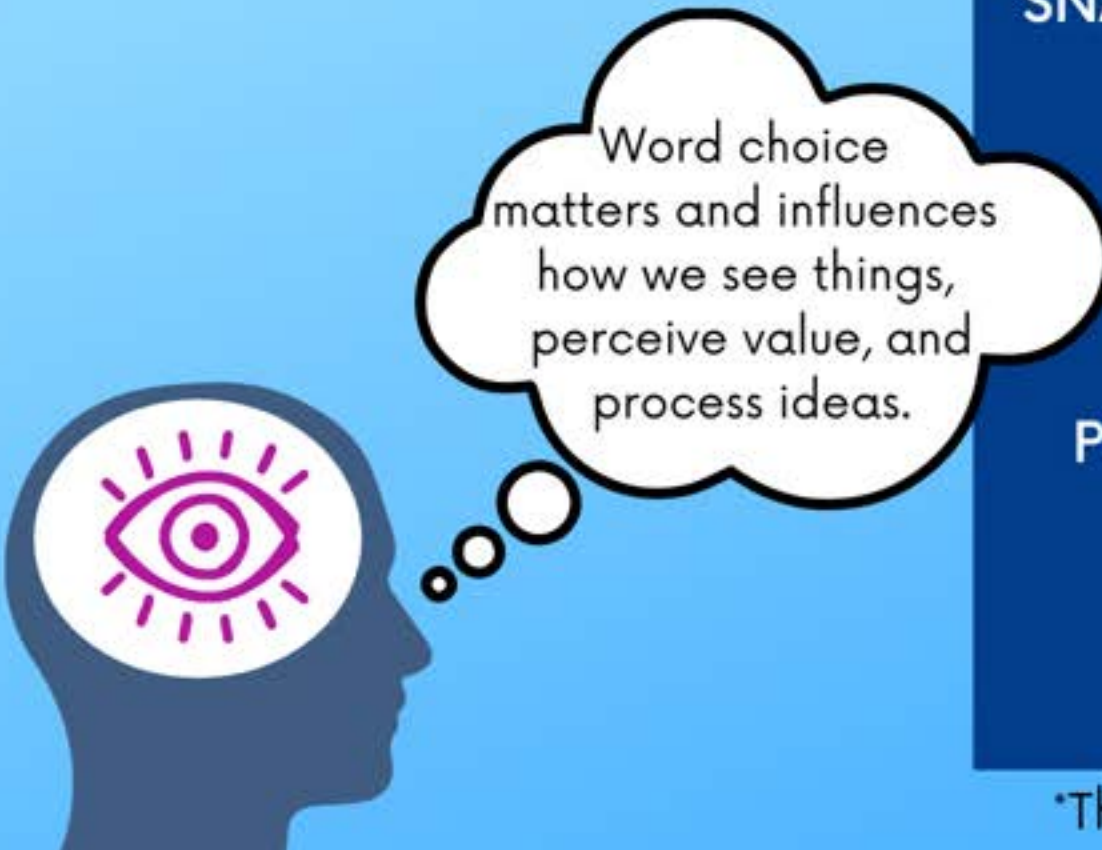
- "Safety Net"
- "Pathways"
- "Roads"
- "Ladders"
- "Fabric"



Examples of New Frames

Within

The Reframing of Human Services



Word choice
matters and influences
how we see things,
perceive value, and
process ideas.

**SAY
THIS:**

Human Services

SNAP, TANF, WIC, etc

Substance Use
Disorder

Developmental
Services

People Experiencing
Homelessness

Survivor

Older Adults*

**NOT
THAT:**

Social Services, Social
Safety Net

Welfare

Substance Abuse

Disability Services

The Homeless

Victim

Senior Citizens,
The Elderly

*The Reframing of Aging is a dynamic, new initiative.

In your work with older adults, what narratives and stereotypes do you hear about the clients you work with?

Do these narratives or stereotypes affect your work? If so, in what ways?





What's in the "Swamp" of Aging?

Public thinking isn't a blank slate - it's more like a swamp, with distracting and dangerous ideas that can eat your message. Learn to navigate this mucky, yucky terrain

The video player interface shows a title bar with the logo 'FW' and the text 'FWA Aging - What's in the Swamp of Aging' and 'FrameWorks Institute'. The main content area is a dark green box with a light blue border, containing a comparison between 'IDEAL' and 'PERCEIVED "REAL"'. The 'IDEAL' side lists: Accumulated wisdom, Self-sufficiency, Staying active, and Earned leisure. The 'PERCEIVED "REAL"' side lists: Deterioration, Loss of control, Dependency, and Determinism. The video player controls at the bottom include a play button, a progress bar at 05:34, a signal strength indicator, a settings gear, and the 'vimeo' logo.

FW FWA Aging - What's in the Swamp of Aging
FrameWorks Institute

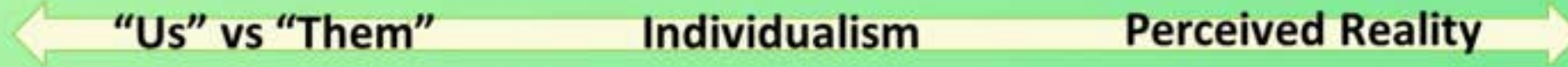
IDEAL	vs.	PERCEIVED "REAL"
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accumulated wisdom• Self-sufficiency• Staying active• Earned leisure		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deterioration• Loss of control• Dependency• Determinism

05:34

vimeo

Building on What We Have Learned:

SWAMPS of Public Understanding :HUMAN SERVICES & AGING



Reframing Aging Basics

Countering Engrained Ideas About Aging

Reframe thinking about aging and older adults based on the core values of:



JUSTICE

A just society treats everyone as equals.

When older adults are marginalized and their potential and contributions are undervalued, we fail to promote justice for all.



INGENUITY

Replace outdated thinking with innovative ideas.

Americans are living longer and healthier lives, we must use our ingenuity to adjust our systems and enact policies to meet this new reality.

Use an explanatory metaphor to redirect thinking:



BUILDING MOMENTUM

Growth continues throughout our lives and older adults contribute to our communities.

The momentum we build as we get older, through experience and perspective, contributes to our collective vitality, and as a society, we should harness and value it.

CONFRONTING INJUSTICE

Ageism is a real problem - but an unknown one. This video walks through research on how to elevate issues of ageism in the most productive way.

Framed with *Separate Fates*

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.

Reframed with *Justice*

All Americans have a right to participate fully in our democracy, our economy, and our community life. But right now, our society starts to exclude us as we age. Americans are living longer, but our systems and structures haven't been adjusted so that older people can stay involved. Instead, our workplace policies, our transportation systems, and other features of everyday life have the effect of isolating and marginalizing older adults. To build a more just, more inclusive society, we need to take steps to prevent social isolation of any group, including older people.

Quick Start Guide

Framing is the process of making choices about what to emphasize and what to leave unsaid.

Here's a **quick tour of themes to avoid and alternatives to advance.**

Instead of these words and cues:

"Tidal wave," "tsunami," and similarly catastrophic terms for the growing population of older people

"Choice," "planning," "control," and other individual determinants of aging outcomes

"Seniors," "elderly," "aging dependents," and similar "other-ing" terms that stoke stereotypes

Try:

Talking affirmatively about changing demographics: "As Americans live longer and healthier lives . . ."

Emphasizing how to improve social contexts: "Let's find creative solutions to ensure we can all thrive as we age."

Using more neutral ("older people/Americans") and inclusive ("we" and "us") terms

“Seniors,” “elderly,” “aging dependents,” and similar “other-ing” terms that stoke stereotypes

“Struggle,” “battle,” “fight,” and similar conflict-oriented words to describe aging experiences

Using the word “ageism” without explanation

Making generic appeals to the need to “do something” about aging

Using more neutral (“older people/Americans”) and inclusive (“we” and “us”) terms

The Building Momentum metaphor: “Aging is a dynamic process that leads to new abilities and knowledge we can share with our communities.”

Defining ageism: “Ageism is discrimination against older people due to negative and inaccurate stereotypes.”

Using concrete examples like intergenerational community centers to illustrate inventive solutions

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If you would like to learn more about Reframing Aging...

Check out www.reframingaging.org



- Quick Start Guide
- Caravan Newsletter
- FrameWorks Academy Video Series
- Harvard Implicit Association Test
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>
- Talking Elder Abuse
- Finding the Frame White Paper

Resources Available



Talking
Points



FAQs



Message
Cards

<http://frameworksinstitute.org/toolkits/humanservices>

National Human Services Assembly





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Thank You

The Conversation Continues at the ECIAAA Annual Retreat

- November 2, 2022
- 10:00am-2:00pm
- Virtual via GoToMeeting



Reframing Aging
Presentation by Lauren Wright